

Mountain View VOICE



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PENSTYLE | P.29

MARCH 30, 2007 VOLUME 15, NO. 13

INSIDE: WEEKEND | PAGE 21

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PHOTO COURTESY LAMV PONY BASEBALL

PLAY BALL!

Last Saturday, the Los Altos/Mountain View Pony Baseball league held festivities with more than 1,000 boys and girls to celebrate Opening Day for the 2007 season. Above, Matthew Martin, 9, and Michael Bakan, 10, are introduced with the other Mustang II Division Tigers.

Foothill-De Anza considers labor pact with unions

By Alexa Tondeau

Whether nearly \$500 million in construction jobs will be open to all contractors, or just to those with a union workforce, will come before the board of the Foothill-De Anza Community College District next month in a series of meetings that is sure to produce strong testimony from both sides.

At issue is whether the district will cover all construction paid for by the Measure C bonds with a project labor agreement, or PLA, with trade unions in Santa Clara and San Benito counties.

The topic surfaced at a meeting earlier this month, and will be addressed again April 2, when representatives from the construction industry will deliver presentations and have a question-and-answer session.

In the meantime, supporters and opponents of a project labor agreement have been generating

considerable buzz in the community, and at the center of the controversy is whether a PLA will end up costing the district — and the taxpayers — considerably more money.

A PLA requires all contractors, union and non-union, to sign a one-job collective bargaining agreement with construction unions. The agreement mandates that a certain percentage of labor be hired from local union halls, and comes with the guarantee of labor peace, meaning no strikes.

► See **UNIONS**, page 16

Goodbye, squirrels

BAD BUNCH PUT DOWN, CITY SAYS

P.13



Green light on Whisman project

COUNCIL INDICATES SUPPORT FOR 1,260-HOME DEVELOPMENT

By Daniel DeBolt

Housing advocates had a cause to celebrate Tuesday when the slower growth City Council switched gears momentarily and expressed support for up to 1,260 homes adjacent to Whisman Station. If ultimately approved, it would be the city's largest housing development in recent years.

"I think it could be a really good project," said Mayor Laura Macias, whose opinion was not clear before the meeting. "I'd be willing to move forward."

Ronit Bryant and Jac Siegel were the only council members who completely opposed the project at the study session. Both said they were worried that not enough was known about toxics left by former companies on much of the 48-acre site. During last year's election, Bryant and Siegel had expressed concern about losing the city's industrial land to residential uses. On Tuesday, council member Tom Means said it was clear that the land had been mostly vacant for some time, even while owners say they honestly tried to sell it during the dot-com boom.

"I don't need a lot of analysis to see what the market is telling us here," said Means, who is also an economics professor at San Jose State University.

Siegel questioned why a Hewlett-Packard site just north of Middlefield Road adjacent to Highway 237 has gotten 30 bids from buyers, but no one was interested in these industrial parcels nearly right across the street.

"I find it hard to understand," Siegel said.

Residents near Whisman Station spoke at last week's council meeting, saying they were concerned about density and traf-

► See **COUNCIL**, page 10

Auditors blast VTA's finances

MACIAS SAYS REPORT CONFIRMS WHAT MANY OBSERVERS KNEW ALREADY

By Daniel DeBolt

When the scathing audit of VTA's finances was released last Friday, Mayor Laura Macias and many others felt it affirmed things they'd noticed all along: out-of-control spending and service decisions made for political reasons, rather than to meet actual ridership demands.

Macias, herself a current Valley Transportation Authority board member, said the audit is being taken very seriously by the agency, including the nine suggestions the audit provides for the VTA to pull itself out of financial difficulties. Chief among them: The agency must once again focus on its core services.

Macias cited examples of some of the VTA's problematic decisions, such as cutting ser-

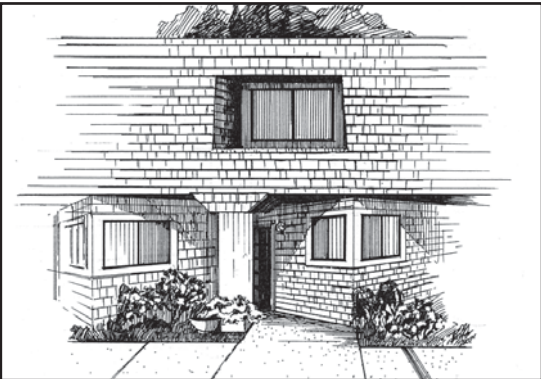
► See **VTA**, page 8

INSIDE

GOINGS ON 26 | MARKETPLACE 35 | MOVIES 24 | REAL ESTATE 42 | VIEWPOINT 18

REDEFINING QUALITY SINCE 1990
Reading between the emotional line makes the difference between finding a house and a home.

Chuck & Tori Atwell



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Susan Enzmann



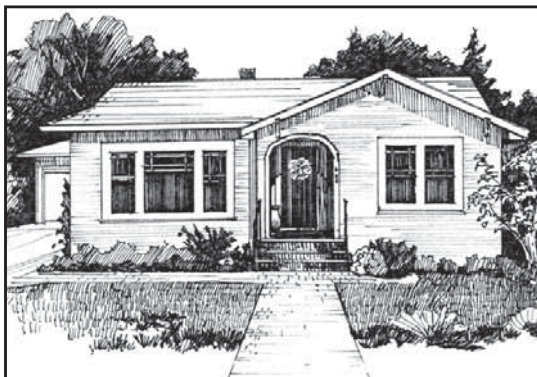
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Voices

A R O U N D T O W N

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

Will blogs replace newspapers one day?



"I never read blogs. I read weekly news journals mostly."

Laurent Lehmann, Switzerland



"Probably not. Newspapers truly exist in that they can be impartial. Blogs don't have editors or when they do they have like-minded people editing them. Blogs may replace the opinion columns in the newspapers, but I doubt the rest of it."

Patrick Albertolle, Palo Alto



"Definitely. No one has the motivation to get a newspaper when you can turn on your computer and go online for everything. When I go online, blogs are everywhere. Sadly, newspapers are archaic."

Abraham Aragundi, Los Angeles



"No. I think everybody likes newspapers. [It's] like comparing TV to the movies. TV hasn't replaced movies."

Stephanie Reid, Sunnyvale



"No. I read newspapers once in a while."

Joyce Chan, Cupertino

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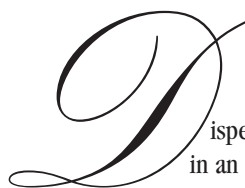


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■ CRIMEWATCH

BURGLARY, 2580 CALIFORNIA ST., 3/23

On Friday at 6:05 p.m., a woman reportedly tried to cash a counterfeit traveler's check at Safeway. Before the police reached the store, the suspect left in a vehicle with two men.

The police later tracked the vehicle with the three suspects in it near San Antonio Road and Leghorn Street. The suspects were also carrying a loaded handgun and narcotics in the car, police said. All were arrested on charges of forgery, carrying a loaded weapon in a vehicle and possession of narcotics.

ATTEMPTED ROBBERY, 790 E. EL CAMINO REAL, 3/19

Last Monday at 12:35 a.m., a man pulled up at the Shell Gas Station and got out of his car. Two men who were already parked at the station approached the victim apparently asking for directions. But when they got closer, they asked for his wallet and cash.

The victim noticed a police officer across the street and told the suspects about him. Dismissing it as a bluff, the suspects decided to pick a fight. The victim ran towards the officer, and the suspects fled in their car. They are described as two Hispanic males in their 20s.

■ POLICELOG

ARSON

1500 block Plymouth St., 3/21

ATTEMPTED ROBBERY

700 block E. El Camino Real, 3/19

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE

W. El Camino Real / Lane Avenue, 3/23
1000 block Boranda Ave., 3/25

AUTO BURGLARY

Hotel Avante, 3/24
600 block Rainbow Dr., 3/24
900 block Middlefield Rd., 3/25
500 block S. Rengstorff Ave., 3/25
300 block W. Dana St., 3/22

BATTERY

W. El Camino Real / Phyllis Ave., 3/21
Crittenden School, 3/23
1700 block Rock St., 3/22
700 block W. El Camino Real, 3/22

COMMERCIAL BURGLARY

200 block N. Bernardo Ave., 3/21

DISORDERLY CONDUCT

2000 block W. El Camino Real, 3/21
200 block Franklin St., 3/24
1100 block Castro St., 3/24
Moraga Dr. / Sylvan Ave., 3/25
600 block Escuela Ave., 3/26

DISTURBANCE

900 block El Monte Ave., 3/21
1800 block Higdon Ave., 3/23
200 block Latham St., 3/23

DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

W. Middlefield Road / Moffett Blvd., 3/22

EMBEZZLEMENT

Wal-Mart, 3/21

FORGERY

Tropicana Hotel, 3/23
2000 block Rialto Ct., 3/22

GRAND THEFT

500 block Hans Ave., 3/19
Library, 3/24
500 block Starr Way, 3/24
200 block Tyrella Ave., 3/26

IDENTITY THEFT

Crisanto Ave. / S. Rengstorff Ave., 3/26

PETTY THEFT

2200 block California St., 3/19
Target, 3/19
200 block Easy St., 3/21
Sears Department Store, 3/21
1900 block Old Middlefield Way, 3/21
600 block Mariposa Ave., 3/24
300 block Escuela Ave., 3/25
2200 block Latham St., 3/22

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

1100 block Granada Dr., 3/24
2100 block Crittenden Ln., 3/22

SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES/PERSON

400 block Logue Ave., 3/19
1000 block W. El Camino Real, 3/19
100 block W. Dana St., 3/19
900 block High School Way, 3/23
700 block W. Dana St., 3/24
Global Beads, 3/24
1900 Latham St., 3/24
Las Muchachas, 3/24
300 block Tyrella Avenue, 3/24
Independence Avenue / W. Middlefield, 3/22
Safeway, 3/26
1800 block California, 3/26

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

600 Moorpark Way, 3/22
300 block Higdon Ave., 3/26

VANDALISM

1600 block San Luis Ave., 3/19
San Veron Park, 3/19
2400 block W. El Camino Real, 3/23
1100 block W. El Camino Real, 3/23
700 block Rainbow Dr., 3/26
Marshalls, 3/26

■ CORRECTION

A story in last week's *Voice*, "Six candidates up for hospital seat," incorrectly stated Ginny Lear's involvement with the Mountain View-Los Altos Union

High School District in 1994-95. Lear chaired the bond campaigns for that district. She was also a trustee for the Los Altos School District.



Birds of a feather

By Don Frances

A RECENT ISSUE of the *Voice* contained a photo of birds swimming at Shoreline, with an unfortunate caption beginning, "Ducks take a swim ..."

Unfortunate, because as Karla Kane of California Street pointed out, "There don't seem to be any ducks in the photo." The birds shown, she added, "are geese and coots."

As I've learned lately (particularly since our "Seen Around Town" section began,) Mountain View is chock full of bird lovers who are sure to notice a slip-up like this. But even I know the difference between geese, ducks and coots, and should have caught it.

That's why I've decided to fall back on the old, "I was just testing you" excuse.

The winner of this, uh, test is Karla Kane, who has just won a very nice set of crystal bird-shaped candlesticks. Karla, please reach me by phone or e-mail to claim your prize.

THE GOOD PEOPLE at Community Services Agency want the world to know that they have a new and better Web site.

The site, www.csacares.org, "was a long time in coming," says Executive Director Tom Myers, "but it's a very critical piece of our outreach and communication to the community." Myers will keep a blog on the site as well, and I'm interested to see how that goes.

This seems like a good time to announce that the *Voice's* Web site soon will be upgraded as well. This will include an online forum called "Town Square" where anybody and everybody can comment on the stories and issues affecting Mountain View.

More on that later. The new site won't be online for another few weeks, and not a moment too soon

► See **EDITOR'S DESK**, page 6



DON FERIA

Konnichi wa: Mountain View High School senior Elisabeth Mart, 17, center, is flanked by Japanese exchange students Takuya Imaizumi, left, and Yuri Igarashi, right, during an icebreaker exercise at last week's opening ceremonies of the annual visitation exchange with Mountain View's sister city of Iwata, Japan.

Hospital board picks replacement

LOS ALTOS RESIDENT JOHN ZOGLIN TO FILL VACANCY LEFT BY CURATOLA

By Alexa Tondreau

El Camino Hospital board members selected Los Altos resident John Zoglin to fill the seat vacated recently by Dominick Curatola, a cardiologist who said he wanted to spend more time on his practice.

Zoglin, 51, is the director of e-commerce at PGP Corporation in Palo Alto, a company that specializes in data security and encryption. He told the board in a 20-minute question-and-answer session that he has a "deep emotional investment" in the hospital and the community.

Zoglin's father served as El Camino Hospital's chief of staff in the 1970s. His mother, Mary Lou, was a member of the Mountain View City Council for

two consecutive terms, starting in 1996.

Answering questions on a variety of topics along with five other candidates, Zoglin, whose professional background is in marketing, commented on what he saw to be the hospital's top priority.

"The El Camino brand is not as strong as it should be given the reality of the quality of care here," he said. He envisioned

► See **HOSPITAL**, page 15



Joseph Francia

Joseph Francia, local farmer, dies at 84

FAMILY OWNS LAST OF MOUNTAIN VIEW'S WORKING ORCHARDS

Staff Report

Joseph Anthony Francia, patron of the Mountain View farming family which operates the last working orchard in town, died peacefully of natural causes March 23 in the family farmhouse on Whisman Road. He was 84.

Born June 13, 1922 in San Jose to Michael and Serafina Francia, Joseph moved here with his family as a boy. He attended Mountain View High School before

joining the Army and shipping overseas to fight in World War II. During the war, he was captured in Germany and spent several years in German concentration camps. He was awarded numerous medals, including a Purple Heart, for his service.

After the war, Francia worked as a mail carrier before returning to the family farm, which includ-

► See **FRANCIA**, page 6

Local mother charged with child abuse

SUSPICIOUS BURN ON 5-YEAR-OLD STUDENT IN MOUNTAIN VIEW LEADS TO ARREST

By Alexa Tondreau

A Mountain View woman was booked into the county jail in San Jose last week on suspicion of child abuse, police said.

The woman, whose name has not been released, is the mother of a 5-year-old boy who attends a school in the Mountain View Whisman district. On March 22, police said, the boy's teacher noticed a one-inch-diameter burn mark on his arm, and brought him to the main office. (Police are not disclosing the name of the school.)

The school's principal called

in a police officer and social worker, who questioned the boy. According to Joanne Pasternack of the Mountain View Police Department, he told them his mother had done it on the way to school "because he wasn't quieting down in the car."

The mother, who lives on Mountain View Avenue, was picked up and questioned by police. She told them the boy

had received the wound from a skateboarding accident, police said. Believing the boy's injuries to be inconsistent with this story, police booked her on charges of child abuse.

Pasternack said the boy and his three siblings, ages 6, 5 and 1, have been taken into protective custody.

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

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■ SEEN AROUND TOWN

Mayfield trees blossoming



Recently the Voice ran a photo of these trees, located at the site of the proposed Mayfield project, in the Seen Around Town section. When that photo was taken, the trees were still green. This photo, taken two weeks ago by Martin Donald of Hamilton Avenue, shows the same row of trees, now in full blossom.

If you have a photo taken around town which you'd like published in the Voice, please send it (as a jpg attachment) to editor@mv-voice.com.

FRANCIA

► Continued from page 5

ed a nine-acre apricot orchard on Whisman Road owned by the family since the 1930s, and the Corn Palace fruit stand and farm in Sunnyvale. He remained an active orchardist and farmer in Mountain View and Sunnyvale for more than 65 years, and for the past 15 years was a mainstay at the Sunday farmers' markets downtown, selling produce alongside his daughter Josie Angelo and niece Sara.

"He had, technically, land wealth beyond most people's

comprehension, but he didn't care," said Don Angelo, Francia's son-in-law. "He actually produced something and he could share it with his family and his friends."

Angelo said Francia knew the area around the Corn Palace fruit stand, and he would make sure kids in the neighborhood never went to school hungry, always offering an apple or banana.

In a statement, the family wrote that "Joe often reflected on the valley of the past, the vast orchards, vegetables and flower growers, recounting the beauty of the 'Valley of Hearts' Delight,' as Joe would say, and days long gone."

Francia's son, Michael Francia, and brother, Ben Francia, continue to live on their Whisman Road property where the orchard is still maintained.

Besides Michael and Ben, Francia is survived by his daughter, Josie Angelo; son-in-law Don Angelo; sister Julia and her husband Frank Rivas; three grandchildren; four great-grandchildren, and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his wife Lydia and sister Rose.

A memorial service was held Wednesday at Spangler Mortuary, and a church service followed Thursday at 10 a.m. at St. Joseph's Church, 582 Hope St. ▀

EDITOR'S DESK

► Continued from page 5

— our current site is so 1998.

SOMEONE NAMED Joe Steele from a band called Stereo Suite wrote recently with an unusual announcement:

"We are a Los Angeles-based modern rock band playing in Mountain View on April 6th at Red Rock."

Seems like that Red Rock Cafe is always up to something. As for Stereo Suite, Steele says the show will be unplugged and starts at 8 p.m. He added that the band is "in the vein

of The Fray, Augustana, Daughtry, Lifehouse, and Switchfoot."

I look askance at Daughtry — how that guy got so far on "American Idol" I'll never understand — but I'm happy to plug anything interesting going on downtown. Anybody else with small (i.e., not Shoreline) shows they'd like to announce is encouraged to write in and tell me about it.

And if anybody wants to hear more of my opinions on "American Idol" contestants, please do let me know — I only need the slightest nudging.

ALSO: Don't miss a presentation

next week by Chike Nwoffiah on African liberation music titled "Who Shall Command the Sky-lark Not to Sing?"

Besides being founder and executive director of Mountain View's Oriki Theatre, Nwoffiah is an award-winning filmmaker and producer with plenty to say on a variety of topics.

The free event is Thursday, April 5, 7-8:30 p.m. at CSMA's Tateuchi Hall. Call (650) 917-6800, ext. 314 or visit www.arts4all.org for more info.

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

Light workload for planning commission

SEVERAL EPC MEETINGS HAVE BEEN CANCELED SINCE JANUARY

By Daniel DeBolt

While the City Council discusses a string of controversial development projects in Mountain View, the Environmental Planning Commission is feeling a little left out, with half its meetings canceled so far this year.

The commission generally has two Wednesday night meetings per month to provide input on zoning changes, which the council then uses to help make decisions. But the commission has had only one meeting per month since January, and now its next two meetings in a row — March 21 and April 4 — will likely be canceled as well.

“It’s not the role of the commission to whine and rant about this,” said Eric Anderson,

the commission chairman. “It’s the kind of the style of the council [to determine] how much we do. ... We have the capacity to do more.”

Work on the commission is done at the behest of the council and city staff. A lack of work isn’t unheard of for a commission, though it may seem strange when the city grapples with a seemingly endless number of development issues.

Mayor Laura Macias said she was unaware of the situation until recently.

“There are plenty of things they can start to work on,” she said, citing green buildings and the general plan’s housing element. “There is no reason why they can’t do that.”

During last year’s election, several council candidates, including winners Ronit Bryant and Margaret Abe-Koga, said the commissions were a rich resource that should be utilized more.

Five of the city’s seven council members were on the EPC at some point.

“If you look back they were probably saying, ‘The council should draw on us more,’”

Anderson said. “So I don’t think it’s a new situation.”

But Andersen said that when city staff is “overbusy” as they are this year, they sometimes don’t have the time to cue up work for the EPC. This year the city planning department is postponing many developments that require a zoning change because of unfilled staff positions and a large workload. And without a lot of zoning changes, the commission may be lacking its bread-and-butter jobs — projects requiring zoning changes small and large.

“We do have a significant amount of things they will continue to look at in the coming months,” said Martin Alkyre, a city planner who works with the commission, citing “a number of things in the pipeline.”

Last year, Anderson said, the commission was busy grappling with the controversial Mayfield project. This year’s equivalent, a proposal for up to 1,300 homes near Whisman Station, has not gone before the commission.

“Sometimes the council does their thing before we see an issue,” he said about the Whisman development.

On Feb. 21, the commission considered several possible priorities for the year, including an update to the housing element in the general plan, Google’s proposal for a large office development on Shoreline Boulevard, and proposed development of the Grant Road farm. The EPC’s first major undertaking this year was the March 7 study of an update to the city’s 1977 condo conversion ordinance. At its first meeting in January a chair and vice chair were selected, but no other action was taken.

The commission may see more work later this year, but until then, they’ll be awaiting or studying the “endless” amount of pertinent material, as commissioner John Inks said he was doing.

“We’re volunteers trying to represent the community ... ready, willing and able,” Anderson said.

“There are plenty of things they can start to work on.”

MAYOR LAURA MACIAS

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

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MARCH 30, 2007 ■ MOUNTAIN VIEW VOICE ■ 7



COURTESY IMAGE

An artist's depiction of the proposed Rengstorff train crossing.

VTA

► Continued from page 1

vice on important bus lines like the 22 and 522 along El Camino Real while adding light rail and bus lines that are rarely used, such as the Vasona light rail line.

The audit backs up these observations.

“The board has approved capital projects and transit service plans that were political solutions to address the needs of local jurisdictions at the expense of the region’s transportation

needs,” the auditors wrote. “As a result, VTA has built transportation systems and has transit service plans that have low ridership and are expensive to operate and maintain.”

As a result of the report, Roger Contreras, the agency’s chief financial officer, resigned. Meanwhile, board members admitted last week that they took risks in committing money to a proposed 16.5-mile extension of BART from Fremont to San Jose without knowing where all the funding for it would come from.

It is estimated that the VTA

will need \$4.7 billion to finance and build the project. After county voters failed to approve the Measure A sales tax last November, it became unclear where much of that money would come from. Now VTA board members, including San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed, seem to be open to the idea of a shorter BART line that would end at Berryessa and cost half as much.

Former City Council member Greg Perry, who was Mountain View’s representative on the VTA board at the time of debate over BART-to-San Jose, had called for a complete halt to the

project because, he said, it drains money and resources from cities it won’t directly serve.

Macias will serve out the rest of the year on VTA’s board of directors after taking over for Perry in December. Mountain View representatives will then step down, and one of the two cities Mountain View shares the seat with—Palo Alto and Los Altos—will take over.

The audit was performed independently by the Hay Group, and was initiated by VTA’s general manager, Michael Burns, who started the job 18 months ago.

VTA gives priority to Rengstorff rail crossing

One project Mountain View has discussed for years made it onto the VTA’s priority list last February: an overpass (or “grade separated crossing”) for the train tracks at Rengstorff Avenue.

The crossing is considered to be one of Mountain View’s most dangerous. Over the last 15 years, there have been five accidents at the crossing, including one fatality. There have also been five suicides.

When complete, Rengstorff Avenue would cross under the railroad tracks, freeing car, bike and foot traffic and making the intersection much safer.

“It’s great progress,” said Joan Jenkins, city transportation manager. “It’s a very expensive project. It will take considerable time to get the full funding.”

The project, currently in preliminary design stages, ranks at No. 6 on a list of 49 projects that could take anywhere from one to 30 years to begin. Estimates put its cost at between \$55 million and \$75 million.

Macias said Sen. Diane Feinstein and Rep. Anna Eshoo have expressed interest in pursuing funding for the project. ■

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Audit casts new light on VTA's BART plans

ONCE-SPURNED
OPTIONS NOW BACK
ON TABLE, BOARD
MEMBERS SAY

Bay City News

At the VTA board meeting last Friday, several members said some options for the planned BART extension in the South Bay previously deemed unacceptable now need to at least be considered.

The statements marked a sharp turnaround for the Valley Transportation Authority, which as recently as December committed to building the full 16-mile extension from Fremont to Santa Clara, with a five-mile underground tunnel through downtown San Jose.

However, in light of a highly critical independent audit of the agency released last week, and with new members joining the board this year, some members are beginning to talk about building the BART project in segments or building it above ground instead of tunneling through San Jose.

"I think we can segment, and I think we need to re-look at the tunnel," said VTA board member and county

Supervisor Liz Kniss. "We should be looking at everything," agreed VTA board member and Cupertino City Council member Dolly Sandoval.

San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed said he believes voters will approve a tax increase to pay for building the entire extension at once. If they don't, Reed said, he is willing to consider building it in segments — in marked contrast to his predecessor Ron Gonzales, who opposed any discussion of building the extension in phases.

"We have to put everything on the table," Reed said. "If we don't have the money, we don't have the money."

A tax increase would be necessary because the VTA currently does not have enough revenue to build the project — which some estimates put at \$4.7 billion — or enough revenue to operate it once built. Voters rejected a proposed tax increase last year that officials said would have provided the needed funds.

Despite statewide elections scheduled for next February and June, VTA General Manager Michael Burns said any new tax increase measure is unlikely to go before county voters until November 2008.

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COUNCIL

▶ Continued from page 1

fic there. None had comments about toxics in the ground.

The agency hired by the city to conduct the environmental impact report, David Powers and Associates, said a study of the soil and groundwater's toxicity would soon make it clear if remediation is necessary.

"Typically, we have not seen sites that cannot be remediated," said John Schwarz of David Powers.

Council member Nick Galitto said there has been a clamoring for parks and housing in recent years, and this was "an opportunity to develop that."

"It seems to me that it's really worth moving forward here," he said.

Council member Margaret Abe-Koga did not arrive until after the council's straw vote on the project's viability. But, she expressed support for up to five-story buildings along the site's northern edge to make room for retail possibilities on the ground floors. Bryant opposed buildings above four stories, and Siegel opposed density over R3-2 zoning — up to 39 units per acre — which would rule out five stories.

The council expressed support for a range of densities from eight to 60 units per acre on the site, which Macias and Siegel opposed. Bryant said she supported the range because they were "just setting parameters."

Means and a majority of council members supported dropping the nine-acre Francia family orchard from the discussion. Council member Matt Pear supported development of that area, but admitted it was difficult because the narrow strip was sandwiched between the city's noisy municipal operations center and office buildings.

"We could float a bond issue to put a big park in there," Siegel suggested.

Macias praised the developer for adding an unusually large number of below market rate homes, and for including membership for all residents to the private recreation center to be built on the site.

The council unanimously supported retail space at the site, from 17,000 to 37,000 square feet. Several members made comments about how it would be nice for residents to at least have a coffee shop nearby.

A majority of the council supported public streets instead of private streets and use of the city's award-winning row house guidelines instead of copying the

▶ Continued on next page



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► Continued from previous page

design from Whisman Station.

City officials felt the need to clarify that it was illegal for the council to make a decision on the project Tuesday, and that there would be public meetings in the future where zoning changes and a precise plan would be approved.

Funds for Evandale relocation

Concluding a discussion that began several months ago, the council voted Tuesday to use below market rate housing funds to help relocate 250 low-income tenants at 291 Evandale Ave., all of whom

must make way for a 144-condo project.

The only caveat is that the money can legally only go to residents who are able to find another home in Mountain View. Council member Ronit Bryant opposed the plan because she felt general fund money should be used to compensate all the tenants regardless of where they were going to move.

"Hopefully we will be able to find a place in Mountain View," said a public speaker named Claudia, one of several residents who thanked the council through an interpreter. Several of the Evandale residents — at least 25 — showed up for the meeting.

The city allocated \$2,000 for each of the 64 households, plus \$8,100 for the Community Services Agency to administer the funds to those named on lease records.

The site's developers have already committed to a free last month's rent and a \$500 moving allowance, as well as bilingual renter's advice and a subscription to a rental guide. When the city's contributions are factored in, total assistance is equivalent to three months rent plus \$500.

"This is consistent with tenant relocation policies in other cities," wrote Linda Lauzze, the city's administrative and

neighborhood services manager, in the staff report.

Council member Tom Means proposed the idea last year as a way to use the city's growing BMR fund. Developers often elect to pay BMR fees rather than include a portion of affordable units in their projects.

Housing advocates have said the money should go to affordable housing projects only, and criticized the Evandale payout as a way to "grease the skids" for developers to avoid building affordable housing.

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

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Squirrel problem solved?

BAD BUNCH PUT DOWN, CITY SAYS, AND CHILDREN ARE SAFE ONCE MORE AT CUESTA PARK

By Daniel DeBolt

City officials say the string of squirrel attacks at Cuesta Park is hopefully at an end, with at least six squirrels — the same ones, it is believed, who were biting and scratching children over food — trapped and euthanized.

“We have, for now, suspended trapping,” said Dave Muela, community services director.

By all indications the few older, aggressive squirrels that habitually dominated territory near the children’s playground have been removed. With park patrons obeying large signs forbidding food be brought to the park, squirrels are now seen rarely, if at all, near the playground area on Cuesta Drive.

Muela would not say exactly how many squirrels were caught.

But he did say all were caught using the same method: A decoy baby stroller lured the squirrels into a live trap with food inside.

Since the squirrels were trapped in late February, officials have heard of no incidents, not even a squirrel jumping into a stroller.

The last incident occurred Feb. 23, when a squirrel jumped on a 4-year-old girl’s face to take a bag of chips. That brought the total reported incidents to 13 since May of last year.

The city confirmed rumors that squirrels were caught while the area was closed for tree trimming in February.

“We were doing it at the same time anyway,” Muela said. “But that wasn’t why we did it.”

The trapped squirrels were euthanized by Clarke Pest Con-

trol using chloroform gas.

Last year the squirrel problem was picked up by national media outlets such as CNN, and animal rights group People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals threatened lawsuits if the city carried out its plan to trap them.

The city moved forward with the trapping in February after months of consulting with a wildlife biologist and the state Department of Fish and Game for the most humane method of removing the squirrels, officials said. So far, the city has not heard further complaints from PETA or other groups.

Muela said park rangers will continue to patrol the area through the spring and summer. ▀

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

Grant Road farm meetings scheduled

APRIL FOOL’S DAY GATHERING ‘NO JOKE,’ SAYS FARMLANDS GROUP

By Daniel DeBolt

An informational meeting on ways to save the farm on Grant Road has been scheduled by the Mountain View Farmlands Group for

Sunday, April 1, and organizers billed the April Fool’s Day event with the phrase, “It’s no joke.”

Meanwhile, the city has also scheduled its first public hearing this year, a study session for the evening of May 8 at City Hall.

On Sunday, results of the Farmland Group’s economic feasibility study for saving the farm will be presented for the

first time. The group has drafted a proposal for 50 homes on the site with room for five acres of the 15-acre farm to be preserved. Developer Summerhill Homes proposes 55 homes.

The meeting will be held a block away from the farm at Blach Intermediate School’s Old Gym, located at 1120 Covington Rd., from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. ▀

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Easter — April 8

❖ 5:30am

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April 5

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April 6

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April 7

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April 8

Easter Sunrise Service, 6:30am (patio) Breakfast to follow

April 8

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HOSPITAL

► Continued from page 5

a marketing push that would reach more people in the community.

Zoglin admitted he has no professional experience in health care or in construction, an interest expressed by the board as it undertakes a major construction and earthquake retrofit project at its main facility on Grant Road.

Zoglin has worked in executive positions at Dell and Hewlett-Packard, and until recently was the owner of a Sylvan Learning Center tutoring chain in Stockton.

Board member Ed Bough asked the six candidates how the hospital should respond to Camino Medical Group, which will soon set up shop at a new

Mountain View facility.

"They are our biggest customer and our biggest competitor for outpatient services," Bough

"I'm a big believer that people get paid what they're worth."

JOHN ZOGLIN

said. "What should our relationship with them be?"

Zoglin envisioned a moderate response.

"We should have an open dialogue," he said. "But we need to come from a position of strength and continue to develop the vision you have — it's the right one."

Zoglin also seemed entirely

unaware of the controversy surrounding former CEO Lee Domanico's executive compensation, which created headlines in 2005 when the hospital hesitated to release the figure.

Saying he wasn't aware if management was being overpaid, he responded, "I'm a big believer that people get paid what they're worth."

Zoglin came in first after the initial voting round, in which the board members ranked candidates on a scale of one to six, with the low number indicating the best rating. Zoglin was followed in points by candidates Ginny Lear and Victor Reid.

He indicated that he would run for re-election in 2008, when the remainder of Curatola's term expires.

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

■ NEWS BRIEFS

CALTRAIN CASUALTY WAS APPARENT SUICIDE

The name of a man struck and killed by a train last February near the downtown Mountain View Caltrain station was revealed by his family last week as Bradford Hyatt Mills of Palo Alto.

Mills, 48, died in an apparent suicide at 7:50 a.m. on Feb. 13. He was struck by a Caltrain commuter train under Highway 85, about a half mile east of the downtown station.

— Daniel DeBolt

WEST NILE BIRD FOUND IN PALO ALTO

Three birds testing positive for West Nile virus have been found in three nearby cities — most recently in Palo Alto — since February, prompting Santa Clara County Vector Control District officials

to worry that 2007 could see in an increase in the virus in the area.

Infected birds were found in Cupertino, Palo Alto and Santa Clara, with the Palo Alto bird discovered "within the last week, week-and-a-half," according to district spokeswoman Kriss Costa.

Having one or two birds turn up positive in the early part of the year is not unusual, but in such cases the birds are usually found in the same general area, and there is a lull of weeks or months before more birds are found, according to Costa.

West Nile virus can cause inflammation of the brain, especially in the elderly and those with weakened immune systems. However, many people infected with the virus experience little more than a fever and head and body aches, and 80 percent show no symptoms at all, according to health officials.

— Bay City News

Peninsula Easter Services



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- 7:30 PM Good Friday
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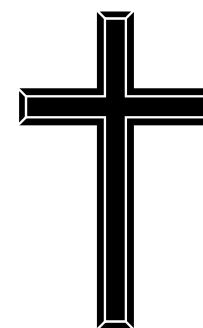
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6 am

Palo Alto Baylands Nature Preserve

Easter Services
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Good Friday
Noon (to 3 p.m.) & 7 p.m.

Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday
7:00 p.m.

Easter Services
6 a.m., 8:15 a.m., 11:00 a.m.

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7:30 a.m.

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UNIONS

► Continued from page 1

It also requires that union rules on pensions, work conditions and dispute resolution be followed.

One effect of this agreement is that non-union contractors who bid on the project would have to pay workers' health and welfare benefits to union trust funds, and would be required to pay union dues and fees. And according to non-union contractors, that's where the problem starts.

Connie Norlander, a non-union contractor and owner of Wall-covering Designs, Inc. in San Carlos, said she will not bid on the Foothill-De Anza project if a PLA agreement is put in place. The reason, she said, comes down to simple economics.

Norlander already has a benefits package established for her employees, in the form of a 401(k). With a PLA, she said, she would have to pay additional benefits to the union hall.

"I have to pay that [benefits] package to the union, which my workers will never have access to. Essentially, it's like giving it away. Paying the double benefits and the sign-up initiation fee, it makes it pretty unattractive and impossible. It means I'm not able to bid on projects in my own backyard," said Norlander, a Palo Alto resident.

Nicole Goehring, government affairs director for the local chapter of Associated Builders and Contractors, said there is evidence a PLA can reduce the number of contractors who bid, and make projects more expensive overall.

She cited a renovation project in the Oakland Unified School District in which the inclusion of a PLA decreased the original bidder pool from eight to three. According to Goehring, the lowest bid then came in at \$437,000 more than the first round of bidding, when the PLA was not yet in place.

"Our contractors feel like they are excluded from the work," especially local contractors interested from the beginning, she said. The smaller pool of bidders drives up the price for projects, sometimes by as much as 20 percent, she said.

But Neil Struthers, CEO of Santa Clara County's Building and Construction Trades Council, said the idea that PLAs inflate costs cannot be proved, as there are too many variables in construction projects and insufficient data to make sense of them.

"It's very hard to measure what

► Continued on next page

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► Continued from previous page

they are trying to measure," he said. "To get any kind of real data, you'd have to compare two identical projects, one with [a PLA] and one without. Quite frankly that's physically impossible."

Struthers cited another element of the agreement that he thinks makes up for any cost increase — creation of a program in the district that will educate and train students in skills relevant to the construction industry. Struthers said the students will be offered apprenticeships through local unions and will have the opportunity to graduate with a union card.

"The school district is leveraging more than just classrooms, they are leveraging careers," he said.

Struthers also said that if bids did come in higher with a PLA in place, the reason most likely would be that the PLA has a strict prevailing wage law.

In Struthers' opinion, many non-union contractors don't pay the prevailing wage — approximately \$30 per hour in California — and thus historically have been able to bid lower.

"It becomes a contractor's marker," he said. "It's a race to the bottom. The real issue here is accountability."

Norlander said that isn't so.

"They say we don't pay appropriate wages, don't set up training funds, but that's ridiculous. I've been audited numerous times," she said. "I've never been fined a dime."

Despite cost concerns, major construction jobs in Santa Clara County valued at nearly \$3 billion have been completed with

PLAs in place, Struthers said, including San Jose International Airport, San Jose City Hall, and Mountain View's El Camino Hospital.

Hospital officials said the attraction of using a PLA for El Camino, which was saddled with the state-mandated construction of a new, earthquake-safe medical facility, was the belief that it would provide overall stability during the construction process.

El Camino spokesperson Judy Twitchell said that, in the hospital's opinion, "It really makes sense to have a PLA on a project this huge and complex. They like to work out all the issues before they start; it just helps on a project of this size."

The common text of a PLA establishes a labor management committee to meet on a regular basis to resolve issues during the construction project, and sets up guidelines for work rules, hours, holidays, overtime pay and dispute resolution procedures.

There's always a chance of a strike," Struthers said, "but [with a PLA] we've given up our right to give up

manpower. It keeps a very tight schedule. There's definitely a value there from the owner's perspective."

For now, Foothill-De Anza has not taken sides on the issue, but is opening up a full discussion during its April 2 meeting. A second meeting is scheduled for April 30, when the board will vote on the issue. ■

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

"It really makes sense to have a PLA on a project this huge and complex."

JUDY TWITCHELL

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Photo of Curly and Willi Frey (in traditional outfit) with Char Pitts and Don Powell at the Oktoberfest in Munich, Germany.

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- YOUR LETTERS
- GUEST OPINIONS

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■ EDITORIAL THE OPINION OF THE VOICE

Final brakes on BART to San Jose

In the wake of last week's scathing audit that shows the Valley Transportation Authority is nearly \$3 billion short of needed revenue to build and operate the extension of BART to San Jose, it is time for county transportation leaders to look for other options.

We know it will be difficult for San Jose residents and BART's other supporters to accept the unfortunate truth: There simply is not enough money for VTA to build the ultra-high-priced BART and still meet its obligations to other cities in the county that would not benefit from the \$4.7 billion project.

For cities north of San Jose, like Mountain View, Los Altos and Palo Alto, the audit was not a surprise. It has been clear for several years that the VTA was inflating ridership numbers and deflating costs — a dangerous mix that auditors said added up to a \$2.8 billion (yes, billion with a "B") mistake.

The irony of this debacle is that the VTA already has plenty of money if it simply drops the BART idea, and instead looks for ways to combine heavy rail and light rail into a transit network that could be built soon and for a lot less money. Such a system would give commuters real options to get out of their cars, which, after-all, is the goal of all BART supporters.

Unfortunately, the VTA is not likely to give up BART so easily. One option already being considered is ending the extension from Fremont at Berryessa, more than five miles short of the original terminus, which would save half of the estimated \$4.7 billion estimated project cost. San Jose Mayor Chuck Reed told the Mercury News last week, "I'm committed to bringing BART all the way to Santa Clara. But I am also a realist, and if we don't have the money, we don't have the money."

If VTA board members decide they cannot give up BART, Reed and VTA chief Michael Burns have already said they will support putting a transportation sales tax before voters next year. Such a tax would require a two-thirds approval, but some observers believe it could pass (as in 2000, when a half-cent sales tax to bring BART to San Jose won 71 percent of the vote).

A new half-cent tax would not be welcome in cities north and south of San Jose, unless major promises were made by VTA leaders to spread proceeds of the tax to all county projects, not just BART to San Jose. But as shown in the recent failed effort to pass a countywide tax by a simple majority, voters are not fond of new taxes these days. We think it is time for VTA to go back to the drawing board and design and implement projects that can be built without raising taxes.

■ LETTERS VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

WHISMAN PROJECT IS OVERLY AMBITIOUS

Editor:

The 1,260-unit housing development proposed by Regis Homes for the Whisman area is much too ambitious.

The ink isn't even dry with details of the Mayfield Mall development, where there are apparently a number of unresolved issues pertaining to height, density, treatment of heritage trees and overall impact on the area.

Yet the city is considering an even more massive project at the opposite end of town. There are currently over 3,000 housing units in the pipeline and it seems paramount that the city takes the time to update its general plan before deciding to perpetuate the torrid pace of development currently being embraced.

The prospect of addressing affordable housing in Mountain View is commendable; however, a development that would draw perhaps 2,700 new residents to one location is excessive. The suggestion that traffic in the area would decrease during morning and evening commutes is somewhat perplexing.

If the city is serious about constructing something which realistically addresses a balance between scale, functionality and aesthetics for both new and existing residents, I hope council members will not merely provide a rubber stamp for this project. I also hope that the prospect of eight acres of parkland and a boatload of tax revenue for the city doesn't cloud the council's judgment.

Please consider the long-term impact on the entire city carefully before deciding to pave over every remaining parcel.

Scott Haber
Flynn Ave

COUNCIL SHOULD CONSIDER GLOBAL WARMING

Editor:

This is in response to last week's letter from the "single-issue voter" (Letters to the Editor, "Council must create more parks, now").

Mountain View certainly needs more parks and open space, especially as many homes do not have yards. I agree that the City Council needs to make use of the in-lieu fees to develop new parks and to improve existing parks.

But for the council to consider global warming in its decisions hardly indicates "delusions of grandeur." It shows the recognition that global climate change affects everyone and we all need to do whatever we can to prevent a catastrophe. If global warming continues unchecked, parts of Mountain View will be under water in 50 or 100 years.

The number of jobs in and near Mountain View are increasing, so it is right for the council to approve more housing so people don't have to live in the Central Valley and drive an hour or more each way to get to work. Maybe the Mayfield project as designed is not appropriate for the location, but let's allow high-density housing to be built elsewhere in the city.

By the way, the mayors of over

► See **LETTERS**, next page



Foothill-De Anza should reject discriminatory PLAs

By Nicole Goehring

In June of 2006, local residents voted to support the Foothill-De Anza Community College District's new construction bond Measure C. Our contractors and their employees were among the more than 65 percent of voters who approved the college bond measure. They looked forward to being able to build and work in their community.

Sadly, the local citizenry is now learning something that they were never informed of before the vote. Directors of the college are being asked by labor unions to approve a project labor agreement (PLA) on all Measure C school construction. Such agreements keep non-union contractors from working on jobs the agreement covers. We believe these agreements are nothing but discrimination packaged as a solution to a nonexistent problem. They will only reduce competition and increase costs.

If PLAs are so essential and such a wonderful construction tool, then why weren't we made aware of this "tool" before the election? In our view, it is because PLAs are incredibly divisive and have been rejected around state repeatedly by free-thinking public entities.

County taxpayers should be aware of PLAs and urge their representatives to reject them, for three reasons. First, we believe PLAs can increase the cost of public projects, potentially reducing the value of the college bonds. Second, PLAs are discriminatory and stifle local and minority participation. And third, wages paid and benefits offered to workers — be they union or nonunion — are the same under the prevailing state mandate, so this is not an issue of so-called "livable wages."

Though many PLA supporters claim the agreements hold costs of projects down, their claims are not in agreement with the facts. First, consider basic economic theory: When competition is

reduced, prices increase.

Oakland has learned an expensive PLA lesson. In the spring of 2004, the Oakland Unified School District issued a construction bid for the rehab and modernization of Burckhalter Elementary School. Eight bids were received, the lowest being \$1.8 million. However, the district decided to re-bid the contract after agreeing to include a PLA on the work.

This time only three bids were received, and the lowest bid was \$2.2 million — 24 percent higher than the non-PLA bid. Even sadder for the parents and teachers of that community was the fact that the district was forced to close five elementary schools due to budget shortages.

So why would anyone support a PLA? Many public officials simply are not aware of the facts. Others are beholden to union leaders and are being "asked" to consider them. In some cases, unions attempt to convince officials to sign union-only project labor agreements under the threat of labor unrest or work stoppages. Sign the PLA, they say, and you'll avoid costly strikes and have "labor peace."

Unfortunately, labor peace is not always achieved. The expansion at San Francisco International Airport, constructed under a PLA, was still subjected to strikes by union workers.

It is wrong to ask for money from the public and then pursue discriminatory PLAs after the funds have been approved. Elected officials and board representatives at all levels of government should say "no" to discrimination and "yes" to open competition. We urge the Foothill-De Anza district board members to do just that.

Nicole Goehring is government affairs director for Associated Builders and Contractors, Golden Gate Chapter.

We provide training while building Foothill-De Anza projects

By Neil Struthers

In 2006, local voters overwhelmingly approved Measure C, a \$496 million bond measure that will enable the Foothill-De Anza Community College District to complete its 15-year plan to purchase new technology, renovate buildings and construct new facilities.

The bond measure also provides the district with an opportunity to leverage some of these funds to create new career training opportunities for local community college students in good occupations such as carpentry, construction management, and as electricians and engineers, among others.

Under an agreement proposed by our local Building Trades Council, contractors seeking bond-related work would agree to provide a certain number of jobs to qualified local community college students. Students would be funneled into the program through an elective academic offering that exposes them to construction industry careers.

As an added benefit, the numerous apprenticeship programs associated with the Building Trades Council will grant students working under the agreement entrance into their formal programs after they complete their coursework with the ultimate goal of helping them obtain their union cards as members of a skilled craft. Similar programs are winning accolades at the East Side Union High School District and the San Jose Evergreen Community College District.

There is, however, a contingent of contractors ideologically opposed to these agreements. They maintain that these programs increase costs and unfairly exclude contractors who don't participate in apprenticeship training or meet other requirements in the agreements, such as providing industry standard levels of health benefits to employees.

We believe these arguments are false and misleading. The real issue is account-

ability. Under laws that have been in place for more than 75 years, all contractors must pay prevailing wages on public works projects. The law is intended to prevent employers from importing cheap labor in place of qualified local workers and stop them from gutting health coverage and training programs to gain a cost advantage over more responsible contractors.

Unfortunately, this law has proven hard to enforce. That has contributed to a lack of construction-related career training opportunities both at the high school and community college level. The agreement we have proposed makes it very hard for contractors to circumvent this law.

Enforcing laws on prevailing wages has many benefits. The East Side High School District in San Jose has recorded an increase in the number of bidders since implementing the agreement three years ago.

Contractors have a choice when deciding what projects to bid on. They go to that trouble when they know there is a level playing field. They don't when certain contractors with a reputation for taking unfair advantage of prevailing wage rules are in the running.

And they won't offer training to students if it puts them at a competitive disadvantage. We are confident that when the district completes its review of our proposal it will join the other educational jurisdictions that are getting the biggest bang for the public construction buck, not only by building new buildings but also by building new lives as well. After all, that is what education is all about.

Neil Struthers is CEO of the Building and Construction Trades Council of Santa Clara and San Benito counties, which represents more than 25,000 construction workers.

■ LETTERS

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

400 cities have signed the U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement, so there is plenty of precedence for local government action.

**Phyllis Michel
Concord Circle**

MUSSOLINI'S SPIRIT LIVES ON IN CALTRAIN

Editor:

The typical rider depends on Caltrain to get to or from work or to take care of family or civic responsibilities. So it's a shame the typical Caltrain experience involves malfunctioning ticket machines, rudeness and, sometimes, a \$300 to \$500 fine for the rider.

I had just such an experience when I took Caltrain home from work earlier this month. Waiting with my bike at the Millbrae southbound platform, I realized the arriving train's bike car was at the other end of the train. I started running with my bike to reach the other end, and the conductor saw me doing this.

Nonetheless, the train closed its doors and started moving away before I could reach the bike car. I had an appointment near the Mountain View station, and thanks to the rudeness of the conductor, I was unable to keep my commitment.

I used to think these sorts of actions were necessary for timeli-

ness. But a Caltrain conductor happily delays a train to enforce policies, just not for the benefit of the riders.

This recent experience reminded me why it had been a year since I last used Caltrain. Driving my car up and down Highway 101 every day during commute hours is a less stressful and a more humane experience.

I have come to the conclusion that Caltrain is hostile to its riders. Maybe one day, if we're lucky, its management will be assumed by BART or some other transit authority.

**Karen McAdams
San Pierre Way**

ESHOO SUPPORTS FAMILY PLANNING PROGRAMS

Editor:

I'm writing in response to Kristin Adams' March 9 letter calling on the federal government to expand access to low-income women for family planning services and urging me to co-sponsor H.R. 819, the Prevention First Act (Letters to the Editor, "Prevention First Act is good legislation").

I've consistently supported legislation that enhances family planning programs. In the last Congress I was a co-sponsor of the Prevention First Act. This year I've decided to become an

original co-sponsor of H.R. 1074, the Reducing the Need for Abortion and Supporting Parents Act, which offers a comprehensive set of prevention and support policies to reduce the number of unintended pregnancies and abortions in the United States.

The legislation, supported by Planned Parenthood and NARAL Pro-Choice America, provides a holistic, common-sense approach to preventing unintended pregnancies and supporting pregnant women. I'm proud to support this legislation and will do everything possible to secure its passage.

**Rep. Anna G. Eshoo
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Viewpoint

■ GUEST OPINION

How to make the most of our transportation investment

By Carl Guardino

On Feb. 14, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger appointed me to the nine-member California Transportation Commission, a four-year term of part-time citizen service that began on March 1. Appropriately (for a Valentine's Day appointment), I view this as a labor of love.

With transportation and traffic congestion cited as the foremost frustration of Bay Area residents for 30 of the past 32 years, my responsibilities are important to our region and state. Over the next 90 days I will be traveling to 12 counties throughout the greater Bay Area — home to seven million people — to seek your insights and ideas.

Specifically, in sessions open to the public, I have asked the boards of supervisors, transportation agencies and transit districts in counties from as far south as Monterey and San Benito to as far north as Napa and Sonoma, to share their views on four key issues: their top traffic

concerns, top safety issues, key priorities for options to the automobile, and how they are leveraging limited state transportation funds.

I view transportation investments with four simple and straightforward objectives:

■ Leverage every taxpayer dollar — California voters had the vision to approve nearly \$20 billion in transportation bonds last November. Yet the state's highest priority road and transit improvements over the next 10 years alone will cost \$160 billion. Locally, "self-help counties," whose voters have enacted sales tax measures for specific transportation improvements as we have done three times in Santa Clara County, must continue to be rewarded with matching funds.

■ De-congest our roadways — Traffic relief must be a key priority. Transportation dollars have a dual benefit: They put Californians to work building and improving the transportation system, which helps other Californians get to work. Recently, the California Transportation Commission allocated \$4.5 billion to fix some key traffic tie-ups. Much more must

be done. The Highway 280/880 interchange near Valley Fair in San Jose is an auto-mall sized monument to the mountain of projects that still need funding throughout the state.

■ Saving time and saving lives — While traffic relief is a top priority, saving lives is vital. In the 1940s, my mom and her family moved from Oklahoma to San Jose in search of a better life. Their trip included the treacherous Pacheco Pass, Highway 152, linking the Central Valley with what is now Silicon Valley. Six decades later, too many Californians still risk or even lose their lives on this dangerous stretch of road.

A more recent example is Highway 9, a state-owned stretch of road between Los Gatos, Monte Sereno and Saratoga. Over the past few years, numerous accidents between motorists and cyclists or pedestrians have led to serious injuries and needless loss of life. Addressing safety issues saves lives.

We need to invest in alternatives to solo vehicle driving.

■ Options to the automobile — Whether we are motivated by traffic relief, improving air quality, or curbing greenhouse gases and our overdependence on oil, we need to invest in alternatives to solo vehicle driving. This includes heavy rail (like BART and Caltrain), light rail and buses. It also includes cost-effective programs and public-private partnerships for carpools and vanpools, and increasing the safety and capacity for pedestrian and bicycling paths and lanes.

The California Transportation Commission represents the needs and frustrations of nearly 37 million Californians. We serve the entire state, while also offering insights from our own regional experiences. As I embark on this "Listening Tour" of traffic talks, I welcome your thoughts. Collectively, many Californians have been enraged by the traffic tie-ups that stall our state. It is time we engage in order to invest every tax dollar wisely and well.

Carl Guardino is CEO of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group. He can be reached at cguardino@svlg.net. His "listening tour" began Wednesday in Oakland.



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The Mountain View City Council has scheduled a study session for Tuesday, April 3, 2007 to consider the Fiscal Year 2007-08 budget for the General Operating Fund, including various city fees. The study session will start at 6:30 in the Council Chamber, 500 Castro Street, Mountain View.

If you are unable to attend the meeting but would like the City Council and staff to know your views, please send a letter to the City Council at P.O. Box 7540, Mountain View, CA 94039 or an e-mail to city.clerk@mountainview.gov by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, March 30.

Copies of the Fiscal Year 2007-08 Narrative Budget Report – General Operating Fund will be available for review by 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, March 29, 2007 at City Hall in the City Clerk's Office, 500 Castro Street, 3rd floor, Mountain View, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and at the Mountain View Public Library, 585 Franklin St, Mountain View. The report can also be found on the City's website at www.ci.mtnview.ca.us.

City of Mountain View Fiscal Year 2007-2008 Budget Schedule:

April 3 Study Session: Narrative Budget Report (Part I) – General Operating Fund

April 17 Study Session: Capital Improvement Program (CIP) and Annual Goal Setting (Part II)

May 1 Study Session: Narrative Budget Report (Part II) – Other Funds (including the Utility Funds) and General Operating Fund follow-up

May 8 Council Meeting: CDBG Hearing (Part II)

May 22 (tentative) Council Meeting: Adoption of CIP

June 5 Council Meeting: Annual Budget Public Hearing

June 12 Council Meeting: Adoption of Budget

■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

■ MOVIE TIMES

■ BEST BETS FOR ENTERTAINMENT

■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

Where's the orange peel beef?

IT'S AT JING JING IN DOWNTOWN PALO ALTO

By Sheila Himmel

Sticky, sweet and spicy orange peel beef has been Jing Jing's star attraction for more than two decades. But the downtown Palo Alto veteran isn't all about heat.

If it's been a while since you've had savory, slightly nutty sizzling rice soup, Jing Jing is a good place to reconnect with that, too. It comes in three sizes, \$4.95-\$9.25. At your table, servers plop toasted rice into chicken broth populated with shrimp, chicken and pork.

Twenty-one years ago, Jing

Jing's Szechwan and Hunan food was considered hot in style and flavor. Downtown Palo Alto now has fresher interpretations of the Western school of Chinese cooking, but Jing Jing still rings many people's chimes.

Jing Jing does a lot of takeout and wisely provides microwave-ready cartons without those irritating metal handles. Orange peel beef (\$9.75) works fine for takeout, with its stir-fried beef, candied orange peel, garlic and red chilies. Sizzling rice soup does not.

The experienced takeout customer takes alternative transportation, brings a companion and



MARJAN SADOUGH

An indoor view of Jing Jing restaurant in Palo Alto.

► See **JING JING**, page 22

Sports Page

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Weekend



MARJAN SADOUGH

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JING JING

► Continued from page 21

to dash in and out, or calls Jing Jing from the car. Parking can be brutal.

Jing Jing also delivers, with some restrictions, to Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Atherton.

Students looking to stretch their dining-out dollar do well with the combination fried rice (\$6.50). Fried but not greasy, the rice packs pork, chicken, shrimp, scrambled egg, peas and carrots.

The walnut prawn dish (\$12.75) also could be a meal in itself, if you

can stand this much sweetness. Seventeen (!) prawns in crispy fried coats rest with toasted and candied walnuts, too many to count, atop a bed of crisp, shredded iceberg lettuce. When life gives you mayo sauce and iceberg lettuce, make a salad.

Look for the house special noodle soup (\$6.25) under Noodles, not Soup. There's a good reason. Fat, squared-off noodles absorb the hearty soup and become redolent of broth featuring chicken, pork and prawns. Mushrooms, water chestnut, onions and beaten egg also get into the act. It's like egg flower

soup with noodles.

In addition to orange peel beef, 30 items are listed as Jing Jing Specialties. That may be too many. They all claim to be hot and spicy, but they're pretty tame. The hot braised whole fish (\$16.95) had a crispy skin at one time, but the hot bean sauce did it in. It's a good sauce, though, and the fish is flaky once you get rid of the skin and bones, head and tail.

With eggplant in spicy garlic sauce (\$7.25), the peeled eggplant is so bland and viscous it

► Continued on next page

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► Continued from previous page

could be okra.

Shredded pork in Peking sauce (\$8.50) comes with four flour pancakes, like mu shu pork. But instead of cabbage you get double the tasty pork. On the other hand, Sweet & Sour Pork A La U.S. (\$8.50) drowns in pineapple and gristly, stingy pieces of fried meat.

Lunch specials are served practically before you've ordered. If you have half an hour for lunch on a weekday, you'll have time to spare, mon-

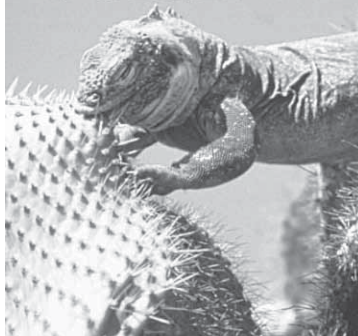
ey in your pocket and probably leftovers for dinner. However, this means the noodles are a little too ready. Avoid dishes like Szechwan dan-dan noodles (\$6.25). The lunch plate (\$6.75) offers a wide choice of two dishes with rice, soup and tea.

Lunch plates include vegetarian Hunan tofu and assorted vegetables, and the full menu has a huge vegetable department.

Jing Jing shows its age, in wooden wainscoting and major use of mirrors. But service is very friendly, from the enthusiastic greeting to the grateful goodbye. ■

HUNGRY?
Check the dining out section of your

MountainView
VOICE



■ DINING NOTES

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Weekend

MOVIE TIMES

300 (R) ★★★1/2 Century 16: 11 a.m.; 1:55, 4:40, 7:30 & 10:15 p.m.
Century 20: 11:40 a.m.; 12:55, 2:25, 3:35, 5:05, 6:25, 7:50, 9:10 & 10:35 p.m.

AMAZING GRACE (PG) ★★★1/2 Century 12: 12:30 & 4 p.m.

AVENUE MONTAIGNE (PG) Aquarius: 12:30, 2:45, 5, 7:15 & 9:40 p.m.

BLADES OF GLORY (PG-13) Century 16: 11:10 a.m.; 12:10, 1:30, 2:35, 3:55, 4:55, 7:10, 8, 9:35 & 10:20 p.m. Century 20: 11:50 a.m.; 12:35, 1:25, 2:15, 3:05, 3:55, 4:45, 5:35, 6:30, 7:15, 8:05, 9, 9:45 & 10:20 p.m.

BRIDGE TO TERABITHIA (PG)
Century 20: 11:35 a.m.; 1:55 & 4:20 p.m.

DEAD SILENCE (R) Century 20: 1:05, 3:30, 5:40, 7:55 & 10:10 p.m.

GHOST RIDER (PG-13) Century 20: 6:55 & 9:25 p.m.

THE HILLS HAVE EYES 2 (R) Century 16: 11:05 a.m.; 1:20, 3:35, 5:50, 8:05 & 10:20 p.m. Century 20: 12:15, 1:30, 2:35, 3:45, 4:50, 6, 7:05, 8:15, 9:20 & 10:25 p.m.

THE HOAX (R) (SNEAK PREVIEW) Century 16: Sat. at 7:30 p.m. Century 20: Sat. at 7:30 p.m.

I THINK I LOVE MY WIFE (R) ★ Century 12: 7:05 & 9:35 p.m.

THE LAST MIMZY (PG) Century 16: 11:25 a.m.; 2, 4:30, 6:55 & 9:20 p.m. Century 20: 11:45 a.m.; 12:55, 2:20, 3:15, 4:40, 5:35, 7:10, 8, 9:35 & 10:20 p.m.

THE LIVES OF OTHERS (R) ★★★★★ Century 12: 12:20, 3:30, 7:10 & 10:10 p.m. Guild: Noon, 3, 6 & 9 p.m.

THE LOOKOUT (R) ★★★1/2 Century 16: 12:15, 2:45, 5:15, 7:45 & 10:10 p.m. Century 12: Noon, 1:15, 2:30, 3:45, 5, 6:15, 7:30, 8:45 & 10 p.m.

MEET THE ROBINSONS (G) Century 16: 11:30 a.m.; 2:05, 4:30, 7 & 9:30 p.m. Century 20: 11:30 a.m.; 12:20, 1:10, 2, 2:45, 3:40, 4:30, 5:20, 6:15, 7, 7:50, 8:40, 9:30 & 10:15 p.m.

MEET THE ROBINSONS (IN DISNEY DIGITAL 3D) (G)
Century 16: 12:30, 3, 5:30, 8 & 10:30 p.m.; Sat. & Sun. also at 10 a.m.

MISS POTTER (PG) ★★★1/2 Aquarius: 2:15, 4:30, 6:45 & 9:15 p.m.; Sat. & Sun. also at noon.

MUSIC AND LYRICS (PG-13) ★★★ Century 12: 9:30 p.m.

THE NAMESAKE (PG-13) ★★★ Century 20: 11:25 a.m.; 2, 5, 7:45 & 10:30 p.m. Palo Alto Square: 1:30, 4:25, 7:20 & 10:20 p.m.

NOMAD: THE WARRIOR (R) Century 20: 7:20 & 9:50 p.m.

NORBIT (PG-13) ★★ Century 20: 12:25, 5:25 & 10:30 p.m.

PAN'S LABYRINTH (R) ★★★1/2 Century 20: 2:50 & 7:55 p.m.
Palo Alto Square: 1:35, 4:20, 7:10 & 10 p.m.

PEACEFUL WARRIOR (PG-13) Century 16: 11:15 a.m.; 2:15, 5:05, 7:50 & 10:35 p.m. Century 20: 11:35 a.m.; 2:15, 4:55, 7:40 & 10:25 p.m.

PREMONITION (PG-13) ★★ Century 16: 12:05, 2:30, 5, 7:40 & 10:05 p.m. Century 12: 12:05, 2:40, 5:05, 7:35 & 10:05 p.m.

PRIDE (PG) ★★★ Century 16: 7:25 & 9:55 p.m.
Century 20: 11:45 a.m.; 12:50, 2:20, 3:20, 4:45, 5:45, 8:10 & 10:35 p.m.

REIGN OVER ME (R) ★★★ Century 16: 12:50, 3:50, 6:50 & 9:50 p.m. Century 12: 11:55 a.m.; 1:20, 3, 4:15, 6, 7:20, 9 & 10:15 p.m.

SHOOTER (R) ★★★1/2 Century 16: 11 a.m.; 12:35, 1:50, 3:25, 4:45, 6:45, 7:35, 9:40 & 10:25 p.m. Century 12: 12:10, 1:40, 3:10, 4:45, 6:30, 7:40, 9:45 & 10:35 p.m.

TMNT (PG) Century 16: 11:30 a.m.; 12:40, 1:45, 2:50, 4, 5:10, 7:05 & 9:25 p.m.; Sat. & Sun. also at 10:30 a.m. Century 12: 11:50 a.m.; 1, 2, 3:20, 4:30, 5:45, 7, 8:15 & 10:30 p.m.

WILD HOGS (PG-13) ★★ Century 16: Fri., Sun.-Tue. at 11:35 a.m.; 2:20, 4:50, 7:15 & 9:45 p.m.; Sat. at 11:35 a.m.; 2:20, 4:50 & 10 p.m.
Century 12: 12:15, 2:50, 5:15, 7:45 & 10:20 p.m.

ZODIAC (R) ★★★1/2 Century 20: 11:55 a.m.; 3:15 & 10:05 p.m.; Fri., Sun.-Tue. also at 6:45 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)
For show times, plot synopses and more information about any films playing at the Aquarius, Guild and Park, visit www.LandmarkTheatres.com

★ 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



I THINK I LOVE MY WIFE ★
(Century 12) The plot of *iWife!* is one big tease. All Richard Cooper (Chris Rock) can think about is sex, primarily because he doesn't have any in his seven-year marriage. His exhausted wife Brenda (Gina Torres) works, takes care of the kids and falls asleep as soon as her head hits the pillow. One day a sexy friend (Kerry Washington) shows up at Richard's office to ask for a favor. From that point on, the successful Wall Street investment banker starts meeting the provocatively dressed Nikki for late lunches and other afternoon outings, often missing important business meetings with colleagues (Steve Buscemi and Edward Herrmann), putting his job in jeopardy. A lack of inventiveness dogs the narrative. Many situations are repeated with slight, unfunny variations. Richard Cooper looks like the real Chris Rock but acts like a mindless duplicate from "Invasion of the Body Snatchers." And he's not funny. *Rated: R for pervasive language and some sexual content. 1 hour, 37 minutes.* — S.T.

THE NAMESAKE ★★★
(Century 20, CineArts) No one seems better suited to transform Jhumpa Lahiri's touching prose into film than director Mira Nair ("Monsoon Wedding"). The narrative unfolds differently than the story in the best-selling 2003 book. Starting more dramatically with the tragic train crash that spares bookworm Ashoke's (Irfan Khan) life in 1974 India, Sooni Taraporevala's script initially favors the male point of view. Then time leaps forward to the awkward meeting between Ashoke and Ashima (Tabu), whose parents have arranged for their marriage. When asked if she will be lonely living halfway around the world from her family, the shy beauty looks at her future husband and replies, "Won't he be there?" Humor and humanity go hand in hand, as the newlyweds embrace each other and life in America. Capturing the nuances of such a complex, textured novel is impossible. Nair conveys its spirit, creating a moving saga that speaks to anyone caught between cultures. *Rated: PG-13 for sexuality/nudity, a scene of drug use, some disturbing images and brief language. In Bengali, Hindi and English with English subtitles. 2 hours, 2 minutes.* — S.T.

PREMONITION ★★
(Century 12, Century 16) Sandra Bullock is restless wife and mother Linda Hanson, whose husband (Julian McMahon as Jim) may be dallying in more than the stock market. Which is all null and void when a policeman comes to the door to inform her that Jim has been killed in a car wreck. Linda copes with the shock on autopilot, calling in her mother (Kate

Nelligan) for support and rallying the courage to tell her two small daughters that their dad is gone for good — until she wakes up the next morning to find Jim in the shower, and the next morning and the next, in a vicious cycle of bewilderment that frustrates with mounting questions that have no answers. Somehow Linda finds the strength and improbable resources to piece together a re-shuffled timeline in order to confront her husband's lover and prevent him from his imminent death. Bullock is the strong suit — eminently watchable — but the pacing stutters as she reorganizes her tangled web and dreams of "Miss Congeniality 3." *Rated: PG-13 for language and some violence. 1 hour, 37 minutes* — J.A.

PRIDE ★★

(Century 16, Century 20) Inner-city Philadelphia, circa 1975. Jim Ellis (Terrence Howard) struggles to find work despite his strong education and professional demeanor. Following a discouraging interview with a bigoted coach (Tom Arnold), Ellis applies for temporary work with the Philadelphia Department of Recreation (PDR). But his newfound duties — to clean out the Marcus Foster Recreation Center so it can be torn down — don't sit well with the center's longtime maintenance man, Elston (Bernie Mac). A handful of young men utilize the center's basketball courts daily, but the area around the facility has become a refuge for drug dealers and delinquents. Things change when Ellis uncovers the center's swimming pool, sparking memories of his experiences as a young swimmer. In an effort to keep the center open, Ellis tirelessly cleans the pool and encourages the energetic basketball players to come swim. Soon the close-knit group is eager to start a PDR swim team and challenge others, with Ellis and Elston leading the charge. Although cliched and formulaic, the film has plenty to applaud, boasting resilience, camaraderie, and yes, pride. *Rated: PG for thematic material, language including some racial epithets, and violence. 1 hour, 44 minutes.* — T.H.

REIGN OVER ME ★★

(Century 12, Century 16) Alan Johnson (Don Cheadle) is a successful dentist and family man who isn't feeling the satisfaction he thinks he should. In a quirky Manhattan moment he spies long-ago roommate Charlie Fineman (Adam Sandler) zipping around the city on a motorized scooter looking disheveled and forlorn. Charlie, a thriving oral MD in his own right, had the rug pulled out from under him when his wife and three young daughters went down on a targeted 9/11 aircraft bound for L.A. Unable to cope with the magnitude of his loss, Charlie has shut down and lives in a peculiar fugue state, haunting late-night Chinese diners, frenetically banging drums at an alt-punk club and incessantly remodeling his kitchen. Stunned at the turn of events, Alan resolves to help his old friend regain his balance, in the process secretly coveting Charlie's freedom and pulling away from his own professional and familial burdens. The unlikely alliance at the center of it all is dark, edgy and saturated with his-

tory and sentiment. As is the poignant concept of 9/11's post-traumatic stress cases. *Rated: R for language and sexual references. 2 hours, 4 minutes.* — J.A.

SHOOTER ★★1/2

(Century 12, Century 16) Mark Wahlberg turns a hackneyed action-adventure into a stand-up-and-take-notice thriller. Special Forces Marine Bob Lee Swagger (Wahlberg) buries himself in retirement after an Ethiopian intelligence mission goes south and his shooting partner ends up with a bullet in his brain. Three years into Swagger's self-imposed exile in the Rocky Mountains, the government comes calling and begs his crack-shot services as a protection expert for the current president. Naturally it's a cover for a more fiendish scheme and the cynical Swagger suddenly finds himself on the wrong end of the law. But what's a little conspiracy when you've got the skills to take down the entire operation? Paranoia, betrayal, double-crosses and huge dollops of testosterone are all accounted for as Swagger takes one for the team and still manages to elude the competition. Multiple climaxes finally settle on a way to end the damn thing and not a moment too soon. Bottom line, the bad guys are bad and the guns are smokin' hot; hey, that's why they call it a thriller! *Rated: R for language and loads of violence. 2 hours, 6 minutes.* — J.A.

WILD HOGS ★★

(Century 12, Century 16) William H. Macy is the best thing about director Walt Becker's "Wild Hogs." His Howdy-Doody face and good-hearted enthusiasm serve his computer-geek character well, as he joins Tim Allen, Martin Lawrence and John Travolta in a tepid comedy about midlife crisis. With a nod to "Easy Rider," the suburban friends mount their motorcycles to seek adventure on the open road. Make that misadventure. There's not a sign or post that Dudley (Macy) doesn't seem to slam into between Cincinnati and this not-so-wild bunch's destination of the Pacific Ocean. Allen takes the role of Doug, a dentist with a supportive spouse (Jill Hennessy) and a son (Dominic Janes) disinterested in having anything to do with him. Lawrence plays a hen-pecked husband forced to return to The Firm, a plumbing business that sends him out to repair overflowing toilets at gas stations. Travolta seems to be living the male-fantasy dream with a supermodel wife. But all of them are dissatisfied with their dull, boring lives. *Rated: PG-13 for crude and sexual content, and some violence. 1 hour, 39 minutes.* — S.T.

■ **MOVIE CRITICS**

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

■ **MOVIE REVIEWS**

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american	french	pizza
<p>Clarkes Charcoal Broiler 615 W. El Camino Real, Mtn. View. 650/967-0851 Voted Best Hamburger 14 Yrs in a Row. Beautiful Outside Patio Dining.</p> <p>Hobee's Restaurants 2312 Central Expwy. Mtn. View. 650/968-6050 Voted Best Breakfast/Brunch 9 years in a row!</p> <p>Marie Callendar's 4710 El Camino Real (just south of San Antonio) 650/941-6989</p> <p>Sports Page 1431 Plymouth Street (exit at Shoreline off 101) Mtn. View. 650/961-1992</p>	<p>Chef TJ 938 Villa Street, Mtn. View. 650/964-7466 "Outrageously good" New French-American fare "in a charming little Victorian house" — Zagat 2003.</p> <p>Le Petit Bistro 1405 W. El Camino Real, Mtn. View. 650/964-3321 Casual and cozy French restaurant. 15 tables.</p>	<p>Kapp's Pizza Bar & Grill 191 Castro Street Mtn. View, 650/961-1491 Happy Hours Mon-Fri 4pm-6pm.</p> <p>El Paso Cafe 1407 El Camino Real, Mtn. View. 650/961-8858 Fax: 650/961-3439 (Between Rengstorff and Shoreline)</p>
bakery / cafe	mexican	ice cream
<p>Annie's Coffee Place 856 W. El Camino Real #A (Between Shoreline & Castro) Mtn. View. 650/938-1333 Mon-Fri 7am-6pm Sat 8am-5pm</p>	<p>Fiesta Del Mar- Seafood, Mexican Cuisine & Cantina 1005 N. Shoreline Blvd., Mtn. View. 650/965-9354 Open Daily, Lunch & Dinner. Voted Best Seafood for 7 years.</p>	<p>Gelato Classico 241 B Castro Street Mtn. View. 650/969-2900</p>
		
<p style="background-color: yellow; border: 1px solid red; display: inline-block; padding: 2px;">If you would like to be listed in DINING ON THE TOWN please call Britt Callaway at the Voice at 964-6300</p>		

Goings On

MOUNTAIN VIEW VOICE

■ HIGHLIGHT

2ND ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER MUSIC COMPETITION

Hosted by Areon Flutes. March 31, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Designed to promote the study and enjoyment of performing chamber works, the performance division competition will be open for public enjoyment. Free. Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. www.areonflutes.com

SPECIAL EVENTS

SPRING FLING Event features the Peninsula Carriage Driving Club showcasing carriages and horses, the Fortis Agility Sports Training Group with their trained dogs, craft projects and face painting for kids, storytelling, puppet and musical shows. Pre-ordered box lunches are available. March 31, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. \$20 members/\$25 non-members/\$5 children 5-17, free for children under 5. Filoli, 86 Canada Road, Woodside. www.filoli.org

ART GALLERIES

"ART MADNESS" Artists will show exhibits from pottery to painting. Through March 31. Free. Gallery House, 320 California Ave., Palo Alto. Call 574-4654. www.gallery-house2.com

"CATARACT: A JOURNEY OF SPIRIT" Chinese-style brush paintings by local artist, Patricia J. Machmiller, on display through March 31. Soaring granite, a single pine tree and the mist from a waterfall are some of the subjects rendered in ink on rice paper. Hours: Tue.-Sat., 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Gallery 9, 143 Main St., Los Altos. www.gallery9losaltos.com

"IMAGES FROM ITALY" WATERCOLORS BY SANSON Through March 31. Exhibit reflects Sanson's attraction to Italian hill towns and Renaissance cities. Portola Art Gallery, 75 Arbor Road, Menlo Park. www.portolaartgallery.com

"NOW AND THEN" A solo exhibition by Bay Area artist Albert Smith. Showcasing the transformation in his work since 1975. By appointment through Sun., April 1. Free. Chelsea Art Gallery, 440 Kipling St., Palo Alto. Call 324-4450. www.chelseartgallery.com

"OPEN SPACES AND OTHER PLACES" Carolyn Shaw will present a solo exhibit of oil paintings of California landscapes through April 29. Free. 1870 Art Center, 1870 Ralston Ave., Belmont. Call 574-4654. www.1870artcenter.org

"VIRIDITAS" PAINTINGS, INSTALLATIONS, PHOTOGRAPHY, EARTHWORK

AND VIDEO By Tracy Ginsberg. Through April 28, 11 a.m.-6 p.m. Free. Spur Projects, 888 Portola Road, Portola Valley. www.SpurProjects.com

"WATER" An exhibit of watercolor paintings by Kay Culpepper. Through March 30. Tue.-Sun., 2-5 p.m. Free. Flea Street Cafe Gallery, 3607 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park. Call 854-1226. kayculpepper.com

AT THE WATER'S EDGE Landscape and oil paintings by Los Altos artist, Carol Hake on display April 3-28. Meet the artist Thu., April 5, 5-7:30 p.m. Hours: Tue.-Sat., 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Gallery 9, 143 Main St., Los Altos. www.gallery9losaltos.com

EARTH AND SKY April 3-28. Cassandra Gay makes original monotype prints that are painterly in feel. Free. Gallery House, 320 California Ave., Palo Alto. Call 328-1835. www.galleryhouse2.com

HAWAII: "UP CLOSE" Views of Hawaii by watercolor artist Sue Lyttle. Through March 31. Mon.-Sat., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sun., 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Viewpoints Gallery, 315 State St., Los Altos. <http://viewpointsgallery.com/>

BENEFITS

CSMA'S ARTSALUTE GALA Benefit honoring accomplishments in the arts. Cocktail reception; dinner; entertainment; honorary awards; silent/live auctions featuring art and music, wines, travel and sports adventures. March 31, 6-11 p.m. \$250. Menlo Circus Club, 190 Park Lane, Atherton. www.arts4all.org/gala

CLASSES/WORKSHOPS

DRAWING PLANTS IN PERSPECTIVE Students learn to draw plants by observing basic botanical shapes, structures. Each class will focus on one shape to emphasize. Fridays, April 6-May 4, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. \$195 members/\$240 non-members. Filoli, 86 Canada Road, Woodside. www.filoli.org

SKETCHING IN THE GARDEN Instruction will include understanding the structure and geometry of flowers, the angles of curled leaves, shadows,



"NOW AND THEN": A solo exhibition by Bay Area artist Albert Smith. Showcasing the transformation in his work since 1975. By appointment through Sun., April 1. Free. Chelsea Art Gallery, 440 Kipling St., Palo Alto. Call 324-4450. www.chelseartgallery.com

capturing difficult colors. Fridays, April 6-27, 9 a.m.-1 p.m. \$200 members/\$240 non-members. Filoli, 86 Canada Road, Woodside. www.filoli.org

SPRING VACATION DRAMA CAMP Offered by Peninsula Youth Theatre for children ages 8-14. April 9-13. Hours: 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. \$225. Peninsula Youth Theatre, 2500 Old Middlefield Way, Mountain View. www.pyt.net.org

SUCCESS WITH CITRUS Don Dillon will tell how to plant, prune, and fertilize citrus. April 1, 2-4 p.m. \$20 members/\$25 non-members. Gamble

Garden, 1431 Waverley St., Palo Alto. Call 329-1356 ext. 0. <http://gamblegarden.org/>

COMMUNITY EVENTS

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

CONCERTS

2ND ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER MUSIC COMPETITION Hosted by Areon Flutes. March 31, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Designed to promote the study and enjoyment of performing chamber works, the performance division competition will be open for public enjoyment. Free. Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. www.areonflutes.com

ALBANY CONSORT Brandenburg Concertos 4 and 5, Vivaldi's Spring, other works to celebrate Bach's birthday for recorder, flute, oboe, strings and harpsichord. Jonathan Salzedo harpsichord; Marion Rubinstein recorder; Greer Ellison flute; Carol Panofsky, recorder and oboe; David Wilson baroque violin. April 1, 4-6 p.m. \$25/\$20 seniors/\$15 students. Congregation Etz Chayim, 4161 Alma St., Palo Alto. Call (408) 773-0375. www.albanyconsort.com

FRED CARNES TRIBUTE CONCERT A musical tribute to Fred Carnes for his donation of a Kawai Concert Grand Piano to the City of Palo Alto. March 31, 8-9:30 p.m. Free. Palo Alto Art Center Auditorium, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto. Call 463-4940.

SAN FRANCISCO CHORAL ARTISTS Shapenote hymns and work songs, spirituals and new works. Magen Solomon, artistic director. March 31, 8 p.m. \$18-\$25/group rates available. St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 600 Colorado Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94306. www.sfca.org

DANCE

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/

EXHIBITS

"ACTOR ACTOR" Through April 29. A broad celebration of the intersection of art and theater with an emphasis on Asian material. Subjects include masks, puppets, and stage set design. Hours: Tue.-Sat., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sun., 1-5 p.m. and 7-10 p.m. Free. Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto. Call 329-2366. www.cityofpaloalto.org

"CORRESPONDENCE: MASAMI TERAOKA UKIYO-E" Through April 29. Explores the contemporary work by Japanese American artist Masami Teraoka in juxtaposition with Ukiyo-e woodblock prints by Japanese masters. Hours: Tue.-Sat., 10 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sun., 1-5 p.m. and 7-10 p.m. Free. Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto. Call 329-2366. www.cityofpaloalto.org

"NO LIMITS, WHATEVER" MULTIMEDIA EXHIBIT Includes more than 30 mixed media works created by Santa Clara Valley Watercolor Society members. Through March 31. Hours: Mon.-Fri., 10 a.m.-4 p.m.; Sat.-Sun., by appointment 369-4096. Free. Redwood City Art Center, 2625 Broadway, Redwood City. Call 917-1929. www.scvws.org

100 YEARS AT THE WILLIAMS HOUSE Exhibit celebrates the 100th birthday of the Williams House through revisiting the life and times of the family who built and occupied the home. Exhibit examines life from 1907 to the 1930s. Through June 3. Fri.-Sun., 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. Museum of American Heritage, 351 Homer Ave., Palo Alto. Call 321-1004. www.moah.org

ARCHITECTURE AND GARDENS FROM AROUND THE WORLD An invitational fine art photography exhibition showcasing images of architecture and gardens from around the world. Through April 29. Free with paid admission. Filoli, 86 Canada Road, Woodside. www.filoli.org

ARCHITECTURAL TOURS OF WILLIAMS HOUSE Docent led architectural tours of the Century Old Williams House. Saturdays, through June 2, 2 p.m. Free. Museum of American Heritage, 351 Homer Ave., Palo Alto. Call 321-1004. www.moah.org

ART DIALOGUES Free docent-led tours of current exhibitions. Saturdays, 2 p.m.; no tour April 7. Call 329-2370 to arrange private tour. Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto.

ART IN ACTION LIBRARY SHOW Art in Action opens a 6-month long art show series featuring artwork from local students grades K-8. Through May 5. For a list of participating schools see website. Free. Art in Action, 3925 Bohannon Dr., Menlo Park. Call 566-8339. www.artinaction.org

BARE WITNESS: PHOTOGRAPHS BY GORDON PARKS Exhibition comprised of 73 photographs that were selected by the artist African American photographer, filmmaker, and author Gordon Parks. Hours: Wed.-Sun., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Thu., 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Through July 1. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 328 Lomita Dr., Stanford. Call 723-3469. <http://museum.stanford.edu>

HARMONY, ARTS IN ACTION STUDENT AND FACULTY SHOW Faculty of the Community School of Music and Arts and students from elementary schools in Mountain View, Los Altos, and other local communities will display paintings, drawings, sculptures, collages and more. Through April 4. Free.



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Sunnyvale	Sunrise of Sunnyvale	408-749-8600	633 South Knickerbocker Drive	AL, ALZ
Palo Alto	Sunrise of Palo Alto	650-326-1108	2701 El Camino Real	AL, ALZ
Palo Alto	Webster House	650-327-4333	401 Webster Street	IL

IL=Independent Living AL=Assisted Living ALZ=Alzheimer's Care

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Mountain View City Hall Rotunda, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. Call 917-6800.

IN THE AMERICAN WEST: PHOTOGRAPHS By Richard Avedon. Assertive, controversial, and graphically striking, Avedon's oversized images of working-class Westerners provide the opportunity to reexamine the group of photographs and to explore the realities and myths of the American West. Hours: Wed.-Sun., 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; Thu., 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Through May 6. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 328 Lomita Dr., Stanford. Call 723-3469. <http://museum.stanford.edu>

KEEBLE AND SHUCHAT PHOTOGRAPHY 30 employees display color, black and white, digital and hand colored photographs through April 11. Mon.-Sat., 9 a.m.-5:30 p.m. Keeble & Shuchat Photography, 290 California Ave., Palo Alto. Call 327-8996. www.kspphoto.com

PROFILES IN PORTRAITURE Four local artists, Charles Cantwell, Tom Thompson, Cynthia Tom and Lucy Traeger, exhibit their styles of portraiture in paintings and photography. Through April 22. Free. The Center for Nursing Excellence, 1400 Page Mill Road, Palo Alto. Call 387-2775.

SPRING MIX WATERCOLOR EXHIBIT Santa Clara Watercolor Society member show includes 60 paintings with a springtime focus. California and European landscapes, gardens, spring flowers. April 1-29. Hours: Mon.-Sat., 7:30 a.m.-5 p.m.; Sun., 8 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Free public reception Fri., April 13, 5-7 p.m. Main Street Cafe and Books, 134 Main St., Los Altos. Call 917-1929. www.scvws.org

STEVENSON HOUSE FIFTH MONOPRINT SHOW Resident artist Vlasta Diamant mounts her students' fifth monoprint show titled "Fossils." Through March 31, 7:30-8:30 p.m. Stevenson House, 455 E. Charleston Road, Palo Alto. Call 493-1478.

FAMILY AND KIDS

"GREASE" Presented by Menlo-Atherton's International Thespian Society. March 30-31, 7 p.m.; matinee March 31, 2 p.m.; April 5, 4:30 p.m. Menlo-Atherton High School, 555 Middlefield Road, Atherton.

BASEBALL STORY TIME Sun., April 1, 11:30 a.m. Free. Kepler's Books, 1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. Call 324-4321. www.keplers.com

EASTER BUNNY Professionally produced photos will be available for purchase. Through April 7, 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Stanford Shopping Center, 660 Stanford Shopping Center, Palo Alto.

EASTER EGG PAINTING April 1, 2-3 p.m. Free. Elephant Pharm, 4470 El Camino Real, Los Altos. Call 472-6800. www.elephant-pharmacy.com

EASTER PARTY Includes egg dying, face painting, crafts, games, treats and, of course, Easter egg hunts and live bunnies. March 31, 10 a.m.-noon Free. Unity Palo Alto Community Church, 3391 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Call 849-1101. www.unitypaloalto.org

FAMILY EASTER CELEBRATION The day's events will include an Easter egg hunt, crafts, games, stories, animal balloons, lunch, and more fun. Ages infant to elementary school. March 31, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Free. Grace Community Covenant Church, 701 E. Meadow Dr., Palo Alto. Call 813-1241.

FILM

FRENCH CINECLUB: "L'EFFRONTÉE" BY CLAUDE MILLER Charlotte, a girl from Savoie, quickly bonds with young visiting pianist Clara. Through her relationship with Clara, Charlotte falls in love with piano factory worker Jean, a much older man. April 4, 7-10 p.m. \$ 8/\$6. Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto. Call 575-6816. www.frenchcineclub.com

MONDAY MOVIES April 2: "Little Miss Sunshine"; April 9: "Stranger than Fiction"; April 16: "Failure to Launch"; April 23: "Borat"; April 30: "For Your Consideration" 1:30-3 p.m. \$1 members/\$2 non-members. Little House, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. Call 326-2025. www.peninsulavolunteers.org

PALO ALTO FILM SERIES "MOVIES THAT MATTER" The film follows the lives and careers of Texan trio, the Dixie Chicks, after

they criticized the US President for invading Iraq. April 6, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Donation \$5-\$10. Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto, 505 E. Charleston Road, Palo Alto. www.worldcenter.org/filmseries/pdfs/spring2007.pdf

STANFORD THEATRE GUIDE March 30: "The Big Clock" 7:30 p.m.; "Bedlam" 6 and 9:15 p.m.; March 31-April 1: "Cleopatra" 3:35 and 7:30 p.m.; "The Gay Divorcee" 5:30 and 9:25 p.m. Stanford Theatre, 221 University Ave., Palo Alto. Call 324-3700. www.stanfordtheatre.org

ON STAGE

"TRYING" TheatreWorks presents Joanna McClelland Glass' "Trying" Humorous portrait inspired by the playwright's experiences. Through April 1. See website for details. \$20-\$55. Lucie Stern Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. www.theatre-works.org

THEATREWORKS PRESENTS "MERRILY WE ROLL ALONG" An American story about dreamers and dreams. April 4-29. See website for details. Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View.

OUTDOORS

APRIL WALKS During April the Little House/

Avenidas Walking Group meets in the lobby of Little House. Call Hal Makin at 948-2310 for destination. Wednesdays, 9 a.m. Free. Little House, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. Call 326-2025. www.peninsulavolunteers.org

CALIFORNIA NEWTS 4-mile, leisurely-paced hike with docent Paul Vadopalas. Discuss the life cycle of amphibians, then hike along Canyon Road to a hidden pond to observe and learn about California newts. April 1, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Free. Monte Bello Open Space Preserve. www.openspace.org

SPORTS

GIRLS LACROSSE CLINIC Introductory Lacrosse Clinic open to all girls ages 7 and up. Reservation suggested, April 1, 3-4:30 p.m. Free. Holbrook Palmer Park, 150 Watkins Ave., Atherton. Call 799-3600. www.AthertonLacrosse.com

PALO ALTO RUN CLUB WEDNESDAY NIGHT RUN Wednesdays, meet at 6:15 p.m. A run between 5 and 7.5 miles. Lucie Stern Community Center, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto.

TALKS/AUTHORS

DON KENNEDY ON SCIENCE TEACHING Don Kennedy, Stanford President Emeritus

and editor-in-chief of "Science," will explore how scientists are thinking about K-12 science teaching. April 4, 5-6:30 p.m. Free. Cubberley Auditorium, 485 Lasuen Mall, Stanford. Call 723-9250. <http://ed.stanford.edu>

FORUMS April 4: "What's New in Pain Medication?"; April 11: "California Program for Telephone Accessibility. Are you eligible for the latest equipment?"; April 18: "Heart Disease: Have the Facts Know the Plan" April 25: "Eating Well to Live Well, sorting our nutrition recommendations" 11 a.m.-noon Free. Little House, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. Call 326-2025. www.peninsulavolunteers.org

JUPITER STRING QUARTET The Community School of Music and Arts' Stanford Lively Arts Informances at CSMA series presents a conversation and musical excerpts with the esteemed Jupiter String Quartet. Sponsored by Applied Materials; presenting partner: Borel Private Bank and Trust Company. April 2. Community School of Music and Arts, 230 San Antonio Circle, Mountain View. www.arts4all.org

SCANDINAVIA: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES Foad Vafaei, Director of Emerging Solutions at SAP Labs, will moderate a panel discussion on current trends in telecommunication in Scandinavia. Mon., April 2, 6:30-9 p.m. \$15 members, \$25 non-members. DLA Piper Rudnick Gray

Cary LLP, 2000 University Ave., East Palo Alto. Call (408) 414-5950. www.sdforum.org/SDForum/Templates/CalendarEvent.aspx?CID=2138


VOLUNTEERS

RELAY FOR LIFE OF MENLO PARK Volunteers needed to plan the annual "Relay For Life" of Menlo Park, a fundraiser that is community based and volunteer driven. Volunteers needed first Thursdays, monthly through Aug. 12, 7-8 p.m. Free. Burgess Park, 701 Laurel St., Menlo Park. Call (408) 892-3643. www.relayforlife.org

YES READING Tutor volunteers needed for students who are reading below grade level at under-served schools. Tutors are needed at Belle Haven School in Menlo Park and Selby Lane School in Atherton. Mondays-Thursdays through June 30. E-mail info@yesreading.org for more information.


MORE LISTINGS

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



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Treasure Market

Arts, Antiques & Collectibles Sale
Benefiting Cantor Arts Center
at Stanford University



March 30 – April 1
Arrillaga Center for Sports and Recreation
341 Galvez St.
Stanford University

Friday, March 30th
Opening Night Party & Sale
Silent Auction featuring a new Lexus!
6:30 pm – 9:30 pm
\$50 Members
\$75 Non-Members



Saturday, March 31st
10:00 am – 4:00 pm
Free Admission

Sunday, April 1st
10:00 am – 2:00 pm
Free Admission

Opening Night tickets are limited. Call **650.723.2997**

All proceeds benefit the Art Acquisition Fund at the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford

museum.stanford.edu/TM



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Classic one of a kind Mid-Century Office Building with Architectural Details

- One level, completely renovated 2000 +/- sq ft, architect-designed building. This well-designed space can easily accommodate 4-5 private offices and can be subdivided for 2 tenants.
- Located near Downtown Los Altos, San Antonio Road and Foothills Expressway
- New Professionally designed landscaping
- 6,600 +/- sq ft parcel
- 2 ADA designed bathrooms
- 9 onsite parking spaces
- Double-pane glass windows and skylights
- Slate and Carpet flooring
- Electrical system completely updated
- New Roof
- Air-Conditioning
- Slate wood-burning (gas) fireplace in reception area

\$2,300,000



**Contact Alicia Boyd at 650-328-7797 or
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