

# Mountain View VOICE

JULY 20, 2007 VOLUME 15, NO. 29

INSIDE: HOME & GARDEN | PAGE 25

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## Stuck in Bolivia

And other adventures of a world-traveling family

LOCAL NEWS | P.5



NORBERT VON DER GROEBEN

## HEARTFELT WORDS

**Karen Meredith** talks with presidential candidate Ron Paul, a Republican congressman from Texas, before making a speech at last Saturday's Ron Paul rally at Charleston Park. Meredith, whose son died in Iraq, thanked the congressman for his stance against the war.

# City of Google

IN COMING YEARS, INTERNET GIANT COULD TRIPLE ITS ALREADY HUGE AMOUNT OF OFFICE SPACE

By Daniel DeBolt

Google's presence in Mountain View is already unparalleled, with a reported two million square feet of office space in the North Bayshore area — a third of the area's six-million-square-foot market.

But that's only the beginning. The Internet giant has up to four million more square feet of office space in the pipeline, including plans for a new nine-acre complex alongside the company's headquarters.

The space Google currently occupies is roughly the size of three baseball stadiums. On a drive through Mountain View's North Bayshore area, one can find Google's presence on nearly every other street, including Amphitheatre Parkway, Charleston Road, Garcia Avenue, Alta Avenue, Plymouth Street, Crit-

tenden Lane and Stierlin Court.

"They are all over North Bayshore," said building official Ron Geary. "They have 20 to 25 buildings in North Bayshore alone."

Earlier this month, the City Council approved a ground lease with Google allowing the company to build a new 310,000-square-foot development just east of the Googleplex. (pictured below).

The facility will occupy half of the 18-acre "Charleston East" site at the corner of Amphitheatre Parkway and Shoreline Boulevard.

City officials said it was their impression that Google still plans to build a million-square-foot campus on the NASA Ames portion of Moffett Field, though the company has been quiet about that plan since it was first announced in Octo-

*"They have 20 to 25 buildings in North Bayshore alone."*

RON GEARY

► See **GOOGLE**, page 11

## Hospital hires high-tech guru

DR. ERIC PIFER WILL MANAGE EL CAMINO HOSPITAL'S COMPUTER SYSTEMS, GUARD AGAINST GLITCHES

By Alexa Tondreau

El Camino Hospital is ramping up its efforts to stay cutting-edge, adding a new position to its administrative staff to oversee the hospital's information and technology interests.

Eric Pifer, M.D., was hired last week as the hospital's chief medical information officer, the first person to inhabit the newly created vice-president-level position.

Pifer is scheduled to begin at the hospital on Sept. 4. He will

be a member of the medical staff and report to hospital CEO Ken Graham.

The hospital reported that Pifer's salary will be \$375,000 a year.

As chief medical information officer, Pifer will oversee the hospital's technology functions, with particular regard to quality, he said.

"The hospital not only wants all of its systems to run proper-



Eric Pifer, M.D.

ly, but wants those systems to actually improve patient care," Pifer said.

Pifer said he was well aware of the turbulent road El Camino traveled when implementing its online information system, called

El Camino Hospital Online, or ECHO.

► See **HOSPITAL**, page 10



INSIDE

GOINGS ON 28 | MARKETPLACE 30 | MOVIES 21 | REAL ESTATE 35 | VIEWPOINT 15

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

**Helen & Ki Nyborg**



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**Mary Marley**



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**Courtney Bridgman-Eltherington**



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**Cheryl Okuno**



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# Voices

A R O U N D T O W N

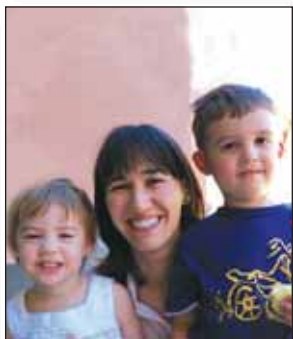
Asked in Downtown Mountain View. Pictures and interviews by Melody Dye.

## Do you ever worry about terrorism?



*"I always thought we'd never get attacked in California, it's kind of more a New York thing. If I went there, I might be a little more worried."*

**Jasmine McGee, with Allison Hyer, Mountain View**



*"Yes, we do, because we travel all the time to Spain. When we go through security it's such a big hassle. But you know, it's not something we worry about in everyday life, just when we travel."*

**Patricia Crespo, with Pablo and Anna, Mountain View**



*"That's been on a lot of people's minds lately, but for me in particular it's not such a worry. It's a front-page item because it's a smoke tactic for candidates running for office and a lobbying tool for industries doing international business."*

**Eric Wetzel, Mountain View**



*"Yes, I do actually. Especially in San Jose when the planes fly low over the buildings. I always have that feeling—what if the plane hits?"*

**Hoshner Spenta, Santa Clara**



*"Last month I was traveling in Europe and people's unattended baggage came to mind. I don't know if it's a real worry though, it's more an awareness."*

**Alan Whitehorn, Mountain View**

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-Workshop Attendee

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- Tuesdays, July 17 & 24
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- Monday, July 23
- \* HEART TO HEART SEMINAR ON GROWING UP**  
Informative, humorous and lively discussions between parents and their pre-teens on puberty, the opposite sex and growing up. Girls attend these two-part sessions with their moms and boys attend with their dads.  
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■ CRIMEWATCH

**ARSON, 400 BLOCK SAN ANTONIO RD., 7/12**

Someone lit some spare tires on fire behind a local Firestone Tires. The fire had mostly died out by the time it was reported.

**GRAND THEFT, LINDA VISTA AVE/TERRA BELLA AVE., 7/10**

Late at night, an officer spotted two cars driving very closely together on a deserted street known as a local dumping ground for stolen vehicles. When both cars stopped, the officer ran the plates and saw that one of the vehicles came up as stolen. He then detained the people in both cars.

Under questioning, the suspects admitted that two of them had stolen the car, while the third had removed its tires and re-installed them on a different vehicle. Three male suspects — two adults and a 14-year-old boy — were arrested on suspicion of grand theft auto. They were charged and booked.

**BURGLARY/RESIDENTIAL, 2300 BLOCK LAURA LANE, 7/12**

Sometime during the day, a person entered a house through the unlocked front door and stole women's clothing. An investigation is currently in progress.

■ POLICE LOG

**ALCOHOL IN PARK**

200 Block S. Rengstorff Ave., 7/16

McDonalds, El Monte, 7/12  
2200 Block Grant Rd., 7/14  
Lozano's Carwash, 7/15

**ARSON**

400 Block San Antonio Rd., 7/12

**ASSAULT WITH DEADLY WEAPON**

2000 Block W. El Camino Real, 7/15

**OBSCENE/ANNOYING PHONE CALLS**

2200 Block San Antonio Rd., 7/12  
1900 Block Colony St., 7/13  
1800 Block Easy St., 7/14

**BATTERY**

700 Block Sylvan Ave., 7/11  
2100 Block Stanford Ave., 7/12  
800 Block Calderon Ave., 7/14  
1800 Block Higdon Ave., 7/15  
500 Block Ortega Ave., 7/15  
Albertsons, 7/16

**PETTY THEFT**

Stevens Creek TRL/Yuba Dr., 7/10  
Diddam's Party Supplies, 7/10  
1000 Block Grant Rd., 7/11  
Wal-Mart, 7/12  
Rengstorff Park, 7/12  
1100 Block San Antonio Rd., 7/12  
3500 Block Showers Dr., 7/13  
Ugly's Bar, 7/14  
100 Block N. Whisman Rd., 7/14  
Target, 7/14  
8500 Block E. El Camino Real, 7/14  
2400 Block Parker Ct., 7/15  
Safeway, 7/16  
400 Block San Antonio Rd., 7/16  
Wal-Mart, 7/16

**BURGLARY/AUTO**

2700 Block Fairbrook Dr., 7/10  
100 Block Castro St., 7/10  
Shoreline Park, 7/11  
300 Block Easy St., 7/12  
100 Block N. Rengstorff Ave., 7/13  
1400 Block Tyler Park Way, 7/14

**BURGLARY/COMMERCIAL**

2200 Block Rock St., 7/10  
Mervyns Dept. Store, 7/11  
1500 Block California St., 7/11  
300 Block Logue Ave., 7/14

**BURGLARY/RESIDENTIAL**

700 Vaquero Dr., 7/11  
2300 Block Laura Lane, 7/12

**CORPORAL INJURY**

2000 Block W. El Camino Real, 7/15  
700 Block Continental Ct., 7/15  
San Antonio Inn, 7/16

**DISORDERLY CONDUCT**

400 Block San Antonio Rd., 7/10  
The Office Bar, 7/10  
Evelyn Ave/Stevens Creek TRL, 7/14  
500 Block Showers Dr., 7/15

**DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE**

300 Block Sylvan Ave., 7/14

**DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE**

W. Evelyn Ave/HY 85, 7/12  
Bush St/W. Evelyn Ave., 7/13  
Devonshire Ave/N. Whisman Rd., 7/14

**EMBEZZLEMENT**

Wal-Mart, 7/16

**FAILURE TO OBEY CORRECTIONS OFFICER**

1400 Block Kittoe Dr., 7/13

**GRAND THEFT**

Linda Vista Ave/Terra Bella Ave., 7/10  
1800 Block W. El Camino Real, 7/11

**POSSESSION OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE**

100 Block E. El Camino Real, 7/15

**POSSESSION OF DRUG PARAPHENALIA**

1700 Block W. El Camino Real, 7/15

**POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA**

1700 Block W. El Camino Real, 7/16

**POSSESSION OF SWITCHBLADE**

800 Block E. El Camino Real, 7/15

**ROBBERY**

2000 Block Old Middlefield Way, 7/11  
600 Block San Antonio Rd., 7/16

**SEXUAL BATTERY**

200 Block Ortega Ave., 7/15

**STOLEN VEHICLE**

1800 Block California St., 7/12  
U-Haul, W. El Camino Real, 7/12

**SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES/PERSON**

200 Block Ortega Ave., 7/10  
W. El Camino Real/Mountain View, 7/10  
Evandale Ave/Tyrella Ave., 7/10  
Rainbow West, 7/11  
5500 Block Showers Dr., 7/12

**VANDALISM**

400 Block Showers Dr., 7/12  
Century 16 Cinema, 7/13  
300 Block Bryant St., 7/15



## Alive and kicking

By Don Frances

**“KICK, LEAD and Dream”** is what the people at Mesa de la Comunidad called this year’s soccer camp, which will be wrapping up a successful first run this Friday at Bubba Field.

The program, co-sponsored by the Police Action League and the Mountain View Los Altos Soccer Club, brought less fortunate kids (or “at-risk youth,” as they’re often called) together with cops, volunteers and Mountain View High School soccer players for some scrimmaging, some drills — just some decent exercise and good times.

The two-week camp is for fifth- to eighth-grade kids from Castro, Crittenden and Graham schools, and is coached largely by the high schoolers. According to a press release by Mesa, “The main focus of the camp is on soccer training, and each day the campers participate in a wide variety of drills and games. Some of the more popular variants are the Italian PK Shootout and the World Cup corner shots.”

The term “at-risk” often alludes to gangs, and it’s implicit in programs like this that they’re meant to be an antidote to the “gang problem.” I believe they are, because what we call “gangs” are not usually organized crime syndicates, just groups of pent-up kids with too much energy and no place to burn it off.

This year’s camp concludes Friday at 1 p.m. with a final scrimmage and awards ceremony. Mesa president Oscar Garcia also noted that Mayor Laura Macias, police Chief Scott Vermeer and other community leaders will be there.

For more on PAL, visit [www.mvpal.org](http://www.mvpal.org) or contact Joanne Pasternack at [mvpal@mountainview.gov](mailto:mvpal@mountainview.gov) or (650) 903-6360. The Mesa Web site is [www.mesacomunidad.org](http://www.mesacomunidad.org).

Don Frances can be reached at [dfrances@mv-voice.com](mailto:dfrances@mv-voice.com).



COURTESY PHOTO

John and September Higham stand with their two children, Katrina and Jordan, in Kyoto, Japan.

## Those globetrotting Highams

MOUNTAIN VIEW FAMILY MEMBERS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES, ADVICE ON TRAVELING THE WORLD

By Alexa Tondreau

For anyone who’s ever dreamed of traveling around the world, but can’t fathom how to put together such a trip, the Highams of Mountain View are happy to help.

They ought to know, since they’ve done it themselves. And they have a Web site which lays out the particulars — just click on “How to plan a round-the-world trip.”

The Highams can tell you

how much you’ll probably spend — well over \$100,000, in their case — and how to live on about \$6,000 a month. Anything cheaper is almost impossible for a family of four, they say.

The Highams also advise how to travel so that you never hit winter in any country you visit, and how to pack (lightly) for a trip of this magnitude.

Recently, the family has been telling audiences about their year-long journey, which spanned 28 countries and five continents, at

community organizations and Bay Area REI outlets, with a presentation tentatively planned at the Mountain View REI location for October.

Also in the works is a book called “Armageddon Pills — Don’t Leave Home without Them (and Other Lessons from a Family’s Journey Around the World),” which the Highams hope to have published sometime next year. The book will have a Google

► See **HIGHAMS**, page 12

## A weekend of festivities

CULTUREFEST RETURNS TO CASTRO

OBON A YEARLY FAVORITE

CultureFest 2007, a diverse party scene of arts, foods and melodies, will take over Castro Street this Saturday and Sunday.

The event, which made its debut last year, is organized and sponsored by the Mountain View Library Foundation and will be held from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Saturday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday.

Entertainment for CultureFest will include a variety of musical and dance acts as well as plenty

It’s time for the annual Obon Festival and Bazaar, featuring Japanese and Western cuisine, arts and crafts, game booths and hands-on cultural activities at the Mountain View Buddhist Temple.

The festival runs from 4 to 10 p.m. this Saturday and from noon to 9 p.m. this Sunday. The Temple is located at 575 N. Shoreline Blvd., between Montecito Avenue and W. Middlefield Road.

► See **CULTURE**, page 6

► See **OBON**, page 6

## Health services in limbo

PROFESSOR: COUNTY BUDGET CUTS LEAVE PUBLIC VULNERABLE TO HEALTH DISASTER

By Melody Dye

Recent cuts in funding to public health services by the Board of Supervisors have some health advocates alarmed, with one saying the cuts have left the county “completely unprepared for any kind of health disaster.”

Last month’s cuts to health care, which slashed \$16.1 million in funding, will affect nearly every facet of health services at the county level. Several regional health offices and community clinics are now slated to close, and funding has been reduced or, in some cases, completely cut for sexually transmitted disease services, violence prevention, disease control and other programs.

Some public health advocates argue that the recent cuts, coming on top of reductions in years past, amount to a gradual dismantling of the county health department’s infrastructure, with negative long-term consequences for all 15 cities in the county, including Mountain View.

“Given the role of the public health department in protecting and promoting the health of the 1.6 million [residents], it does raise issues about where the county’s priorities are,” said Guadalupe Olivas, director of the department.

Marilyn Winkleby, a professor of medicine at Stanford University and faculty director of the Office of Community Health, agrees with Olivas’ assessment, calling public health programs “the underpinning of health promotion and disease prevention.”

“When you make these kinds of drastic cuts,” she said, “you compromise ... the

► See **BUDGET**, page 14

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■ SEEN AROUND TOWN

*Incredible moon*



**Maribel Mercer** of Taylor Court took this eerie shot of the moon on June 29. "This picture was taken from my home facing the pine trees of Whisman Park," she wrote. "This incredible moon showed up a little early during sunset."

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](mailto:editor@mv-voice.com).

**CULTURE**

► Continued from page 5

of food.

The live music performances will include the five-piece rhythm and blues band Vicious Groove and the Talons, a percussion group.

Local South Bay dancer and instructor Juan Arnanda will conduct rumba and salsa dancing that includes dance participation from the audience, and the dance group Sambao — complete with colorful, traditional costumes — will perform Brazilian dances

and play percussion instruments.

A diverse array of foods and treats, including many ethnic foods, will be available as well.

Sue Patrick, president of the Library Foundation, said the purpose of CultureFest is to celebrate the way diversity improves quality of life in the community. Cultures from North and South America, Europe, Africa and Asia will be represented in some form at the festival.

All proceeds from the event will help benefit programs for the Mountain View Public Library.

Patrick said the event is "a truly

different type of fundraiser for our organization."

Rosiland Bivings, who chairs CultureFest, said the foundation wants to continue "to be inclusive and share the uniqueness of this community."

The festival is currently accepting additional help in the form of sponsors, volunteers and vendors. For more information, contact the Mountain View Library Foundation at (650) 526-7014, or visit the foundation Web site at [www.mvlf.org](http://www.mvlf.org).

— Alexa Tondreau

**OBON**

► Continued from page 5

This year as always, the popular festival will entertain with Taiko drumming and Bon Odori folk dancing, a traditional Japanese art form spotlighting performers clad in colorful ukata kimono and happi coats. Taiko demonstrations will be given on Saturday at 4:30 p.m. and Sunday at noon.

The Bon Odori folk dance, one of the traditional highlights of the festival, will start at 7 p.m.

on Sunday, with music provided by the Chidori Band. The Bon Odori, danced by young and old alike, is an expression of both joy and remembrance. The head instructor, Marilyn Ozawa, will be teaching all the dances with the help of her assistants, and all are invited to join in.

Obon, which means "gathering of joy" in Japanese, is a Buddhist holiday commemorating one's ancestors and celebrating the gift of life. It has been observed across the Bay Area for more than 50 years.

"Obon is a time to remember

and honor all who have passed on before us, appreciated all that they have done for us, and recognize the continuation of their deeds upon our lives," wrote the Rev. Dean Koyama, the Mountain View Buddhist Temple's resident minister.

This year the festival is being chaired by Glenn Kitazoe and Jeff Sato. For more information, call the Temple office between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. at (650) 964-9426 or visit [www.mvbuddhist-temple.org](http://www.mvbuddhist-temple.org).

— Melody Dye

# Water district dust-up

BOARD MEMBER GREG ZLOTNICK NAMED HIGH-PAID ADVISOR — 'I CAN CONTRIBUTE MORE'

By Alexa Tondreau

Last Tuesday, Greg Zlotnick was a board member of the Santa Clara Valley Water District making about \$230 per meeting. Today he is special counsel to district CEO Stan Williams at a salary of about \$184,000 a year.

The newly created position was not advertised, and the other six board members of the district, which delivers water and flood control services for most of Santa Clara County, weren't

informed until June 28, when Zlotnick submitted his letter of resignation from the board.

The water district's board is now discussing "revolving door" legisla-

tion that would prohibit the immediate hiring of directors.

Both Zlotnick and Williams, who hired him, are being roundly blasted by the media, district critics and open-government advocates for the move.

Zlotnick, a Palo Alto native who now lives in Mountain View, is an attorney well versed in California's water issues, and has been a district director for more than a decade.

He said the hiring process was entirely above-board.

"I was given an offer. I decided to accept the offer. I am eminently qualified, and I can contribute more in the position than on the board," Zlotnick said.

He said he was surprised by accusations that the hiring showed a lack of openness by the water district.

"We work very closely with people in the community and with various task forces," he said. "We work with them, we listen and we collaborate."

District CEO Williams said it was well within his authority as CEO to make the hire. He has control of 33 positions that are not represented by unions or bargaining units.

Williams said Zlotnick is not the first person to move between the district's board and staff. Joe Pandit was a staff member who served on the board and then was rehired, Williams said.

Zlotnick's hire is "unique," however, Williams said. He was

already representing the district in the Delta and state, but more was needed — Zlotnick needed to work full-time.

"He's our best, the best person this county can have represent us in these discussions," Williams said.

Mountain View City Council member Tom Means isn't sure how the appointment will be beneficial locally.

"We lose a resident who was on the board. I don't know if that helps us or hurts us," he said.

**"We lose a resident who was on the board. I don't know if that helps us or hurts us."**

TOM MEANS

Means said that although it probably would have been best to do at least a preliminary search before hiring Zlotnick, he can understand Williams'

decision.

"If you are in that hiring position, and here's a guy who can do the job, you know him, and he's better than anybody, you can see why" Williams hired him, Means said.

"In a perfect world I suppose you would always open the job to all applicants, but so many jobs are relationship-based jobs," he said.

For his part, Zlotnick said he is moving beyond the controversy to focus on his new position, where he thinks he has a better chance to influence the topics that matter most to him, such as flood control along Permanente Creek.

"I can take a really hard look at things, I'll be more engaged," he said. "It's a different dynamic when you're a staff person working with another staff person, as opposed to a board member."

The district is currently accepting applications for Zlotnick's vacated position. Applicants must live in Mountain View, Palo Alto, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Monte Sereno, Cupertino, Saratoga, Stanford or portions of Sunnyvale or San Jose. Applications are available at [www.valleywater.org](http://www.valleywater.org) and are due by July 19.

The next director will be selected by the board and will serve until Dec. 31, 2008. ■

*Additional reporting for this story was done by Rebecca Trout of the Palo Alto Weekly.*

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# What's in store for the Mayfield project

FOUR ACRES OF PARKS, ELECTRIC TRAINS AND PLENTY OF GUEST PARKING?

By Daniel DeBolt

The contentious Mayfield housing project gained solid footing after last week's City Council vote. What, then, will the project lead to upon its planned completion in 2012?

The city may be able to buy another acre or so of park space to go with the 495 homes (including 45 in Palo Alto) at 100 Mayfield Ave., but there's one problem: where to put it.

Kelly Snider of Toll Brothers said Monday that parks at Mayfield "will get bigger, no question about it," but both she and city manager Kevin Duggan agreed that additional park space may face "physical limitations," Duggan said.

Council member Tom Means made the fateful motion July 10 for 450 units, down from 476. His motion also set the current height limits and made no change to the minimum park space of 3.4 acres.

Also mentioned was \$4 million in city money for additional park space, although — for technical reasons council members said were not fully explained at the

meeting — it wasn't a part of the straw vote.

## How much park space

Given recent land deals in Mountain View, the \$4 million could buy about an acre of park space. Last month, for example, Habitat for Humanity asked the city for \$4.5 million in BMR funds to buy the 1.15-acre Wagon Wheel property on Middlefield Road.

"I don't think the council is on board yet with that price," said council member Tom Means about the Wagon Wheel property. Elna Tymes, former president of the Monta Loma Neighborhood Association, said she was familiar with the property and has seen it offered at a price closer to \$1 million.

As another example, city officials point to the \$2 million spent last week to buy a third of an acre for a park on Del Medio Avenue.

Because Mayfield has yet to be given final approval, the park land may not cost full-market value, but it will likely be an expensive purchase. Means said he would be happy to get another half-acre on top of the 3.4 acre minimum.

Where the additional park space would fit into the plan may take weeks to figure out, Snider said. To make room, it could mean "more or less town homes" or "more or less condos" in some areas. But the single-family homes around the perimeter would probably remain untouched, as would condo building heights.

While the reduction of 26 units may be hard to notice, Snider said the neighborhood will be seeing an additional 60 spaces for guest parking, which she believes will go a long way towards addressing concerns about guests parking in front of nearby homes.

## Caltrain talks electric

The Mayfield housing development could bring as many as 1,000 more residents next to the San Antonio train station by 2012. By 2014, Caltrain officials say, lightweight electric trains could flash in and out of the station to meet increased demand.

Caltrain spokesperson Jonah Weinberg said it was unlikely there would be any change in service at the station until electric

trains come online in 2014, but added that he "didn't want to rule anything out."

Right now, the slow and heavy diesel trains stop at the station once an hour.

During last week's climactic Mayfield study session, several residents obviously didn't like the fact that the project was being sold as a "transit-oriented development," mostly because of the lack of service to the San Antonio train station, where trains used to stop much more frequently.

"During our peak hours we don't have enough equipment to add more service right now," Weinberg said. "We have demand for increased service at a number of stations, without the ability to increase that service."

Weinberg said plans for the electric trains were definitely "on track." Caltrain is working on a plan for the system so that funding can be requested from the state and federal governments and local transit agencies. Government agencies have also expressed interest in removing regulatory barriers to allowing the trains.

In the interim, if demand warranted, Caltrain could add service during non-peak hours between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. and from 7 p.m. to 12 a.m., Weinberg said.

At the July 10 council meeting, Mayor Laura Macias reassured Mayfield neighbors that she was seeking help from county Supervisor Liz Kniss' office to increase service at the station in the future.

## Expensive homes?

Toll Brothers said it's too early to tell what the price of homes at Mayfield will be in 2012, but that hasn't stopped neighbors from speculating.

Wouter Suverkropp, president of the Monta Loma Neighborhood Association, said Toll Brothers has indicated homes would sell for at least \$500,000 and some for more than \$900,000. Snider said her company has yet to name any prices for the single-family homes, the row homes or the condos. She pointed to other projects, however, like Bedford Square in Whisman

►See **MAYFIELD**, page 13

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## Ferraris get green light

PEAR AVENUE SITE FOR JOHN MOZART'S CAR MUSEUM APPROVED IN ONE-MINUTE MEETING

By Daniel DeBolt

Developer John Mozart's proposal for a car museum on Pear Avenue was approved last Wednesday during a meeting that lasted a whole minute.

The meeting, an administrative zoning hearing, adjourned one minute after it convened. Its minutes read: "The zoning administrator asked the applicant if she had a presentation. The applicant did not. The zoning administrator opened the public hearing. No one was present to speak on the item. The public hearing was closed. The zoning administrator then moved to approve the project with standard conditions."

Mozart's 25,000-square-foot glass building, situated near the Computer History Museum at 1326 Pear Ave., will house 60 of his 100 vintage cars, including Concours-winning Ferraris, Duesenbergs, Porsches, Alpha Romeos and specially built race cars.

"It's one more big feather in Mountain View's cap," said City Council member Jac Siegel, an avid car buff who toured a part of the collection along with the *Voice* in February.

"It's supposed to start construction this fall," he added. "We'll see what happens. Certainly he's got the wherewithal to do it. He's quite well off."

Mozart is the owner of Mozart Industrial Development Company, which includes a housing development arm called Classic Communities. He currently keeps many of his cars at the company's Palo Alto office.

The new museum is expected to "make a statement," Mozart said, with black granite floors, walls made of interlocking beams of translucent glass, and special lighting designed to make the cars "pop."

City manager Kevin Duggan said the lot for the museum was an appropriate location. He said he was "pleased that Mozart is talking about having it open for special events in the future, even though it won't have regular hours." ■

E-mail Daniel DeBolt at [ddebolt@mv-voice.com](mailto:ddebolt@mv-voice.com)

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## HOSPITAL

► Continued from page 1

The computerized records system, which is used daily by medical staff to place orders for medicines and tests and to track patient records, was considered difficult to use by many and caused disruptions in pharmaceutical services.

Avoiding a future situation like the one caused by the transition to ECHO "was one of the incentives" for creating the position, Pifer said.

"They've worked with software they've bought off the shelf, and they had issues getting the technology to do what they want it to do," he said. "They need to make sure all the clinical systems hum."

Pifer appears to be coming on board at just the right time, as ECHO is due for an upgrade, said hospital spokesperson Judy Twitchell. The hospital is trying to decide whether to go ahead with an upgrade in the next couple of months, or to wait for an opportunity further down the road.

"We're working on ECHO all the time. We're always trying to make it easier," Twitchell said.

Physician and nurse groups meet "constantly," Twitchell said, to evaluate their ongoing experience with ECHO. Just recently, the hospital tweaked ECHO to make it easier to admit patients into the system, a move which received positive feedback from physicians, Twitchell said.

Pifer said one of his first duties will be to gauge "how transparent they're being with reporting the outcomes" of their information systems, so he can determine the efficiency of the technology the hospital already has in place.

Graham had a pivotal role in bringing Pifer onboard. "Study after study," he said, has shown that one of the best ways to

reduce errors is to "give doctors better real-time access to medical records and critical patient information."

"Physicians do their best when they have all the information necessary to support timely, accurate treatment decisions," Graham said.

As the assistant professor of medicine and chief medical information officer at the University of Pennsylvania Health System, where he worked since 1998, Pifer has specialized in implementing and customizing clinical information systems. He also has maintained a medical practice, and had teaching responsibilities at the university.

He is widely published on the subject of health care "informatics," and in 2006 received the American Medical Director of Information Systems Award for Excellence.

Pifer said medical information officers are becoming an important part of health care as technology plays a more dominant role.

"Most big organizations are beginning to get positions like this," Pifer said. While many rely on internal consultants, El Camino is unique in giving the position much more control than a consultant would have, he said.

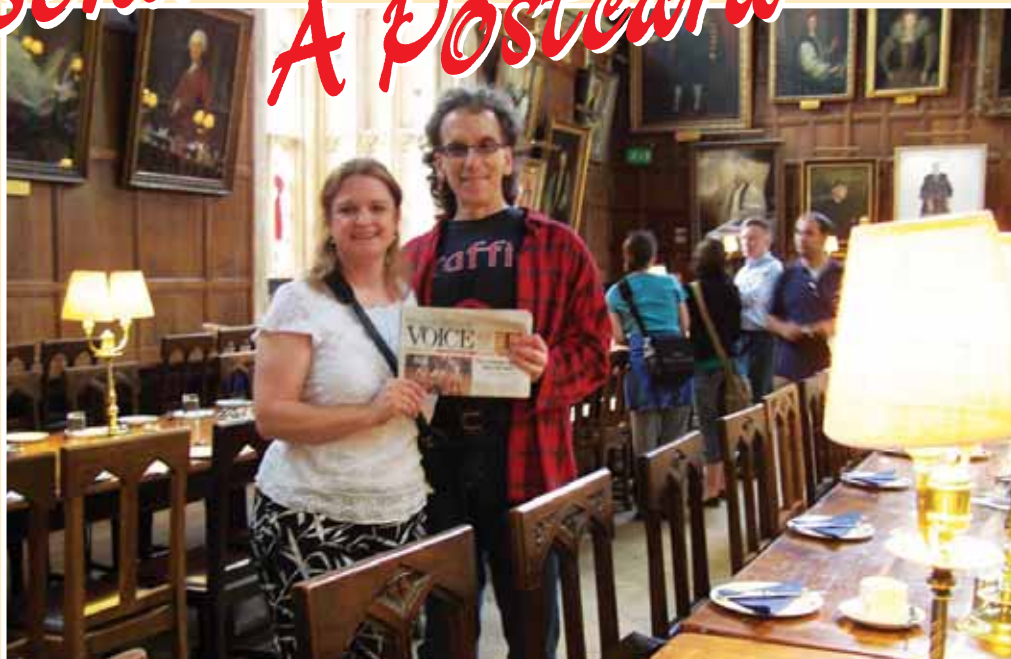
Pifer said he was familiar with the hospital before taking the job "because of its history in informatics." El Camino is one of the few hospitals in the country to have 90 percent of its records transactions conducted online.

And for a doctor with a career interest in technology, Mountain View seemed like an appropriate fit.

"I know Mountain View is in Silicon Valley, and that focus on technology is exciting." ■

E-mail [Alexa Tondreau](mailto:Alexa.Tondreau@mv-voice.com) at [atondreau@mv-voice.com](mailto:atondreau@mv-voice.com)

# Send Us A Postcard



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## Voice wins CNPA award

The *Voice* won a first-place award from the California Newspaper Publishers' Association on Saturday for editor Don Frances' column about Aaron Katz.

The column, "What's Eating Aaron Katz," addressed litigation by a Saratoga lawyer against local districts. It won first prize for columns in its category. Frances also received honorable mention for another column submission.

The *Voice* was among several newspapers in the Embarcadero Publishing Company group of weeklies that won awards. The Palo Alto Weekly

received five first-place and two second-place awards on Saturday, and the Almanac in Menlo Park received a general excellence award for mid-sized weeklies.

The CNPA contest is a statewide competition. Daily and weekly newspapers compete in their circulation range in about 20 categories, including best column, general excellence and public service.

Frances' winning column can be found on the *Voice's* Web site at [www.mv-voice.com/story.php?story\\_id=2438](http://www.mv-voice.com/story.php?story_id=2438).

— Staff Reports



**GOOGLE**

► Continued from page 1

ber 2005. Since then, Google has entered into an agreement to help NASA Ames organize its “terabytes and terabytes” of data.

Google’s reach may also extend to Shorebird Way, where the company plans to build on 64 acres bordered by Shoreline Boulevard to the west and Stevens Creek to the east. Under that plan — which calls for five-story buildings, large parks, “green” building designs and tall parking garages — existing buildings would be demolished to make way for a campus of 1.7 to 2.7 million square feet.

Although the council approved a gatekeeper request for the project in May 2006, Elaine Costello, the city’s community development director, said last month that Google’s plans for Shorebird Way are “on hold.”

The company did not respond to several e-mails from the *Voice* seeking comment on the subject.

**Workers per square foot**

Ellis Berns, the city’s economic development director, said the company employs about 10,000 people in Mountain View, including contract workers. Given Google’s current office space, that translates to 200 square feet of space per worker.

At that rate, the company could eventually have 30,000 workers in Mountain View — close to half the city’s regular population. (It’s uncertain exactly how many new employees would be hired.) Berns said Mountain View’s daytime population is estimated at 118,000.

Google spokesperson Sunny Gettinger said Google would not release an exact number of employees working in Mountain View, because “we don’t break down our numbers that way.” At a recent meeting, council member Margaret Abe-Koga said she thought

the number was about 7,000.

Hiring as many as 17 people a day worldwide, cubicles at Google are said to be routinely rearranged with employees sometimes working in hallways. The company even had to apply for an exemption from the city’s parking requirements because there were simply not enough spaces for its workforce, said former council member Greg Perry.

“They tend to have more employees per square foot,” said city manager Kevin Duggan.

**Rolling in Google money**

This fiscal year, the city expects to receive \$3.8 million from its leases with Google. Many of the company’s buildings are on city-owned land, including its headquarters, the Googleplex and its buildings on Crittenden Lane. Google is also expected to pay the city another \$5.2 million in property taxes, said Helen Ansted, an analyst for the city. The large tax bill may be because of huge swaths of property Google owns in the city but does not occupy.

Property taxes, however, go into a fund for projects in the North Bayshore area or to projects that benefit the area, such as the Highway 101 overpasses at Shoreline and Rengstorff avenues.

The city also believes Google employees contribute significantly to sales tax revenues.

“They have a lot of employees that are highly compensated,” said Bob Locke, city finance director. “To the extent that those employees spend money in Mountain View — that is highly beneficial to the city’s tax base.”

To Duggan, the city is lucky to have “the hottest company in the world.”

“It is better than not having the hottest company in the world,” he said. “We were dealing with empty office buildings just a couple years ago.”

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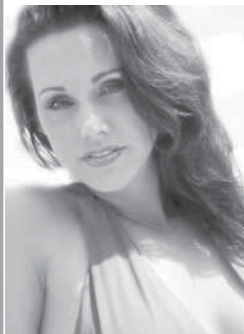
As mentioned in the 2006 Consumer Confidence Report, Mountain View’s high quality drinking water continues to meet State and Federal water quality standards. The report also emphasizes the importance of saving water in order to preserve the limited water supply currently available and to avoid significant water use reductions during 2008.

For more information or to request a copy of the 2006 Consumer Confidence Report, please contact the Public Services Division at (650) 903-6329 or visit the City’s website at:

[http://www.mountainview.gov/services/city\\_publications/water\\_quality\\_report.asp](http://www.mountainview.gov/services/city_publications/water_quality_report.asp)



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COURTESY PHOTO

The family got stranded on the salt flats of Bolivia after their truck broke down.

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## HIGHAMS

► Continued from page 5

Earth companion guide, so readers can download photos of the Higham family's travel path.

Unique to their story is not just the amazing feat of a family of four traveling to five different continents (and never staying in one location for more than two days), but also that they divulge the detailed planning, scrimping and saving that goes into making such a trip possible.

The Highams began to save for their trip soon after the birth of their oldest daughter, Katrina, now 12.

"We wanted to give the experience of seeing the world to our children. They heard us talk about it for as long as they can remember," John Higham said.

Saving for the trip required certain lifestyle choices, like buying less expensive cars and a smaller house, and putting money most people would "squirrel away for college funds" into their trip fund, he said.

Even the children, Katrina and her brother Jordan, now 9, got into the act.

"They became zealots for saving for this. For the last two years before we went, every single day they would ask me if we would be able to go. It really built up their imagination," John said.

Finally, the family was able to embark on their trip in June 2005, with camping gear, tandem bicycles and school books in tow.

The Highams are often asked whether they planned their every move from the beginning. September Higham says they booked

most of their plane flights in advance, but didn't schedule their time once they were in a particular location. For instance, when they arrived in Europe that June, they had already scheduled a plane flight out of Istanbul for 18 weeks later, but didn't have a set plan for the interim.

Katrina and Jordan were home-schooled throughout the trip, and each day began with a math lesson. September had books shipped to

John said.

For instance, Katrina broke her leg in central Europe, and the family's cycling trip abruptly came to an end. Another time, the family became stranded on the salt flats of Bolivia with nothing to eat but a bag of peanut M&Ms — leading September to coin the term "Armageddon pills" as a description of their only nourishment.

Of the 150 places they visited, the family may have liked Switzerland best, September said.

"It was really fun there. There are a lot of outdoor things to do. We really like hiking and biking," she said.

Katrina was particularly fond of the African nation of Tanzania, September said, because of the safari animals she got to see. Jordan liked Costa Rica for its volcanoes.

Having just completed their first year back in school, the children don't outwardly appear to be any different from their peers, though the Highams say they notice internal changes.

"They have a global perspective most kids don't. When they hear about things on the news, they tend to ask about the people instead of the politics in those events," John said.

"I think they act like kids who live in this world, not just Mountain View, California," September said. ■

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### ■ INFORMATION

For more on the Highams' trip, including presentations and book news, visit [www.armageddonpills.com](http://www.armageddonpills.com).



COURTESY PHOTO

In Machu Picchu, Peru.

the family at various outposts along the way, specifically historical fiction that would coincide with their travels.

John and September made sure to utilize the locations they were visiting to enhance their children's lessons, including studying D-Day in Normandy and the Cultural Revolution while in China.

Both children were required to keep daily journals documenting their account of the trip. Each family member had good and bad days,

# A unique summer school for teachers

## HIGH-TECH JOBS KEEP EDUCATORS BUSY THROUGH 'INDUSTRY INITIATIVES' PROGRAM

By Alexa Tondreau

At Mountain View-based Synopsys, Inc., you'll find more than the normal crowd of engineers and IT personnel this summer: Some veteran teachers have showed up to lend a hand as well.

Assigned to a variety of departments and positions, including work in networking and voiceover IP, 12 teachers in all have come to the company as part of a program called the Industry Initiatives for Science and Math Education (IISME).

The organization is a consortium of companies, research laboratories and government groups in the Bay Area that offers eight-week paid positions to kindergarten through 12th grade teachers.

Terri Oropeza, a Synopsys employee who is a mentor to six teachers this summer, said the participants do valuable work, contributing significantly to Synopsys projects.

"We don't have them do just something boring, like stuffing envelopes. It has to be interesting," Oropeza said. "They really give us extra staff."

Teachers currently working at Synopsys are contributing to research and prototyping, a variety of documentation projects including the creation of a "tier-1"

document, and Windows and networking projects, Oropeza said.

The company began planning in February which projects it would assign to teachers this summer, Oropeza said, and looked for projects with a duration time of eight weeks, so teachers could participate from start to finish.

IISME, which has been in existence for 23 years, aims to help teachers in several ways. A major goal of the program is to enhance the type of curriculum each teacher brings back to the classroom. The program hopes to instill teachers with a better sense of the corporate world, so they can impart what they know to their pupils.

"We want them to have something to bring back from the

corporate life into the classrooms, so they can inform their students about real-world jobs and opportunities," said Tisha Bacigalupi, sponsor relations manager of IISME.

Additionally, a majority of the teachers who participate teach science and math, Bacigalupi said, and can easily transfer what they learn in a research lab or project into their curriculum.

Another goal of IISME is more practical: to keep teachers teaching. The program pays its participants about \$7,400 over the course of eight weeks, an important supplement to a teacher's income — particularly in Mountain View, where some teachers find it difficult to keep up with

the cost of living.

Oropeza, who has a teaching background herself, said Synopsys hopes to "motivate them to continue teaching. It's hard for teachers to afford to live around here, and the value of teachers to our community is so huge."

Synopsys is participating in its seventh year with IISME, and another Mountain View company has joined for the first time this year, Bacigalupi said. Google took on one teacher for the summer, she said.

Mountain View resident Karen Gehler, who teaches second grade in Sunnyvale, is in her fourth consecutive year in the program. This summer she is working in production monitoring at Lockheed Mar-

tin, where she assists in monitoring the supply chain of a new building for flight hardware, she said.

Gehler thinks that, beyond the normal scope of the program's aims, the experience has enhanced her abilities overall. For instance, she said, it has greatly improved her ability to use computer software technology, including Excel and PowerPoint.

"What's really been helpful for me is that I'm more organized, more businesslike with planning in my classroom and helping out the school," she said. "I'll be able to do PowerPoint presentations if the school needs it."

Bacigalupi said the program has maintained its popularity over the years.

"Teachers do come back, year after year after year," she said. ▀

E-mail Alexa Tondreau at [atondreau@mv-voice.com](mailto:atondreau@mv-voice.com)



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*carpet, it feels as though someone is driving a dagger into my hip and pouring hot lead down my leg."*

Ernie was a carpet installer, and years of lifting and working bent-over had taken their toll. His MRI's revealed massive disc and joint degeneration. The surgeons he consulted were not optimistic about the outcome of surgery, given the extent of damage to the discs of L4 and L5 that had protruded and were pressing against the nerves causing his pain.

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## MAYFIELD

► Continued from page 8

Station, where town homes are being sold in the \$750,000 range.

Given current prices, if the condo market does not continue to rise dramatically through 2012, a buyer may be able to obtain a two-bedroom condo for \$600,000 at Mayfield. But the average homebuyer would still face daunting obstacles: either a huge monthly mortgage payment or a huge down payment, not to mention finding a decent long-term loan.

Some pro-growth advocates say that building more homes of any sort is better for the overall housing market, since supply must increase to meet demand.

Toll Brothers' Snider noted that last year the City Council voted to not require below market rate units in the project, partly due to fundamental disagreements over the BMR program. The developer will be building seven BMR units on the Palo Alto side of the project, which has 45 homes total. ▀

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**BUDGET**

► Continued from page 5

very infrastructure that's serving your community."

Winkleby, a longtime resident of Mountain View, believes the county health department is invisible to many local citizens. Most people, she said, identify with the city and don't realize that health services in Mountain View are provided by the county.

Among its responsibilities,

the Public Health Department is meant to be the first line of defense in a major health crisis, such as an outbreak of meningitis or tuberculosis. In the event of a natural catastrophe, such as an earthquake, it would be responsible for organizing and staffing the treatment and recovery centers. Winkleby maintains that, in the face of recent cuts, the county is unprepared for such an emergency.

"It's ironic," she said, "that we're this county with an average household income approaching six figures, multi-million

dollar homes, and some of the most advanced technology in the world, but we're completely unprepared for any kind of health disaster. We just don't have as good an infrastructure for public health as the surrounding counties."

Despite this dire assessment, county Supervisor Liz Kniss thinks there is room for cautious optimism, given what has been salvaged. The final cuts, she said, were only a fraction of what was originally slated for the chopping block.

"The suggestion was that \$26 million be cut from public health, which is roughly half of the annual operating budget," said Kniss, a former nurse and chair of the board's health and hospital committee. "That would have just about decimated everything. When we began to look

at this, I thought, there must be extra resources somewhere."

Kniss said she and her colleagues leveraged funds and a p p l i e d for federal m a t c h - i n g grants, r e d u c i n g the final cuts in health care by about \$10 million. In Mountain View, partial funding was restored for the Community Health Awareness Council; for Outreach

and Escort, a service for seniors; for the Support Network for Battered Women; and for a number of school-linked services.

Kniss said she sought to save hands-on programs that directly affect local communities, especially those run by community-based organizations that provide cost-effective care. While many programs had to be pared back, only a few were completely shelved.

"The programs will no longer be as robust or effective as they were," she said, "but it's a matter of seeking out alternative strategies so we can get them back into shape."

As state funding continues to decline, and the county's incoming revenue fails to meet costs, Kniss is setting up a task force to explore how best to support health care issues in the future.

"We're looking at a deficit for the upcoming year, so we need to find alternative means to provide the kind of services that we're struggling with right now," she said.

Kniss is thinking of pushing for a quarter-cent sales tax increase to raise funds for health care, and is looking to collaborate with local nonprofits. "Right now, we need to explore every possibility," she said.

Olivas, for one, hopes that includes the possibility of restoring funding.

"We're supposed to be a public safety net," she said, "so I hope they look elsewhere for future cuts, because we've been pretty significantly impacted already. I hope they reexamine where the targets should be." ■

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**Kniss is thinking of pushing for a quarter-cent sales tax increase to raise funds for health care, and is looking to collaborate with local nonprofits. "Right now, we need to explore every possibility," she said.**

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The Voice is published weekly by Embarcadero Publishing Co. and distributed by U.S. Mail to residences and businesses in Mountain View.

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## ■ EDITORIAL THE OPINION OF THE VOICE

# Council sets bar on Mayfield

Last week's City Council decision to clip another 25 units from the Mayfield Mall project at San Antonio Road and Central Expressway — and throw in \$4 million for more park space — was no surprise. What was a mild shock was that the council finally signed off on a project that few members of the recently elected majority seem to like very much.

In fact, Jac Siegel mused that he would just as soon see the entire 26 acres turned into a park. But despite a steady barrage of shrill comments from the project's neighbors in recent months, Siegel and his colleagues have moved forward on the controversial project, which will have a final size of 450 units on the Mountain View side and at least 3.4 acres of park space. An additional 45 units will be built in the Palo Alto portion of the subdivision, just across San Antonio Road.

The clunking between neighbors and developers on Mayfield was inevitable when Hewlett-Packard decided to abandon the old shopping center property and put it in the hands of Toll Brothers, the nationally known housing developer that seeks a maximum return on investment. Residents of the adjacent Monta Loma neighborhood were outraged that a large, densely populated project was going to take root just over the fence from their properties.

The neighbors were quick to criticize early design scenarios, and benefited tremendously when the new council majority was elected in November after promising slower growth. With a somewhat sympathetic ear on the council — compared to retiring members Greg Perry and Mike Kasperzak, who favored dense housing projects — Mayfield critics began to gain traction. Last week's vote shows how much strength they acquired in the last six months.

And although they would be hesitant to admit it, the neighbors did quite well in beating down the size and impact of the Mayfield design. Despite their continued criticism of the final plan adopted, the neighbors were able to lower the number of units, acquire more acreage for parks, and see 60 more guest parking spaces added to the project, decreasing pressure for visitors to park on their streets.

Overall, it looks like the long battle over Mayfield has been worth it. The project will add a lot of homes and significant park space to the area and, with care in the final blueprint, could become a good neighbor to the Monta Loma residents next door.

## ■ LETTERS VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

### MAYFIELD PROJECT LACKS AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Editor:

I certainly hope Anthony Marek does not hope to live in the new Toll Brothers development he favors at Mayfield ("Time to build homes at Mayfield site," Letters to the Editor, July 6). At his family's housing budget of \$3,000 a month (as stated in his letter), he will not be able to afford even the lowest-level luxury condo that Toll Brothers is proposing.

Even in the best circumstances — a good credit rating, 30-year mortgage, no other debt (car payment, etc.), and 20 percent down — Mr. Marek still falls short in qualifying for a conventional mortgage at the \$3,000-a-month-payment mark.

In fact, only 17 percent of Mountain View households earn enough to be able to afford the first-level Toll Brothers unit at Mayfield, and substantially fewer at the highest end. Toll Brothers has opted for an in-lieu payment instead of BMR units here, leaving out the possibility of balancing the development's income mix.

The idea that this new development brings affordable housing to Mountain View is simply erroneous.

Janie Taylor  
Mardell Way

### SOLAR'S HIDDEN COSTS, PART II

Editor:

In addition to the solar panel installation issues cited by Susan Perkins in last week's issue ("A warning for those considering going solar," Letters to the Editor), those who are considering photovoltaic solar panel installation on their home should be aware that their roof trusses need to be strong enough to support the dead weight of the panels, which can be 500 pounds or more.

To manage construction costs, your existing trusses might be strong enough only to support the roof materials plus anyone working on the roof with a minimal margin for safety. Depending on the age of your home, you might be able to obtain the truss specifications from the City Clerk's office.

I'm not aware if the city now requires trusses to be strong enough to support solar panels for new home construction, but, given their intent to implement one or more climate change initiatives, it would certainly be appropriate for such requirements to be in place — ideally before the Mayfield development plans are fully approved.

Bruce England  
Whisman Station Drive



## ■ GUEST EDITORIAL

# The BMR debacle

SPENDING FUNDS IN ONE-TIME PAYMENTS IS A POOR USE OF CITY'S RESOURCES

By Roy G. Hayter

Recent actions by City Council members suggest they are intent on continuing their short-sighted practice of spending BMR funds, originally intended to build affordable low- and very-low-income housing, for one-time payments of relocation expenses.

This practice began last year in response to the plight of dozens of very low income families being displaced from apartments at 291 Evandale Ave. Although initially a response to a unique event, this appears to be becoming policy.

We question this practice for two reasons.

First, the built-in restriction on use of BMR funds for housing in Mountain View only means that an increasingly large number of displaced tenants are ineligible to receive relocation payments, as affordable rentals in the city continue to become scarcer. There are barely any now. We recommend that council members find another source of compensation if they wish to express sympathy for displaced tenants.

Second, to the extent that these funds can be and are used to

compensate displaced low-income tenants, this is not a sensible use for them.

Looking at the most recent example of a disappearing affordable apartment complex: The assessed value of 2215 Rock Street is about \$2.4 million. By using BMR funds in hand (there's \$2.8 million in the bank), the city

tenant relocation expenses during the current fiscal year. This is said to be a minor amount ("only" about 10 percent) of the current BMR fund total. But investing \$300,000 annually, as the city's contribution to a project similar to San Antonio Place, could build seven single-occupancy apartments every year. It took about 10 years to implement the San Antonio Place project with its 120 units, an average of 12 every year. The current relocation policy, if continued, drains away funds which could increase by 60 percent our supply of similar apartments. Why is the city spending funds that could build units?

In short, a valuable source of local funds that could provide badly needed

rental housing for low-income families and individuals is being dribbled away, because the council does not have the political will to specify other funding sources for compensation. BMR funds are a sitting duck.

Other cities' responses to similar situations have been quite different: They expect developers to pay relocation expenses to all who are displaced, regardless of their income or where they end up. The city's general fund could also help more residents. So far, these more sympathetic and appropriate measures have been rejected by our City Council.

We note in passing that this council appears to favor replacing low-income rental apartments with high-priced ownership condos and town homes. The state's mandate, which all council members agree to follow on taking office, calls for the production of a "fair share" of housing for all income levels within a community.

There is a glimmer of hope. The environmental planning commission will meet in September to develop a comprehensive tenant relocation assistance policy. We hope they will recommend a policy that helps all who are displaced and ensures that BMR funds are used for their rightful purpose.

Roy Hayter is chair of Advocates for Affordable Housing. He lives on Yale Drive.

*This council appears to favor replacing low-income rental apartments with high-priced ownership condos and town homes. The state's mandate, calls for the production of a "fair share" of housing for all income levels within a community.*

could have acquired this property and given it to a nonprofit developer for upgrading and retention as permanent low-income affordable apartments. When it comes to affordable housing, is the city asleep at the switch?

Another argument against spending BMR funds on one-time expenses is this: The council has specified that up to \$300,000 from BMR funds may pay for



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## ■ GUEST EDITORIAL

**Don't spend BMR funds — invest them**LATEST MOVE TO HELP ROCK STREET TENANTS  
SENDS CITY DOWN A DANGEROUS PATH

By Alicia Crank

Two years ago, hardly anyone was talking about the city's below market rate funds — other than the fact that there was a pool of money to be spent that wasn't being touched.

Then, as condo conversions increased and lower-income tenants were being displaced, "BMR" became prominent in the council's vocabulary due to outcry from residents and other interested parties.

These days, BMR funds are being considered for relocation assistance rather than creating housing. What was discussed as a one-time option is now being considered as a permanent option. This is a serious problem.

I realize there is a level of anxiety in spending these funds rather than leaving them dormant, however there is a difference between spending and investing.

You can *spend* the money on relocation expenses for people to move

to another location they may be able to afford. But what happens if and when their new rental complex comes up for conversion? A cycle is being created that isn't beneficial to anyone. Money is spent, but not invested back in the community.

Or you can *invest* the BMR funds by creating the housing needed for the community.

Sadly, BMR housing is becoming a NIMBY issue. Some residents, it seems, just don't want "low-income" people next door. This was evident last year when the council was deciding which lot in downtown Mountain View should be the site for an affordable housing complex. Instead of picking a more family-friendly place like the lot near the library and parks, council members caved in to pressure from neighbors and chose the lot next to the train tracks.

It's worth noting that those neighbors' prejudice was misplaced, because around here, "low income" isn't the same as poor. A \$50,000

income isn't considered to be low in most states. But in the Bay Area, under normal circumstances, one can't own a condo and still live comfortably on that kind of money.

At any rate, spending BMR funds on tenant relocation only adds to the prejudice, because without affordable housing, families are never given a chance to pull themselves up into homeownership. Worse, they face the constant threat of eviction to make way for the next set of condos or townhouses.

I am a proud renter in Mountain View, and would hate to think that just because I don't make a six-figure income, and refuse to incur massive debt to own a 1,000-square-foot condo, that I could face eviction due to a condo conversion — and not have other housing, created by BMR funds, as an option.

Don't spend. Invest.

*Alicia Crank is a member of the city's Human Relations Commission. She lives on California Street.*

## ■ GUEST EDITORIAL

**Anna, please impeach**REPRESENTATIVE ANNA ESHOO NEEDS OUR  
SUPPORT TO BRING BUSH, CHENEY TO JUSTICE

By Fred Duperrault

Kudos to Representative Anna Eshoo for getting after Vice President Dick Cheney for illegally pressuring U.S. Interior Department (U.S.D.I.) officials to divert water needed to maintain salmon in the Klamath river. According to an article in the July 13 *Voice*, Eshoo stated, "The vice president is not above the law or immune from Congressional oversight."

Great! Now Representative Eshoo can follow up to prove her claim that Cheney is not above the law, by helping to invoke the impeachment process. The vice president — and the president — are indeed chargeable for allegedly misusing their high offices, for violating the Constitution, for crimes against humanity, for committing fraud, and for a number of other blatant offenses.

After the House Judiciary Committee places an impeachment bill on its calendar, investigative hearings and debating precede the vote on impeachment. If a simple majority of the House vote to impeach Cheney and/or Bush they will be

tried in the Senate. The Senate will subsequently decide if the charges warrant removing these two from office.

The general consensus among Rep. Eshoo's constituents seems to be that they want Cheney and Bush

perpetuate.

Anna Eshoo's colleague, Dennis Kucinich, from Ohio, has already authored a bill to impeach the Vice President (H. Res. 333), and has gained the co-sponsorship of 15 other House members.

However, more co-sponsors are needed to help induce House Speaker Nancy Pelosi to retract her edict to keep impeachment "off the table."

Representative Eshoo needs our support to take a stand to uphold the Constitution through the legal process of impeachment. It's the right and patriotic thing to do.

Representative Anna Eshoo's contact numbers are: (202) 225-8104 (Washington, D.C. office); (202) 225-8890 (Washington, D.C. fax); (650) 323-2984 (Palo Alto office); annagram@mail.house.gov (e-mail).

For in depth information on the impeachment process, go to the American Bar Association's Web site on impeachment: [www.abanet.org/publiced/impeach2.html](http://www.abanet.org/publiced/impeach2.html).

*Fred Duperrault lives on W. Middlefield Road.*

***The general consensus among Rep. Eshoo's constituents seems to be that they want Cheney and Bush to be impeached.***

to be impeached.

On the PBS show "Bill Moyers Journal" last Friday, July 13, Moyers hosted two constitutional scholars, John Nichols and Bruce Fein, who eloquently made the case on how critically important it is to uphold and protect the people's Constitution by utilizing its impeachment prerogative. They repeatedly emphasized that if Cheney and Bush are not held accountable for their constitutional violations, it will result in a very dangerous precedent that future presidential administrations could



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Ricotta gnocchi with brown butter, sage and parmesan cheese is surrounded by assorted small plates.

KELLEY COX

## ■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

# Lavanda feels the love

PALO ALTO MAGNET FOR A DRINK AFTER WORK, SPECIAL OCCASION, QUICK LUNCH OR LEISURELY DINNER

By Sheila Himmel

It took Palo Alto a while to get what executive chef Clyde Griesbach had in mind at Lavanda. Back in 2002, tall food and long rosters of ingredients and Asian accents were stylish, and here was a “less is more” Italo-Californian restaurant and wine bar. Almost six years on, you can feel the love.

Griesbach’s minimalist Mediterranean cuisine pays its respects to name-brand organic purveyors, top-shelf seafood, naturally raised chickens and Niman Ranch meats. And each item on the plate stays true to itself. The

beets taste like beets, although if you like you can mingle them with red chard and orange honey sauce on the superb dinner plate of roast duck breast and confit of leg and thigh (\$26). Up to you.

Lavanda is a festival of small plates, many in colorful art glass.

Smallest of them all are eight cold and six hot “small tastes” that run three for \$15. Marinated, dried, grilled or fried, each is served separately. If you love one best, nudge it closer and hope the rest of your party doesn’t notice. Calamari rings and tentacles are grilled and then chilled, deliciously chewy in vinaigrette

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with diced carrots and onions. Fried potatoes should be hotter, but in a mild tomato sauce they play well with the calamari and any of the other spiky little tastes, such as salt cod with hot peppers, marinated olives and preserved tuna. If you think you don't like radicchio, try Griesbach's grilled version, the bitterness offset by sweet vincotto, a fine wine vinegar.

**A younger, hipper crowd populates Lavanda. The restaurant, with a lively bar, now feels more city than suburb. Singles dine and mingle at the bar.**



Lavanda's bar is a great place to eat solo.

KELLEY COX

Herbed, whipped ricotta cheese is lighter than butter, and spreads easily on Panorama's sesame-crust egg bread. On both of my visits, though, the country wheat bread needed freshening.

If soft-shell crabs (\$14) are on the menu, have them. Simply sauteed, they leave nothing to be desired.

A big hunk of baked mozzarella burata (\$10) was too rubbery, although once wrestled to a piece of grilled egg bread, the rich but-

► See **LAVANDA**, page 20

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tery flavor came through.

A recent daily special offered veal T-bone (\$26), an inch and a half thickness of grilled tenderness, lightened by an accompanying lemon vinaigrette arugula salad, generously topped with shaved Parmesan.

Culinary magnets are plastered all over Lavanda's menu, including the list of daily specials, from small tastes to second plates. First plates are bigger than small tastes but smaller than second plates. Got it?

Another section entices you with pasta. In the garlic-lover's spaghetti with clams (\$18), each little clam is steaming hot.

In the lusty tagliatelle with braised beef, pork and veal (\$18), each meat retains its own texture.

Vegetarians, Griesbach will never take baked penne (\$15) off the menu, nor ricotta gnocchi (\$17), a heart-stopper in brown butter topped with fried sage and Parmesan. Other vegetarian choices include salads, of course, but also grilled seasonal vegetables with mozzarella di bufala and six \$8 plates such as roasted green beans with olives. You aren't stuck with a mound of sauteed plants.

For dessert, the lemony muffin with strawberries and whipped cream (\$9) is nothing special, but the chocolate mousse cake

(\$9) certainly is. It captures the depth of chocolate in textures from chunky to weightless.

The lunch menu is equally attractive. A friend and I split the soup of the day (\$8), featuring bright vegetables, tomatoes, chickpeas and a puree of escarole and fennel.

Lunch pastas run a bit smaller and cheaper, which makes the ricotta gnocchi with brown butter (\$14) no less fabulous. Sandwiches come with your choice of fries, green salad or orzo salad, undistinguished except for being cupped in purple

*On Thursday nights, wine-tastings are popular. Every night, at least 25 wines are available and the 1,000-bottle Wine Spectator award-winning wine list covers the boutiques as well as the big boys.*

radicchio lettuce. Smoked trout on toasted focaccia (\$12) would be better with less mayonnaise and a perkier mix of lettuces.

Lavanda means lavender in Italian,

Spanish and co-owner Luka Dvornik's native Croatian. History buffs may detect a whiff of cinnamon at Lavanda, site of the original Good Earth restaurant and before that, a House of Pies.

A younger, hipper crowd populates Lavanda than when it opened in 2002. The L-shaped restaurant, with a lively bar in the crook of the L, now feels more city than suburb. Singles dine and mingle at the bar. On Thursday nights, wine-tastings are popular. Every night, at least 25 wines are available by the Riedel glass, and the 1,000-bottle Wine Spectator award-winning wine list covers the boutiques as well as the big boys. ▀

### ■ DINING NOTES

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MOVIE TIMES

**1408 (PG-13) ★★1/2** Century 20: 11:30 a.m.; 2, 4:25, 7 & 9:35 p.m.  
**A MIGHTY HEART (R) ★★1/2** Century 20: 11:10 a.m.; 1:40, 4:40, 7:15 & 9:55 p.m.  
**EVAN ALMIGHTY (PG) ★★** Century 20: 12:05, 2:35, 4:55, 7:25 & 9:55 p.m.  
**EVENING (PG-13) ★★** Century 20: 11:25 a.m.; 2:15, 5, 7:50 & 10:30 p.m.  
**FANTASTIC FOUR: RISE OF THE SILVER SURFER (PG) ★★** Century 20: 12:20, 2:50, 5:15, 7:35 & 10:05 p.m.  
**GOYA'S GHOSTS (R) (NOT REVIEWED)** Century 16: 10:50, 1:35, 4:20, 7:05 & 9:50 p.m.  
**HAIRSPRAY (PG) (NOT REVIEWED)** Century 16: 11 a.m.; 12:40, 1:50, 3:40, 4:40, 6:50, 7:35, 9:40 & 10:25 p.m. Century 20: 11:30 a.m.; 12:25, 1:20, 2:15, 3:05, 4, 4:55, 5:45, 6:40, 7:35, 8:25, 9:20 & 10:15 p.m.  
**HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX (PG-13) ★★1/2** Century 16: 10:30 & 11:15 a.m.; noon, 12:30, 1, 1:45, 2:30, 3:15, 3:45, 4:15, 4:55, 5:45, 6:30, 7, 7:30, 9, 9:40, 10:15 & 10:40 p.m. Century 12: 11:45 a.m.; 12:20, 1, 1:30, 1:55, 2:30, 3:15, 4, 4:30, 5:10, 5:45, 6:15, 6:45, 7:20, 8, 8:40, 9:10, 9:40, 10:10 & 10:35 p.m.  
**I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY (PG-13) ★★** Century 16: 11:05 a.m.; 12:35, 1:55, 3:20, 4:45, 6:45, 7:30, 9:30 & 10:15 p.m. Century 12: 12, 1:10, 2, 2:50, 3:50, 4:50, 6, 7, 7:50, 9:20, 9:50 & 10:30 p.m.  
**INTERVIEW (R) (NOT REVIEWED)** Palo Alto Square: Fri. & Mon. at 2:50, 5:10, 7:30 & 9:50 p.m. Sat. & Sun. at 12:40, 2:50, 5:10, 7:30 & 9:50 p.m.  
**INTRODUCING THE DWIGHTS (R) (NOT REVIEWED)** Aquarius: 1:45, 4:15, 6:40 & 9:20 p.m.  
**JOSHUA (R) ★★** Century 20: 11:20 a.m.; 4:35 & 10 p.m.  
**KNOCKED UP (R) ★★1/2** Century 20: 1:30, 4:30, 7:30 & 10:25 p.m. Palo Alto Square: 4:15 & 9:45 p.m.  
**LA VIE EN ROSE (PG-13) ★★** Century 20: 12:30, 3:40, 6:50 & 10 p.m. Guild: 1 & 6:30 p.m.  
**LICENSE TO WED (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED)** Century 16: Fri., Sun. & Mon. at 11:50 a.m.; 2:15, 4:50, 7:25 & 9:55 p.m. Sat. at 11:50 a.m.; 2:15, 4:40 & 9:55 p.m. Century 20: 11:50 a.m.; 2:25, 4:45, 7:05 & 9:30 p.m.  
**LIVE FREE OR DIE HARD (PG-13) ★★** Century 16: 12:50, 3:55, 7:10 & 10:10 p.m. Century 20: 11:35 a.m.; 1:10, 2:30, 4:10, 5:25, 7:10, 8:30 & 10:10 p.m.  
**THE LIVES OF OTHERS (R) ★★** Century 20: 1, 4:05, 7:10 & 10:20 p.m.  
**NANCY DREW (PG) ★1/2** Century 20: 11:15 a.m.; 1:40 p.m.  
**OCEAN'S THIRTEEN (PG-13) ★★** Century 16: 7:15 & 10 p.m. Century 20: 11:10 a.m.; 1:55, 4:45, 7:45 & 10:35 p.m.  
**ONCE (R) ★★1/2** Aquarius: 1, 3, 5, 7 & 9 p.m.  
**PARIS JE T'AIME (R) ★★** Guild: 3:45 & 9:15 p.m.  
**PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END (PG-13) ★★1/2** Century 20: 4:15 & 8:15 p.m.  
**RATATOUILLE (G) ★★** Century 16: 10:40 & 11:35 a.m.; 1:25, 2:20, 5:05, 7:50 & 10:30 p.m. Century 20: 11:15 a.m.; 12:15, 2, 3:20, 4:50, 6:15, 7:40, 9 & 10:25 p.m.  
**THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW (1975) (R) (NOT REVIEWED)** Guild: Sat. at midnight.  
**SICKO (PG-13) ★★** Century 16: 12:45, 3:35, 6:45 & 9:35 p.m. Century 20: 1:05, 3:55, 7 & 9:50 p.m.  
**TRANSFORMERS (PG-13) ★★** Century 16: 11:45 a.m.; 3, 4:05, 6:30, 7:20, 9:45 & 10:35 p.m. Century 12: 11:30 a.m.; 12:40, 1:50, 3, 4:15, 5:30, 6:30, 7:40, 9, & 10 p.m.  
**WAITRESS (PG-13) ★★** Century 20: 1:50 & 7:20 p.m. Palo Alto Square: 1:45 & 7:10 p.m.

Note: Screenings are for Friday through Tuesday only.

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

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MOVIE REVIEWS

**1408 ★★ 1/2**  
 (Century 16, Century 20) Author Mike Enslin is a paperback expert at debunking supposedly ghost-laden locales. The skeptical writer ventures to spooky destinations with haunted histories, stays overnight and then bangs out moody novels with the help of his handy tape recorder. But in Mike's myriad travels he has never experienced tangible proof of the paranormal — until a mysterious postcard encourages him to visit the Dolphin Hotel but warns him to steer clear of room 1408. The enticing challenge is too tempting for Mike to pass up. Things seem normal at first. But soon Mike is seriously regretting his decision, as mind-boggling occurrences and transparent specters begin intruding on his otherwise dull day. Fans of Stephen King and John Cusack will enjoy an engaging 90 minutes, but being trapped in a dreary hotel room is hardly must-see cinema. *Rated: PG-13 for thematic material, disturbing sequences of violence and terror, frightening images and languages. 1 hour, 34 minutes.* — T.H.

**HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX ★★ 1/2**

(Century 16, Century 12) Following the death of a classmate in "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire," Harry, Hermione and Ron have lost the *joie de vivre* that once fueled their lives at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. And the resurgence of the evil Lord Voldemort has the rest of the wizarding world in an uproar. The Order of the Phoenix holds clandestine meetings to prepare for war. The Order includes several former Hogwarts professors, such as "Mad-Eye" Moody and Remus Lupin, and Harry's godfather, Sirius Black. But the Ministry of Magic refuses to believe that Voldemort has returned, instead labeling Harry a liar and Hogwarts headmaster Albus Dumbledore a conspirator against the Ministry. To squelch any possible uprising, Ministry mainstay Dolores Umbridge takes over Hogwarts' Defense Against the Dark Arts class. But Umbridge's presence at Hogwarts proves stifling, and soon Harry and others are meeting secretly to study practical defense spells in preparation for a major conflict with Voldemort and his loyal Death Eaters. Fans of the novel will be thoroughly satisfied, as will fantasy fans in general. *Rated: PG-13 for sequences of fantasy violence and frightening images. 2 hours, 18 minutes.* — T.H.

**JOSHUA ★★**

(Century 20) The Cairns are the perfect American family. Abby and Brad are loving parents to 9-year-old Joshua, their piano-prodigy son. As they welcome a newborn daughter into their upscale Manhattan apartment, their life turns into a nightmare. As Joshua behaves more and more strangely — and his exhausted mom slides into mental and physical illness — the narrative raises several terrifying possibilities. Abby Cairn could be going insane, imagining things and placing her baby in harm's way. The apartment building could be haunted. Or well-mannered Joshua might be a Hannibal Lecter in the

► See **MINI REVIEWS**, page 22

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MINI REVIEWS

▶ Continued from page 21

making. Ratliff's horror screams "No!" to mainstream American family values. Loving, child-centered parents may be creating clever little fiends bent on disempowering and destroying them and their way of life. "Joshua" questions the very nature of child-rearing and the nuclear family. *Rated: R for language and some disturbing behavior by a child. 1 hour, 30 minutes.* — S.T.

**LIVE FREE OR DIE HARD** ★★★  
(Century 16, Century 20) Modern technology intrudes on New York detective John McClane's world when a group of Internet-savvy terrorists led by the bitter Thomas Gabriel begins to take advantage of America's tech dependence. McClane is escorting young hacker Matt Farrell to the FBI's command center when things go haywire. Gabriel and his team of tattooed thugs and IT geeks systematically disrupt the American way with computer viruses and hacker know-how. Chaotic street lights snarl traffic, a faux anthrax threat evacuates the U.S. Capitol and police stations are overrun with panicked citizens. Only McClane and Farrell have the brawn and brains to shut down Gabriel's sinister ambitions. Gabriel's complicated plan is far more confusing than the straightforward snatch-and-grab job of the first "Die Hard" film, and McClane has grown less empathetic since then, violently dispatching villains without the slightest remorse. The complex action sequences are impressive, with brilliant graphics and top-notch stunt work tugging viewers to the edge of their seats. *Rated: PG-13 for intense sequences of violence and action, language and a brief sexual situation. 2 hours, 10 minutes.* — T.H.

**OCEAN'S THIRTEEN** ★★★  
(Century 16, Century 20) "Ocean's" is a couple of action-packed hours of eye candy with a plot to boot. Not much of one, but the film is still a catchy retreat that reworks the concept of the world's most improbable scam. In a nutshell: Key players Danny Ocean (George Clooney) and Rusty Ryan (Brad Pitt) set out to avenge the betrayal of their beloved guru Reuben Tishkoff (Elliott Gould). Tishkoff was a trusting half-partner in Vegas' hottest hotel casino (The Bank) until kingpin Willie Bank (Al Pacino doing his sleaziest lounge lizard) screwed him over to the tune of millions. The duplicity lands Tishkoff in critical condition from sheer shock. Ocean and company want revenge. What else to do but to take down Bank in a high-profile crash-and-burn? The boys are in rare form: smooth and breezy in that cooler-than-thou way that garnered so many fans in 2001. The action is snappy enough to mask the narrative missteps. This roll of the dice is a guaranteed winner, summer fun with a safety net. *Rated: PG-13 for language and some sensuality. 2 hours, 2 minutes.* — J.A.

**SICKO** ★★★★★  
(Century 12) "Sicko" looks at the lucky Americans, the 250 million who have private health-care insurance. Applying the Michael Moore method of documen-

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tary filmmaking, the director combines humor with tales of personal tragedy — and then veers into audacious, unexpected territory. The folksy fire-brand again puts himself in front of the camera, making his position clear: His nonfiction film functions as a personal essay that includes pointed commentary, offers a politically charged vision and raises big questions. As Moore's most brilliantly structured work, "Sicko" starts off with ordinary Americans whose claims and coverage have been denied for ridiculous reasons. Close-ups capture their emotional testimonies, appealing to our hearts more than our minds. Then

doctors and industry insiders testify about how insurance companies maximize profits by keeping benefits from the premium-paying patients who need them. Eventually the ruffled rabble-rouser throws his questioning back at us: "Who are we? A nation that dumps its own citizens like garbage on the curb because they can't pay their medical bills?" *Rated: PG-13 for brief strong language. 1 hour. 56 minutes.* — S.T.

■ MOVIECRITICS

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



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*From left: Peter Fung, MD, neurologist; Audrey Prairo, RN, Emergency Department; John Barnes, MD, neurologist; Ruby Garma, RN, MS, Stroke Unit*

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