

Mountain View VOICE



Autism 101
Kids learn about autistic peers through mom's puppet show
HEALTH & FITNESS | P.21

NOVEMBER 9, 2007 VOLUME 15, NO. 44

INSIDE: WEEKEND | PAGE 17

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NORBERT VON DER GROEBEN

Brent Ross of Mountain View and his team have built the best Halloween display around – and according to Fearnets.com, it's the best in the country.

The scariest house in America

CREATORS OF BUSH STREET HALLOWEEN DISPLAY WIN \$50,000 IN HAUNTED HOUSE CONTEST

By Daniel DeBolt

The award-winning “DC Cemetery” on Bush Street that draws big crowds every year isn't just a seasonal hobby for its creators — it's a year-round love affair.

“I generally try to budget \$1,000 a month,” which adds up to \$12,000 a year for several years, said lead designer Brent Ross.

This year, Ross, 31, and his eight-member team got some of that investment back as winners of the Fearnets.com “best house haunt in the country.” On Halloween morning, Ross was in

New York to appear on “The Today Show,” where he was presented with \$50,000 by the president of Fearnets.com — a Web site whose users watched a video and voted Ross' house their favorite over 40 others.

After receiving his award on national TV, Ross flew home first class — just in time for Halloween night, so he could enjoy the fruits of his labor.

That night the street was blocked off while a line formed to enter the DC Cemetery and accompanying DC Morgue. Some children were too afraid to go inside.

Ross has been building the cemetery

in his parents' front yard and part of his neighbor's yard for the last 17 years, each year adding more props and more detail. The team's passion for their display shows through in its many personal touches — for example, the gargoyles that breathe fog on top of the cemetery fence were hand-sculpted by Ross.

The display has grown into a complicated system of motion sensors, micro-computers and props operated with compressed air. Numerous elaborate skeletons, a witch and a grim reaper

► See **HOUSE**, page 11

They'll always have Paris

MOUNTAIN VIEW A MODEL FOR 'ECOTOWNS', FRENCH OFFICIAL SAYS

By Daniel DeBolt

Looking for small cities that could inspire French “ecotowns” of the future, senior French official Jacques Attali has picked Mountain View as one of the best role models in the world.

City officials and local environmentalists were shocked when French reporter Francois Clemenceau came to Mountain View in October with some strange news. Clemenceau gave out a report from Attali saying that France is planning five “ecopolis” or “ecotowns,” including one built completely from scratch. In the report, Attali names Mountain View, along with New Songdo City, South Korea and Hammerdy Sjostat, Switzerland, as places where particular traits of such “ecotowns” already exist.

France's vision is for high tech, eco-friendly villages of less than 50,000 people where there will be

► See **FRENCH**, page 8

■ CITY COUNCIL

Greens clash with neighbors over 'Hawthorn Park'

COUNCIL FAVORS LOWERING HEIGHT OF ROW HOMES PROPOSED FOR HETCH HETCHY OPEN SPACE

By Daniel DeBolt

The city's growth pains reached an unexpected intensity Tuesday night as environmentalists in favor of dense housing clashed with neighbors of a proposed development at 450 N. Whisman Road.

Ninety-six three story row homes had been proposed on six acres — a rectangular open lot between Whisman Road and Tyrella Avenue that is bisected diagonally by the Hetch Hetchy right of way. The resulting configuration of homes, named “Hawthorn Park” by the developer, put what neighbors described as a 500-

► See **COUNCIL**, page 10

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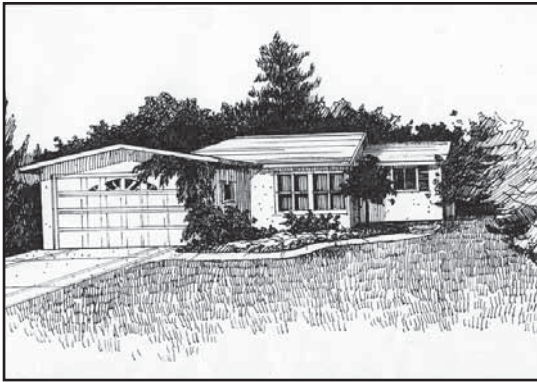
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Chuck & Tori Atwell



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Tom Correia



SUNNYVALE ■ Gorgeous top-floor condo! Light and bright, 2bd/2ba with plush carpet + vaulted ceilings. Lots of space + storage. Beautiful grounds. **\$529,000**

Patrice Horvath



MOUNTAIN VIEW ■ Newer construction in an established neighborhood. 3bd/2.5ba home with maple HW floors, living room, dining room + family kitchen. Central A/C. **\$845,000**

Mary Marley



MOUNTAIN VIEW ■ Unique end-unit! 2bd/2ba + office with Euro kitchen, master suite with walk-in closet, + inside laundry. Large private patio and yard. Community pool. **\$575,000**

Chuck & Tori Atwell



MOUNTAIN VIEW ■ Cozy 2bd/1.5ba home + separate office in Old Mountain view. Sleek kitchen, hardwood floors, family room + new paint. Large lot. Close to shopping. **\$799,000**

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CAMPBELL ■ Wonderful townhome! 3bd/2ba end-unit, 1500+/- sf. Hardwood floors, step-down living room, large master suite, + inside laundry. Close to dining + shops. **\$649,950**

Cheryl Okuno



MOUNTAIN VIEW ■ Cute 3bd/2ba townhome with remodeled kitchen, hardwood floors, lots of storage, + indoor laundry. This unit is very private + complex has a pool. **\$659,000**

Kathy Bridgman



MOUNTAIN VIEW ■ Turn-the-key and move-into this upgraded condominium. 1ba/1ba corner unit offers 855+/- sf. Complex features a fitness center, pool + spa. **\$365,000**

Voices

A R O U N D T O W N

Asked in Downtown Mountain View. Pictures and interviews by Theresa Condon.

What is your favorite meal?



"Grilled steak, grilled veggies and bread. I make that all the time."

Julie Gerdes, Mountain View



"One of my favorite meals is Amici's pizza. My favorite is the New York with no toppings."

Mike Santullo, Palo Alto



"Probably Mexican or Central American. Anything with cheese on it. Definitely flan if they make it."

Jeannine Hensley, San Francisco



"Taco Bell. The chicken soft taco."

Ruby Landers, Mountain View



"The grilled salmon at Pasta restaurant."

David Lee, Mountain View

Have a question for [Voices Around Town?](#) E-mail it to editor@mv-voice.com

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Community Health Education Programs November 2007

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Events & Lectures

"Systemic Lupus Erythematosus: the Old and the New"

Tuesday, November 13, 7 – 8:30 p.m.

Christine Thorburn, M.D., PAMF Rheumatology

Systemic Lupus Erythematosus is an autoimmune disease that can affect any organ system in the body. The disease most commonly causes fatigue, arthritis and skin rash, but it can also cause inflammation and damage in organs such as kidneys and blood vessels. Join us to hear a review of this challenging chronic illness and its treatment.

Hearst Center for Health Education, Level 3, Jamplis Building, Palo Alto Medical Foundation, 795 El Camino Real, Palo Alto. RSVP to (650) 853-4873.

Classes

"What You Need to Know About Warfarin," Wednesday, November 14, 6 – 8 p.m.

A PAMF pharmacist will discuss what warfarin is, why you are taking it and how you can help yourself.

"Learning About Heart Failure," Friday, November 16, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

This class, taught by a cardiology nurse practitioner, discusses medications used in treatment, dietary requirements, weight monitoring, self-care, activity guidelines, and symptom recognition and reporting, and more.

"Managing Your High Blood Pressure," Tuesday, November 27, 3 – 5 p.m.

This class provides information on causes, risks and treatment of high blood pressure, and approaches to successful reduction, such as exercise and medication.

"Supermarket Wise," Thursday, November 29, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Learn techniques for making healthier food choices in a local supermarket with dietitian Karen Ross, M.S., R.D.

"Advance Health Care Directives," Call for available dates and times.

PAMF's specially trained volunteers will provide advice and answer questions about the advance health care directive form. No cost.

Support Groups

Cancer (1st & 3rd Tuesdays) • Diabetes (1st Wednesday) • Multiple Sclerosis (2nd & 4th Mondays) • Sleep Apnea (1st Thursday) • Alcohol and Drug Education (Every Tuesday) • Healing Imagery for Cancer Patients (November 14)

For information on class fees and to register, call the Education Division at (650) 853-2960.

■ POLICE LOG

AUTO BURGLARY

1200 Block Brookdale Ave., 10/30
1800 Block Miramonte Ave., 10/30
9200 Block Marilyn Dr., 10/31
400 Block Showers Dr., 10/31
1800 Block Van Buren Cl., 10/31
2500 Block Garcia Ave., 11/1
700 Block Continental Cl, 11/1
El Camino Hospital, 11/3
2400 Block Charleston Rd., 11/3
200 Block Easy St., 11/4
700 Block W. Middlefield Rd., 11/4
2200 Block Showers Dr., 11/5

BATTERY

200 Block Castro St., 10/30
220 Block Loreto St., 10/31
6400 Block Ehrhorn Ave., 10/31
California St./Ortega Ave., 11/1
Luckys, E. El Camino Real, 11/3
1000 Block Space Park Way, 11/3
500 Block S. Rengstorff Ave., 11/4

COMMERCIAL BURGLARY

Seascape, 11/1
500 Block Showers Dr., 11/5
100 Block Montbelo Ave., 11/5

DISORDERLY CONDUCT

PD Fire Admin., 10/31
PD Fire Admin, 11/1
Castro School, 11/1
900 Block High School Way, 11/4
2400 Block Charleston Rd., 11/4

DISTURBANCE

Terra Bella Academy, 11/2
2000 Block San Luis Ave., 11/2
1800 Block Centre St., 11/3
240 Block Castro St., 11/3

IDENTITY THEFT

360 Fay Way, 11/3

GRAND THEFT

650 Block W. Evelyn Ave., 11/1
800 Block San Vernon Ave., 11/5
E. Evelyn Ave./Moorpark Ave., 11/5

PETTY THEFT

100 Block Grant Rd., 10/30
1200 Block Grant Rd., 10/30
100 Block N. Whisman Rd., 10/30
100 Block Barbara Ave., 10/30
Costco, 10/31
820 Block E. El Camino Real, 11/1
1000 Block Crestview Dr., 11/1
1600 Block Amphitheatre Pkwy., 11/1
Marshalls, 11/2
1800 Block Ednamary Way, 11/2
Wal-Mart, 11/3
800 Block N. Rengstorff Ave., 11/4
1200 Block Brookdale Ave., 11/4
200 Block Castro St., 11/4
2100 Block Showers Dr., 11/5
500 Block Franklin St., 11/5
600 Block Showers Dr., 11/5
500 Block N. Shoreline Blvd., 11/5

POSSESSION OF NARCOTICS

N. Shoreline Blvd./Wright Ave., 11/4
2200 Block Latham St., 11/4

STOLEN VEHICLE

500 Block Sierra Vista Ave., 11/1
800 Block W. El Camino Real, 11/2
2100 Block N. Rengstorff Ave., 11/3
300 Block Sierra Vista Ave., 11/4

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

1800 Block Higdon Ave., 10/31
800 Block Hope St., 11/1

SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES/PERSON

1300 Block Beverly St., 10/31
130 Block Beverly St., 11/1
910 Block Rengstorff Ave., 11/1
1100 Block Bonita Ave., 11/2
Castro St./Villa St., 11/3
1000 Space Park Way, 11/5

VANDALISM

900 Block Clark Ave., 10/30
1800 Block Higdon Ave., 11/1
City Lot, 11/4

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Wednesday, November 7

Sunday, December 2

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Reading together

By Don Frances

HAVE YOU begun reading your book yet? “When the Elephants Dance,” by Tess Uriza Holthe?

The book is a WWII story taking place in the Philippines, and this year’s pick for Mountain View Reads Together, which kicked off last week with a talk with the author.

MV Reads is a fairly new concept — this is its second year, I believe — whereby all of Mountain View picks up the same book and reads it during the same month, so that we can share our impressions of it. (Ideas like this are catnip to journalists, because we like to read.) Think of it as Oprah’s Book Club for Mountain View.

Besides reading the novel itself, there are still many ways we can participate in this unique program, according to organizer Sharlene Gee:

This Saturday, Nov. 10, from 2 to 3:30 p.m., get the kids involved with a “family stories” event in the downtown library’s Community Room. There, “Professional storyteller Olga Loya will tell stories from a Mexican family tradition. Anthony Robles, author of ‘Lakas and the Manilatown Fish’ ... will follow with a reading of his book for young children. Refreshments will be provided.”

Then the following Saturday, same place same time, is a “making books” event during which “Families are invited to write, draw and assemble books from their own family stories and traditions. Bring photos that you wish to include. All other materials will be provided.”

That same day, from 10 a.m. to noon, is an interesting-sounding event called “Tracing the MV Community Tree,” which is described as an “interactive discussion walking through the family tree of our community” led by SF State professor

► See **EDITOR’S DESK**, page 13



HARDY WILSON

CSA volunteer Mary Sanbrook sifts through bags of donated toys to make sure none are on the recall list.

CSA checks for lead in donated toys

By Daniel DeBolt

Community Services Agency officials decided late last month to examine 800 toys left over from last year to make sure none were on a federal recall list.

To the relief of agency staff members, only seven of the toys were found to have problems such as lead paint.

The unused toys, donated last year during various community toy drives, will be added to those collected this year and given to about 1,000 children

during the holiday season. CSA officials said they’re grateful for help from Cisco employees, who assisted in sifting through the 800 toys.

“I was really worried given all of the releases from the Consumer Product Safety Institute,” said associate director Maureen Wadiak. “We really wanted to take the extra precaution.”

The agency is taking toy donations now. Donations can be made at the CSA office at 204 Stierlin Road. Call (650) 968-0836 for more information. ■

Local firefighters answer the call

MOUNTAIN VIEW SENT ENGINE CREW, BATTALION CHIEF TO SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

By Don Frances

As the wildfires began to break out across Southern California three weeks ago — multiple fires from Santa Barbara to San Diego, all emerging within 48 hours — the call went out for help all over the state.

The Mountain View Fire Department heeded the call by sending an engine crew — Engine 2, staffed by Kevin Collins, Vern Chestnut, Mike Wester and Mike Robbins — and a battalion chief, Andy Smith.

On Oct. 22, they joined a caravan of engines headed south on Interstate 5. They fueled up at truck stops

Rally for health draws 170 teens

STANFORD DOC ADVISES EXERCISE, EATING RIGHT AT MAYOR’S YOUTH CONFERENCE

By Daniel DeBolt

Dr. Walter Bortz may be 77, but that only made him more qualified to deliver a wake-up call to a crowd of 170 youth at 9 a.m. Tuesday.

At this year’s Mayor’s Youth Conference, Mountain View’s middle and high school students took a day off from their normal routine to learn about “the most important thing in your life — health,” Bortz said. “You can’t do nothin’ in life if you don’t have your health.”

Mayor Laura Macias agreed, and said she didn’t mind hearing some health advice herself.

“If we are taking care of ourselves then we are going to be able to contribute more to what happens in our world,” she said.

The event was organized by the youth advisory commission and the recreation department. The health theme was suggested by commission member Kacy Clark, who also designed the shirts for the event, said recreation supervisor John Marchant.

After Bortz’s talk in the Center for Performing Arts, the teens broke into small groups to discuss caffeine, diabetes, eating disorders and similar issues. At the end of the conference the teens were asked what they had learned. Students mentioned “confidence,” “stress” and “too much TV is bad for your brain.” They also learned breathing

techniques for controlling stress and how to “eat the colors of the rainbow” to ensure a proper diet.

Bortz is a well known author, Stanford medical professor and marathon runner. One of his assertions Tuesday was that genes and heredity “don’t matter that much.” Only 15 percent of a person’s health problems can be explained by genes, he says. The rest is the responsibility of the individual.

He also told students tests have shown that TV reduces the amount of oxygen to the brain.

“I’m 77... there’s not a darn thing wrong with me.”

DR. WALTER BORTZ

“I’m 77,” he said. “I’m going to run a marathon in Los Angeles in a few weeks. There’s not a darn thing wrong with me.”

One of Bortz’s books is called

“We Live Too Short and Die Too Long.” Many of his comments had a similar existential flavor.

“I don’t want to end up in a nursing home,” he said, before explaining how the most common reasons for ending up in one are preventable.

The answer to the most common health problem facing today’s youth — diabetes — is as simple as eating appropriately and getting exercise, he said.

“One third of children born this year will develop diabetes,” Bortz said, adding that it costs \$11,000 a year to treat each diabetic. In the U.S., he said, “60 million people will soon have diabetes — there isn’t enough in the treasury to pay for that.”

To illustrate how much exercise is recommended, a few students were given pedometers to measure how much they walked during the conference. It is recommended that a person walk 10,000 steps a day, but one student had walked only 1,200 steps by 1:30 p.m., even as she shuffled between events, which included a health fair in civic center plaza.

Students were given surveys at the end of the conference to suggest new city-run health programs. ■

► See **FIRE**, page 13

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Jennifer Tremmel, MD, SM, is the Clinical Director of Women's Heart Health at Stanford and the Director of Stanford's Secondary Prevention Program. She is an interventional cardiologist who

is also trained in preventive cardiology and specializes in the care of women with coronary artery disease (CAD) or who are at high risk for CAD.

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■ SEEN AROUND TOWN

Faces on flowers



"I was struck by the 'faces' of my pansies as I was watering them," wrote Birgit Starmanns of Pacchetti Way, who said it felt like they were looking at her.

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.

Moffett Blvd. auto shop hit by fire, alleged thievery

An alleged theft at an auto body shop near downtown Mountain View early Monday morning was immediately followed by a two-alarm fire, according to fire and police officials.

The blaze was reported by officers responding to a call to C&C Body Shop, located at 251 Moffett Blvd., at about 3 a.m. A suspect had been seen entering and exit-

ing several vehicles parked near the business at that time, police said, and when officers arrived they detained the suspect and found property stolen from the shop.

While questioning the suspect, officers noticed a fire inside the shop and alerted the fire department. The cause of the fire, which was mostly contained to the office area of the building, remains

under investigation.

When the first engine arrived on the scene a second alarm was immediately sounded because of paint and other flammable chemicals inside the shop, according to fire spokesman Lynn Brown.

Firefighters had the blaze controlled by 3:22 a.m., he said. No injuries were reported.

— Staff Reports

DA undecided in rape-molestation case

By Theresa Condon

A Mountain View man accused of raping a 43-year-old woman and molesting her 2-year-old son was arrested last week in San Jose, but the county District Attorney's Office says there may not be a case at all.

According to deputy district attorney Mike Fletcher, an investigation is in progress to determine whether the charges are bogus. "It's not clear a crime was committed," he said.

The alleged victim told police that just after midnight on Oct. 22, Francisco Tala Jeronimo, 32, entered her bedroom through a window at the Santiago Villa Mobile Home Park on Space Park Way and sexually assaulted her. She reported the incident to police nearly a week later. At that time, the woman also told law enforcement that Jeronimo had molested her son on earlier occasions.

According to police reports, Jeronimo was previously employed as a maintenance man

at the mobile home where the family lived. It is not clear if he was employed by the park or directly by the family, however he was said to be acquainted with the alleged victim.

After two days of investigation and surveillance, Jeronimo was arrested last week on Gish Road in San Jose. Mountain View detectives booked Jeronimo into the San Jose County Jail, and are still talking to witnesses to try and provide more evidence in the case. ■

County to close Cold Case Unit

ANNOUNCEMENT COMES AS DA'S OFFICE SOLVES 28-YEAR-OLD MURDER CASE

Bay City News and Staff Reports

Cold cases may grow even colder in Santa Clara County beginning next year, as the Cold Case Unit of the District Attorney's Office is being shut down due to budget cuts.

"They are eliminating the Cold Case Unit which I think is appalling," Deputy District Attorney Charles Constantinides said last week after announcing that the 1979 murder of De Anza College student Linda Ann Jozovich had been solved and the killer confessed.

Since it was established three years ago, the Cold Case Unit has solved 20 cases stretching as far back as 1972, according to District Attorney's Office spokeswoman Amy Cornell. The unit's elimination is the result of Santa Clara County's chronic budget woes. Eliminating the unit will save approximately \$316,000 annually, according to the county's final 2008 budget.

Officials from the DA's office tried earlier this year to save the Cold Case Unit, citing the number of unsolved murder cases the unit has closed.

"We even had victims' families that came in," said Assistant District Attorney David Tomkins. Despite those efforts, the Board of Supervisors eliminated the unit when they approved the fiscal 2008 budget in June.

In addition to the Cold Case Unit, the District Attorney's Office is also eliminating the attorney position dedicated to reviewing claims of innocence of wrongful prosecution. That elimination will also save approximately \$316,000 annually, according to the county budget.

In 1979, Jozovich, a Cupertino resident, was abducted from a parking lot and brutally murdered by Santa Cruz resident Terry Childs. Childs, now 52, was already incarcerated in Salinas Valley State Prison for other killings and confessed to the Jozovich murder.

Two years ago, the Cold Case Unit helped solve the case of Mountain View resident Betty Yvonne Vickers, who was raped and murdered in 1976. Gary Dean Story, the original suspect in the crime, was eventually convicted of murder. ▣



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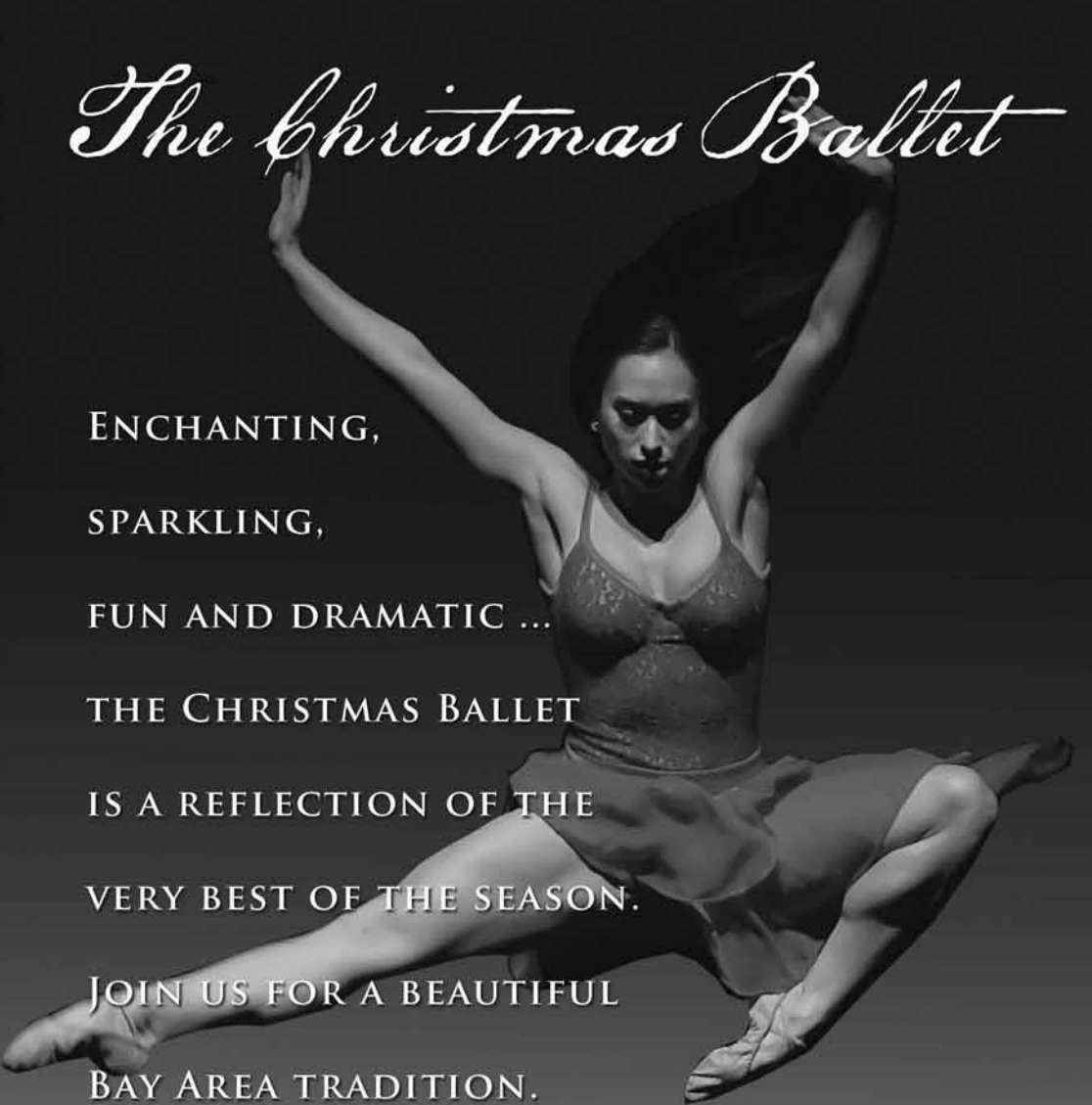
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FRENCH

▶ Continued from page 1

social diversity, good public transit, adequate open space and a friendly business climate, Attali says.

After pro-American French president Nicolas Sarkozy was elected in May, he appointed Attali, a prolific writer and famous intellectual, to head the "Committee to Liberate Growth in France," hoping to remove obstacles to business.

When the *Voice* asked Clemenceau why he thought Mountain View was chosen by Attali as a model for business develop-

The mention of Mountain View in Attali's report had a lot to do with Google's free WiFi, his secretary said.

ment and "going green," Clemenceau said, "Why not?"

One Palo Alto environmentalist had a very different reaction, something along the lines of, "Why Mountain View?" She went on to criticize the Mountain View City Council for cutting high density, smart growth development at Mayfield.

In a call to Attali's office in France, a secretary there said the mention of Mountain View in his report had a lot to do with Google's free WiFi—a model for the communication technology Attali wants to see in these new cities. Attali did not respond with more details by press time.

Clemenceau, a respected reporter for Europe One, believes he made a good case for Mountain View during his visit. He interviewed local environmentalists, Mountain View city officials Nadine Levin and Ellis Berns, Google's VP of business operations Shona Brown, and he learned about Google's program to develop plug-in hybrid cars. The resulting radio broadcast will air this month in France.

Clemenceau was the second European reporter to talk to city officials in October. A few weeks earlier, Dan Glaister of the Guardian UK talked to city manager Kevin Duggan about the city's relationship with Google.

"It's amazing. For the size town we have, nothing bypasses us," Duggan said. ▀

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

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COUNCIL

► Continued from page 1

foot-long, 30-foot-high “wall” of three story row homes along their backyard fences.

Though as much as 77 feet would separate the new homes from the old, a slide show rendering created by one neighbor showed how the view from his backyard would be altered for the worse. Most residents wanted the area left as open space, especially since there is a documented lack of park space in that neighborhood.

The negative reaction from neighbors, which led to a three-hour discussion Tuesday night, surprised council member Nick Galiotto, who was among a council majority that favored reducing building heights down to two stories or, at most, 27 feet. Developer KMJ Urban Communities is expected to come back for another study session on the matter.

At least three council members — Jac Siegel, Ronit Bryant and Laura Macias — said the project should be significantly altered or rejected in favor of open space.

Local environmentalists showed unusual passion Tuesday, citing global warming as a key reason for Mountain View to build more housing.

“The housing crisis is out of control,” said resident Tamara Colby, a member of the Sierra Club. “We have a severe housing-jobs imbalance. We need to open our hearts to our community — we need to share with others or we will all bake.”

Colby said every home the council allows to be built would mean one more person wouldn't have

to commute hours a day to work in Mountain View, decreasing carbon emissions.

“Because of their compactness, these houses are efficient to build,” said local Sierra Club member Jennifer Andersen, who recommended they be built differently to allow solar panels.

The Hetch Hetchy trail will run along the front porches of the homes, which Council members Tom Means and Margaret Abe-Koga said would provide a unique opportunity for biking and walking to work. The trail runs between the Shoreline district and the Whisman area's industrial park.

“How often do you get to have a trail at your doorstep?” Means said.

One resident said he wanted “to step up and buy one of these homes.” Compared to the neighbors, “I'm sure I represent a much larger group of people,” he said.

Neighbors responded by saying that the \$800,000 homes wouldn't be affordable, and another said there was no way the city could ever meet the huge demand for housing.

“Mountain View has done its share of housing,” Siegel agreed.

The project has been in the works for two years, and though it fits the zoning in the general plan, council members were concerned about the lack of public input at the start. Some neighbors said real estate agents had told them the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission could never develop on the site. The SFPUC is in contract to sell the land to the developer.

“The issue of not having public input for two years into this project is deeply concerning to me,” Abe-

Koga said.

Meanwhile, three neighbors showed up Tuesday night to oppose a project that wasn't on the agenda: a community garden proposed along a different Hetch Hetchy right of way near Beatrice and Bonny streets.

Making a comment some thought was satire, one of the neighbor said, “We didn't understand it would be, essentially, high-density vegetable plots.”

A community hearing to discuss the garden is planned for the Rengstorff Park Community Center on Nov. 15 at 6 p.m.

Other Council news

■ Mayor Macias' pursuit of valet parking for visitors who aren't familiar with downtown Mountain View was rejected by the other council members, who said they couldn't justify spending over \$20,000 of city money when the Bryant Street parking garage is still underutilized.

■ Realizing the council might end up rejecting Home Depot altogether at San Antonio Shopping Center, members agreed to Ronit Bryant's request for another study session on the topic. Many members opposed the project at a session in March. City manager Kevin Duggan said that if there is a fundamental problem with Home Depot it would be good to have that discussion as soon as possible.

■ The meeting was adjourned Tuesday in memory of Manuel Herrera, a longtime city employee and volunteer firefighter who recently passed away. ■

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LocalNews

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

HIGH SCHOOLS ORGANIZE EVENT TO EXPLORE BIAS

A collaboration between Mountain View, Los Altos and St. Francis high schools will host an evening event next week that explores diversity, tolerance and confronting bias in the community.

The Thursday, Nov. 15 event, held in the Los Altos High School cafeteria, begins at 6 p.m. with refreshments and student art displays. At 7, the KQED documentary “Not In Our Town: Northern California” will be shown. Following the film will be a discussion exploring issues of diversity, tolerance and bias in the context of high school communities.

The event is free, and all students, parents and faculty are welcome. Los Altos High is located at 201 Almond St., Los Altos.

PYT PRESENTS ‘OLIVER’

Tickets are on sale for Peninsula

Youth Theatre's presentation of the Dickens classic “Oliver” at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts. Shows run Nov. 10 to 18, and most days have a matinee. To learn more or order tickets, call (650) 903-6000 or visit www.pytnet.org.

FOOD DRIVE AT ST. FRANCIS

The St. Francis High School Service Club is sponsoring its annual food drive to help families in need throughout Santa Clara and San Mateo counties. Donations of non-perishable food items can be dropped off at the school cafeteria after 2 p.m. on Nov. 16.

Monetary donations are also accepted, with checks payable to St. Francis High School, marked “Thanksgiving Food Drive” and given to Sister Virginia or Mrs. Fulton in the main office.

St. Francis is located at 1885 Miramonte Ave. For more infor-

mation, contact Mark Busbin at (650) 968-1213, Ext. 618 or mabusbin@sfhs.com.

—Theresa Condon

GOOGLE EXPANDS GIRLS' HORIZONS

Google Inc., in partnership with Seagate Technology, will host an event at the Google headquarters on Wednesday, Nov. 14 in support of the non-profit Expanding Your Horizons Network, established to motivate girls' career interests in science, engineering and math.

The event is 5:30 to 9 p.m. and will feature a cocktail reception, hands-on activity stations, music from the Scientific Jam Band, dinner and a dessert buffet at the famous Google cafeteria. For info or to register, visit www.expandingyourhorizons.org.

—Susan Hong

HOUSE

► Continued from page 1

have tiny computers in them, which can each take 10 hours to program, Ross said. The computers respond to "midi notes," which allows the display to be programmed by an electric music keyboard. When everything is set, Ross hits play on the keyboard and the display runs in a loop.

The scariest prop in the DC Morgue might be a skeleton that flips up and smacks against a window, coming face to face with visitors before sliding downward. A sign warns against entering for people who are "prone to stroke, claustrophobia or wetting themselves."

Ross once studied prop design and was thinking about joining the movie business, but when faced with the choice to "do this as a hobby" or "do this as a profession and quit [DC Cemetery] completely," he chose the former. Being in Hollywood would have meant giving up his 17-year project, he said.

Now he's a stock broker in training, which gives him the time and money necessary for his hobby. And he's created a side business selling "armatures" — the hidden mechanical contraptions that bring his props to life. That business is called Devious

Concoctions (the "DC" in "DC Cemetery").

Ross' parents, Mike and Mary-Ann Ross, have sacrificed their garage, which Ross took over and converted to a shop where the props are constructed. All year long, Ross and his team hammer away, making noise that would normally irritate neighbors. But this display brings a sense of pride to the neighborhood.

The day after Halloween, enthusiasts were arriving from Fremont, Sacramento and elsewhere to see the cemetery. Ross said he is part of an online group of "Halloween nerds," which probably didn't hurt when it came time to vote on Fearnert. Parents of small children also visited Thursday, because children often are too scared to approach the display at

A sign warns against entering for people who are "prone to stroke, claustrophobia or wetting themselves."

night.

Ross' wife, Kasey, was watching him work on Thursday. "It's the only way I get to see him," she said. The two are expecting a baby soon and plan to put the \$50,000 prize money toward buying a house in Mountain View. Because of their new responsibilities, the DC Cemetery may not be around next year.

"I'd like to say it's going to be around forever," Ross said. "But I wouldn't mind taking a year off."

More information is available at www.dc-cemetery.com. The

house is located near the corner of Bush Street and Yosemite Avenue. ■

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FIRE

► Continued from page 5

concealed or potential fires, which can smolder for days.

In an interview with the *Voice* last week, the firefighters said that, though they would have been happy to fight the full-blown blazes, they were heartened to receive the appreciation and thanks of the displaced residents. The intensity of the fires that swept through was clear to the crew members.

"You could see where it burned right up to the back of the homes, right up to the decks," Chestnut said. "Sometimes the decks were a little singed."

Smith's first assignment was in Fillmore, Ventura County. The crew "set up on the western edge of a neighborhood. We had four strike teams, so 20 engines," he said. At four firefighters per engine — a fire captain, second captain, fire engineer and firefighter para-

medic — that's 80 firefighters holding the line.

Twenty-four-hour shifts were typical, Smith said. "There were reports of some companies working three days nonstop." Though not desirable, there's not always an alternative, he said.

Smith noted that the engines sent by most cities, including Mountain View's Engine 2, are "structural" or "type I" engines, built for fighting structural fires in an urban setting. So they were not equipped to fight fires on the mountainsides.

Meanwhile, the firefighters' sheer numbers made organization a daunting task. According to Mountain View Fire Chief Michael Young, all those city and county departments, plus the state's Cal Fire force, operate through the "Incident Command System," which organizes the firefighters in a pattern resembling military deployment.

"It's chaotic, and it's not a perfect system," Young said, "but I think our state did it better than

anybody else."

The fires are out now, leaving behind half-a-million charred acres, 2,000 destroyed homes and several dead.

In California, a calamity like this "typically happens every other year, every third year," said Young, who made sure his people were ready when the call came out. In the near future, however, due to climate change and other factors, "I think it's going to be every year," he said.

Mountain View's firefighters will always be ready to help, he said, in part because mutual aid is a two-way street.

"For us, it'll be an earthquake, or a terrorist attack," he said. The forested hills above Los Altos and Palo Alto are also concerns, and should they go up, Young said, "We'll probably be one of the first 10 engines in those areas."

Whatever may come, he wants to make sure his city will "enjoy the benefit of the same resources" used in Southern California. ▣

EDITOR'S DESK

► Continued from page 5

Dan Gonzales. This one's at a location to be announced.

As for the centerpiece novel, there are two upcoming group discussions on it — 10 a.m. Nov. 14 at Clocktower Coffee, 425 N. Whisman; and 2 p.m. Nov. 18 at Books Inc. And finally, at the end of the month, you'll get another chance to meet author Holthe, 7 p.m. Nov. 29 at the Mountain View High School Theater.

And there it is. For more on all this, visit www.mvreads.com or call (650) 903-6337.

THE COOL Cities event came and went last weekend, and organizer Jennifer Anderson says it was a success, with as many as 150 people there at its peak.

"There was considerable interest in the various tables and activities, and Sally Lieber, Laura Macias, Ronit Bryant and Margaret Abe-Koba each spoke," she said.

Also, she said, "We received 28 different suggestions of things that Mountain View people can do to mitigate global warming (on post-its that we provided)," and she provided me with a copy of the suggestions.

Most of them involved the little things we can do in our daily lives — recycling and whatnot — but a handful called for larger, institutional changes. Perusing the list, I was intrigued by numbers 6 and 26, which called for a publicly funded photovoltaic system from which the entire community could draw power. I'm not sure if this could work logistically, but the idea seems to resemble a municipal power plant, only solar.

Another set of suggestions involved changing the city's building codes to make the places we live greener. These included "mandatory double-pane glass windows,

"light wells in large developments, "downtown dense housing" and, perhaps most controversially, "use San Francisco as a model."

And then there's number 21, which is unique and self-explanatory: "Recommend a subject about Environmental Sanitation in early curriculum for our children in schools."

Certain themes on the list stood out. One could be described as "paper not plastic": The use of plastic bags, water bottles, styrofoam and the like should be cut way back, or banned altogether. ("Bring your own takeout container for restaurant leftovers — avoid styrofoam," advises number 27.)

Junk mail, too, should be

banned (does anyone besides junk mailers oppose this idea?), and one person suggested we "eat less animal protein."

Another item caught my idea, and I wonder why it isn't brought up more often: "Hang 50 percent of your laundry out to dry on the clothesline," suggests number 18. It's so crazy it just might work.

A HEARTY "Go Spartans!" to the Mountain View High School Marching Band, which brought home nine awards from the Foothill Band Review in Pleasanton last month.

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

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■ EDITORIAL THE OPINION OF THE VOICE

Tenants have nowhere to turn

We hope the ordeal suffered by a dozen or more residents whose apartments at the Americana complex were contaminated by asbestos will stir local lawmakers to protect tenants should similar problems come up in the future.

What happened in this case shouldn't happen to anyone, but if it does, state, county or city officials must be empowered to step in and oversee the cleanup and compensation to the tenants.

At the Americana — which is managed by Prometheus, a company that oversees about 10,000 apartment units in the area — the nightmare began when workers embarked on an early-October roof-replacement project in the complex at 707 Continental Circle. Company officials say the roofing contractor did not know asbestos was present in the apartments, although tenants say their leases actually acknowledged that the material was present.

Whether the contractor knew or not, there is no dispute that asbestos particles were dislodged during the roofing replacement and floated into many top-floor apartments. Then, when a tenant demanded that units be tested for asbestos, the contractor halted work on the project, leaving some renters' apartments and belongings exposed to the elements.

As luck would have it, a torrential rainstorm hit Mountain View that weekend, forcing many tenants to evacuate the building. Many have since moved out of the building permanently, but are fighting for to be compensated for moving expenses. For others still intending to return, Prometheus found temporary quarters while the asbestos is cleared away and the roof replaced.

Many tenants are outraged at the way they have been treated

by the company, but in searching for redress, have found that no state, county or city agency has jurisdiction over this type of asbestos incident. One resident told the *Voice* that she had called dozens of agencies that might be able to hold the apartment owners responsible for the damages, from the Governor's Office to the Environmental Protection Agency.

"Every single person told us to get a lawyer — we are in no one's jurisdiction," she said.

Even the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, which is the most likely agency to deal with the problem, said there would likely be no consequences for the Americana's owners and apartment managers. Since the roofing workers were not trying to remove the asbestos, and accidentally shook it loose, the company would not be liable for damages, a spokeswoman said.

All of this points to a hole in the law as gaping as the Americana's roof. Unsuspecting tenants leased their apartments believing they had a right to be safe from toxic or dangerous substances. They also assumed their apartments would not be exposed to inclement weather. And if the people they pay rent to failed in this regard, there should be some form of reasonable compensation.

But it seems the renters were wrong to think they had these legal rights.

If ever a situation cried out for State Sen. Joe Simitian's "There Oughta Be a Law" contest, this is it. Prometheus apparently has encountered similar situations, in particular an asbestos problem at a Cupertino apartment complex in 2000.

If nothing else, this large management firm should do everything possible to resettle the tenants and pay them generous damage settlements. It is the only fair thing to do at this point.

■ LETTERS

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

GREEN OPPORTUNITY WITH HAWTHORNE

Editor:

As a person who lives and works in Mountain View, I enjoy the many benefits of a pedestrian. Because I work within walking distance from my home, I have an extra one to three hours each day not spent commuting.

Unfortunately, many people are not so lucky. They are forced to spend hours commuting because they cannot afford to live in the areas where they work. This time adds up. Around 50 percent of the greenhouse gas emissions in the Bay Area are caused by transportation, of which commuting plays a significant role.

This is also why I am especially happy when the city supports smart growth development. Just this week, Mayor Laura Macias signed the Mayor's Climate Pro-

tection Agreement, committing to major greenhouse gas emission reductions.

Soon, the City Council will convene a study session to consider a development called Hawthorne Park, proposed for a six-acre site between Tyrella Avenue

and N. Whisman Road. They've chosen to build compactly and use land efficiently on this site. Not only have they found space for 69 new families, they've also been able to set aside one-sixth of the site for a one-acre park.

According to the Center for

Clean Air Policy, people who live in compact developments produce 20 to 30 percent less carbon emissions per household than people who live in typical single-family homes.

There is a choice for this site and many others in our city. We can opt for auto-oriented development or we can choose pedestrian-oriented projects that complement the trails and allow for easy connections to jobs and the VTA. In that way, Mountain View is honoring its commitment to combat climate change.

Patricia Dyck
Villa Street

WHAT HAPPENED TO CITY'S LEASH LAWS?

Editor:

When did Mountain View



► Continued on next page

► Continued from previous page

repeal its leash laws?

Over the past several years I have witnessed an ever-increasing number of dog owners who seem to think the athletic fields at Crittenden Middle School were built for dog parks. Last time I checked these fields were meant for softball and soccer.

Being a dog owner myself, I understand wanting to give your dog exercise, but not at Crittenden. Mountain View does have an actual dog park.

This past weekend at one of the softball fields I saw yet again a number of off-leash dogs with their owners letting them run uncontrolled. This time was different though, because sitting right in the parking lot facing the athletic fields was a Mountain View police officer.

Did he approach the offending dog owners and at least give them a warning about their dogs being off leash? Nope. Did he even acknowledge their presence in the hour-plus time span he occupied that parking space, never once leaving his car? Negative again.

With Mountain View having such a limited number of athletic fields, it would be great if our city officials could see fit to keep them as athletic fields and not let irresponsible dog owners ruin them for our kids. Enforcing our leash laws is the first step in this direction.

Joe Cree
Morgan Street

IMMIGRATION AGENTS JUST DOING THEIR JOB

Editor:

Well, you have slipped another notch by criticizing a branch of our federal government, Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), for doing its job ("More pain from ICE raids," Oct. 26). Who's writing your editorials, Ted Kennedy?

The ICE raids are not unconstitutional, they are for a reason. We are being invaded by a country south of our border. Invaded without a shot being fired. Whether you realize it or not, if these "invaders" are allowed to stay in our country, everything will get much worse than it is now.

These illegal aliens are costing taxpayers considerable amounts of money, and if they are allowed amnesty, as your article proposes, the costs will be considerably more.

We taxpayers are paying \$22 billion in welfare to illegal aliens each year — \$2.2 billion in food stamps, \$2.5 billion in Medicaid, and the list goes on. If they are allowed to stay here, the money

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► See **LETTERS**, page 16

■ GUEST OPINION

Hospital overpaying its top executives

By Bill Krepick

The recent action by the El Camino Hospital board to approve huge salaries and bonuses for the top 10 hospital executives is unconscionable. The board spent over \$100,000 to have several consultants help justify their decision, but they failed to use a 'reasonableness test' when awarding the bloated salaries.

At least seven of the 10 VP-level administrative jobs can be done by talented individuals from for-profit organizations — both health care related and general business related. There is no way anyone can claim that nonprofit hospital experience is required for the following VP jobs and salaries: finance/

accounting (\$410,000); business development (\$307,000); fund raising and PR (\$291,000); facilities services (\$271,000); HR (\$267,000); corporate and community health services (\$254,000); and payor relations (\$217,000).

These salaries — which include base pay and incentives as paid out two weeks ago by the board — do not include benefits, which are almost 30 percent of base pay. Comparables for these jobs should include a broad cross section of Bay Area businesses — not a limited set of nationwide nonprofit hospitals.

Having run a \$200 million-plus software business, my experience suggests that the salaries being paid to ECH professionals in these jobs are at least 25 to 30 percent above the salaries paid to Bay Area professionals for comparable VP-level jobs in general business. I believe that for-profit hospitals also pay substantially lower salaries.

In considering salary levels for its executives, the board should have taken into account the fact that in

the past four to five years there has been almost zero turnover in the executive staff at ECH. If the ECH executives were so woefully underpaid, why wasn't there substantial turnover as executives sought out higher paying jobs? I believe the answer is because the ECH executives place very high value on the collegial atmosphere, the comfortable setting where there is little pressure from either the CEO or the board, and the generous compensation packages.

When the board hired Ken Graham as CEO 15 months ago, he accepted a very generous offer, and the board made sure he was paid "at the market" by having the executive recruiter research CEO comparables. How can they now say that,

with a \$904,000 total compensation package, he is underpaid? Annual cost-of-living increases should not amount to more than 4 to 5 percent in this market.

The board and the hospital

staff are to be commended for the number of quality awards earned by the hospital, but they should be putting equal focus on performance and efficiency in health care delivery. They should be doing some soul searching and thinking about how taxpayers and other ECH employees will react to these extraordinary salaries.

As Robin Iwai pointed out in an opinion piece last week in the *Voice*, teachers are paid at between one fifth and one tenth of what hospital administrators earn. Apparently El Camino Hospital executives and the board believe that nonprofit hospital workers should profit from the support of taxpayers and donors.

Bill Krepick lives on Meadow Lane.

LETTERS

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we are paying for their keep now would be a drop in the bucket compared to future expenses.

If we have this type of money to pay for the benefits of illegal aliens whom, I might add, do not pay taxes, why don't we spend it on our American citizens?

Jack Stone
Greenview Drive

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■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

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■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

Goldilocks and the three éclairs

FULL-SERVE BAKESHOP ADDS SOME SAVORY FILIPINO FAVORITES

By Sheila Himmel

With a name like Goldilocks, it's got to be what — a porridge-based restaurant?

On closer examination, the sign says "Goldilocks: Cakes, Breads, Pastries, Asian Cuisine." Get it now?

Me neither, except that Goldilocks' surnames indicate a sweet tooth.

Inside the Mountain View store, near Pet Club in the Costco shopping center, most of the view is of pastries, many behind a

long glass counter, some in packages on display tables. A wall of effusively decorated sheet cakes offers themes from "Spider-Man 3" to "My First Barbie." (The Spidey cake is topped by a towering Gotham City background, Barbie by the doll herself.) Goldilocks' cake flavors range from chocolate to halo-halo (sweet bean). But let's stop there on the way out, since Goldilocks promises a meal from the Philippines.

Cuisine of the Philippines is a rainbow of Malay, Chinese,

► See **GOLDILOCKS**, page 18



MARJAN SADOUGH

A combination meal with sinigang na kanduli (sweet and sour fish), pork longganisa, and steamed rice photographed at the Goldilocks restaurant.

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RECREATION PLAN COMMUNITY MEETING

Wednesday, November 14, 2007

7:00 p.m.

Mountain View Senior Center,
266 Escuela Avenue, Mountain View

DOG PARK – ADDITION OF PROPOSED NEW RULES

At the meeting, the Parks and Recreation Commission will review a staff report concerning the addition of proposed new rules for the park.

The proposal involves limiting the number of dogs one individual may bring to the park at once to three and also defines the term “small dog” as 13 inches, measured at the shoulder.

A copy of the staff report will be available beginning 4:30 p.m. Friday, November 9, at either the Shoreline Office, located in the Rengstorff House, 3070 North Shoreline Boulevard, Mountain View or at the City’s Website at: www.mountainview.gov

If you have any questions, or if you cannot attend the meeting but would like to share your comments with the Commission, you may call (650) 903-6074 or send an e-mail to: jack.smith@mountainview.gov

GOLDILOCKS

► Continued from page 17

Indian, Spanish, Mexican and U.S. stripes. Past the pastries you may notice a menu board listing hot and savory items. If you don’t already know dinacdacan from lechon kawali, the menu isn’t much help.

I ordered by pointing to a tray and asking what it held. “No thanks” on the otherwise attractive dinuguan (\$4.99), pork cooked in pork blood; and lechon kawali (\$3.99), deep-fried pork belly with liver sauce. “Yes please” on the beef kaldereta (\$4.99), a spicy stew; Chinese pork asado (\$4.29), mainly pork butt; and dinacdacan (\$3.99), grilled strips of pork.

Lumpia may be more familiar to non-Filipinos. Goldilocks offers the usual deep-fried egg-

rolls stuffed with chopped pork, shrimp and vegetables that you dip in gooey sweet and sour sauce. Those are lumpia Shanghai (\$3.35). The other lumpia dish is like mu-shu vegetables wrapped in a crepe. They call it fresh lumpia (\$3.90).

From 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., the three-item lunch (\$6.99) is a good deal. You pick the items, one of which can be rice or noodles. Chicken adobo was a meaty thigh and leg swimming in a salty sea of soy sauce, vinegar, garlic and black pepper. Sweet glazed pork had a better flavor, although it was lukewarm and some of the chunks were pure fat. I chose garlic rice, pungent with shards of browned garlic. Everyone else seemed to get plain rice, shaped like a hockey puck. Either way, it’s good rice, short-grained and semi-sticky.

► Continued on next page

■ DINING NOTES

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MARJAN SADOUGH

Restaurant supervisor Heidi Alalay adds some egg rolls to a combo meal at Goldilocks restaurant.

► Continued from previous page

The staff could be a little more willing to answer questions, especially at times when the restaurant isn't busy.

Drinks include fresh mango juice, and fresh calamansi juice. I first read this as "calamari" but it refers to a lime-like fruit that shows up a lot in Filipino cooking.

Over in the far corner are the condiments, utensils, coffee and soft drinks. Oddly, Goldilocks goes to the trouble of serving Seattle's Best Coffee, with packets of powdered non-dairy creamer rather than real milk.

A steady stream of lunch diners stopped by the pastry side on the way out. Many Goldilocks desserts retain the Spanish names they were born with, like leche flan, lengua de gato cookies and brazo de Mercedes cake. There's a whole line of preserves made from coconut, yam, fruit, tapioca balls and red beans. Buko pandan jelly (\$5.69) combines strips of young coconut and jelly made from pandan leaves (green in color, butterscotch in flavor) with custard and sweet cream sauce.

Among the packaged goodies, beware "Biscotti With Butter" (7-ounce bag for \$3.29). They look harmless, but taste like packing material dipped in movie popcorn "butter." Chocolate Crinkles (7-ounce bag for \$2.99) also claim zero grams of

trans fats, but you have to read way down the ingredient list before getting to their brush with chocolate: alkalinized Dutch cocoa powder. Marble cake (\$1.15) is a far better choice.

Goldilocks was born in 1966 as a small bakeshop in Makati, Philippines. Two sisters and their sister-in-law chose the

name, according to the Web site, because the golden-ringlet girl "seemed to suggest luck." There are now 18 Goldilocks stores in the United States and Canada, with headquarters in Hayward.

Except for the free porridge, I'd say old Goldilocks had more pluck than luck. ▣

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