

Mountain View VOICE



Wood vs. Plastic
The jury is still out
on eco-friendly decks
HOME & GARDEN | PAGE 21

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INSIDE: CLASS GUIDE | PAGE 27

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NORBERT VON DER GROEBEN

Hundreds of Canada geese feed at Shoreline Park in Mountain View last Friday. The population of Canada geese is out of control at Shoreline and they are making a mess, golfers say.

'Goose lavatory' at Shoreline Park

BIRDS' NUMBERS ARE GROWING, AND GOLFERS SAY THEY'RE A NUISANCE

By Daniel DeBolt

Years ago the Canada Geese came to Shoreline Park. They never left.

The birds, as many as 800 of them, leave large droppings. And by abandoning their parents' migratory ways, these geese have created a year-round problem for golfers and other users of Shoreline Park.

"You're walking through it all the time," said a golfer named Glen. "It's on your shoes and on your ball. If you're playing by the rules you hit it with the poop on it."

The city has been trying everything in the book to keep the goose population under control, with most efforts focused on the golf course. At the course, a sign reads "Don't feed the squirrels or the birds."

Every weekday a border collie named Wryn chases the geese off in flocks. Liquids have been sprayed on the grass to turn them away by inducing a vomiting reflex. Fake predators, including a coyote, are moved around the course to scare them off. Remote control boats have even been used to keep them out of the park's lakes.

Even so, last year the population grew by 50 to 100 geese, the city said, after a program of "egg addling" — using mineral oil to kill goose eggs — had to be temporarily stopped under what the Department of

"If you're playing by the rules you hit it with the poop on it."

Fish and Game called a bureaucratic "snafu." The federal government last year put the responsibility for issuing egg addling permits into the hands of states. The only problem was that egg addling is technically illegal in California.

"Without egg addling your problem is

going to be worse the next year," said Dan Yparraguirre, head of the Department of Fish and Game's Waterfowl and Migratory Bird Program. "This egg snafu has certainly set folks back."

Yparraguirre said the department hopes to fix the problem soon, "but we just couldn't get our ducks in a row before last spring."

Resident Steve Anderson is a longtime golfer and marshal at the golf links. On Sunday mornings, among other things, he can be seen "herding geese" by waving a golf club or whatever's handy. Anderson said Canada

► See **GEESE**, page 10

Paradigm shift at MV Whisman

SCHOOL DISTRICT ONE OF A FEW IN U.S. TO ADOPT 'CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT' TEACHING METHOD

By Susan Hong

The Mountain View Whisman School District announced this week that it has adopted a new approach to teaching which regards parents and students as "customers" and "stakeholders" in the educational process.

The new method, called "Continuous Improvement" or CI, marks a paradigm shift for the district. The idea for the change started about two years ago, when newly hired Superintendent Maurice Ghysels introduced his administrators to a business-related approach to education. Ghysels, who holds a Ph.D. in education with an emphasis on organizational development, worked in the corporate field during the 1990s.

After combing the country for resources, Ghysels and his team started a CI pilot program of 22 teachers last October. The teachers saw so much success in the classroom with Continuous Improvement, educators said, that

► See **MV WHISMAN**, page 11

Day Worker Center finds new home

TRINITY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OFFERS ONE-YEAR TRIAL FOR DOWNTOWN SPACE

By Daniel DeBolt

After months of searching, Mountain View's Day Worker Center is set to move into a new space at the Trinity United Methodist Church at 748 Mercy Street, just half a block from City Hall.

At a press conference in front of the

church Tuesday, church leaders were thanked for providing day workers "refuge" with a one-year lease. The center's former lease, at the Calvary Church on California Street and Escuela Avenue, was set to expire this month after five years.

United Methodist Pastor Janette Saavedra said she was excited about hosting the center. A church member named Shelly

Kinney had read about the center's situation in the *Voice*, prompting the church to offer help, she said.

"It gives me much faith that there are people who will reach out to us like this," said Elizabeth Fitting, the president of the Day Worker Center board.

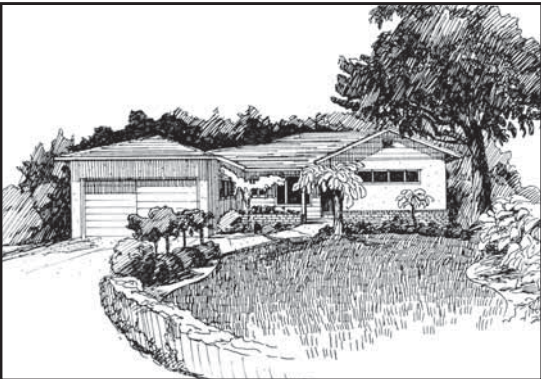
► See **DAY WORKER**, page 9

INSIDE

GOINGS ON **25** | MARKETPLACE **32** | MOVIES **18** | REAL ESTATE **37** | VIEWPOINT **13**

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

Chuck & Tori Atwell



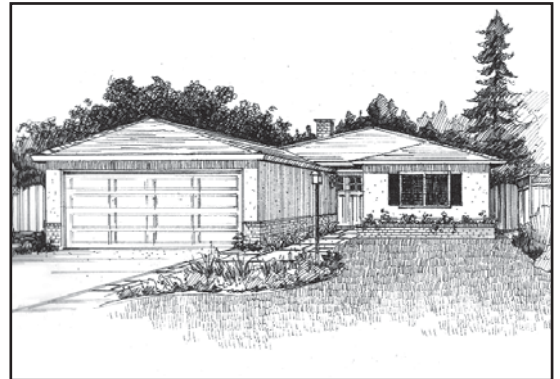
MOUNTAIN VIEW ■ Rarely available 3bd/3ba home with 4th bedroom or den. New paint inside and out, hardwood floors + fireplace. 2-car garage. Large yard. **\$1,078,000**

Maisy Young



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Dottie Monroe



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Margaret Grant



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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.

“Did you have any toys that had to be recalled?”



“The girls did have some of those Polly Pockets that were recalled. In general though we try to avoid Toys ‘R’ Us and don’t go for too much plastic stuff.”

Gina Villarreal, with daughter **Ines** (pictured), Sunnyvale



“Well, we had the wooden Thomas the Train that was recalled because of lead in the paint. It’s funny, because I normally don’t buy the name-brand stuff on TV, and I do this one time, and it gets recalled! I was absolutely furious that such a popular toy had lead in it.”

Cassy Christianson with **Ethan**, Mountain View



“Several months back we had that Thomas the Train recalled because of some sort of deal with lead in the paint. We haven’t really changed what we buy, though — we’re not too worried about it.”

Regina and Bryan Freed with **Nathan**, Mountain View



“I haven’t had a problem with any of the recent toys, but I did have a BabyTrans baby carrier that got recalled because the straps were faulty. I do think it’s amazing how they [the companies] get away with this kind of thing for so long. I mean, lead in the paint?”

Yukki Wong with **Lur**, Mountain View

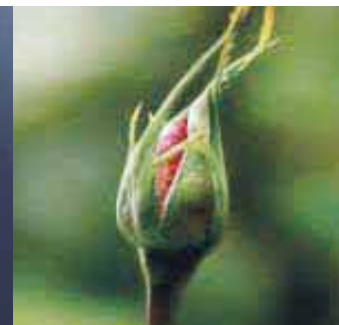


“It’s not such a problem in my family because we don’t buy many toys. They’re always begging for Playstation or Legos.”

Graciela Gomez, with children **Vanessa** and **Raciel** (pictured), Mountain View

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-Workshop Attendee

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MountainView
VOICE
Online

■ **CRIMEWATCH**

ASSAULT, 400 BLOCK N. SHORELINE BLVD., 8/10

An argument between a mother and her 35-year-old daughter turned violent when the daughter began to stab her mother in the face and head with a metal rod used to sharpen knives. The mother, who sustained minor injuries, was treated at the scene by paramedics. Her daughter was arrested on assault charges.

with an eviction notice, his brother became enraged and tried to hit him over the head with a glass bottle. The brother was arrested on assault charges.

CHILD HARASSMENT, LATHAM ST./RENGSTORFF AVE., 8/11

A man verbally harassed an adolescent girl as they rode a bus from the Stanford area into Mountain View. He spoke to her in a sexual manner despite her entreaties for him to stop. When the man exited the bus with her, she called police. He was described as a black male in his late 20s with short hair. He was last seen wearing a dark shirt and dark jeans.

ASSAULT, 1300 BLOCK W. DANA ST., 8/9

When a man served his 40-year-old brother

■ **POLICE LOG**

ARSON

1900 Block W. El Camino Real, 8/11

MISSING PERSON - ADULT

100 Block W. Dana St., 8/12

ATTEMPTED SUICIDE

1800 Block California St., 8/9

MISSING PERSON - JUVENILE

2500 Block Grant Rd., 8/12

BATTERY

200 Block Castro St., 8/11
200 Block Evandale Ave., 8/11

PETTY THEFT

1900 Block Rock St., 8/9
600 Block Evelyn St., 8/9
700 Block E. El Camino Real, 8/12
Target, 8/12
600 Block Castro St., 8/12
800 Block Bush St., 8/13
1500 Block Salado Dr., 8/13
700 Block Middlefield Rd., 8/13
800 Block N. Rengstorff Ave., 8/13

BRANDISHING WEAPON

500 Block Hans Ave., 8/11
600 Block Franklin St., 8/13

BURGLARY/AUTO

200 Block Montecito Ave., 8/8
200 Block California St., 8/8
2100 Block California St., 8/9
100 Block Del Medio Ave., 8/10
100 Block Del Medio Ave., 8/11

POSSESSION OF CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE

200 Block San Ramon Ave., 8/13

BURGLARY/COMMERCIAL

Wal-Mart, 8/9

POSSESSION OF DRUG PARAPHENALIA

Pear Ave./N. Shoreline Blvd., 8/10
600 Block Leong Dr., 8/10

BURGLARY/RESIDENTIAL

100 Block N. Whisman Rd., 8/9

POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA

400 Block Clyde Ave., 8/11

CORPORAL INJURY TO SPOUSE

1900 Block Montecito Ave., 8/12
1900 Block Rock St., 8/12

POSSESSION OF STOLEN PROPERTY

100 Block Space Park, 8/11

DISORDERLY CONDUCT

100 Block Grant Rd., 8/10
700 Block E. El Camino Real, 8/10
Rengstorff Park, 8/11
200 Block Palo Alto Ave., 8/12
800 Block Leong Dr., 8/12

PROBATION VIOLATION

2200 Block California St., 8/12

DOMESTIC DISTURBANCE

1800 Block Latham St., 8/11
1900 Block W. El Camino Real, 8/12

SALE OF MARIJUANA

1900 Block W. El Camino Real, 8/11

GRAND THEFT

1300 Block Belshaw Dr., 8/10
100 Block Grant Rd., 8/11
1900 Block Fordham Way, 8/12

SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES/PERSON

500 Block View St., 8/10
2700 Block Katrina Way, 8/11

INDECENT EXPOSURE

2200 Block Rock St., 8/12

VANDALISM


3100 Block Escuela Ave., 8/9
200 Block Landings Dr., 8/10
100 Block Bryant St., 8/11

■ **CORRECTIONS**

Last week's story on the departure of Alza Corp., "After 17 years, Alza Corp. is pulling up stakes," gave an incorrect amount for the company's purchase by Johnson and Johnson in 2001. The figure, according to the *Wall Street Journal*, is \$12 billion. Due to an editing error, last week's

story on union talks, "Retiree health care on table," incorrectly stated that Mountain View's union members receive health care benefits for themselves and their families for life after retirement. In fact, retiree health benefits are for the union members only, not their families.

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- Thursdays, September 6-27
- * REFRESHER CHILDBIRTH CLASS**

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- Saturday, September 8
- * IS MEDIA THE OTHER PARENT?**

Tom Robinson, MD, from the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Center for Healthy Weight and Rebecca Randall from Common Sense Media discuss the effects of media on the health of our children and practical ways parents can guide their children towards a better understanding of media messages and productive lifestyle. Please call (650) 724-3783 to register for this free event.

- Tuesday, October 2

Call (650) 723-4600 or visit www.lpch.org to register or obtain more information on the times, locations and fees for these and other courses.



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Good works bulletin

By Don Frances

‘HERE’S SOMETHING you don’t see every day,” wrote Rosemary Byrne of the Red Cross’ Palo Alto Area Chapter. “Residents affected by the June 11 fire in Mountain View are throwing a thank-you barbecue on Aug. 26 for everyone who helped them at that time, including the Red Cross and the Mountain View Fire Department.”

The fire she refers to was on the 100 block of Church Street, where a two-alarm blaze put a dozen people out of their homes. As usual, Red Cross volunteers were on hand to help the displaced residents find a place to stay, a bite to eat and whatever else they needed.

“We often hear ‘thank you’ from people we help, but I don’t think we (and I doubt the firefighters) ever had a party thrown in our honor as thanks,” Byrne wrote.

For more on our local chapter of the American Red Cross, visit www.paarc.org.

AS NOTED IN this week’s Home & Garden section, “Literacy in the Garden” is seeking volunteers (see page 23).

But there’s also a corollary program, “Literacy in the Classroom,” which is seeking volunteers to “share simple stories about their childhood favorites with Castro third-graders,” wrote organizer Linda McCrary.

The seven-week program, which meets Tuesday mornings, “kicks off Oct. 2 with a two-hour training session. Volunteers will receive detailed week-to-week instructions, and no writing or teaching experience is required,” McCrary wrote.

For more information, e-mail lmccrary@mvlaae.net or call (650) 940-6024.

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



JOHN INKS

Al Jehning (foreground) gets help grilling hamburgers from Mountain View City Council members Jac Siegel, Matt Pear, Tom Means and Nick Galiotto at the Mountain View Historical Association’s 50th birthday celebration last week.

Mountain View Historical Association celebrates 50 years

By Don Frances

The Mountain View Historical Association celebrated its 50th birthday last week with burgers, good times and more than half the City Council in attendance.

As reported to the *Voice* by Robert Weaver, the group held its celebratory barbecue on Aug. 5 at the Adobe Building with more

than 100 people in attendance. The council members took turns flipping burgers, Weaver said.

The Historical Association was founded in 1957 as a nonprofit dedicated to gathering and preserving the city’s history. The renovation and preservation of the Adobe Building itself, located at Moffett Boulevard and Central Expressway, is one of the association’s achievements. The group

has also published “Milestones: a History of Mountain View” and it established and staffed the Mountain View History Center at the downtown library.

Plans for a city heritage museum at Cuesta Annex are now in the early stages.

For more information about the Mountain View Historical Association, contact Wally Erichsen at (650) 948-2644. ■

Manslaughter charge sought in death of Mountain View woman

Bay City News

The California Highway Patrol has asked for misdemeanor or vehicular manslaughter charges to be filed against the driver of a big-rig truck involved in a fiery crash on U.S. Highway 101 in Redwood City in May that caused the death of a Mountain View woman.

Indira Gagloeva, 37, was struck and killed by a piece of concrete that flew through her windshield as she was driving in the northbound fast lane of the highway near Woodside

Road at about 1 p.m. on May 22.

According to CHP Officer Grace Castillo, a big-rig traveling at about 55 mph in the southbound slow lane at the time drifted onto the right-hand shoulder for unknown reasons.

The driver of the truck, Carlos Velasquez, 49, of Gilroy, then unsafely overcorrected, Castillo said, and swerved across all the southbound lanes and overturned, striking the center divide and bursting into flames.

Concrete chunks from the center divide flew into the northbound

lane and struck Gagloeva’s Lexus sport utility vehicle.

Gagloeva was airlifted to Stanford Medical Center but later died of her injuries. Her 12-year-old daughter was also in the SUV but escaped serious injury.

Velasquez and a passenger in the truck were uninjured and escaped before the truck caught fire.

Alcohol or drugs did not play a factor in the crash, according to Castillo.

The case has been forwarded to the San Mateo County District Attorney’s Office for review. ■

Firefighters, cops seek SEIU-style benefits

By Daniel DeBolt

The issue that kept negotiations with police and fire unions from coming to a close last week wasn’t whether retiree health benefits should be cut, union leaders say, but whether they should increase as part of an unusual request for a two-tier contract.

In 2003 and 2004, firefighters and police took a cut in their retiree health benefits thinking the city’s other unions would follow suit. Instead, the city cut a sweeter deal with the Service Employees International Union last year. Now the public safety unions want the city to give those benefits back, but for existing union members only.

The public safety unions are looking for something similar to the SEIU. Under its new two-tier contract, SEIU employees hired after June 2006 must pay 15 percent of their retiree health care, while SEIU employees hired before then retain the benefits for free. Firefighters and police, under their current contract, must pay 15 percent of their retiree health care regardless of seniority.

“I’ve got a rope in my left Achilles tendon,” said Sgt. Ken Leal, president of the Police Officers Association, explaining why retirees health care is important. “I was on the SWAT team for 12 years. Cancer rates on firemen and policemen are sky high.”

While having a two-tier contract is something no union usually asks for, in this case it will restore some equity among the city’s unions, according to union leaders.

City manager Kevin Duggan said coming up with a package that has “parity” with the SEIU is complicated, partly because there are some sections where the unions want parity and others where they don’t.

► See **BENEFITS**, page 6

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■ SEEN AROUND TOWN

Tall sunflowers



Joan Kline grows these tall sunflowers against the back fence of her Walnut Drive home.

"The red Moulin Rouge is seven feet tall," she wrote, "the yellow Razzmatazz Mix is six feet tall." But that's not all: "I also have a Russian Mammoth Sunflower, not pictured, that is 14 feet tall!"

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.

Verisign's own data breached in laptop theft

By Daniel DeBolt

Mountain View's Verisign Inc. has terminated one of its human resources workers after a laptop computer was stolen from her car with personal information on an unknown number of employees, including Social Security numbers and salaries.

The incident, which happened in mid-July, was poten-

tially embarrassing for a company which specializes in digital security—specifically, in encryption that allows secure transactions over the Internet.

According to numerous reports, the employee had not followed the company's policy requiring that such data be encrypted.

Verisign has told its employees that Social Security num-

bers, dates of birth, phone numbers and addresses were stolen and has offered employees one year of free credit check reports. The company said bank account numbers and passwords were not stored on the laptop.

The company reportedly had 5,331 workers in its employ last year.

BENEFITS

► Continued from page 5

"We are hopeful that with more dialogue we'll get the issues resolved," Duggan said. "Every union negotiation is different."

Ruth Corona-Garcia of employee services said the city's goal is "to try to respond to retirees' health costs," which have been increasing every year, and have become an issue

across the country. At one point, the city was facing a projected shortfall of over \$40 million.

Leal said the city's unions helped the city get through tough budget times, and it is time for those members to be rewarded.

"We're talking about one of the richest cities in the area right now," Leal said. "Mountain View can actually pay all of its bills for a year without [going into debt]."

John Miguel, president of the Firefighters Association, said the solution to skyrocketing retiree health care costs may be a change in state law that would allow the money to be put into a trust fund generating 18 percent in interest every year. The money currently generates only 4 percent. ▀

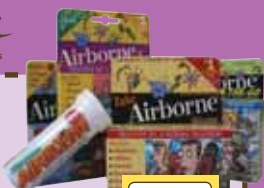
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COURTESY PHOTO

KMVT's Ben Koning aims the camera on Matt Chwierut, volunteer for Hands On Bay Area, while Miguel Manalac handles the mic during shooting at San Jose State in October 2005.

KMVT wins video honors

DOCUMENTARY SHINES LIGHT ON LOCAL VOLUNTEERISM

By Susan Hong

A video produced by KMVT, Mountain View's community television station, has won the 2007 Best Professional Documentary for Public Awareness award from the Alliance of Community Media.

The 30-minute video, "If We Don't Care Now," addresses the need for volunteerism on social issues like the environment, homelessness and education. It profiles a local nonprofit organization, Hands On Bay Area, which helps individuals volunteer to make positive social changes.

In 2005, Hands On Bay Area approached KMVT producers Naomi Ture and Brian Szabo with the idea of making a video about volunteers. The producers jumped at the chance.

"I've been involved in a lot of volunteer work personally in the past, and being able to really see in depth what different nonprofits are doing in the Bay Area to help effect change is very inspiring and very exciting to see," Ture said.

The team found volunteers who planted seedlings to revitalize the Bay, painted murals in schools and taught English to immigrants. Other volunteers talked with elderly residents in assisted living centers or served food to the poor. The video provides snapshots of these individuals.

The filmmakers delved beneath the surface and asked the local volunteers how they felt about the work they were doing. All said they personally benefited from volunteer work.

"Our goal is to capture an organization's heart and soul on video, and in a style and manner

that you typically see only from high-end production houses," said Szabo, who is executive director of KMVT.

According to Hands On Bay Area, in 2005 the group arranged for 10,000 volunteers to help with 120 projects giving 48,000 service hours.

"I've seen the power of volunteerism where the people who begin to get engaged start to feel a little more powerful and a little less powerless. They start to recognize that they can change and they can play a role in that change," said Jim Pitofsky, the group's executive director.

"They get a better appreciation of the challenges and are less judgmental about those who are going through hard times," he added.

In the video, Patrice Tardif, the group's community program director, attests to the positive feedback of volunteering. "You should walk away feeling great, like you've just been zapped with a surge of energy," she said. "That's the great thing about Hands On, because we are able to do that for both our volunteers and our clients."

For more information on "If We Don't Care Now," or on KMVT, visit the station's Web site at www.kmvt15.org.

Those interested in volunteering can visit Hands On Bay Area's Web site, www.handson-bayarea.org, choose from nearly 100 different ongoing projects, and sign up to volunteer. The group can also be reached at (408) 956-1448. ■

E-mail Susan Hong at shong@mv-voice.com



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OBITUARIES

FRANCES L. HEALTH

Frances L. Health, a medical technologist and family woman, died July 18. She was 90.

Health was born in Dover, N.H., and graduated from the University of New Hampshire. In 1955 she moved to California to follow her husband George's career as an aerospace engineer, settling in Mountain View.

Health worked at Good Samaritan and El Camino hospitals as a medical technologist, and taught medical assistants at the Lawton School of Medicine in Palo Alto. She was also a member of St. Williams Church, Aglow International, and Camp Farthest Out.

She is survived by her sisters Madeline and Alice, her sons Richard and Matthew, her daughter Briana, two granddaughters and one great-granddaughter.

A Memorial service was held on

July 26. Donations in her memory may be made to Loaves and Fishes Family Kitchen, (408) 293-4504, or Sacred Heart Community Services, (408) 278-2160.

CELIA RAMIREZ GARZA

Celia Ramirez Garza, a longtime Mountain View resident and matriarch of a family of eight children, died of cancer on July 21 at Solara Hospital in McAllen, Texas. She was 68.

Garza was born in Pharr, Texas in 1938, one of twelve children. Though she resided in California for much her life, her heart was always in the "Valley," family members said.

Garza is survived by her four sons and four daughters, Albert, Melba, Herman, Daniel, David, Estella, Virginia and Elisa; 14 grandchildren; and five great-grandchildren.

Her family wishes to extend a special thanks to Dr. Ellie Guardino and nurse practitioner Jan Petrie, who cared for Garza over the last four years. A Memorial Service will be held at 3 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 18, at Kingdom Hall of Jehovah's Witnesses, 120 Pioneer Way in Mountain View.

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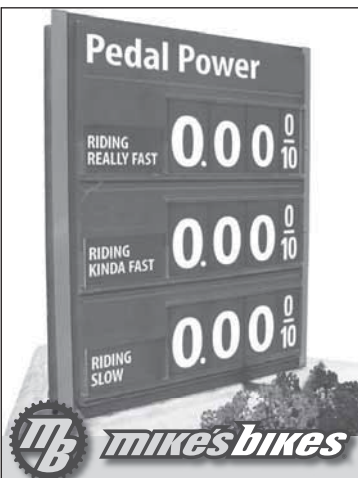
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DAY WORKER

▶ Continued from page 1

Day workers were facing the possibility of moving into a commercial space smaller than they would have liked — or soliciting work on the streets. But the new space in the church's fellowship hall is twice as large as the old location at Calvary, and could go a long way towards attracting the region's day workers to its offices.

"It's like a miracle," said Maria Marroquin, the center's director, on Monday. "From one church to another church — God is in charge, believe me."

At the press conference, Marroquin highlighted the fact that female workers would especially benefit from having a safe place to seek work and attend English classes.

"Now we feel protected," said a day worker named Maria, who spoke through an interpreter. "Now we have a place of refuge."

Another worker, Abel Aguilar, said he knew workers who "prayed this would happen," after hearing about the possibility.

During a tour of the site, day workers and community leaders oohed and aahed over the large space at the back of the church, which includes a kitchen area and an attached room with stained glass windows — the place where English classes will likely be taught. Marroquin's new office is near the pastor's office, closer to Mercy Street.

Pastor Saavedra said that over the next year the church will decide if the operation is a good fit. The center's board has also told the city that it may need some monetary help as funding sources are expected to dry up over the next few years. City leaders said they would like to see Los Altos and Palo Alto get involved, because it could be argued the center serves those cities as well.

Worker Center board member

John Rinaldi joked that now that they're close by, day workers wouldn't have to march as far to rallies in Civic Center Plaza.

Besides connecting employers with employees, the Day Worker Center has built a community of organizers and day workers who take English classes, eat lunch together and volunteer at local events. Several have participated in the city's CERT training classes.

County Supervisor Liz Kniss, who attended Tuesday's press conference, said it was very important

for the center to "have the support of the community — which I think you have."

Kniss said the event felt "spiritual," before looking to church members for a reaction.

"You can say that," church members said in response. ▀

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



Supervisor Liz Kniss (second from right) tours the new Day Worker Center on Tuesday.

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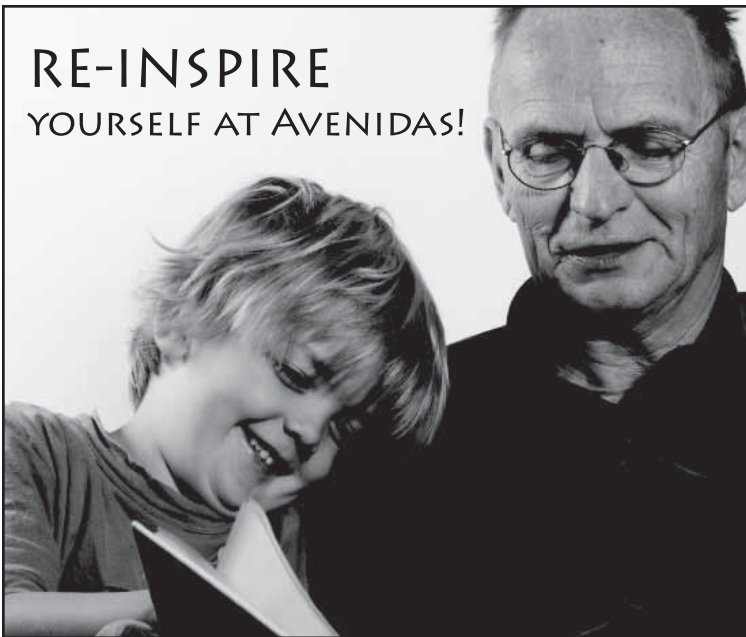
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GEESE

► Continued from page 1

geese looked graceful in the movie "Wings," but "you don't see them [dropping feces] in that movie."

Once in a while, a goose gets accidentally hit by a flying golf ball, Andersen said, but no one seems to complain.

"Biologically we're not really concerned about geese in this situation," Yparraguirre said. That's because there are no records of Canada geese living permanently in the area before places like Shoreline Park existed.

Much of the course is laden with the cigar-shaped droppings, especially wherever the geese spend the night. In those places, the droppings pile into mounds — a virtual "goose lavatory," Anderson said.

The feces certainly aren't found everywhere on the course, and it doesn't seem to keep longtime golfers like Anderson from coming back. The park's paths and other areas are blown or swept clean on a regular basis.

Paula Bettencourt, assistant parks and recreation director, said Shoreline's population of Canada geese can vary from only a handful to as many as 800, depending on the time of year and the time of day. The geese also live in the Baylands



DANIEL DEBOLT

Geese graze on Shoreline Golf Course with the Amphitheatre in the background.

nature preserve in Palo Alto, or anywhere there is grass and water, Yparraguirre said — and they're an even bigger problem on the East Coast, he added.

Council member Ronit Bryant said the goose population needed to be addressed as a regional problem, because the birds can so easily move from city to city. On that score, Anderson said the geese may always have a place nearby to nest, because Palo Alto hasn't been as aggressive with the problem and has resisted calls to addle the goose eggs.

Anderson said geese aren't the

only problem at Shoreline Park. During the winter there are as many as 4,500 coots, a dark-colored rail that he claims are worse than the geese. Geese tend to only eat the tips of grass blades, but the coots will eat a whole patch of grass down to the roots. Last winter Anderson counted 1,800 coots on the course's 10th fairway alone.

"It's a rare problem," Yparraguirre said about the coot. "It's not as common as the goose situation." ▀

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MV WHISMAN

► Continued from page 1

the idea spread quickly throughout the entire K-8 district.

All five members of the school board endorsed CI this year. Teachers are now on a waiting list to receive training, according to district officials.

Under CI, students take responsibility for their education by creating classroom mission statements, setting personal goals, charting their own academic progress and leading parent-teacher conferences twice a year. They also create a personal binder to track their academic progress throughout the year, and work with their teachers at the beginning of the year to set the ground rules on what they believe makes a good teacher.

If a teacher is going too fast on a particular subject, students

have a process to say so. In this way, students can determine how much time a teacher spends on a lesson plan.

Students also set goals for themselves. For example, if a student wants to achieve 80 percent on a math test but only reaches 70 percent, he or she can set a personal goal in the binder to improve by 10 percent. The teacher then shows the student what must be done to improve by that amount.

The teacher prominently displays a class performance metric in the classroom. When one student reaches a goal, the entire class performance goes up. If one student

falls behind, the entire class performance goes down. Educators hope this will create social pressure among the students, and lead to continuous improvement for both students and class.

At the end of the semester and school year, instead of parent-teacher conferences without the student, under CI the student will now lead the conferences. The student presents an academic progress binder to a parent, including work examples. Then the student discusses areas in which to improve and areas in which there has been acceptable performance. Educators say having students lead the conferences has doubled parent participation.

Testimonials

Kim Thompson, fifth grade teacher at Bubbs Elementary School, began using CI last October with her math class. She saw a 5 percent improvement over last year on the California Standards Test in math.

“They went up more than a grade level,” she said. In her 12-year teaching career, she had seen such an increase before, but not recently, she said.

Teachers say the same has occurred with English language learners. Ranen Bhattacharya, a seventh grade teacher at Crittenden Middle School, began using CI last year with his ESL class.

“We structured a lot of goals

garten through eighth grade, up and running with Continuous Improvement by 2009. The district will spend a few hundred dollars — \$271 plus a \$100 daily stipend — to train each teacher. Mountain View Whisman is using staff development funds and a one-time state grant to cover training expenses, Ghysels said.

The district has trained 44 percent of its teachers so far. Teachers train at the Mountain View campuses of Microsoft and Synopsis, which are donating catering, consultation and use of their facilities.

‘The right mindset’

Continuous Improvement’s business terminology helps teachers to keep in mind who they serve, teachers said.

“People are very concerned about what their customers think,” Bhattacharya said. “I think we should have that same kind of concern for our kids, and this terminology just helps us to have

“It made the kids more focused and made me more focused. In the long run, everybody improved.” Because CI gives them a voice, “Students are engaged in the process, they’re excited.”

KIM THOMPSON, FIFTH GRADE TEACHER
AT BUBBS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

around literacy, sometimes around homework, and goals about asking for help,” he said. For ESL kids who often feel neglected in a school system, when they see themselves setting goals and achieving them, it shows personal interest, Bhattacharya added.

Admittedly, Thompson said, in some ways CI takes more work. She has to grade papers and provide feedback to students on a timely basis, but that has made her more

the right mindset.”

Although students will set the ground rules in the classroom under this new paradigm, they still have to meet English and math proficiency standards mandated by California and the federal No Child Left Behind Act. CI gives teachers a better tool to meet those standards, teachers say, and gives kids a “buy-in” to their education.

“I’m thrilled with this,” said Karen Robinson, principal of Crittenden Middle School. “This is exactly what we’ve been gathering pieces of.”

While some individual schools in Cali-

fornia have adopted CI, Mountain View Whisman will become the only district in California to use Continuous Improvement, and only one of a handful of districts nationwide.

A Web search found that Cedar Rapids Community School District in Iowa, Clark County School District in Nevada, the Racine School District in Wisconsin, and the Rock Island School District in Illinois were using Continuous Improvement. There are also school districts in Texas and Pennsylvania that have adopted CI. ▀

Mountain View Whisman will become the only district in California to use Continuous Improvement, and only one of a handful of districts nationwide.

on top of things, she said.

“It made the kids more focused and made me more focused. In the long run, everybody improved,” she said. Because CI gives them a voice, “Students are engaged in the process, they’re excited.”

Superintendent Ghysels is quick to say that CI is not a panacea, and braces himself for challenges to come. But he expects to see positive results district-wide several years down the line thanks to CI.

“I just think it’s really neat that we are in uncharted territory, and with your help we’ll get to the other side,” he told a group of 105 teachers in a training session Monday morning.

School administrators expect to have the entire district, kinder-

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El Camino enjoys record profits

By Susan Hong

El Camino Hospital saw its best fiscal performance in decades this year, chalking up a profit, or what it calls "net operating revenue," of \$74 million — a 47 percent increase over last year.

But administrators say not to expect those numbers again.

"A hospital like this might expect a performance like this once in a generation. This was an unusual year," CEO Ken Graham said.

Better results were based on a number of one-time factors. The nonprofit hospital received about \$10 million from arbitration and settlements with insurance companies, which had withheld payments from previous years. Investments in securities also performed well, contributing about \$17 million. Patient care generated about \$47.5 million in net revenue.

Administrators had planned to have 300 days' worth of cash on hand, so the hospital could operate without any incoming revenue, and beat that goal by 20 percent. The hospital now has 360 days' worth of cash on hand.

Graham said the money will go into investments, new medical equipment and facilities as the hospital prepares to pay back its \$148 million bond for building a new earthquake-safe structure. Starting in 2010, the hospital will have to begin paying back \$25 million a year on the bond debt.

"We are planning on very hard years in 2010 and 2011 as we take on a new building, a new mortgage and moving expenses," Graham said. The hospital may apply some of the increased funds to what he expects "will be a real tough two years ahead of us."

Construction of the new hospital is one-third complete and going smoothly, according to hospital officials, who say the project is on time and on budget. The project is slated to be finished by June 2009.

"We have the benefit of having a really experienced contract team," said project manager Ken King.

The steel infrastructure to the main building is complete, and contractors will begin working with doctors to choose which medical equipment to install.

So long as no unforeseen accidents or expenditures occur, the hospital may have money left in its contingency fund for an artwork centerpiece to grace the entrance, King said. But the board will not make a decision on the artwork expenditure until members are certain the budget allows for it.

The hospital board plans to hire one of four audit firms, including Jefferson Wells, Faithful & Gould, and Pricewaterhouse Coopers, to check construction costs. ▀

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■ EDITORIAL THE OPINION OF THE VOICE

Alza: the last of a breed

Many Mountain View nonprofits probably saw it coming when Alza was purchased by the medical conglomerate Johnson and Johnson six years ago. But even so, when the news became official this month that Alza would lay off 600 workers and leave Mountain View forever, it sent a gasp through the community, especially among the groups that Alza has supported over the years.

Alza, a relatively small player in the world of giant pharmaceutical companies, was sold for several billion dollars in 2001. Since then, its destiny has been in the hands of J&J, a high-profile company which owns the rights for many popular prescription drugs, some of which will lose their patents in a few years. Rather than struggle when the patents expire, the company decided to cut its costs, and laid off more than 4,000 employees worldwide, which also spelled the end of Alza in Mountain View, whose products can be made elsewhere.

But although it probably won't take long to find another company to take over Alza's building in the Bayshore, it will be much more difficult to replace the commitment to public service that made Alza so special in Mountain View. Alza was named an outstanding company by the Mountain View Chamber of Commerce in 2005. According to Nancy Noe, a former City Council member who is government affairs director of Alza, community

involvement was a key component and important goal set out by its founder, Dr. Alejandro Zaffaroni.

Beneficiaries of the company's generosity include the Rotacare clinic at El Camino Hospital, the county's HealthyKids medical insurance program, the annual Diversity Youth Forum, and many other organizations and projects.

Alza's latest big public service project was building a system to turn methane gas from the city's landfill into electricity that could be used in the company building. Enough power is produced to eliminate a huge amount of greenhouse gases — reportedly the equivalent to taking 1,500 cars off the road.

In today's global marketplace, it is often difficult for companies to focus on a community the size of Mountain View, especially when they operate in several cities around the world.

Nevertheless, we expect Microsoft, Google, Synopsis and Yahoo, to name just a few, will take note of the hole Alza's departure leaves in Mountain View's nonprofit community. Now it is time for another public-spirited company to step up and take over where Alza left off. Luckily, Mountain View has no shortage of candidates.

*Now it is time for another
public-spirited company to step up.*

■ LETTERS VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

ON WALKERS, BIKERS AND RIGHT-OF-WAY

Editor:

Regarding last week's guest opinion by Steve Roselle, "Walkers, not bikers, are the problem at Shoreline Park," your headline only serves to polarize the situation.

Mr. Roselle should go biking in Munich, Germany, where the lanes are clearly marked, the rules are very well known, and all bicyclists have and use a bell. The walkers respond appropriately.

As an older walker, I just cannot discriminate between wind noise and tire noise, bird calls and derailleur noises, the clicking of a nesting bird and the clicking of a brake lever.

And I should not have to. Maritime law, English law, American law and other laws for the past several hundred years have always said the overtaking vehicle does *not* have the

right of way and has the responsibility to take avoiding actions. Passionate discussions and other items that put noise directly into the ear of the walker are just not the relevant issue. Roselle's comparison with El Camino Real is also completely off the point, as there are separate sidewalks and bike lanes there.

I go walking at Shoreline to get a quiet appreciation for the outdoors with my two or three friends, not to be herded single-file so a high-speed biker on his way home, yelling a hearty "On your left!" makes me dodge so he doesn't have to slow down.

If Mr. Roselle dislikes the paths on Shoreline Park, then he should avoid Shoreline Park and continue his ride home in the automobile traffic on El Camino, in which he fares so well.

Mike Chambreau
Los Altos



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■ GUEST OPINION

Global warming and the city's general plan

WE NEED TO START THINKING ABOUT CLIMATE CHANGE THE WAY WE THINK ABOUT EARTHQUAKES

By James Kempf

A city's general plan is supposed to address development of the urban infrastructure in a longer time-frame. Over the next 50 years, one of the major trends that should be reflected in Mountain View's general plan is global warming.

Consensus estimates are that the sea level will rise around two feet within that time. What would get flooded when the sea level rises? Adding another six feet for high tide and two feet for storm surge suggests that 10 feet is a good figure for estimation.

Between the Rengstorff Avenue exit and the Sunnyvale border, not much is threatened. But heading the other direction from the Rengstorff exit, the 10-foot contour crosses west of Highway 101 and runs between Leghorn Street and Charleston Road until the Palo Alto border. Most of the industrial park east of 101, along Bayshore Parkway and Garcia Avenue, and the area west of 101 between the highway and Leghorn, would be flooded, including the highway itself.

This land today is protected by large levees. But like those that failed during Hurricane Katrina, these levees most likely were not designed for sea level, which is where they will be in 20 to 40 years. Clearly, the levees need to be strengthened to prevent flooding.

But continuing to invest in reclaiming the old Cargill salt ponds to form the "historical" tidal marshes should probably be stopped. Those lands will be under more than two feet of water by the middle of the century.

So the first aspect of a general plan revision is modifications to mitigate the effects of sea level rise and other direct impacts of climate change.

The current Mountain View general plan was started during the late 1950s and finalized during the 1980s. During that period, gasoline and natural gas were cheap. The resulting urban

infrastructure forces people to drive 10 minutes to take their kids to school, and features building codes that encourage low-rise buildings requiring extra heating and cooling. At the time these seemed like desirable features that would make Mountain View a pleasant place to live.

That was then, this is now. Today, even if people decide they want to live a low-carbon, energy-saving lifestyle, the physical infrastructure of our city makes it almost impossible to do so. If our civilization doesn't manage to drastically reduce carbon generation over the next 20 years, we're facing a sea level rise of 20 to

100 feet, not two feet.

The impact of a sea level rise of that magnitude would be catastrophic to Mountain View's urban infrastructure, to say nothing of the cost as carbon-based energy becomes more expensive.

So the second aspect of a general plan revision is modifications that encourage people to choose a lifestyle with a low carbon footprint.

We need to stop treating global warming as some theoretical idea or a looming catastrophe. Instead, we need start thinking about it the way we think about earthquakes. The general plan needs to be modified for the changes we know will come, and to make it easy for people to choose low-carbon lifestyles, just like today's city regulations require earthquake-safe building technology.

The City Council's recent decision to stick with "point" modifications to the general plan to avoid cost — despite the budget surplus this year — seems penny wise and pound foolish. Given the magnitude of the problem and the assumptions embedded in the current general plan about cheap carbon-based energy, a lot more needs to change to guide Mountain View into a future of a drier climate, a higher sea level, and low-carbon lifestyles for its residents.

James Kempf lives on Foxborough Drive.

Clearly, the levees need to be strengthened to prevent flooding.

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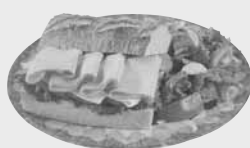
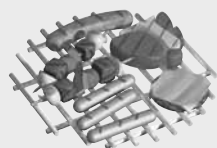
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■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

Portions fit for a cowboy

MOUNTAIN VIEW DARLING LOS CHARROS OPENS A NEW RESTAURANT ON EL CAMINO REAL

By Elaine M. Rowland

Los Charros, located next to the Holiday Inn on El Camino Real, could easily be mistaken for the hotel restaurant. In fact it's the new sibling of Taqueria Los Charros on West Dana, a very popular, inexpensive, and smaller venue.

The new Los Charros Restaurant and Cantina, which opened this spring, is well lit, clean and roomy, with cheery, hand-painted and carved chairs and tables from Mexico that sport the restaurant's horseshoe logo.

While it may not offer the bargain plates found at its sister taqueria, Los Charros offers a tasty lunch

of such proportions it's worth the price, especially when you include the complimentary warm chips and two kinds of salsa—a chunky fresca-style and a pureed number. The variety of dishes lets you wander off the beaten quesadilla-enchilada-taco path if you desire (cactus, anyone?). Or you can stay firmly on the beaten path—on either side of the border—with those aforementioned Mexican classics and American staples like BLTs for lunch or pancakes for breakfast.

A popular lunch choice here is the camarones al ajillo (\$12.75), the prawns in a buttery garlic

► See **LOS CHARROS**, page 16



MARJAN SADOUGHI

Restaurant manager Pedro Perez adds the house dressing made with jalapeno pepper and vinaigrette to the Camarones Al Ajillo plate at Los Charros in Mountain View.

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MARJAN SADOUGHI

Rodolfo Cisneros, left, and Jose Bueno work in the kitchen at Los Charros.

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LOS CHARROS

► Continued from page 15

sauce. And I do mean buttery. The prawns were good-sized, firm and juicy, and arched around a dome of rice on the plate to look something like a crab. Your choice of wheat or corn tortillas accompanies.

Plato al queso lets you select a meat (\$10.75) and is served with wheat or corn tortillas. It reminds me of fajitas, since the meat is cooked with peppers and onions. But the mellow sauce and layer of cheese differentiated it from that other grilled-meat-in-a-tortilla dish. Though the beef I had was not terribly tender, the flavor was good. And true to the name Los Charros, the portions were big enough to feed a cowboy, so I had a midnight snack to take home. Rice and beans came on the side; not bad, but not much flavor.

What I enjoyed most about my lunch, however, was the chicken tortilla soup (\$3.75) and the cantaloupe agua fresca (\$2), a delicious water and fruit drink. The soup

had chunks of avocado and cheese, crunchy strips of tortillas, and a hearty, complex flavor that tasted like a chicken tamale — the old-fashioned kind in the corn husk wrapper. As for the fresca drinks, I'd like to go back and try each one, because the watermelon and cantaloupe versions were terrific — very refreshing.

I did go back for breakfast, which is served until 11 a.m., and got the impression they were more prepared for the lunch crowd than the breakfast crowd. Did I say "crowd"? Actually, the restaurant was not crowded during a recent weekday lunch hour, nor during a recent weekend brunch. Despite the small number of guests for the number of servers and cooks, the food still took a while to come out at breakfast, and orders were served piecemeal — one person's entree, then a side. Drinks came out at different times.

Also, the effort spent in the presentation of lunch was missing from breakfast. The enormous breakfast burrito (\$5.95), while carefully wrapped, sat squarely in the middle of the plate with

no beautification — no cilantro sprig, no decorative sauce. It was stuffed with eggs, cheese, salsa, hash browns and a meat of your choice, so we chose chorizo, which was a bit greasy. But if you like a big breakfast, the breakfast burrito will hold you for a few hours.

Rajas a la Mexicana (\$7) sounded promising: pasilla chilies, potatoes, eggs and onions scrambled together and served with hot tortillas. But it turned out rather bland until I added the salsa condiment that came with the breakfast burrito.

Los Charros' turn at the American breakfast of bacon, eggs, hash browns and toast (\$5.50) was less successful: The scrambled eggs were closer to fried, and the hash browns were very pale, not brown. The toast arrived well after the rest of the food.

Given the haphazard assembly of breakfast, and the fact that chips and salsa are not a part of it, I'd go back for lunch before going back for breakfast.

The other reason I preferred lunch at Los Charros was the noise

► Continued on next page

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MARJAN SADOUGH

A view of the bar featuring hand-carved chairs.

► Continued from previous page
level. There was some background music, but it was very noisy even without guests or music. The open kitchen runs along half the dining room, and the faux tile floors and peach-colored plaster walls reflect noise around the restaurant. It's a little too much to take first thing in the morning.

But I bet the mariachi shows on

Friday nights are a rowdy good time in the Cantina (7-9 p.m.). That's when you want a place to be good and noisy.

There didn't seem to be a particular "type" who dines at Los Charros — we saw all walks there, including families. Though there's no kids' menu, they accommodate children easily and certainly have room for large parties.

Like Palo Alto Sol, this restau-

rant has a sizeable bar, open from 11 a.m. to midnight, daily. Unlike a Palo Alto Sol or La Morenita, it doesn't seem to have a regional focus or many very spicy dishes. But for lunch or dinner in a cheery room, Los Charros is a filling addition to Mountain View's slice of El Camino Real. ■

■ DINING NOTES

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ARCTIC TALE (G) Century 20: 2:45, 5:05, 7:20 & 9:45 p.m.
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BECOMING JANE (PG) ★★1/2 Century 20: 4:40, 7:25 & 10:05 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 11:20 a.m. & 2 p.m. **Palo Alto Square:** 1:45, 4:30 & 7:20 p.m. Fri. & Sat. also at 10:15 p.m.

THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM (PG-13) ★★1/2
Century 16: 12:55, 2, 3:40, 4:50, 6:55, 7:40, 9:40 & 10:25 p.m.
Century 20: 2:15, 3:05, 3:55, 5, 5:55, 6:50, 7:45, 8:45, 9:40 & 10:30 p.m.
Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 11:30 a.m.; 12:20 p.m. & 1:10 p.m.

BRATZ (PG) Century 20: 2:25 & 5:05 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 11:40 a.m.

DADDY DAY CAMP (PG) Century 16: 9:05 p.m.
Century 20: 2:55, 5:20, 7:55 & 10:15 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 12:30 p.m.

DEATH AT A FUNERAL (R) Century 20: 2:25, 4:45, 7:10 & 9:35 p.m.
Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 12:05 p.m. **Guild:** 12:30, 12:45, 5, 7:15 & 9:30 p.m.

EL CANTANTE (R) ★1/2 Century 12: 12:40, 4, 7:50 & 10:35 p.m.

EVEN ALMIGHTY (PG) ★★ Century 12: 4:40 & 10:15 p.m.

HAIRSPRAY (PG) ★★☆☆ Century 16: 12:50, 3:50, 7:05 & 9:50 p.m.
Century 20: 2:20, 4:55, 7:35 & 10:10 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 11:45 a.m.

HARRY POTTER AND THE ORDER OF THE PHOENIX (PG-13) ★★1/2 Century 12: 12:20, 3:30, 7:20 & 10:25 p.m.

HOT ROD (PG-13) (Not Reviewed) Century 12: 1:30, 3:50, 7:15 & 9:50 p.m.

I NOW PRONOUNCE YOU CHUCK AND LARRY (PG-13) ★★
Century 12: 1, 4:10, 7:35 & 10:15 p.m.

THE INVASION (PG-13) ★★1/2 Century 16: 12:30, 1:40, 3, 4:20, 5:30, 7:15, 8, 9:45 & 10:30 p.m. Century 20: 2:30, 3:45, 5, 6:15, 7:30, 8:50 & 10:05 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at noon & 1:15 p.m.

KNOCKED UP (R) ★★1/2 Century 20: 4:20, 7:25 & 10:25 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 1:05 p.m.

THE LAST LEGION (PG-13) Century 20: 2:40, 5:10, 7:40 & 10:10 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 12:10 p.m.

LIVE FREE OR DIE HARD (PG-13) ★★☆☆
Century 20: 2:30, 5:25 & 8:25 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 11:35 a.m.

MY BEST FRIEND (PG-13) ★★☆☆ Aquarius: 2 & 6:45 p.m.

NO END IN SIGHT (NOT RATED) ★★1/2
Aquarius: 2:20, 4:45, 7:15 & 9:45 p.m.

NO RESERVATIONS (PG) ★★1/2 Century 16: 1:10 & 7:25 p.m.
Century 20: 2:50, 5:15, 7:50 & 10:25 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 12:15 p.m.

ONCE (R) ★★1/2 Aquarius: 4:20 & 9 p.m.

PIRATES OF THE CARIBBEAN: AT WORLD'S END (PG-13) ★★1/2 Century 20: 2:15 & 8:35 p.m.

RATATOUILLE (G) ★★☆☆ Century 16: 1:30, 4:15, 7:05 & 10 p.m.
Century 20: 4:50, 7:40 & 10:20 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 11:20 a.m. & 2 p.m.

RESCUE DAWN (PG-13) ★★1/2 Palo Alto Square: 1:30, 4:20 & 7:15 p.m. Fri. & Sat. also at 10:10 p.m.

THE ROCKY HORROR SHOW (1975) (R) Guild: Sat. at midnight.

RUSH HOUR 3 (PG-13) Century 16: 12:30, 1, 1:45, 2:45, 3:15, 4, 5, 5:30, 6:30, 7:15, 7:55, 8:45, 9:30 & 10:15 p.m. Century 12: 12:50, 1:20, 1:50, 2:30, 3:10, 3:40, 4:20, 5, 5:40, 6:15, 7, 7:30, 8, 8:50, 9:30, 10 & 10:20 p.m.

SICKO (PG-13) ★★☆☆ Century 20: 5:45 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 11:25 a.m.

THE SIMPSONS MOVIE (PG-13) Century 16: 12:35, 2:50, 5:05, 7:20 & 9:35 p.m. Century 12: 1:40, 4:30, 7:10 & 9:40 p.m.

STARDUST (PG-13) ★★1/2 Century 16: 1:05, 4:10, 7:10 & 10:10 p.m.
Century 20: 2:35, 4, 5:30, 7, 8:30 & 10 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 11:35 a.m. & 1 p.m.

SUPERBAD (R) Century 16: 12:45, 2:15, 3:55, 5, 7, 7:45, 9:45 & 10:30 p.m. Century 12: 12:30, 2, 3:15, 4:45, 6, 7:40, 9 & 10:30 p.m.

TALK TO ME (R) Century 20: 7:45 & 10:30 p.m.

TRANSFORMERS (PG-13) ★★ Century 16: 3:45 & 10:05 p.m.
Century 12: 1:10 & 7:05 p.m.

UNDERDOG (PG) Century 16: 12:40, 2:45, 4:50 & 7 p.m.
Century 20: 2:35, 4:45, 7 & 9:10 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 12:25 p.m.

Note: Screenings are for Friday through Tuesday only.

AQUARIUS: 430 Emerson St., Palo Alto (266-9260)

CENTURY CINEMA 16: 1500 N. Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View (960-0970)

CENTURY PARK 12: 557 E. Bayshore Blvd., Redwood City (365-9000)

CENTURY 20 DOWNTOWN: 825 Middlefield Road, Redwood City (369-3456)

CINEARTS AT PALO ALTO SQUARE: 3000 El Camino Real, Palo Alto (493-3456)

GUILD: 949 El Camino Real, Menlo Park (266-9260)

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



BECOMING JANE ★★1/2

(CineArts) As in most Austen projects, Jane's (Anne Hathaway) parents (Julie Walters and James Cromwell) are searching for a suitable husband to guarantee their daughter's future social standing. The two have their eyes on the nephew of a rich widowed aristocrat (Maggie Smith reprising this role for the umpteenth time) who disapproves of Jane's spirited and independent ways. Naturally Jane falls for the rogue in the form of an arrogant and dashing Irishman named Tom Lefroy (James McAvoy). Their frisky flirtation is fraught with social risk, but the irrepressible Jane stubbornly thinks with her heart and not her head — refusing to marry for position. The climax is effectively weepy for serious fans of the genre. *Rated: PG for chaste romance. 2 hours.* — J.A.

THE BOURNE ULTIMATUM ★★1/2

(Century 16, Century 20) As amnesiac super-agent Jason Bourne, Matt Damon successfully fronts a full-throttle action thriller that's the culmination of a smashing trilogy. As always Bourne is on the run, intent on avenging the loss of his victims and trying in his own immutable way to apologize for his past. Seems Bourne's brainwashing is backfiring: In snatches of memory he's re-living his past, those murky days when his average Joe was on the cusp of enduring high-profile CIA assassination training. Those recollections kick-start a mission as Bourne seeks to reclaim himself from himself. Paranoia runs rampant; scene after scene is fraught with kinetic hyper-tension. As Bourne closes in on his reality he butts up against the powers that be and continually and satisfyingly beats them at their own game. *Rated: PG-13 for intense action and violence. 1 hour, 53 minutes.* — J.A.

EL CANTANTE ★1/2

(Century 12) Hector Lavoe was the voice of his people, introducing a new sound with trombonist Willie Colon and the Manhattan-based recording company Fania Records in 1967. Despite the Latin flavor, the rise and fall of Lavoe replays the same old song of so many music legends: humble beginnings; talent paired with a lucky break; drug addiction; marital problems; and an untimely death. The source of the salsa sensation's pain and musical inspiration are never clear, and the times seem divorced from historical context. Marc Anthony easily slides from an affable young man to the passionate singer fronting

Colon's raw, up-tempo sound. When he belts out the Ruben Blades-authored title song or a medley of Lavoe hits, the screen sizzles. Jennifer Lopez often adds heat, swinging her hips while squeezed into a red dress. But their spark alone can't sustain a feature-length film favoring style over substance. *Rated: R for drug use, pervasive language and some sexuality. 1 hour. 56 minutes. In English and Spanish with English subtitles.* — S.T.

STARDUST

★★★1/2

(Century 16, Century 20) You know

you're destined for superfluous sap when lovesick pup Tristan Thorne (Charlie Cox) woos the fickle Victoria (Sienna Miller) by promising to gift her with a real star. The fallen star appears in the form of a beautiful and poised enchantress called Yvaine (Claire Danes). A gaggle of evil witches led by eldest sister Lamia (Michelle Pfeiffer) seeks to cut out the star's heart so they can ingest it and prolong their tenuous hold on a fleeting youth. As Tristan and Yvaine attempt the return trip home they encounter all manner of men, including the fearsome Captain Shakespeare (Robert De Niro), a ruthless

marauder who secretly loves poetry and dressing in women's clothing; and a merciless trio of princes who need to claim the star to mount the throne that will rule their kingdom. The result is a bloated, mixed bag of triumphs and failures. Not your mother's fairy tale, but it could be yours. *Rated: PG-13 for violence and mature themes. 2 hours, 5 minutes.* — J.A.

■ **MOVIE CRITICS**

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



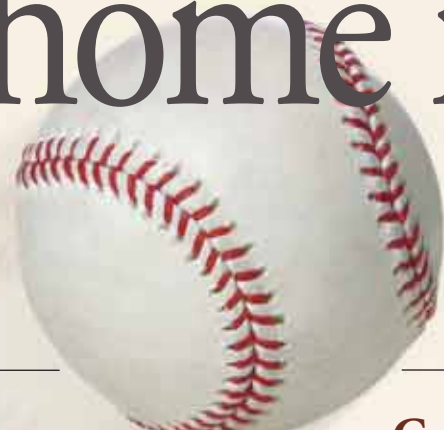
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