

Mountain View VOICE



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ARTS & EVENTS | P.25

JANUARY 26, 2007 VOLUME 15, NO. 4

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Their tube

GRAHAM VIDEO PRODUCTION CLASS PREPARES STUDENTS FOR FREESTYLE ACADEMY AND BEYOND

By Alexa Tondreau

At Graham Middle School, the morning announcements don't crackle through, barely audible, on the scratchy public address system. Not anymore, anyway.

Courtesy of Graham's video production class, known as Graham Middle School Television (GMSTV), announcements now appear in a form far more resonant to these children of the YouTube generation — they come to each classroom via television monitor, with the entire school wired and watching the broadcast simultaneously.

Step into the GMSTV classroom on a typical morning and you'll find students in the full swing of taping the day's segment. A green screen backdrop hangs in one corner, and two students sit, anchor-like, at a desk before it. The camera operator signals that he's ready, and "Quiet on the set!" is called by the production manager.

The two readers begin the announcement, which includes the Pledge of Allegiance, upcoming school-wide events and a list of volunteer opportunities. It goes off without a hitch — with the help of the school's new Tele-Prompter screen.

With the slogan "GMSTV ... because news happens" perched above the whiteboard, the class, now in its second year, has become an important curricular



Julie Park (left) and Lillian Paredes act as news anchors while being filmed by their classmate during a class at Graham Middle School.

addition at Graham.

The brainchild of social studies teacher Tom Sayer, the class teaches students all the basics of video production, including shooting, editing and script writing, as well as instruction in interviewing

"This is a video generation."

TOM SAYER

their subjects and brainstorming news-worthy ideas.

Sayer said the technological training comes easily for many

of the students.

"Some of them really have natural talents. There are a variety of kids here. Creative types, techie types; we even have a limited English speaker coming in."

With the skills they learn at GMSTV, he said, students will be well prepared for the local high school technology program, Freestyle Academy, as well as careers far beyond their school days.

"This is a video generation," Sayer said. "They are video savvy and it's so powerful."

► See **GRAHAM**, page 6

Grant Road farm shuttered

LEASE RUNS OUT FOR FARMER WHO TILLED SOIL THERE FOR 20 YEARS — HOUSING APPEARS LIKELY

By Daniel DeBolt

In a surprise move, the owners of the city's beloved Grant Road farm told the Schmitz family that it is time to leave the property — in all likelihood to pave the way for a housing tract proposed by SummerHill Homes last year.

David Schmitz, who has farmed the 15-acre site for 20 years, said he agreed to a shortened lease last year, with a chance it would be renewed. But earlier this month, owners Betty Moore and Pauline King said the lease would not be extended.

With the lease now up on Feb. 15, the familiar fruit stand faced a bulldozer this week, "For Sale" signs went up for the farm's equipment, and locals scavenged for souvenirs at a word-of-mouth farm sale last weekend. The younger members of the Mendoza family, the farm's laborers, will have to find work elsewhere, while the elders will be going to a farm in Marysville and taking a lot of the animals with them, Schmitz said.

"It's amazing they kept it this long," said Leslie Burnell, a former neighbor who was chatting with Schmitz.

"I thought they were going to let us keep it a little bit longer," Schmitz said in response. But he wanted to stress that "We're grateful they let us do it for the 20 years they did."

The Mountain View Farmlands Group — a group of local residents whose mission is to save five acres of the 15-acre farm — issued a press release on the recent developments.

"The termination of the farmers' lease does not mean this land is lost as a farm," wrote member Chris Hildebrand. "But it does mean, sadly, that local children won't be able to see where and how food is grown this season, and won't get to ride the Halloween train later this year. There are going to be a lot of unhappy kids asking their parents: 'What happened to the Pumpkin Patch?'"

Several visitors dropped in at the farm Tuesday to purchase equipment or reminisce about the city's past, when the farm

► See **FARM**, page 12

Lieber in no-spank hot seat

ASSEMBLY MEMBER SURPRISED AT FUROR, SAYS BILL MEANT FOR CHILD ABUSERS

By Daniel DeBolt

Mountain View's Sally Lieber, state Assembly speaker pro-tem, has stoked the fires of national debate with a proposal to ban spanking children under 3 years old.



Sally Lieber

"I expected this to be a very contro-

► See **LIEBER**, page 11

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Voices

A R O U N D T O W N

Asked in Downtown Mountain View. Pictures and interviews by Zunaira Durrani.

Nintendo Wii or Sony PlayStation 3?



"I choose PlayStation 3 because I'm a fan of the Gran Turismo series. I want to experience the Nintendo Wii too. Pricing is an important factor why people choose one or the other."

Yuri Hanker, San Francisco



"My cousin got Wii for Christmas so that was fun. My 6-year-old cousin beat my 25-year-old cousin on bowling, so it's amazing what these things can do."

Roseann Conclara, Daly City



"Nintendo Wii. It's cheaper than PlayStation 3."

Joni Salim, Mountain View



"I'll buy a Nintendo Wii. I grew up using Nintendo and I like it."

Stefani Lessr, New York



"PS3. It's the latest. Wii is kind of childish since you act all crazy in front of the television."

Lok Pun, Los Altos

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■ QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“Everybody knew it was coming. What can you do? Land values are so much now.”

— DAVE SCHMITZ SR.,
ON THE CLOSURE OF GRANT ROAD FARM

■ CRIMEWATCH

PROSTITUTION, 200 BLOCK PAMELA DR., 1/12

Police went undercover to investigate a business claiming to provide massages. Officers conducted a search of the premises and arrested three people on charges of prostitution and providing massages without permits. The suspects are from San Jose, Saratoga and Daly City.

POSSESSION OF STOLEN PROPERTY, 1900 BLOCK SUN-MOR AVE., 1/19

A man was reported in a resident's backyard on Sun-Mor Ave. When officers reached the house, they found a suspect in the back-

yard and a vehicle stolen from San Francisco parked in front of the address. The suspect was arrested for possession of stolen property and parole violation.

RESISTING ARREST, 241 CASTRO ST., 1/20

A fight broke out among six people at Molly Magee's on Saturday. When police arrived on the scene, one person refused to comply with an officer's orders. This led to a short struggle between the suspect and the officer. The suspect was arrested under charges of obstructing/resisting arrest, including threatening an officer with injury.

■ POLICE LOG

ASSAULT WITH A DEADLY WEAPON

Fair Oaks St./Leland Ave., 1/16

AUTO BURGLARY

500 block Del Medio Ave., 1/17
900 block High School Way, 1/17
100 block Thomson Ave., 1/19
700 block N. Shoreline Blvd., 1/20
100 block W Middlefield Rd., 1/20
200 block W Middlefield Rd., 1/22
700 block Continental Circle, 1/22
700 block Continental Circle, 1/22

BATTERY

2100 block Leghorn St./San Antonio Rd., 1/17
100 block Hackett Ave., 1/18
Crittenden School, 1/19

DISTURBANCE

300 block Castro St., 1/17
200 block Fayette Dr., 1/20

DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE

300 block Higdon Ave., 1/17
500 block San Antonio Rd., 1/18
200 block 201 California St., 1/18

GRAND THEFT

Dunaway Stockroom, 1/19
100 block E El Camino Real, 1/22

IDENTITY THEFT

Wal-Mart, 1/16
3200 block Ruth Ave., 1/16
200 block Escuela Ave., 1/18

PETTY THEFT

500 block Showers Dr., 1/16
1900 block Montecetto Ave., 1/16
Safeway, 1/16
Sears Department Store, 1/17
200 block Church St., 1/19
100 block Higdon Ave., 1/20
Goodwill, 1/22
3500 block Truman Ave., 1/22
700 block Continental Circle, 1/22

RAPE

Rengstorff Park, 1/19
200 block S Rengstorff Ave., 1/20

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

700 block Continental Circle, 1/16
100 block Ortega Ave., 1/17

ROBBERY

300 block San Antonio Rd., 1/17
Castro St./Villa St., 1/20

STOLEN VEHICLE

200 block Pettis Ave., 1/19
Century 16 Cinema, 1/20
900 block High School Wy., 1/21
1500 block Mercy St., 1/22
200 block Del Medio Ave., 1/22

SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES/PERSON

400 block Church St., 1/16
1300 block Montecito Ave., 1/19
200 block Pamela Dr., 1/22

TERRORIST THREATS

700 block Cornelia Ct., 1/18

■ CORRECTION

A photo caption in last week's Home & Garden section misstated the name of a couple shopping at

Peninsula Building Materials Co.'s masonry showroom. Their names are Linda and Edmond Lau.

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PAWeekly/Mt. View



West of Eden

By Don Frances

I GREW UP not far from Sacramento, and the downtown there, if you haven't been, is beautiful. One of the main reasons is its trees — I've heard it said our state capital has more trees per capita than any other city west of the Mississippi.

It was community effort that made it that way, and for the past year a local group, Mountain View Trees, has been pushing to make our own city just as bucolic.

This Saturday, the group is celebrating its one-year anniversary through a tree-planting downtown, with refreshments served afterward.

The group was co-founded by freshman City Council member Ronit Bryant, who told me she started the group with friends after they asked themselves, "Wouldn't it be wonderful if we had a volunteer tree organization in Mountain View?"

Forming the group, it turns out, "was easy to do, because there were actually many people in Mountain View who were interested in doing that." Today, Bryant said, the group has 17 active members and a growing e-mail list. Their mission: "keeping an eye on trees in their neighborhood."

"We're hoping to get exposure and collect more and more people in all parts of town," she said.

The upcoming event is Saturday, Jan. 27, with the planting from 10 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on Bryant Street near Mercy and California, where the group will plant eight new trees — "a significant addition

► See **EDITOR'S DESK**, page 14



KARNA KURATA

Soap box derby cars on display at Elks Lodge in Palo Alto.

Return of the soap box derby

IF JOE SPARACO HAS HIS WAY, KIDS IN RACERS WILL ZOOM DOWN DANA STREET LATER THIS YEAR

By Daniel DeBolt

If the City Council gives the green light this Tuesday, scores of gravity-powered hot rods will take over a Dana Street overpass in June for the first soap box derby in the area since the early 1970s.

The man behind the effort is Clocktower Coffee Roasting

Co. owner Joe Sparaco, who has brought together the Palo Alto Elks Club, the Mountain View Whisman School District and a motorcycle club for firefighters and police called the Iron Warriors to promote the idea.

Sparaco also plans to get disadvantaged and disabled kids in some of the cars. Towards that end, the Iron Warriors have

taken on the task of constructing custom cars to hold two people.

Normally a sport for 8- to 17-year-olds, a few lucky adults will face off in specialized cars as well. Sparaco hopes to get community leaders, local mayors and the police and fire chiefs to square off in races with titles such as "Chief's

► See **DERBY**, page 12

■ NEWS BRIEFS

EARLY BIRDS LINE UP FOR NINTENDO WII

Dozens, or even hundreds, of Mountain View residents dragged themselves out of bed before dawn on Sunday to get a crack at buying the new Nintendo Wii gaming console.

At the Target store on Showers Drive, a busy queue of approximately 90 people had formed by 7:30 a.m. in the hopes of buying a Wii. Target opened its doors at 8 a.m. and announced it had 80 copies for sale. Customers — both video game buffs and parents hoping to please their youngsters — said the line began forming around 5 a.m., and that the 80th person arrived at about 7 a.m. Customers who arrived later than 7 a.m. were

disappointed.

Circuit City and Best Buy on El Camino Real were the other stores closest to Mountain View offering limited numbers of Wii. Best Buy customers had camped overnight in anticipation of possessing the game console.

Camping outside Best Buy is fast becoming a ritual with people seeking new gadgets or looking to sell them online for a profit.

— Zunaira Durrani

LOCAL PEACE PROTESTERS HEAD FOR D.C.

The group Mountain View Voices for Peace, often seen on El Camino Real protesting the war in Iraq, will be sending five members to participate in a

large rally in Washington, D.C. this weekend.

Part of a national grassroots effort to stop the war, the rally is expected to draw many thousands to pressure Congress to use its "power of the purse" to stop the war. "We think it's important to focus on Congress — a Congress that was elected to end the war," said group member Lenny Siegel.

Local resident Karen Meredith, whose son, Army Lt. Ken Ballard, was killed during a firefight in Najaf in 2004, said, "We want Congress to have the same courage that my son and his fellow troops exhibited when their Commander in Chief gave orders to invade Iraq."

— Daniel DeBolt

No contest plea in hate crime case

JOSEPH KRUEGER ADMITS WIELDING KNIFE DURING ATTACK

By Daniel DeBolt

The trial is nearly over in the hate crime committed last year in downtown's Pioneer Park, after the second suspect in the case pleaded no contest Friday.

Joseph Krueger, 21, will now be sentenced for his role in the attack last August on a young black man, when he and co-defendant Jonathan Rhodes reportedly shouted racist epithets and slogans while punching the victim and holding a knife over his head.

"I admit, your honor," Krueger said, after the charges were read Friday.

Judge Rise Jones Pichon then explained the details of the sentence Krueger would likely receive as part of the plea deal.

"Three years, no less," she said, referring to the possible state prison term.

Krueger unofficially agreed to the same three-year state prison

deal given to Rhodes, 18, who was sentenced in November. Krueger will be formally sentenced March 15.

According to police and witness accounts, Krueger and Rhodes, both from the Central Valley, had been working on a construction project nearby on Oak Street when they came to the park to carry on a verbal altercation with a woman there. The victim, who had been sitting nearby, was drawn into the argument, and a fight ensued.

The two men shouted "White power!" and made Nazi salutes during the attack, while threatening the victim's life, police said. Officers arrived at the end of the fight. The 19-year-old victim, a

► See **HATE CRIME**, page 14



Joseph Krueger



Jonathan Rhodes

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Annalise Zimmerman (left) and **Sabrina Riley** set up a video camera during their television production class at Graham Middle School in Mountain View.



KARNA KURATA

GRAHAM

► Continued from page 1

In addition to their work on the daily announcements, students, who operate in teams, are always in some phase of production on the latest long-term project. Sayer has students cover big school events, like assemblies and talent shows, and for January's Black History Month, students are working on biography pieces.

Another project documents various aspects particular to

Graham, like teachers, sports and after-school activities, for incoming middle schoolers interested in what Graham will be like. The video is meant to quell any fears they might have about transitioning to 5th grade, and offers a view of Graham from the students' perspective.

"You can bring them here [for a visit], but they only get bits and pieces. It's a good way to see behind the scenes," Sayer said.

Graham Principal Alicia Henderson says she's impressed by

the way the class has provided service to the school.

"It enhances the learning of our entire community," Henderson said. "Kids of this age really respond to this medium, and it adds vitality and energy to the information that they share."

And though only in its second year, the program has grown tremendously.

"We started with no equipment. We were using my own camera. We started with two computers and now we have 10," Sayer said.

District denies transfers

THIRTY STUDENTS NOT ALLOWED TO SWITCH,
MOST OF THEM FROM LOS ALTOS TO MOUNTAIN VIEW HIGH

By Alexa Tondreau

Not every student in the Mountain View-Los Altos High School District is guaranteed admission into the high school of his or her choice. On Monday, school officials announced that 30 students were denied transfer requests this year.

Typically, students transfer each year from Los Altos High to Mountain View High, or vice versa. But lately, officials said, too many students were moving in one direction — from Los Altos to Mountain View.

All students who have siblings attending the requested school were granted transfers, as were 47 additional students, officials said at Monday's district board meeting. Acceptance letters were mailed out last week.

The district's policy on intra-district transfers, established in 1981, gives first priority to students who have siblings attending the school of their choice and accepts everyone else on a first-come, first-served basis. The district begins to accept applications Dec. 1.

Several parents voiced concern

about the high number of denials at the meeting, and said families in the district were unprepared for the bad news.

Said Los Altos resident Amy Gaffney, "Throughout the community, there was this sense of, 'Don't worry, it will all work out.'"

Gaffney added some parents were miffed about the sibling priority clause. She said she understood first-come, first-served to mean "whoever is first in the line."

But trustee Phil Faillace responded that the sibling priority was a necessary clause to provide some sense of structure to the entire process. Without the clause, he said, "I'm concerned it might promote the practice of camping out all night" to get applications in first.

Larger numbers of students looking to transfer have forced the district to deny some applicants for the first time in the past two years. A growing trend has been students seeking to transfer from Los Altos to Mountain View. Although there has been speculation about the motives — including the idea that some families may perceive Mountain View as a safer environment — no cause has been determined.

At Monday's meetings, the most common reason on display for the transfers had to do with parents wanting their children to go to the same school as their friends. With current boundary lines, students from the same neighborhood can attend either school.

"This is not anything to do with one school versus another," Gaffney said. "This is a friend thing."

But with the Los Altos School District looking to redraw some of its boundary lines for elementary and middle school children in the near future, there's hope that some of the kinks can be ironed out.

"We are in communication with the Los Altos School District," Superintendent Barry Groves said. "It's a very important issue for them, and we're making sure we are at the table when they draw their boundaries."

And for students who did not get accepted to the high school of their choice this round, Groves added that "We will look again in March, May and August to see if we can accept any more at that time." ▮

E-mail Alexa Tondreau at atondreau@mv-voice.com

Even teachers agree: Too much homework can be a headache

By Alexa Tondreau

The scene at Mountain View Whisman's district office last Thursday was the stuff of kids' dreams: Parents and school officials met to consider implementing a policy that would adjust and in some cases diminish the amount of homework students must do.

Principals from all nine elementary and middle schools were on hand, as well as the full district board and an audience of parents. And at the center of discussion was one question: How meaningful is the homework we give our kids?

Or, as Principal Karen Robinson of Crittenden Middle School put it, "Homework is not merely for torture. We have to use it effectively."

The discussion looked at both the quantity and the quality of homework assigned to elementary and middle school children. An unofficial school policy suggests that homework should increase 10 minutes for each grade level. For example, third graders should have 30 minutes, and fourth graders should have 40.

But as parents and educators alike pointed out, it doesn't always work out that way.

Alison Hicks told the board that based on her experience as a mother of two children at Castro Elementary, "The same homework assignment can vary with the child. It could take five minutes for one child and 50 minutes for the other."

The board also discussed what trustee Philip Palmer referred to as "parental volume control," meaning that a parent who observes a child spending too much time on any given assignment can pull them away from it without the child being penalized.

Parent Jenny Murray believed that one assignment for the whole class didn't make sense when trying to cater to different types of learners.

"It's my hope that teachers can set the homework based on each child," she said.

Bubb Principal Ruth Willen agreed, saying she had observed that hours of homework could lead to "causing kids stress." She added that studies show that when educators give children more homework, "they don't see any difference in academic growth."

Superintendent Maurice Ghysels said he had heard complaints from parents who found large amounts homework over week-

ends and breaks to be "particularly disruptive" in families' plans together. In fact, the meeting was called after grumblings from parents came to the attention of teachers and board members.

Castro parent Hicks and others also objected to what they perceived to be "busy work." Assignments that included mundane tasks such as coloring were criticized for taking up time better spent in other ways.

"A lot of things they do at home are more learning-enriched than their homework," Hicks said. "When they are digging in the yard for dinosaur bones and then they go on Google to investigate the things they've found, I hate to pull them away from that."

She added that too much homework of any kind was "often the opposite of a motivator" in developing a love of learning in young kids.

The purpose of homework

Those participating in the discussion tried to better define the goals of homework in the first place. Principal Willen from Bubb hoped it would be "something they have already learned, and they practice it that night at home."

But others said such a stance was idealistic in an educational system beholden to strict state and federal standards that impose penalties when schools don't hit certain scores on standardized tests.

"I don't see how we can meet the high standards of our community and our state within the instructional period of the day," said Judy Crates, director of English language in the district.

Ghysels concurred. "At the end of the day," he said, "everybody is looking at the academic scorecard, like it, love it or leave it."

All agreed that the district needs to work on an official homework policy — one that could incorporate the ideas of a teacher's ability to assign work based on the needs of an individual child, and a parent's ability to stop a child when the amount of homework has become disruptive. Other elementary school districts, including Campbell Unified, have such official policies in place.

The next step for the district will be to analyze results from a survey that is soon to be sent out to all parents in the district, and to gather additional input from staff. Administrators hope to have developed a draft of the policy by late spring or early fall. ▣



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PHOTOS BY NORBERT VON DER GROEBEN

HEADS UP: St. Francis' Kiefer Reischl is guarded by Sacred Heart Prep's Gabby Micek on Saturday, Jan. 20. St. Francis won 39-32.



Sacred Heart Prep's Lauren Boyle and St. Francis' Rachel Gate battle for control of the ball under the basket.

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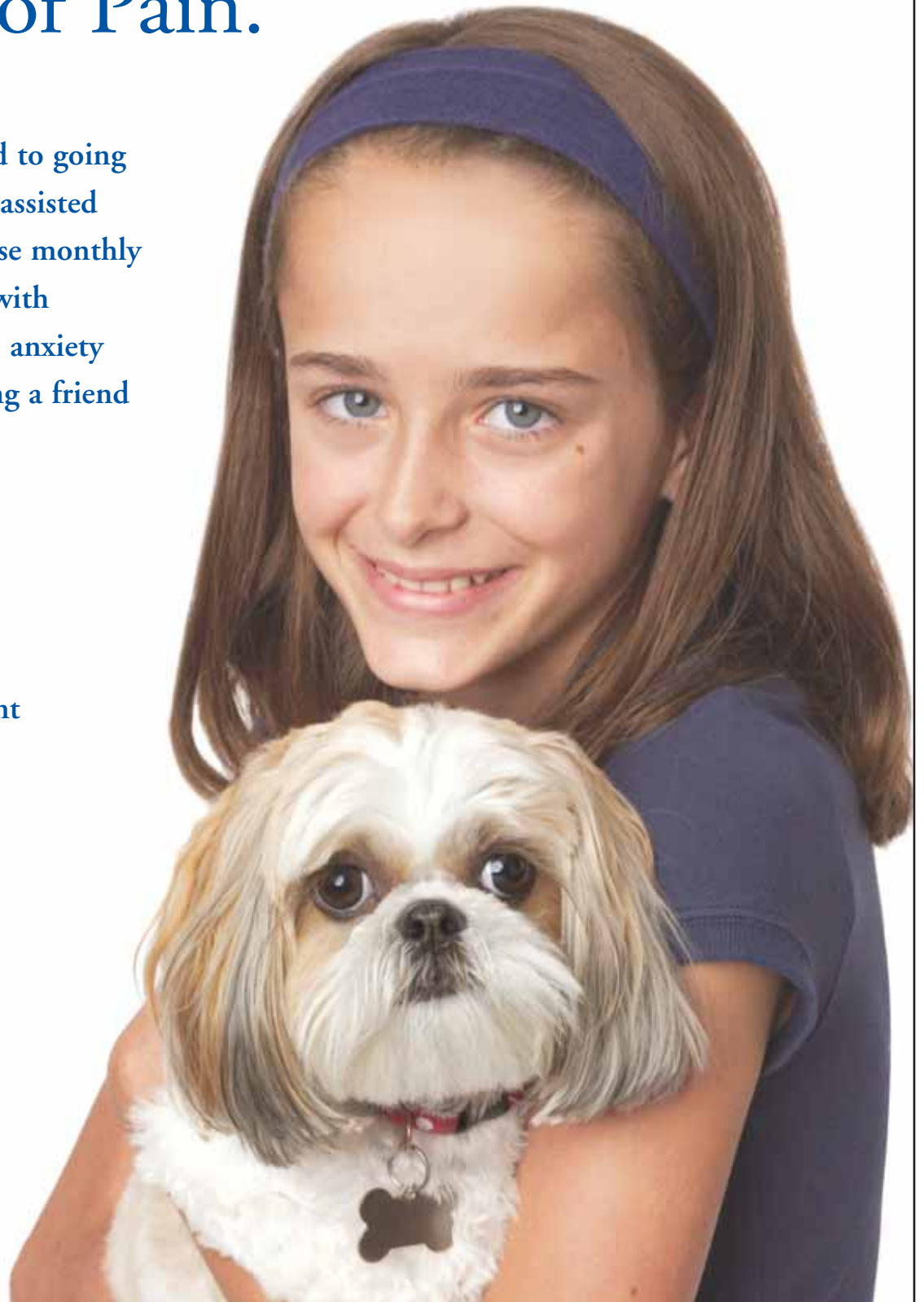


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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	HAPPY NEW YEAR! 1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	Winter Poultry (hands-on) 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$34 9	Stress Management 6:30-7:30 p.m. FREE 10	10 Steps to Healthier Eating (hands-on) 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$25 11	Chefs Challenge (hands-on) 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$34 12	13
14	Baking with Kids 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$29 15	Homemade Pasta & Gnocchi 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$34 16	17	18	Soups & Chowders 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$34 19	20
21	Easy Raw (hands-on) 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$29 22	5 Secrets to Permanent Weight Loss 6:30-8:00 p.m. \$10 23	Basic Japanese (hands-on) 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$34 24	Winter Casseroles to Soothe the Soul 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$34 25	The Flavors of Spain/Easy Entertaining 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$34 26	27
28	Healthy 30 Minute Meals 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$29 29	How to Balance Hormones Naturally 6:30-8:00 p.m. \$10 30	Creative Kids' Favorites 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$29 31			

Winter Poultry

Tuesday, January 9, 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$34

Join Mat Schuster of the Salud Team for some basics on chicken using seasonal recipes. On the Menu:

- Poultry Basics Including Organic vs. All Natural
- The Best Ever Chicken Tortilla Soup with Fresh Avocado, Queso Fresco and Lime
- Chicken and Dumplings
- Stewed Chicken with Dried Plums and Citrus
- Roasted Duck with Pomegranate Glaze

Stress Management

Wednesday, January 9th, 6:30-7:30 p.m. FREE

Do you suffer from headaches, fatigue, mood swings, digestive trouble or allergy & sinus problems? Do you have tension or pain in the neck, shoulders or lower back? Join Dr. Patrick McCauley, D.C. and Dr. Michael Dominguez, D.C. as they discuss the 7 major symptoms of stress, and how you can resolve these symptoms.

10 Steps to Eating Healthier

Thursday, January 11, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (hands-on) \$25

Join Grace Avila as she discusses 10 easy ways to improve your health through eating healthy. Menu:

- Sunrise smoothie
- Easy poached salmon
- Raw slaw
- Roasted seasonal veggies

Chef's Challenge

Friday, January 12, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (hands-on) \$34

Join Grace Avila and the Salud team in Whole Foods' own version of "Iron Chef." Race with your teammates to create the most innovative menu using "the secret ingredient."

Baking with Kids

Monday, January 15, 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$29

A wonderful opportunity to introduce kids to the joys of baking, these treats are sure to inspire curious minds and lively spirits. Our pastry chef will teach the basics of different doughs,

and kids will enjoy making their own mini-pizzas, decorated cookies, and more! Your kids will love interacting and sharing with each other in this unique and memorable way.

Homemade Pasta & Gnocchi

Tuesday, January 16, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (hands-on) p.m. \$34

Our professional chef will teach you how to make, shape, roll, and cook these simple yet elegant delicacies. You'll make stuffed pasta, herbed pasta, gnocchi, and more. The pasta fundamentals will allow you to create limitless personal variations at home.

Soups & Chowders

Friday, January 19, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (hands-on) \$34

The perfect remedy for chilly winter evenings! Our professional chef will explore the fundamentals of fine soups and chowders, allowing you to experiment with your own recipes at home. In class, you'll make both vegetarian and non-vegetarian soups and chowders, ranging from homestyle to elegant, with an emphasis on seasonal, fresh product.

Easy Raw

Monday, January 22, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (hands-on) \$29

Learn the benefits of eating raw foods and prepare four easy recipes taught by Grace Avila.

Five Secrets to Permanent Weight Loss

Tuesday, January 23, 6:30-8:00 p.m. \$10

Do you suffer from fluctuating weight, being overweight or thyroid problems? Join Jenny C. Lee, L. Ac. who will talk about how to lose weight and increase your energy level.

Basic Japanese

Wednesday, January 24, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (hands-on) \$34

Join Mat Schuster of the Salud! Team to learn the basics of Japanese cuisine. Items on the Menu:

- Japanese Noodle Soup Bar: We'll create our own soup bar full of noodles & fresh Japanese ingredients!
- Agedashi Tofu - Fried Tofu in Light Citrus Sauce
- Roll Your Own Sushi Rolls

Soul Soothing Winter Casseroles

Thursday, January 25, 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$34

Natural foods chef, Laura Stec, will cook easy dishes to warm up the cold January nights. Included: tasting of meat and vegan sausages, Piment d'Espelette, the smoked Spanish paprika, and new baking dishes.

- Deep Dish Winter Greens and Organic Feta Back
- Individual Wild Salmon and Creamy Leek Pot Pies
- Black Pepper Polenta Casserole w/Organic Chicken or Veggie Sausage, Tomatoes and Grilled Broccolini

The Flavors of Spain

Friday, January 26, 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$34

Join Grace as she teaches you how to prepare an easy and tasty menu for your next party. Menu:

- Rice & chicken with olives
- Roasted red pepper & caper salad
- Garlic shrimp
- Spanish cheese plate

Healthy 30 Minute Meals

Monday, January 29, 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$29

Ready to settle back into a healthful post-holiday routine? Our professional chef will show you how to prepare quick, nutritious, and delicious meals, both vegetarian & non-vegetarian. Recipes are simple enough for beginners, unique enough to inspire seasoned pros. Also: healthy shopping tips.

How to Balance Hormones Naturally

Tuesday, January 30, 6:30-8:00 p.m. \$10

Jenny C. Lee, L. Ac. discusses a holistic approach to women's hormone-related health concerns.

Creative Kids Favorites

Wednesday, January 31st, 6:30-8:30 p.m. (hands-on) \$29

What happens when kids get to make their favorite meals with a twist? Fun, laughter, and lots of learning. A great class for kids to meet, make friends, and share the camaraderie of cooking!

LIEBER

► Continued from page 1

versial proposal,” Lieber, a former mayor, told the *Voice*. “But I didn’t expect the national media to be as interested as they are.”

Lieber received calls from Time magazine, appeared on the Today show and CNN, and was written up, with photo, in the *New York Times*.

Some of the coverage portrayed her bill as a government hindrance on parents trying to raise their kids, but Lieber said the law is aimed at child abusers who take advantage of the grey areas in current law and walk away unpunished.

Response from court judges and family lawyers indicate, Lieber said, that “they see a number of cases where small children are injured but criminal defendants are walking.”

Current law forbids physical discipline that is “unjustifiable” — a term too vague, Lieber said. A child has to show bruising or lasting psychological trauma to convict an abuser.

Lieber said phone calls and e-mails have been all over the map in terms of support and opposition. The proposal has reportedly found little backing among Republicans. And she said there has been “some very heated opposition from people who have had conflicts with child protective services.”

“Clearly we’ve touched a nerve

out there,” she said. “It’s obviously a controversial proposal — we’re going to fight very hard for this. We truly believe children’s well-being is at stake.”

The *Voice* received one e-mail from someone in Israel saying that many people still believe, for religious reasons, that children should be physically disciplined. In response, Lieber said, “parents can be more effective in commanding respect than they can in commanding fear.”

Still, others have said that it’s not the place of legislators to tell parents how to raise their children. But Lieber said the same argument was made to stop legislators from creating domestic violence laws.

“It’s been very difficult over time to push that conversation forward,” she said. “Now it is accepted by nearly everyone except the abusers that domestic violence is a societal concern.”

“We’re seeing many of those arguments in terms of the physical punishment of children. We’re not talking about the parent who legitimately restrains a child from running into traffic or pulling a hand away from a hot stove — or even those who use occasional and mild physical punishment. We’re talking about situations where an abuser takes advantage of the lack of clarity in the law.”

The intention of the bill, Lieber said, is to “draw a very bright line in the law that will be clearly understood by everyone.”

“We truly believe children’s well-being is at stake.”

SALLY LIEBER

NEWS BRIEFS

CALTRAIN STOPS TO GET MILLIONS IN UPGRADES

The County Board of Supervisors has allocated \$14.85 million in Measure B funds to renovate two nearby Caltrain train stations, including the California Avenue stop.

A new underpass at the California Avenue station will allow north- and southbound trains to stop simultaneously, replacing the cement path which crosses the tracks. The Palo Alto station, the other Caltrain stop to receive upgrades, will have its underpass renovated and made compliant with the American Disabilities Act. New boarding platforms will be constructed at both stations.

The funds were raised between 1996 and 2006 through a half-cent sales tax. Because of better tax revenue this year, Supervisor Liz Kniss, who represents Palo Alto and Mountain View, pushed forward the two projects.

— Daniel DeBolt

PEET’S EYES NEW SPOT ON SOUTH CASTRO

The city is reviewing an application for a Peet’s Coffee and Tea location in downtown Mountain View, officials from the planning department said last week.

The new coffee shop would take over the site of the former Skateworks at 1032 Castro St. south of El Camino Real. The 2,450-square-foot space would require very few changes to the existing structure, and only minor signage and storefront improvements, said Aarti Shrivastava of the city’s planning department.

Although plans for the coffee shop are in the preliminary stages, Shrivastava said that the proposal will likely be approved soon. Peet’s is looking to open sometime in March or April.

Currently there is one Peet’s location in the city, inside the new Nob Hill Grocery Store on Grant Road.

— Alexa Tondreau

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(Science & Health with Key to the Scriptures by Mary Baker Eddy)

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DERBY

► Continued from page 5

Challenge.” He also intends to invite Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger.

“I don’t think small,” Sparaco said.

When he was 13, Sparaco entered a soap box derby in San Francisco, and competed each year until he was 15, nearly qualifying to go to the nationals in his last year. Building the car and racing it “started a whole new relationship for me and my dad, and it lasted my lifetime,” he said.

As a Palo Alto police officer, Sparaco organized a soap box derby on California Street in Palo Alto in the early 1970’s, partly as a way to improve community and police relations.

Sparaco saw an opportunity to bring back the derby through Mountain View’s newly formed Police Activity League.

Cars can be pricey

The no-frills stock class is the cheapest way into the sport. A super stock car is the next level up, with a more aerodynamic body that can be painted smooth. The cost of a good paint job can bump the price for a super stock car to \$1,000 if it’s done by a body shop.

INFORMATION

Sparaco is hoping to get the final stamp of approval for the project from the Mountain View City Council at its meeting this Tuesday, Jan. 30, 6:30 p.m. in the council chambers of City Hall, 500 Castro St., Mountain View.

The race is planned for June 9 and 10 on the 100 block of W. Dana Street. For more on the derby, visit www.svsbd.com, or call Joe Sparaco at (650) 575-5070 or (650) 493-4249, or Chris Harris at (408) 369-4311.

For more on the All American Soap Box Derby, visit www.aasbd.com.

The cost to build a soap box derby car from a kit is at least \$550, Sparaco said. Nearly everything needed to build a car is available in kit form from the All American Soap Box Derby (AASBD).

Parents wishing to re-live their childhood are encouraged to participate — it’s an opportunity to bond with sons and daughters, Sparaco said. But according to AASBD rules, “The adult must not build the car for the child, but share his experience by being there and giving help only if and when needed.”

Several kids have had their cars sponsored by local businesses. The Elks lodge currently houses seven cars donated by local sponsors. These days, Sparaco said, he’s “trying to find kids who want to engage in this type of event but would not be able to afford it themselves.”

The need for speed

The cars run on standardized axles and wheels, and must weigh a certain amount with the driver included. The key to high performance is balancing the weight ballasts and driving the hill correctly.

“It’s not just the car, it’s also how it’s driven,” Sparaco said, adding that “girls seem to be better drivers.”

Winners of the Mountain View event will earn the right to represent the city in the AASBD national race in Akron, Ohio, which is in its 70th year. It’s an all-expense-paid-trip where the kids are “treated like kings,” he said.

Proceeds from the event will go towards Elks lodge, fire department and police department charities.

Car construction workshops, or “clinics,” will be held in late February, and kids will be able to work alongside firefighters and police officers to learn how to construct cars. ■



VERONICA WEBER

Mike McCarthy hauls away pieces of a demolished trailer Tuesday.

FARM

► Continued from page 1

and much of the surrounding property were orchards.

Ben Hatfield was looking to buy a tractor for his ranch in Auburn. Schmitz’s father was showing him a bright-red 1940s McCormick Farmall he had restored.

“I was asking \$2,500, but \$1,800 is fine,” he said.

Schmitz’s father, Dave Schmitz Sr., who had been a farmer himself in Minnesota, came to Mountain View when there were only 8,000 people living here. “It was a beautiful place back when it was orchards,” he said, adding he’d seen the city go from small town to what another visitor called “wall-to-wall people.”

“Everybody knew it was coming,” the elder Schmitz said. “What can you do? Land values are so much now.”

Burnell, the former neighbor, said he remembered when the original orchard stretched to Sleeper Avenue, which is where the original farmhouse stood before it was torn down.

“It’s the end of an era,” said Council member Jac Siegel, who was visiting the farm on Tuesday. “It’s a heritage loss. It will be interesting to see what happens to the property.”

When the farm’s former owner Paul Mardesich died in 2004, rumors spread rapidly throughout the neighborhood that his daughters, Betty Moore of Lafayette and Pauline King of Sunnyvale, would sell the site to developers. The sisters’ intentions weren’t clear until SummerHill Homes announced in January 2006 a plan to develop the site with 55 homes.

The city is expected to hold public meetings this year to re-zone the site and approve a precise plan that may or may not include a small farm. So far no city hearing dates have been set.

Meanwhile, members of the

Mountain View farmlands group will be pushing forward with their plan to save a portion of the farm, which they say would be just as lucrative as developing the entire site. The group plans to meet with SummerHill Homes on Thursday, and will post updates on their effort at www.mvfarmland.org.

“When one door closes, many more open up,” Schmitz said. “We’ll see what happens.” ■

Windmill finds a home

The farm on Grant Road may soon be gone, but at least its iconic windmill will likely find a new home.

Preservationists plan to transport the windmill to the Rengstorff House — which is fitting because it originally stood not far from it, according to “windmill chairman” Charles Grant, who gives tours at the historic house.


Grant was at the farm Tuesday with other representatives of the Rengstorff House to figure out how the windmill would be moved to its new home. He said when farmer Dave Schmitz originally bought the windmill in 1988, it was sitting on a piece of land right across the street from where the Rengstorff House originally stood, at what is now Shoreline Boulevard south of Charleston Road.

The house was later relocated to Shoreline Park, which is where the windmill would go.

Grant said they already have the house and the tank — the windmill was the missing piece.

“We’ve connected all the dots; we’re quite enthusiastic about this,” he said. ■

— Daniel DeBolt

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The Internet savers

WEB HISTORY CENTER DIGS FOR BACKUPS OF THE DOT-COM STORY

By Zunaira Durrani

Bay Area startups take note: If you are about to shred company documents or delete version 1.0 of your software, the Web History Center might have a use for them.

"If you have stuff in the garage that helped a company start out, don't throw it," urges Marc Weber, co-founder of the center, which is located at the Computer History Museum on Shoreline Boulevard.

The center opened its second office in Mountain View last November after receiving a \$100,000 donation from CommerceNet. The first Web History office also opened last year at the Rose-Hulman Institute in Terre Haute, Ind. The organization also has representatives in Europe who are on the lookout for items that document the early days of the Web.

Weber and his colleagues, many of whom are Web pioneers, are trying to save the face of the early Internet. The end result, they say, will be a wiki-like multimedia library that will assemble the story of the Internet.

The challenge the center faces is that dot-commers have been too busy making history to make backups of it. To address the gap between known facts and the unknown human story, Weber is collecting interviews of founders, their secretaries, lawyers and acquaintances. Combining this oral history with digital proof, the center is aiming for a virtual gateway to link Web sites and databases.

The center is partnering with universities and pioneers to "save the Web's collective memory for everybody from children to filmmakers," Weber said. Archive.org,

a site that keeps fragments of the old Internet, is already a partner. Another partner is the University of Maryland, which is saving business plans of failed dot-coms.

Still, Weber says, Bay Area dot-commers could provide insight into a past currently locked away from human memory — on a laptop or CD somewhere that needs to be dug up in order for us to know more fully how the Internet revolution unfolded.

Weber invites people who were involved with the Internet's early years to write him at marc@web-history.org. Donations of images, software, documents, CDs and other items that could add to the museum's collection of computer artifacts are tax-deductible. For more information, visit the Web History Center's Web site at www.webhistory.org. ■

E-mail Zunaira Durrani at zdurrani@mv-voice.com

Computer History Museum on Collectica

Artifacts from Mountain View's Computer History Museum can now be viewed on Collectica.com, an online collector's gallery and community.

The Web site brings together collectors of art, antiques, comics, film memorabilia, music records, automobiles, vintage clothing and even Lego creations.

— Zunaira Durrani

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A vehicle should track straight on a flat, straight road with the steering wheel centered. If the car pulls to one side, investigate the simplest possible cause first—incorrect tire pressure. If that checks out, look for uneven tread wear. If the wear is uniform, interchange the left front wheel-and-tire assembly with the one on the right. If the drifting problem disappears or reappears on the opposite side, a tire is the culprit. Otherwise, pulling to one side may be due to incorrect steering caster, which is an alignment angle that can be adjusted with a wheel alignment. The side with the wheel with the most negative caster angle is the side to which the vehicle will pull.

At Larry's AutoWorks, our technicians can make sure that your steering is properly aligned. Alignment is important to make sure your vehicle handles in a safe manner. We are located just off 101 Freeway on Leghorn between San Antonio and Rengstorff in Mountain View. Take the Rengstorff exit south, then right on Leghorn. We guarantee our repairs; you can trust your vehicle in our very capable hands.

HINT: It is a good idea to get a four-wheel alignment once a year, particularly if your vehicle has hit deep ruts, curbs, etc.

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EDITOR'S DESK

► Continued from page 5

of trees to the downtown," Bryant said.

Head over, say hello, dig a hole, plant a tree ... from there, volunteers will send you to the afterparty on Dana Street.

To learn more about the group, call (650) 450-0511 or write info@mountainviewtrees.org.

BOB AND MELINA Cunningham, owners of Home Instead Senior Care in Mountain View, wrote in to thank all the companies, groups and individuals who helped with the "Be a Santa to a Senior" program. They thanked a laundry list of Santa's helpers, including Avenidas, the Mountain View Senior Center and CSA.

Due to all the donations and volunteer efforts, they wrote, "Many seniors in need who may have been overlooked have received gifts and companionship this holiday season. We were able to provide over 650 gifts to seniors this season in the Los Altos, Mountain View and Palo Alto areas."

To learn more about Home Instead, call (650) 691-9671 or go to www.homeinstead.com.

ALSO: Head over to La Rioja on Castro Street this Wednesday, Jan. 31 and "free" the mayor and others as part of a fundraiser for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Call (408) 423-9345 to find out more. ▣

Don Frances can be reached at dfrances@mv-voice.com.

HATE CRIME

► Continued from page 5

Mountain View resident, was not seriously injured.

Both defendants faced a maximum sentence of eight years in prison, but Krueger faced an additional year for holding the knife. He was represented by a private attorney, Michael Cardoza, while Rhodes was represented by public defender Gary Goodman.

The case received widespread attention in August, and Krueger and Rhodes each were held on \$1 million bail.

If he accepts the deal in March, Krueger will not be able to possess firearms for life and will have to pay restitution of up to \$10,000. Once paroled, he would receive an additional year in prison for every parole violation. ▣

E-mail Daniel DeBolt at ddebolt@mv-voice.com

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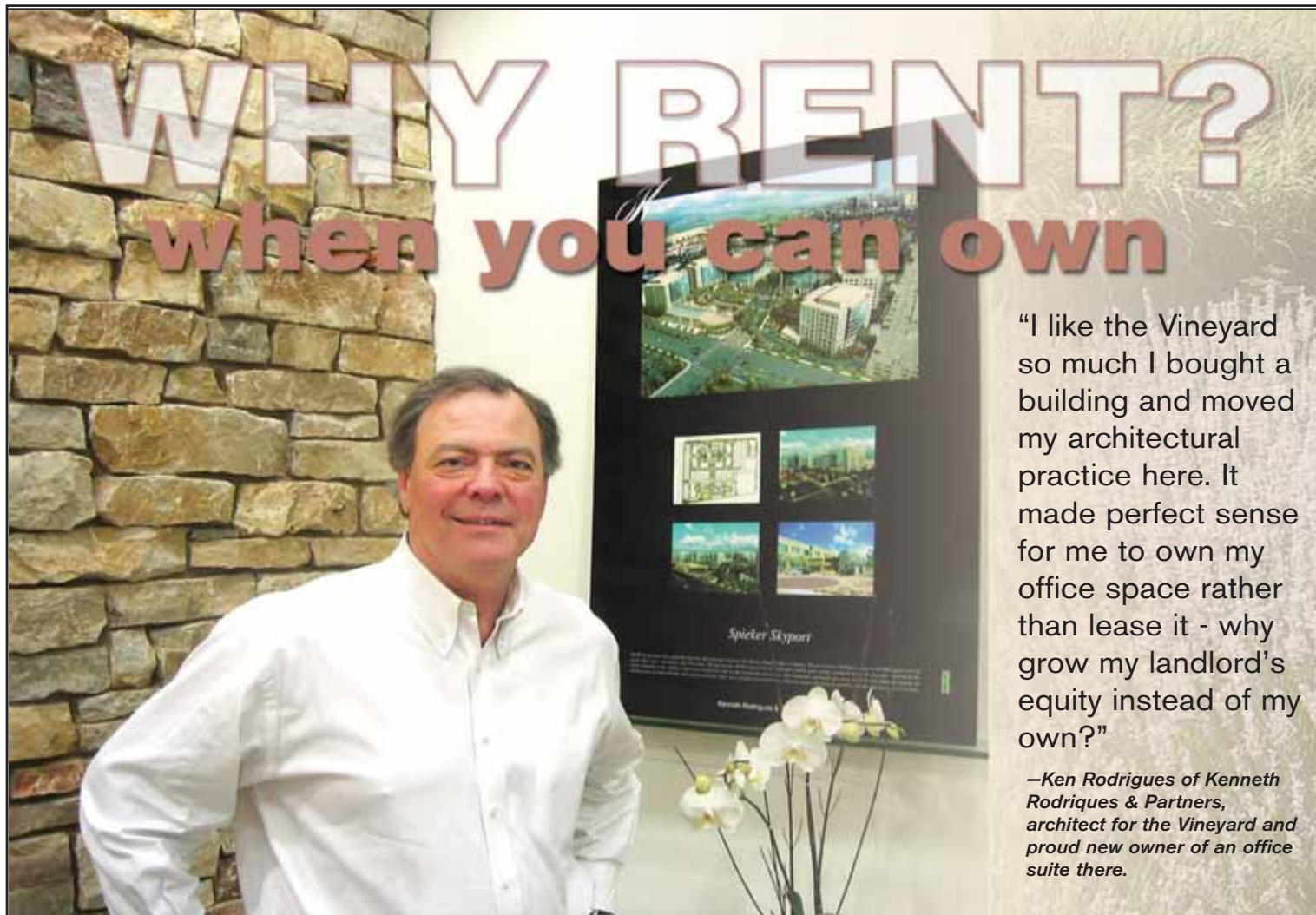
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Viewpoint

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- YOUR LETTERS
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■ EDITORIAL THE OPINION OF THE VOICE

Furor over Lieber's spanking bill

MOUNTAIN VIEW LEGISLATOR'S IDEA TAPS GOLD MINE OF NATIONAL PUBLICITY — AND IRE

Many legislators toil for years in Sacramento and never escape anonymity in the big world outside their hometown.

Assembly member Sally Lieber, a Mountain View Democrat, doesn't have that problem. She made the big time last week by just talking about introducing a bill that would fine parents who spank kids under 3 years old.

On its face (or bottom?), the proposed spanking bill is not a bad idea. After all, who would come out in favor of smacking a 2- or 3-year-old? What's wrong with making it a crime to hit your toddler?

Well, Ms. Lieber, who has no children, soon found out. A recent newspaper poll found readers adamantly opposed any such bill by more than 10-1. And the conservative talk show circuit should send Lieber a thank you card for providing them with one of their hottest topics of the year, which they predictably labeled as yet another hare-brained California idea.

The problem for Lieber here is the same as in other government efforts to regulate matters that should be left to individuals — in this case, to parents who don't want to be told how to raise their kids. Most adults already know that spanking a very young child is a no-no, and could get them in trouble if authorities found out. And, as Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger asked, "How do you enforce it?"

Back to Ms. Lieber. Over her short career, she has risen in the ranks to become the second-ranking member of the Assembly, second only to Speaker Fabian Nunez. She is not a lightweight, but a respected legislator who has never been shy about taking an unpopular position if she thinks it is right.

But in this case, she might have stretched her political credentials a bit too far. When it comes to the very personal matter of disciplining a child, even a very young child, most parents are not going to stand for the government poking its nose in their business.

We expect Sally Lieber will follow through and introduce a bill this session to fine parents who spank their young children. But we doubt it will pass, because most legislators know that childhood discipline should be left to parents, and only parents. If there is a real problem, there are plenty of other laws that can be brought to bear.

The conservative talk show circuit should send Lieber a thank you card for providing them with one of their hottest topics of the year.

■ LETTERS VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

WHO REPRESENTS US IN WASHINGTON? NOT BUSH

Editor:

How do you get your representative to voice your opinion in government? Can someone please explain whom President Bush is representing in the White House? Is it the "people" who voted him there? Is it the "special interest" groups? Is it his own agenda? Who hears my voice on issues or the voices of others?

I find myself listening and watching the news now and wondering why his plans for escalation and the surge of troops in Iraq are not what most of our country find necessary or warranted. Does the voice of the people and public opinion not make it to Washington or to the President's house?

I have e-mailed my senator, my representatives and whomever else I can find. I have signed petitions and even demonstrated in my town against this escalation. I see and hear my views echoed by others and wonder: Who really represents me?

I feel that elected officials are so far removed from what their constituents are thinking that they (the constituents) are not being heard or represented. Many feel the "system" fails us all. Some people do not vote just for this reason.

Are they right? I hope not. I

hope that this is seen as a lesson that we need to fix this system. More people need to flex their voting muscle and work on revamping the way we are represented in this democracy.

Jolene Harada
Sevely Drive

TIME TO TAKE ACTION ON GLOBAL WARMING

Editor:

This is the number of U.S. mayors (representing 55 million Americans) who have signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement pledging to meet or beat Kyoto goals in their communities: 358.

If my neighbors haven't viewed "An Inconvenient Truth," then they should immediately. And then write the Mountain View City Council, telling them to sign on to the U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement. Demand that they take action to bring our community into step with the efforts needed to alter our current course toward disaster.

As Robertson Davies said, "The eye sees only what the mind is prepared to comprehend." Let's open our eyes and our minds. Take action now, while we still have a chance. Your grandchildren will thank you.

Kate McDermott
El Camino Real



■ STAFF OPINION

He said, she said on squirrel debate

THE VOICE HOLDS AN IN-HOUSE DISCUSSION ON HOW TO MANAGE CUESTA PARK PROBLEM

Editor's Note: While discussing the problem of squirrel attacks at Cuesta Park, Voice reporters Daniel DeBolt and Alexa Tondreau found they had differing views on the issue. So they held a debate aimed at hashing out their differences. Below is the result of that debate — and while it doesn't reach a conclusive answer, we believe it sheds light on the controversy.

DANIEL: This might anger some people, but for the sake of debate it needs to be pointed out that squirrels are rodents, and while they might be a lot cuter, they are little different than the rats and mice 99 percent of us would trap and kill on the spot if found in homes or businesses.

ALEXA: I think the big difference is that people kill rats or mice because these rodents have invaded their homes, they live in the attic and walls, and generally create an unsavory and possibly even unsanitary living environment. A park, on the other hand, is a natural habitat that acts as a home and a safe-haven to wildlife. While it would be unnatural to have mice and rats living in a home or business, it's perfectly natural to have squirrels living in a park.

In a sense, humans invade the squirrels' territory when they visit. And isn't the point of a park to harbor and protect nature and wildlife? Isn't that why we created parks in the first place and value them so much?

DANIEL: I would have a little more sympathy for the humans-invading-the-squirrels'-space argument if these squirrels had not invaded the area themselves, pushing out the gentler native grey squirrels far into the Santa Cruz Mountains. The city's wildlife biologist has called these squirrels a pest species.

I know it was humans' fault that they were introduced here and it was humans who trained them to attack for food. But unfortunately, the city says relocating the habituated squirrels out of the park would be illegal, and retraining them would take some time. I'd rather see some squirrels put to sleep than see a small child lose an eye because the city couldn't act fast enough.

ALEXA: The city biologist may call them a pest species, but let's not place too much blame on these critters. They're rodents, as you pointed out, and accordingly they obey only the laws of nature and survival. I don't think we can punish them for being bigger and stronger than the grey squirrel, and because we had a hand in introducing them to this region, and in feeding them human food, we've only got ourselves to blame for this one.

I don't want a child to lose an eye, of course, but wildlife in Cuesta Park doesn't come with

a safety guarantee. It isn't a zoo; the animals aren't kept in cages. There is now a perceived risk for young children, and parents should act accordingly.

I grew up in an area where there were sporadic sightings of mountain lions, and I can recall two different attacks on residents in the hills around our home (one resulted in death). In response to this, there was no effort to trap and kill every known mountain lion — instead, education was called for. For example, people were told not to go out jogging alone after dark, because there was a greater risk for attacks.

I would suggest educating patrons of the park on the risks of aggressive squirrels, including suggestions for keeping them at bay.

I'd also impose a strict prohibition of food on park grounds. The "search and destroy" method seems too extreme.

DANIEL: It's hardly extreme when a child's safety is at stake. And residents have been educated as well as they can be through signs and media coverage of the problem.

I hope people can overlook how cute the squirrels are if other efforts to fix the problem fail — and I have a hunch the efforts will fail.

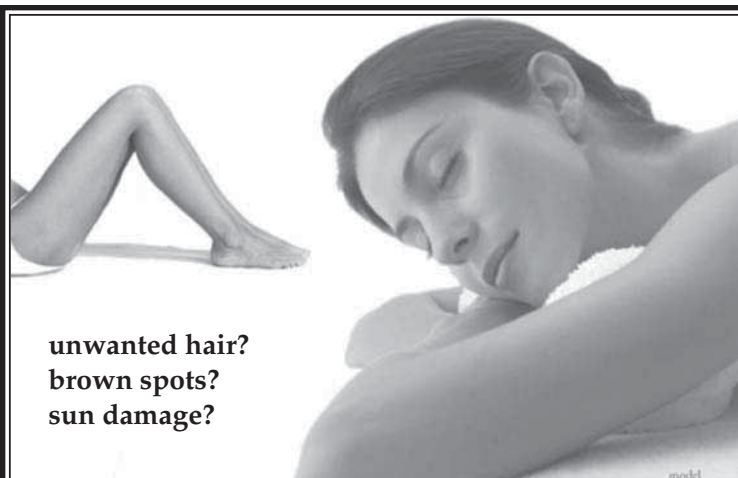
For at least four months park rangers have been out there deterring the squirrels, but there has been no noticeable change in their behavior. The squirrels have turned out to be clever creatures, chewing through strollers to get food, unnoticed, even while rangers are around.

Paying an outside group to do "radical behavior modification" would be a waste of time and money when park rangers could easily be trained to do the same. Groups like the Little Blue Society have obviously not made a strong enough case as to why they should take taxpayer dollars to re-train the squirrels.

ALEXA: From an ethical point of view, I think that saving an entire population of squirrels from eradication is worth the time and the money if we decide as a community to make it so. We should spend a few extra dollars to save the little critters and thereby show the world that the preservation of other species is important to the citizens of Mountain View.

Furthermore, four months isn't a very long time to have spent trying to fix the squirrels' behavior. Let's give it a year or two — if the problem persists, then we can go back to the drawing board.

Killing the current generation does not mean they will go away completely, and the next generation of squirrels could repeat the exact same patterns of aggression. Education is the key to not provoking the squirrels. Anyone who brings food into Cuesta Park does so at their own risk.



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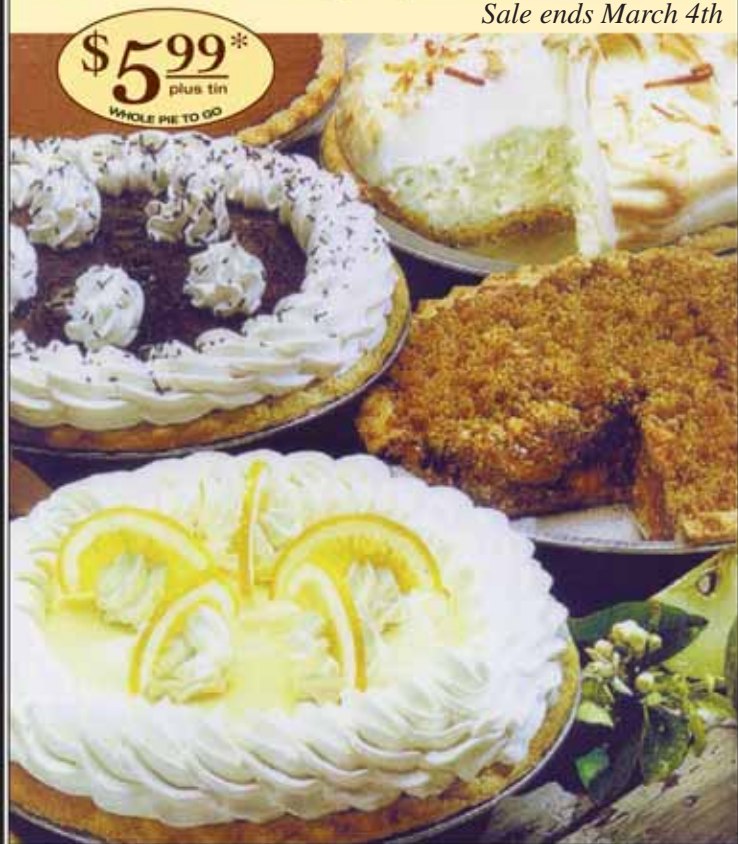
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MOUNTAIN VIEW VOICE

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■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

In the Mexican groove

LOS PORTALES HAS ALL THE INGREDIENTS,
BUT NEEDS MORE ZIP

By Elaine M. Rowland

Readers of restaurant reviews are familiar with critics who delight in shredding a restaurant — picking it to death with trivialities when there's not much to complain about, or pulling out all the stops (and the thesaurus) when a place really does have its problems.

But criticizing is easy; the hardest review to write is the one about a restaurant that's just very average.

Obviously, each restaurant has its adherents, and for different reasons: greasy spoon near a movie theater? The food's probably cheap and fast and there's plenty to eat, so you may find

college students and others without the disposable income filling up there. As long as readers know what they're in for, I wouldn't dismiss an odd little place simply for not appealing to everyone (myself, included, sometimes). To tweak an old saying, there's someone out there for every restaurant.

True to form, Los Portales at Moffett Boulevard and Cypress Point Drive had plenty of patrons — regulars even — when I visited. There, beneath the maroon arches and alongside the yellow walls were what looked like the meeting of a book club, businessmen, a couple of teenag-

► See **LOS PORTALES**, page 18



A good way to start off a meal at Los Portales Mexican restaurant in Mountain View is with chips and salsa and a top-shelf margarita.

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Dinner and a movie?
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Weekend Section.

LOS PORTALES

► Continued from page 17

ers at lunch, and military folk from the nearby airfield. The old-fashioned place is decked in colorful Mexican blankets and hats, and some framed prints of Spain, as well. It has the comfortably worn (but clean) look of a neighborhood joint.

We were seated quickly, and all food and drinks came without undue waiting. Service was generally good without being that corporate "Hi-my-name-is" perkiness. As in many Mexican restaurants, this one starts the meal with chips and salsa — big, hearty, crunchy chips with a mildly spicy salsa loaded with chopped cilantro and green onions. At lunch it was hearty; at dinner, a little watery.

The menu will look quite familiar to frequenters of Mexican restaurants. Diners hunting

for adventurous dishes or some nuevo south-of-the-border food should look elsewhere; otherwise, you'll find their favorites here, in classic burrito-taco-tamale-tostada-enchilada-chile relleno combos, or a la carte.

Los Portales serves breakfast six days a week, and is also open for lunch and dinner. Although the lunch specials are lower-priced than the regular entrees, I was surprised that the large combo entrees were the sort of food I've often found for less money in other restaurants (even those in Palo Alto).

I had the shredded beef enchilada, tamale, and chile relleno combo with refried beans and rice (\$11.75). It was a good-sized serving of food, but didn't have much pizzazz. The ingredients didn't pack much flavor, and the dish wasn't heavily seasoned. I could tell the tamale was made

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One of Los Portales' most famous dishes is Sara's Enchiladas, which features three enchiladas with green, red, and mole sauces and is served with rice, beans, and salad.

VERONICA WEBER

of corn meal; otherwise, it didn't taste particularly different from the enchilada. And putting the same sleepy red sauce over all three items didn't help differentiate them.

Except for the chile relleno. It was soft, but with good pepper flavor. The large combo came with rice (oddly seasoned), slightly runny refried beans, a vinaigrette cole slaw, and a pair of thick tortillas. A dish for very hungry people.

One item on the menu that I don't see very often is sopapillas (\$4.75). This deep-fried food was originally a puffy pastry pillow, but frequently appears as crispy fried strips like tortilla chips drizzled in honey and cinnamon, and sometimes served with ice cream. That's what these were, and not very special. Alternatively, there's the customary flan for desert.

There are a number of seafood dishes here, so we tried the crab enchilada (\$10.75), a sizeable pair of enchiladas under a green sauce with cheese, and tasting strongly of crab. It didn't appeal either to the crab-aficionado or the crab-ignoramus at the table. The better bet was the house super burrito (\$9.50), which was absolutely enormous — looking like the lower third of a baseball bat laid out on a platter. It was quietly tasty.

Since several dishes are available in mild or spicy versions, I think in future I'd request everything be made hot. The salsa was probably the spiciest food I ate there.

Los Portales offers a few appe-

tizers, including the fiesta platter (\$8.95), which consists of nachos smothered in cheese and chicken (or your choice of meat), cheese quesadillas, and chimichanguitas — little crispy cigars rolled up and stuffed. These last were especially tasty, and the others were fine, too, with the guacamole, sour cream and pico de gallo that came with the platter.

The only-average margaritas are \$5.50, but Los Portales has good beers — domestic and Mexican — on tap for only \$3.25 a pint. After eating there, I'd recommend Los Portales as a good beer-and-nachos place after work. Or if you're hungry during off hours, since it's open throughout the day.

Or, if you don't like overly spicy food — and I know a few people who'd appreciate that. ▣



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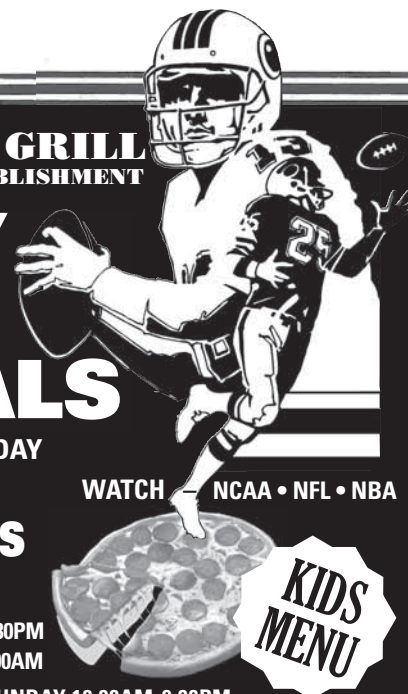
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MOVIE TIMES

ALPHA DOG (R) ★ Century 12: 7:40 & 10:20 p.m.
ARTHUR AND THE INVISIBLES (PG) Century 20: 11:45 a.m.; 2, 4:35 & 9:35 p.m.; Sat.-Tue. also at 7:20 p.m.
BABEL (R) ★★★1/2 Century 16: 12:30, 3:45, 7 & 10:05 p.m. Century 20: 12:25, 4, 7:05 & 10:10 p.m.
BLOOD AND CHOCOLATE (PG-13) Century 16: 11:45 a.m.; 2:15, 4:45, 7:30 & 10:05 p.m. Century 12: 11:55 a.m.; 2:25, 5, 7:30 & 10 p.m.
BLOOD DIAMOND (R) ★★★ Century 16: 1:50 & 7:15 p.m. Century 20: 3:30 & 10:15 p.m.
BORAT (R) ★★★1/2 Century 20: 12:05, 2:20, 4:20, 6:20, 8:20 & 10:20 p.m.
CASINO ROYALE (PG-13) ★★★1/2 Century 16: 12:25, 3:35, 6:55 & 10 p.m. Century 12: 12:20, 3:50, 7:15 & 10:15 p.m.
CATCH AND RELEASE (PG-13) Century 16: 11:05 a.m.; 1:40, 4:20, 7:05 & 9:40 p.m. Century 20: 11:40 a.m.; 12:40, 2:15, 3:15, 4:40, 5:40, 7, 8:05, 9:20 & 10:25 p.m.
CHARLOTTE'S WEB (G) ★★1/2 Century 12: 11:45 a.m.; 2:20 & 4:40 p.m.
CHILDREN OF MEN (R) ★★★1/2 Century 16: 11:15 a.m.; 2, 4:50, 7:40 & 10:30 p.m. Century 20: 12:35, 3:05, 5:35, 8:05 & 10:35 p.m.
THE DEPARTED (R) ★★★1/2 Century 16: 11:30 a.m.; 2:45, 6:50 & 10:10 p.m. Century 20: 12:40, 3:50, 7:05 & 10:10 p.m.
DREAMGIRLS (PG-13) ★★★ Century 16: 1, 4:10, 7:25 & 10:25 p.m. Century 20: 1:10, 4:15, 7:15 & 10:10 p.m.
EPIC MOVIE (PG-13) Century 16: 11:20 a.m.; 1:30, 3:40, 5:50, 8 & 10:15 p.m. Century 12: 11:50 a.m.; 1, 2:15, 3:30, 4:30, 5:50, 7, 8:20, 9:30 & 10:35 p.m.
ERAGON (PG) ★★★ Century 12: Noon, 2:35 & 5:05 p.m.
FREEDOM WRITERS (PG-13) Century 16: 12:05, 3:50, 7:20 & 10:20 p.m. Century 12: 12:40, 4:20, 7:35 & 10:30 p.m.
THE GOOD SHEPHERD (R) ★★ Century 20: 11:55 a.m. & 6:45 p.m.
HAPPILY N'EVER AFTER (PG) Century 12: 12:05, 2:30 & 5:10 p.m.
HAPPY FEET (PG) Century 20: 11:30 a.m.; 2 & 4:40 p.m.
THE HITCHER (R) Century 16: 11:35 a.m.; 5 & 10:30 p.m. Century 12: 12:10, 1:20, 2:40, 3:40, 5:20, 6, 8, 9:10 & 10:05 p.m.
THE HOLIDAY (PG-13) ★★★ Century 12: 7:10 & 10:10 p.m.
THE LAST KING OF SCOTLAND (R) ★★★1/2 Century 16: 12:20, 3:20 & 9:40 p.m.; Sat.-Tue. also at 6:45 p.m. Century 20: 11:50 a.m.; 2:30, 5:10, 7:55 & 10:30 p.m.
LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA (R) ★★★1/2 Century 16: 11:25 a.m.; 2:40, 6:40 & 9:55 p.m.
LITTLE CHILDREN (R) ★★★★ Century 20: 7:10 & 10:15 p.m.
MISS POTTER (PG) (SNEAK PREVIEW) Century 16: Fri. at 7:30 p.m. Century 20: Fri. at 7:30 p.m.
NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM (PG) Century 16: 11 a.m.; 1:45, 4:25, 7:15 & 9:50 p.m. Century 20: 12:30, 3:10, 5:40, 8:10 & 10:35 p.m.
NOTES ON A SCANDAL (R) ★★★1/2 Century 20: Noon, 2:25, 4:50, 7:20 & 9:50 p.m. Aquarius: 2:30, 5, 7:30 & 9:50 p.m.; Sun. also at 12:15 p.m.
THE PAINTED VEIL (PG-13) ★★★ Century 20: 11:45 a.m.; 2:25, 5:05, 7:50 & 10:25 p.m. Aquarius: 1, 3:45, 6:45 & 9:30 p.m.
PAN'S LABYRINTH (R) ★★★1/2 Century 20: 11:35 a.m.; 2:20, 4:55, 7:30 & 10:05 p.m. Palo Alto Square: 1:30, 4:20, 7:20 & 10:10 p.m.
THE PURSUIT OF HAPPYNESS (PG-13) ★★★ Century 16: 11:10 a.m.; 1:55, 4:55, 7:50 & 10:35 p.m. Century 20: 11:30 a.m.; 2:15, 5, 7:45 & 10:20 p.m.
THE QUEEN (NOT RATED) ★★★★ Century 20: 12:10, 2:40, 5:05, 7:25 & 9:45 p.m. Palo Alto Square: 2, 4:30, 7 & 9:30 p.m.; Sat. & Sun. also at 11:30 a.m.
ROCKY BALBOA (PG) ★★★1/2 Century 12: 7:20 & 9:50 p.m.
SMOKIN' ACES (R) Century 16: 12:15, 2:50, 5:25, 8 & 10:35 p.m. Century 20: 11:35 a.m.; 12:45, 1:55, 3:05, 4:25, 5:30, 6:55, 8, 9:25 & 10:30 p.m.
STOMP THE YARD (PG-13) Century 16: 11 a.m.; 1:35, 4:30, 7:10 & 9:45 p.m. Century 12: 12:30, 1:50, 3:20, 4:50, 6:20, 7:50, 9:20 & 10:25 p.m.
VOLVER (R) ★★1/2 Century 20: 11:50 a.m.; 2:30, 5, 7:30 & 10 p.m. Guild: 1:20, 4, 6:45 & 9:25 p.m.

Note: Screenings are for Friday through Tuesday only.

AQUARIUS: 430 Emerson St., Palo Alto (266-9260)
CENTURY CINEMA 16: 1500 N. Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View (960-0970)
CENTURY PARK 12: 557 E. Bayshore Blvd., Redwood City (365-9000)
CENTURY 20 DOWNTOWN: 825 Middlefield Road, Redwood City (369-3456)
CINEARTS AT PALO ALTO SQUARE: 3000 El Camino Real, Palo Alto (493-3456)
GUILD: 949 El Camino Real, Menlo Park (266-9260)
SPANGENBERG THEATRE: 780 Arastradero Road, Palo Alto (354-8263)

★ Skip it
★★ Some redeeming qualities
★★★ A good bet
★★★★ Outstanding

For show times, plot synopses, trailers and more movie info, visit www.mv-voice.com and click on movies.



MOVIE REVIEWS

ALPHA DOG ★

(Century 12) Johnny Truelove (Emile Hirsch) acts as leader to a thuggish group of tattooed young adults, all upper-middle-class kids acting like hardened criminals while sleeping in million-dollar homes. Johnny and his pals seem to live in a make-believe world of gangsters and bad-boy glamour — a world that comes crashing down with the introduction of speed freak Jake Mazursky (Ben Foster). Jake's drug debt to Johnny doesn't sit well with the abusive alpha and Johnny decides to kidnap Jake's 15-year-old brother Zack (Anton Yelchin) in hopes of collecting the owed cash. Johnny leaves Zack in the care of his friend Frankie (Justin Timberlake), and soon Frankie is touting Zack at parties and bonding with the abducted teen. As those around him begin to take a liking to Zack, the resolution to a flawed plan becomes more and more desperate. This gratuitous and unsavory retelling of a tragic 1999 L.A. kidnapping case boasts some decent performances and a compelling climax. But poor casting, misguided direction and a core of despicable characters (yes, even Timberlake) make the film feel like a two-hour prison sentence. *Rated: R for pervasive drug use and language, strong violence. 2 hours, 2 minutes.* — T.H.



CHILDREN OF MEN ★★★ 1/2

(Century 16, Century 20) In the futuristic world of "Men," human beings have seemingly lost the ability to reproduce, many of the planet's finest cities have been decimated and government soldiers rule with an iron fist. The film opens with downtrodden citizens suffering the news that the world's youngest person, an 18-year-old young man dubbed Baby Diego, has died. Theo Faron (Clive Owen) seems relatively unfazed — it's obvious Theo had given up hope for the future of mankind a long time ago. Now Theo spends his hours sleepwalking through a dreary job and occasionally visiting his pot-smoking friend Jasper (Michael Caine). Theo's humdrum existence takes a sharp turn when his former lover Julian (Julianne Moore) returns to his life asking for help. Julian leads a rag-tag group of rebels with a secret — one of their number is a young pregnant woman (Claire-Hope Ashitey as Kee). It will be the first child born in 18 years, and Julian's crew needs Theo to escort Kee to the coast and into the hands of the clandestine "Human Project." The graphic violence and permeating air of hopelessness in "Men" make for a less-than-uplifting experience. But this fascinating portrait of the future is one of the best-directed films of the year. *Rated: R for strong violence, language, some drug use and brief nudity. 1 hour, 49 minutes.* — T.H.

LETTERS FROM IWO JIMA

★★★★1/2

(Century 16) The second of Clint Eastwood's World War II sagas is clearly superior to his flat companion piece, "Flags of Our Fathers." Unspooling from the perspective of the Japanese, the battle scenes against U.S. troops for control of the volcanic island are searing. The present-day discovery of a cache of letters triggers the flashback to 1944. Iris Yamashita's first script, developed from a story co-authored with "Crash" scribe Paul Haggis, quickly establishes Iwo Jima as part of Japan's sacred homeland and a key strategic position in the Pacific Theater. Embodying the honor and warrior code of the Imperial forces, General Kuribayashi (Ken Watanabe of "The Last Samurai") plans a do-or-die defense. He and his troops write letters to loved ones at home, which serve as first-person accounts of the preparations and doomed attempt to stem the American attack in February of 1945. Eastwood triumphs in making you understand and identify with the Japanese entrenched in a no-win situation, instead of caring more about those raising the flags of our fathers. *Rated: R for graphic war violence. In Japanese with English subtitles. 2 hours, 20 minutes.* — S.T.

NOTES ON A SCANDAL

★★★★1/2

(Aquarius, Century 20) At the crux of this twisted melodrama is Judi Dench, a tightly wound spinster schoolteacher named Barbara Covett with a penchant for obsessing

on the weak. In this case new St. George's School hire Sheba Hart (Cate Blanchett), an anxious bohemian art teacher dubbed "the wispy novice." Barb keeps her stalker sensibilities under wraps while biding her time in becoming indispensable to Sheba, who needs all the help she can get in maintaining discipline with her unruly charges. Soon the pair is doing regular lunches and Barb is worming her way into Chez Hart with gleeful but cautious abandon. The world comes crashing down when Barb discovers Sheba is having an affair with 15-year-old St. George student Steven Connolly (Andrew Simpson). Barb feels betrayed, her magnificent complicity with Sheba violated by a pubescent paramour. Dench gives an Oscar-worthy performance as an emotionally devious SWF who dreads ending her days alone and unspools her warped conspiracies with vigilant vengeance. An overwrought score matches the flamboyantly scandalous mood, rendering the whole a wanton cinematic treat. *Rated: R for language, sexuality and adult themes. 1 hour, 32 minutes.* — J.A.

THE PAINTED VEIL ★★★

(Aquarius, Century 20) The classic W. Somerset Maugham novel gets the pretty treatment in this escalating drama of an embittered English couple navigating the perils of China circa 1925. Dr. Walter Fane (Edward Norton) is a staid bacteriologist managing a government lab in Shanghai when he falls for a beautiful but restless socialite named Kitty (Naomi Watts). Petulant, spoiled and hard to please, Kitty nonetheless accepts Walter's proposal

of marriage out of desperation to escape her stifling family. Soon enough the jaded newlywed is shacking up with another man (Liev Schreiber), at which point a bitter cuckolded Walter bullies his wife into accompanying him to a small village on a tributary of the Yangtze where he has volunteered to aid the cholera epidemic. Forced by extreme circumstances to deal with the matters at hand, the estranged couple launches on a journey of self-discovery that ultimately ends in tragedy. "Veil" isn't thrilling filmmaking but rather sturdy adult fare that works lush period locations and the subtle gifts of its talented actors to its advantage. *Rated: PG-13 for language and mature subject matter. 2 hours, 16 minutes.* — J.A.

PAN'S LABYRINTH ★★★★1/2

(CineArts, Century 20) Guillermo del Toro crafts a captivating yet deadly gothic fairy tale rich with the sorrow of the postwar repression of Francisco Franco's Spain. Fantasy meets a brutal reality when young Ofelia (Ivana Baquero) arrives with her pregnant mother (Ariadna Gil as Carmen) at a rural military outpost commanded by her forbidding stepfather, Capitan Vidal (Sergi Lopez). Upon arrival Ofelia is of

two minds: frightened and powerless in the face of her stepfather's icy demeanor yet enchanted by tiny dragonfly fairies that only she can see. The abandoned mill-cum-military base is a sinister place, crawling with armed soldiers on the lookout for resistance fighters hiding in nearby hills. Only sympathetic housekeeper Mercedes (Maribel Verdu) appears to sense Ofelia's anxiety, quietly escorting her to a neglected garden labyrinth where she can be on her own. As Carmen takes to her bed and turns her focus to her unborn son, Ofelia immerses herself in a world of whimsy presided over by a fearsome faun (Doug Jones) and his freakish henchman

who assign Ofelia a trio of tasks in order for her to claim immortality. Monsters of the mind come to terms with gruesome real-life horrors, creating a brilliant juxtaposition of truth and imagination guaranteed to lay waste to every emotion. *Rated: Unrated but should be R for very intense violence and mature themes. In Spanish with English subtitles. 1 hour, 52 minutes.* — J.A.

■ **MOVIE CRITICS**

S.T.-Susan Tavernetti,
J.A.-Jeanne Aufmuth, J.S.-Jim Shelby,
T.H.-Tyler Hanley

■ **BOLLYWOOD CALLING**

Read our first-ever review of a Bollywood movie. See **Arts & Events**, page 26.

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■ HIGHLIGHT

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Presented by The Community School of Music and Arts. Ensemble, led by violinist Alex Eisenberg, playing music by Bartok, Corelli, Elgar, Mozart and Vivaldi, solos. Media sponsor Classical 102.1 KDFC. Jan. 28, 2 p.m. preschool and young children; 4 p.m. school age children and adults. Free. Community School of Music and Arts, 230 San Antonio Circle, Mountain View. www.arts4all.org

SPECIAL EVENTS

FITNESS CONFERENCE Includes a variety of approaches to fitness, fitness and nutrition seminars by professional experts, inspirational keynote speakers Dr. Walter Bortz and Molly and Jeremy Hale. Jan. 27, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. \$45. Mountain View Senior Center, 266 Escuela Ave., Mountain View.

STANFORD UNIVERSITY CAMPUS PLANNING The Stanford Historical Society will sponsor a talk by University Architect David P. Lenox on the future development of the Stanford campus. Jan. 30, 5-6:30 p.m. Free. Oak East Room, Tresidder Union, 459 Lagunita Dr., Stanford. Call 725-3332. <http://histsoc.stanford.edu/programs.shtml>

ART GALLERIES

INGE INFANTE "FIELDS, NEW COLLAGES" Through Feb. 25. Gallery hours: Thu.-Sun., 1-5 p.m. Free. 1870 Art Center, 1870 Ralston Ave., Belmont. Call 261-1086. www.1870artcenter.org

"IMAGES OF SPAIN" Vibrant watercolors by artist, Suej McCall on display through Jan. 27. Paintings inspired by the artist's recent travels to Spain. Hours: Tue.-Sat., 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Gallery 9 Los Altos, 143 Main St., Los Altos. www.gallery9losaltos.com

"JUNE IN JANUARY" By Lillian Balliet. Through Feb. 3, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. Viewpoints Gallery, 315 State St., Los Altos.

www.viewpointsgallery.com

"SMALL WORKS" By member artists in all media. Through Feb. 3. Gallery House, 320 California Ave., Palo Alto. www.galleryhouse2.com

ART21 Artist Kate Curry shows her latest work of sky scenes on display through Jan. 30. Art21 Gallery, 539 Alma St., Palo Alto. Call 566-1381. www.art21.us/539_Alma/curry_panel.htm

STEPHEN ACHIMORE: COLOR FIELD PAINTINGS Features abstract paintings of New York-based artist. Tue.-Sat., 11 a.m.-6 p.m. through Jan. 27. Free. Stellar Gallery, 539 Bryant St., Palo Alto.

AUDITIONS

"PRINCESS" AUDITIONS Palo Alto Children's Theatre presents auditions for the musical "A Little Princess." The show follows Sara, who is sent to a boarding school, where her imagination helps her endure the harsh treatment she receives. Auditions are open to ages 8 through high school. Jan. 30-31, 3:45-5:30 p.m. Palo Alto Children's Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Call 46 3-4930.

BENEFITS

ADVOCATES FOR CHILDREN BLIND WINE TASTING FUNDRAISER Guess wines, learn about them and win prizes. Tickets available online and include the tasting and a selection of nibbles. \$55. Feb. 12, 7-9:30 p.m. Savvy Cellar Wines, 2048 Broadway St., Redwood City. Call 212-4423. www.advocatesfc.org

VALENTINE'S FUNDRAISER FOR THE RED CROSS Carina's Creations Jewelry trunk show benefiting the Palo Alto area chapter of the Red Cross. Feb. 2-3, 10:30 a.m.-9 p.m. Coupa Cosas, 536 Ramona St., Palo Alto. Call 327-8434. www.carinascreationsjewelry.com and www.paarc.org

CLASSES/WORKSHOPS

"TRUFFLES, TRUFFLES AND MORE" Learn recipes for truffles. Feb. 2, 6:30-8:30 p.m. \$36. Whole Foods Market, 4800 El Camino Real, Los Altos. Call 559-0300. www.wholefoodsmarket.com

BEGINNING/INTERMEDIATE IMPROVISATIONAL THEATRE WORKSHOP Jan. 30-31, 7-10 p.m. Dragon Productions workshop for beginning to intermediate improvisers on improv fundamentals. Taught by Terry Sandke. \$50. Dragon Theatre, 535 Alma St., Palo Alto. Call 493-2006. www.dragonproductions.net/classes.htm

BEYOND SIBLING RIVALRY: KEEPING THE PEAC Parenting workshop covering ages 3-8 years old. Pamela Worth will address conflict, fairness, and sharing. Tue., Jan. 30, 7-9 p.m. \$30. Pre-registration is required. Parents Place, 200 Channing Ave., Palo Alto. Call 688-3040. www.parentspaceonline.org

CALLIGRAPHY AND CARD-MAKING WORKSHOP Learn letterforms and make decorated cards. Ages teen to adult. Feb. 4, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. \$85. Community School of Music and Arts at Finn Center, 230 San Antonio Circle, Mountain View. Call 917-6800. www.arts4all.org

CASH FOR COLLEGE Canada College will host a free workshop Sat., Jan. 27, 9 a.m.-

noon. Learn about financial aid opportunities and how to fill out the required paperwork. Help is available in English and Spanish. Canada College, Student Center, 4200 Farm Hill Blvd., Redwood City. Call 306-3307. www.canadacollege.edu

COMPUTER CLASSES "PCs for Beginners": Feb. 7-28, 9-10 a.m.; "Quicken for Beginners": Feb. 7-28, 10:30-11:30 a.m.; "Scanning Photos": Feb. 1-22, 10-11:30 a.m.; "MS Word": Feb. 1-22, 10:30-11:30 a.m.; "Photo-Shop Elements": Feb. 1-22, 1:30-3 p.m. \$20 members/\$25 non-members. Little House, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. Call 326-2025. www.peninsulavalunteers.org

JEWELRY MAKING AND DESIGNING WORKSHOP Learn stringing, knotting, basic wire techniques. Bring pictures and design ideas. Beginners welcome; ages 9 to adult. Jan. 28, 10 a.m.-noon \$40. Community School of Music and Arts at Finn Center, 230 San Antonio Circle, Mountain View. Call 917-6800. www.arts4all.org

MUSHROOM WALKS Filoli Nature Docents, will lead you on a discovery excursion along the hills at Filoli. Children under 12 not allowed. Jan. 27, 10 a.m.-noon \$10 members/\$15 non-members. Filoli, 86 Canada Road, Woodside. www.filoli.org

PRUNING WORKSHOP: FRUIT TREES Learn proper pruning techniques in Filoli's heirloom orchard with emphasis on apples and pears. Workshop begin with a demonstration followed by guided hands-on practice. Jan. 27, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. \$25 members/\$35 non-members. Filoli, 86 Canada Road, Woodside. Call 364-8300. www.filoli.org

COMMUNITY EVENTS

75TH ANNIVERSARY OPEN HOUSE Hosted by The Palo Alto Children's Theatre. Theatre tours and refreshments. Jan. 28, 3-5 p.m. Free. Palo Alto Children's Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Call 463-4930.

AFRICA: SIGNS OF HOPE A series of Sundays focusing on Peace, Health, Education and Economic Development in Africa. Incorporating African music, food, guest speakers, discussion forums, and resource information into worship services/programs. Sundays, through Feb. 4, 5-7 p.m. Free. Los Altos United Methodist Church, 655 Magdalena Ave., Los Altos. Call 868-5462.

COMPUTER RECYCLING Jan. 27, 1-5 p.m. Bring old computer monitors, printers, laptops, and hard drives. Fee for recycling hard drives. Elephant Pharmacy, 4470 El Camino Real, Los Altos. Call 472-6800. www.elephantpharmacy.com

DISCOVERING SHERLOCK HOLMES Stanford University will release 12 weekly facsimiles of Sherlock Holmes stories, as first seen in The Strand Magazine. Mailings will begin Jan. 26, ending April 13. \$20 for newsprint copies; free pdf access. Discovering Sherlock Holmes, 482 Galvez St., Stanford. Call 724-9588. <http://sherlockholmes.stanford.edu>

TREASURES BAZAAR V Gift-quality items. Benefit for Social Causes. Jan. 28, 12:30-3:30 p.m. Free. Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto, 505 E. Charleston Road, Palo Alto. Call 494-0541. www.uucpa.org

CONCERTS

"EAST-WEST CONNECTION II" Presented by Topaz Chamber Ensemble. Performances by Mimi Dye, violinist, and Isabelle Courret, harpist, followed by the Firebird Youth Chinese Orchestra and di-zi player Ding Jian. Sat., Jan. 27, 7:30-9:30 p.m. \$25 advance/\$30 at the door. Benefits Outreach of All Saints. All Saints' Church, 555 Waverley, Palo Alto. Call 380-0961. www.topazmusic.org

"POPCORN" WITH MARK APPLEBAUM Wed., Jan. 31, 8 p.m. A video "concert" short musical films curated by Mark Applebaum. Free. Campbell Recital Hall, 541 Lasuen Mall, Stanford. Call 725-1932. <http://music.stanford.edu>

JOHN DORNENBURG, VIOLA DA GAMBA Fri., Jan. 26, 8 p.m. Dornenburg plays Telemann's Sonata Senza Cembalo and Marin Marais' Pieces de viole, with Yuko Tanaka on harpsichord. \$10/\$5. Memorial Church Chapel, 450 Serra Mall, Stanford. Call 723-2720. <http://music.stanford.edu>

MASTER SINFONIA CHAMBER MUSIC WINTER CONCERT Maestro David Ramadanoff conducts MSCO's winter concert of standards from the 18th-20th century: Johann Cristian Bach's Sinfonia Op. 6 No. 1 in G major, Igor Stravinsky's Danses Concertantes, and Joseph Haydn's "Military" Symphony No. 100 in G major. Jan. 28, 3-5 p.m. \$18/\$15 senior/\$5 students. Los Altos United Methodist Church, 655 Magdalena, Los Altos. Call (408) 296-6629. info@mastersinfonia.org

MASTER SINFONIA CHAMBER ORCHESTRA CONCERT Maestro David Ramadanoff conducts MSCO's winter concert with Johann Cristian Bach's Sinfonia Op. 6 No. 1 in G major, Igor Stravinsky's Danses Concertantes, and Joseph Haydn's "Military" Symphony No. 100 in G major, with its use of the bass drum, triangle and cymbals. Jan. 27, 7:30-9:30 p.m. \$18/\$15 seniors/\$5 students. St. Bede's Episcopal Church, 2650 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park. Call (408) 296-6629. www.mastersinfonia.org

STANFORD WOODWIND QUINTET Sat., Jan. 27, 8 p.m. with guest artist Matthew Edwards the Suite for Wind Quintet by Oscar Lorenzo Fernandez, Mozart's Quintet in Eb for piano and winds, K. 452, Gordon Jacob's Sextet for piano and winds, Albert Roussel's Divertissement for piano and winds, Op. 6. \$10/\$5. Dinkelspiel Auditorium, 471 Lagunita Dr., Stanford.

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DANCE

BALLROOM DANCING Thursdays, through March 1, 7-9 p.m. \$7. Little House, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. Call 326-2025. www.peninsulavolunteers.org

ENGLISH COUNTRY DANCING Traditional and modern set dances to live music. Beginners welcome; no partner required. \$9. First, third and fifth Wednesdays, through June, 8-10 p.m. Flex-It Studios, 425 W. Evelyn Ave., Mountain View. Call 493-6012. www.bacds.org/series/english/mountain_view/

ENVIRONMENT

ECOSYSTEM TRANSITIONS Docents David Milburn and Judy Boore lead a moderate to strenuously-paced hike with an elevation change close to 2,000 feet over 7 miles. Older children with hiking experience welcome. Bring lunch and be prepared to climb and descend. Rain cancels. Meet at the Higgins-Purissima entrance. Feb. 4, 9 a.m.-2 p.m. Free. Purissima Creek Redwoods Open Space Preserve. www.openspace.org

WINTER WANDERLAND With docents Toni and Rich Gooch. Moderately strenuous, 10-mile loop through Windy Hill's woodlands. Meet at the lower parking lot. Feb. 3, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. Windy Hill Open Space Preserve. www.openspace.org

EXHIBITS

NIGHTBLOOMS: PRINTS BY MARK BROWN

A series of digital art works which explore the space in which Nature and Technology collide, merge and multiply. Through Feb. 26, Free. Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. Call 903-6000. www.ci.mtnview.ca.us/mvcpa/visualarts.html

ON STAGE

"AMBITION FACING WEST" Presented by TheatreWorks. Playwright Anthony Clarvoe adapts his own family history in the exploration of the immigrant experience. Tuesdays, 7:30 p.m.; Wed.-Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 2 and 7 p.m. Through Feb. 11; \$20-\$60. Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. www.theatreworks.org

A DOLL'S HOUSE Thu.-Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 2 p.m. Through Feb. 4. Torvald and Nora's negotiated and powerfully sexual relationship begins to crumble as events unfold over Christmas, 1959. Directed by J. Forte. \$10-\$25. Pear Avenue Theatre, 1220 Pear Ave., Mountain View. Call 254-1148. www.thepear.org

TEEN ACTIVITIES

ANIMATION WORKSHOPS Offered by Mountain View Recreation. The animation workshop introduces students to stop motion animation production. Animations are created using digital cameras and capture software and students learn about aspects of the production process. Jan. 27, 1-4 p.m. \$67.50 residents/ \$78.75 non-residents. Mountain View Community Center, 201 S. Rengstorff Ave., Mountain View. Call 903-6331.

VOLUNTEERS

BECOME A LITERACY VOLUNTEER Vision Literacy, an adult literacy organization, is conducting a volunteer orientation that provides an overview of the group's mission and describes the role of tutors and volunteers in its literacy programs. Jan. 30, 6:30-7:30 p.m. Free. Mountain View Library, 585 Franklin St., Mountain View. Call (408) 262-1349. www.visionliteracy.org

MORE LISTINGS

For a complete listing of local events, see our website at www.PaloAltoOnline.com.

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Tuesday, January 30th
7:00 PM

Kindergarten
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Thursday, February 1st
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DR. CULVER'S
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"Billy had cried nonstop his whole life—

all three weeks of it.

He was losing ground rapidly.

He was unable to nurse, he was losing weight daily, and none of the clinics he had been taken to had an answer."

We found that Billy had sustained a birth injury to his neck, causing him unrelenting pain and muscle spasm. The moment that the offending neck vertebrae was restored to its normal position, Billy opened his eyes, breathed a deep sigh, and fell asleep. He ate, he thrived, and his daddy decided to study chiropractic.

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How many of us have sustained a neck injury at birth and "failed to thrive," because of an obstruction to normal nerve signals passing between our brain and vital organs?

Call to schedule a no-charge consultation. Feel free to bring any MRI's, X-rays or lab studies you may have.

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Mountain View

● St. Joseph of Mtn. View (K - 8th grade)

1120 Miramonte Ave., Mountain View, CA 94040
(650) 967-1839 www.sjmv.org

Open House Info

Sunday, Jan. 28th 11:15 - 1:15 p.m.

Los Altos/Los Altos Hills

● St. Simon School (K - 8th grade)

1840 Grant Road, Los Altos, CA 94024
(650) 968-9952 www.stsimon.com

Open House Info:

Tuesday, January 30th
Kindergarten 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 & 12:30 - 2:15
Kindergarten presentation: 11:15 - 12:00
Grades 1 - 8: 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 & 1:15 - 2:30

● St. Nicholas School (K - 8th grade)

12816 S. El Monte Ave., Los Altos Hills, CA 94022
(650) 941-4056 www.stnicholasLAH.com

Observation:

Monday, Jan 29th 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.
Tuesday, Jan 30th 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

Open House:

Thursday, Feb. 1st 6:30 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Sunnyvale

● Resurrection School (JK - 8th grade)

1395 Hollenbeck Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94087
(408) 245-4571 www.resparish.org/school

Open House Info:

Saturday, Jan. 27th 2:00 - 4:45 p.m.
Tuesday, Jan. 30th 9:00 - 12:00 noon

● St. Cyprian School (K - 8th grade)

195 Leota Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086
(408) 738-3444 www.saintcyprianschool.org

Open House Info:

Sunday, Jan. 28th 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.

Kindergarten Workshop:

Tuesday, Jan. 30th 7 - 8 p.m.

● St. Martin School (JK - 8th grade)

597 Central Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94086
(408) 736-5534 www.stmartinsun.org

Open House Info:

Sunday, Jan. 28th 10:30 - 1:30 p.m.

Cupertino

● St. Joseph of Cupertino (K - 8th grade)

10120 N. De Anza Blvd., Cupertino, CA 95014
(408) 252-6441 www.sjcschool.org

Open House Info:

Tuesday, Jan. 30th 9:00 - 12:00 noon

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 RSVP Now 650-625-0111 - Limited Seating

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www.1085TasmanUnit552.com



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