

MountainView VOICE



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**IN BUSINESS
| P.21**

MARCH 7, 2008 VOLUME 16, NO. 9

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DANIELLE VERNON

And baby makes three: Emi Hirabayashi, a leap year baby, lays swaddled in her mother's arms. Below, Emi is cuddled by her parents, Christine Endo and Hideki Hirabayashi.

Happy birthday, little leapers

LAST FRIDAY, A LEAP DAY, SAW 14 NEW ARRIVALS AT EL CAMINO

By Casey Weiss

Sitting in the maternity ward at El Camino Hospital last Friday afternoon, Qing Jeon Qin said his newborn son Andy will never have to worry about getting old.

"When someone else is 80, he'll only be 20," Qin joked. "He'll always be younger."

Andy is one of 14 babies born there last Friday, Feb. 29 — a leap day. That means his precise birthday won't reappear on the calendar until 2012.

According to the Honor Society of Leap Year Babies, so-called "leapers," or "leaplings," represent only 1 percent of the world's population. The extra day, added once every four years to keep our

calendar in sync with the earth's orbit around the sun, can play tricks on a family's yearly birthday routines.

"She will be even more spoiled," promised Christine Endo of her daughter Emi. The two, along with father Hideki Hirabayashi, were staying across the hall from little Andy and his parents.

Endo said she and her husband will have to celebrate extra hard each February to make up for their daughter's missing birthdays.

"None of her cousins will have the distinction of being born on Feb. 29," Hirabayashi added.

Though Emi was due on Feb. 28, her parents, who live in

Mountain View, never anticipated that she would be born on a leap day.

"It was a surprise, I thought she would

► See **LEAPERS**, page 12



Shuttle concept lurches forward

By Daniel DeBolt

Last year, City Council members stated as one of their goals the idea of setting up a free shuttle service, thereby providing better transportation options for residents and reducing greenhouse gases in the process.

But in a study session Tuesday, staffers told the council that such a service may not be effective in reducing emissions. Instead, they suggested a campaign encouraging residents to "dump the pump" in favor of existing public transit.

As for transportation options, city analyst Peter Skinner told the council that the Valley Transportation Authority "does meet demand," and that a resident could get anywhere in the city in half an hour, on average.

► See **COUNCIL**, page 9

Alta Vista mourns loss

By Casey Weiss

A few days after the murder of Jose Merales, Alta Vista students and Principal Bill Pierce walked from classroom to classroom to collect donations for funeral costs for the former student.

Three girls carried a jar decorated with Merales' picture, while Pierce spoke to students about the 17-year-old, who had stopped attending the continuation high school before his death.

"He was a very sweet kid, very soft spoken, which is why it makes it so hard," Pierce told the *Voice* on Monday.

That day, Merales' family came by to pick up the donations — about \$75,

► See **ALTA VISTA**, page 10

INSIDE

GOINGS ON **28** | MARKETPLACE **30** | MOVIES **19** | REAL ESTATE **35** | VIEWPOINT **13** | WEEKEND **16**

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* Based on 10% average appreciation in a normal market, and 15% average appreciation in a bull market

** Source: DataQuick 1997-2007

Some Bay Area communities performed even better than this. The fact is, all real estate markets are local, and the Bay Area is a highly desirable, thriving real estate market where home ownership has historically represented a positive investment.

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Voices

A R O U N D T O W N

Asked in Downtown Mountain View. Pictures and interviews by Nicole Baldocchi.

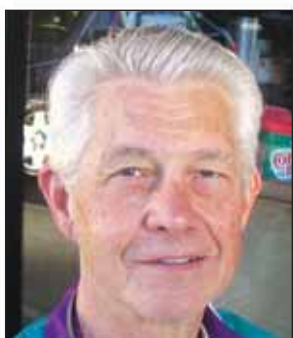
If you could recommend one book to the president, what would it be?



“*The Alchemist.*”
Chris James, Mountain View



“*The Catcher in the Rye*”
by J.D. Salinger.”
Davar Moinir, Los Altos



“*I’d probably tell him to read the Bible for wisdom, thought and advice, but I know he already does.*”
Del Thorpe, Mountain View



“*The Alchemist.* Because it says you can dream anything and you can achieve it.”
Radhika Uyyala, Mountain View



“*Machiavelli’s Prince.* It has a lot of history and potential history instructions.”
Adam Bovill, San Francisco

Have a question for **Voices Around Town**? E-mail it to editor@mv-voice.com

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Community Health Education Programs

March 2008

Events and Lectures

The Aging Eye

Tuesday, March 11, 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Susan Connolly, M.D., PAMF Ophthalmology

This talk will focus on age-related eye conditions including cataract, glaucoma and macular degeneration. Diagnosis and treatment of these conditions will be discussed.

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

Cardiac Imaging

Tuesday, April 1, 7 to 8:30 p.m.
Bob Hu, M.D., PAMF Cardiology

Dr. Hu, cardiologist and cardiovascular imaging specialist, will discuss the different diagnostic imaging techniques used to assess heart function and the benefits of the different modalities.

Classes

Learning About Heart Failure, Wednesday, March 12, 2:30 – 4 p.m. and Friday, March 28, 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.

What You Need to Know About Warfarin, Wednesday, March 19, 2 – 4 p.m.

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

Managing Your High Blood Pressure, Wednesday, March 26, 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.

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction, begins on April 7 & 8, 6:30 – 9 p.m.

Free orientation on Monday, March 24, 6:30 – 9 p.m. This program is designed to help people learn how to deal effectively with physical and emotional stress by providing training in breathing, meditation and gentle yoga.

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** (March 5 & 19)

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

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■ CRIMEWATCH

ROBBERY, 200 BLOCK WHISMAN RD., 2/29

Two men robbed the 7-Eleven clerk with a knife. The men were described as black adults wearing dark clothes, dark sunglasses and bandanas over their faces.

the face. The attacker then got into the passenger side of a white Honda and got away. She was described as a Hispanic adult, about 5 foot 4 inches tall and 150 pounds.

BATTERY, PLYMOUTH STREET/N. RENGSTORFF AVENUE, 3/2

A woman was walking along Rengstorff Avenue when she was approached from behind by an unknown woman who pulled her hair and punched her in

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY, 400 BLOCK TYRELLA AVE., 2/29

A woman heard her window blinds rustling and the screen from the window opening. She turned on the lights and called 9-1-1. Nobody could be found, but the screen had been removed from the window. Nothing was taken.

■ POLICE LOG

AUTO BURGLARY

500 Block Central Ave., 2/27
700 Block W. Middlefield Rd., 2/27
1400 Block Wildrose Way, 2/29
San Antonio Road/Terminal Boulevard, 2/29, W. Dana Street/Hope Street, 3/1
400 Block Ortega Ave., 3/2
1500 Block N. Shoreline Blvd., 3/3

PETTY THEFT

1000 Block Grant Rd., 2/27
El Camino Hospital, 2/27
400 Block San Antonio Rd., 2/28
Wal-Mart, 2/29
500 Block Showers Dr., 3/1
600 Block Showers Dr., 3/1
600 Block Showers Dr., 3/3
2000 Block W. Middlefield Rd., 3/3

BATTERY

Terra Bella Academy, 2/26
Buddha Lounge, 3/2
Plymouth Street/N. Rengstorff Avenue, 3/2
200 Block S. Rengstorff Ave., 3/2
1000 Block Washington St., 3/3
800 Block E. El Camino Real, 3/3

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

1600 Block Grant Rd., 2/26
400 Block Tyrella Ave., 2/29

ROBBERY

200 Block N. Whisman Rd., 2/29
1000 Block Grant Rd., 3/3

COMMERCIAL BURGLARY

500 Block N. Shoreline Blvd., 2/26
200 Block Ravendale Dr., 2/29
200 Block N. Bernardo Ave., 2/29
200 Block Ravendale Dr., 2/29

STOLEN VEHICLE

Escuela Avenue/Villa Street, 2/26
60 Block W. El Camino Real, 2/27
800 Block Heatherstone Way, 2/27
Wal-Mart, 2/27

DISORDERLY CONDUCT

1100 Block Villa St., 2/26
1900 Block W. El Camino Real, 2/28
1800 Block Peacock Ave., 3/1
200 Block Castro St., 3/2
1000 Block La Avenida, 3/3

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

1200 Block Cuernavaca Circle, 2/26
Latham Street/Mariposa Avenue, 2/28
200 Block Calderon Ave., 3/3

DISTURBANCE

1800 Block Ednamary Way, 2/27

SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES/PERSON

1100 Block La Avenida, 2/26
100 Block E. El Camino Real, 2/26
1900 Block San Luis Ave., 2/28

GRAND THEFT

1000 Block Huff Ave., 2/27
2100 Block Landings Dr., 2/28
2600 Block W. El Camino Real, 2/29

TRESPASSING

Walgreens - El Camino Real, 2/28

PETTY THEFT

Sylvan Park, 2/26
1100 Block Castro St., 2/27
500 Block Showers Dr., 2/27
900 Block Clark Ave., 2/27
1800 Block Miramonte Ave., 2/27

VANDALISM

2500 Block Dierix Dr., 2/27
2200 Block Latham St., 2/27
900 Block San Ramon Ct., 2/28
100 Block Easy St., 3/1
800 Block W. Dana St., 3/2
800 Block W. Dana St., 3/2

LUCILE PACKARD CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

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Lucile Packard Children's Hospital offers classes, seminars and resources designed to foster good health and enhance the lives of parents and children.

- * HEART TO HEART SEMINAR ON GROWING UP**
Informative, humorous and lively discussions between parents and their pre-teens on puberty, the opposite sex and growing up. Girls attend these two-part sessions with their moms and boys attend with their dads.
- For Boys: Thursday, March 13 & Tuesday, March 18
- For Girls: Saturdays, April 5 & 12
- * NEWBORN CARE 101**
Often touted as our "most fun" class, this interactive program teaches the specifics of newborn care, including bathing, temperature-taking, changing diapers, swaddling, soothing techniques and more. Infant doll models are used to allow for hands-on practice.
- Saturday, March 15
- * SIBLING PREPARATION**
Designed for children two years of age and older, this class prepares siblings for the emotional and physical realities of the arrival of a newborn.
- Saturday, April 5
- * THE YOUNG AND THE RESTLESS: BULLYING AND THE SOCIAL LIVES OF OUR CHILDREN**
Know how to help children communicate effectively and build healthy relationships. Learn about how boys and girls react differently in socially stressful situations and strategies that will help your child when they need to stand up for themselves or others.
- Tuesday, April 15

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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Checks at CHAC

By Don Frances

“HERE ARE THE pictures I took at the event. What a good looking bunch of people!”

So wrote Paul Schutz, development director at the Community Health Awareness Council, regarding the Feb. 25 “check ceremony,” hosted by CHAC, whereby the *Voice* handed out thousands of dollars of your money.

One of those good looking people, publisher Tom Gibboney (yes, he was in the pictures), provides the following explanation:

“The *Voice* Holiday Fund and the Silicon Valley Community Foundation were giving away money, more than \$75,000, to be exact, to seven nonprofit organizations that serve this community, from feeding the hungry and housing the homeless, to offering counseling to proving a world-class art experience for local students.

“Each of the nonprofits will be able to use the money as they see fit, to meet their objectives in serving the community.”

Tom noted that, since its inception five years ago, “*Voice* readers have increased their support to the holiday fund each year. With matching grants from the Wakerly Foundation, and the Hewlett and Packard foundations, the total raised for the Holiday Fund started at \$26,000 in 2003, \$39,000 in 2004, \$46,000 in 2005, \$54,000 last year and \$75,000 for 2007.”

This is cause for thanks, most especially to the readers, who year after year put their money where their mouth is. And indeed the thank-you letters have been rolling in, signed by Jim Boin of CSA, Jeffrey Walker of CSMA, Bruce Barsi and Monique Kane of CHAC, Mona Armistead of Partners for New Generations (newcomers to the Holiday Fund), and all the rest. ...

► See **EDITOR'S DESK**, page 6



MARJAN SADOUGHI

The upgraded Mountain View Public Library features a new check-out area, right, Friends Lobby Shop, center, and Welcome and Information, left.

Library reopens with spiffy upgrades

ONE-MONTH CLOSURE BRINGS NEW LOBBY, CHECK-IN SYSTEM

By Casey Weiss

A renovated lobby and new automated check-in system greeted Mountain View residents on Monday morning when the library reopened its doors after a month of construction.

Renovations began in early February to update technology and provide more open space and reading areas with better views of Pioneer Park.

“It was crowded and dark,” said Karen Burnett, director of library services. “I tried to take advantage of the spaces we had and use them better.”

The library entrance is now more wide-open, with a visible welcome desk and display area, and there are approximately 35 new chairs, most of them looking out onto the park. There are also more spaces for old-fashioned reading, with a quiet room that prohibits laptops and talking, and staffers converted a room with copy machines into a group study area.

“They moved a lot of the references upstairs, so the staff can answer questions,” said Joanne Contreras, library assistant in circulation. “The library is nice and very open.”

In addition to the layout changes,

the library has two additional self check-out machines, a new and more personalized online catalogue and an instructional collection for English language learners.

Other major changes include check in and sorting equipment, a drive-up return in the parking garage, a five-minute drop-off zone in front of the library and a digital board to update customers about new activities and programs.

Burnett estimated the total cost of renovations and upgrades at approximately \$1.5 million.

► See **LIBRARY**, page 7

Firms lobby for Evelyn project

By Daniel DeBolt

Six developers wooed City Council with promises of a high-quality project last week in the jostling to see who will build affordable housing on Evelyn Avenue.

City staff called them “six of the most highly regarded and experienced affordable housing developers in the Bay Area,” and said choosing one over another was going to be difficult. After hearing their presentations, council member Matt Pear and Mayor Tom Means suggested the council draw the winner from a hat — to “save time and money,” Means said.

“I’m pretty indifferent between the groups,” he said.

The project on the table would build 50 family-friendly affordable homes at the corner of Evelyn Avenue and Franklin Street, three blocks west of Castro Street. The one-acre lot is currently used for overflow parking for Caltrain commuters.

The council has allocated \$7 million in housing funds toward the project. The developers do not have to bid on the project because they would all receive the same funding.

Some council members still had some concerns. Member Laura Macias wanted to know why city staff wasn’t recommending ROEM Corp., which they said has a reputation for building the highest quality homes. But staffers, who instead recommended the BRIDGE housing corporation, explained that a

► See **EVELYN**, page 8

No end in sight for school budget woes

By Casey Weiss

While they wait for state budget cuts to be finalized, local school districts are joining others statewide to oppose Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger’s proposal to slash more \$4 billion from public schools.

Educators throughout California, including at the Mountain View-Los Altos and Mountain View Whisman school districts, are becoming increasingly vocal

with their concerns.

At MVLA, the board of trustees last month passed a resolution against the cuts, and their counterparts at the elementary school district are scheduled to vote this week to send a letter to Sacramento opposing the budget proposals. The elementary and middle schools, which receive much of their funding from the state, could lose a total of about \$3 million under the proposed budget cuts, while the high school

district, funded by both state and local taxes, faces smaller losses of about \$800,000.

“Things were likely to get worse. And they have,” said Craig Goldman, chief financial officer, during last week’s MVWSD board meeting.

California faces a several-billion-dollar shortfall, and local administrators said they will know more after April 15, when taxes are filed and the state has better revenue projections. The governor’s pro-

posal would suspend Proposition 98, which requires minimum funding for public schools, while also slashing 10 percent from government programs.

“We do need to plan for extended hardships,” Goldman said. “We need to be prepared and adapt to bad news.”

At MVLA, Joe White, associate superintendent of business services, said the high school

► See **SCHOOL BUDGET**, page 12

■ SEEN AROUND TOWN

Eclipsed moonrise



Intrepid stargazer Isaac Kikawada of Mountain View Avenue has taken more crisp images of a lunar eclipse in progress. "We just wanted to let you know that there was another lunar eclipse [on] Feb. 20," he wrote, "the last one till Dec. 21, 2010! The backyard astronomers here were quite eager to observe it, though the weather was not very kind to us."

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.

EDITOR'S DESK

► Continued from page 5

"DON, MAYBE YOU can give Arthur Miller's classic, 'All My Sons,' a mention in your column. 'It never hurts to ask' is my motto."

That's Marilyn Gildea writing in, with a fine motto that is proved right by the fact that you're reading this. (Another favorite: "Better safe than sorry.")

The play, now showing at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, is this Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m., and ends Sunday with a 2 p.m. matinee. Call (650) 903-6000 to order tickets by phone.

"I TOLD YOU that the Peninsula

Outdoor Painters would be painting on location at Mountain View's Cuesta Park Annex on Feb. 19, 21, 26 and 28," wrote local plein air guru Bob Schick. "Well, it rained on Feb. 19 and 21, so only Barbara Von Haunalter and myself painted on those days. On Feb. 26 almost 20 artists came out to paint, and on Feb. 28, about seven artists painted."

To see some of the work of these fair-weather artists (and Bob and Barbara), visit picasaweb.google.com/outdoorpainters/CuestaOrchard22608. I just perused the site, and the paintings are very good, most featuring the Annex's fruit trees in full early-spring regalia.

In fact, they're the sort of thing I'd love to hang on my wall at home, in case anybody has an extra one lying around.

"I AM WRITING to inform you that Twee Twee the Clown at the farmers market is quitting as a clown after four years."

And so we end on a sad note from Old Mountain View resident Jamil Shaikh, who volunteers at the Sunday farmers market for the CSA.

"Twee Twee told me that it is time for him to move on and he would like to thank the community and the citizens of Mountain View for this opportunity. In the future he may come back strictly as a balloon artist without clown getup. Next Sunday, March 9 will be his last day at the farmers market."

It just won't be the same without old Twee Twee. ▀

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

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Through the looking glass

MOUNTAIN VIEW, SAN JOSE STUDENTS TOUR EACH OTHERS' SCHOOLS IN OUTREACH PROGRAM

By Casey Weiss

Though Andrew Hill High School is only 20 miles south of Mountain View, its campus security and strict dress code are unlike anything most local students have experienced — something they discovered first-hand after spending a day on the San Jose campus.

Students from Mountain View High and Andrew Hill High participated in school exchanges this winter to foster understanding and perspective between the two different communities. Over 60 Mountain View students, including student council leaders and others from the Associated Student Body and Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) organizations, visited San Jose in December.

Then last month, some 40 Andrew Hill students came to Mountain View to participate in group discussions and to see the Spartans' campus during one-to-one tours.

"My partner was astounded we didn't have gates surrounding our school," said Mountain View junior Ariel Shurtleff.

Andrew Hill students are under tighter security, and cannot wear red or blue clothing on campus, choosing instead between solid black, white or gray T-shirts. They also must always have student IDs visible.

Despite such differences, the exchange helps students establish relationships and debunk stereotypes about different districts, said Mountain View English teacher William Blair, who helped organize and run the program.

"So, they don't think we all drive Bentleys and we don't

all think they are in gangs," he said. "Through exchange, you bond."

"We are a lot more alike than we are different," he added.

The exchange is part of ongoing outreach programs at Mountain View. Last week, for example, MVHS student ambassadors met with eighth graders to discuss high school life and address any concerns the incoming freshmen may have.

To help build relationships, the same students from Andrew Hill and Mountain View were paired for both visits, and participated in activities, such as scavenger hunts, that helped them learn more about their partners, according to Mountain View High School assistant principal Sharon Chrisman.

While students became acquainted in December, Blair prepared more personal questions for pairs to ask each other regarding friendships, dreams and personal obstacles. After lunch, Andrew Hill students shadowed their partners, attending Mountain View classes before returning for a discussion about the goals of the exchange and a group debriefing.

Former Mountain View Assistant Principal Matt Neeley, who was also a City Council member, started the yearly exchange. Although it had stopped last year after Neeley left to take a job in Italy, Blair brought back the program this winter.

"It's almost not enough," Blair said. "But it's the age of Facebook and MySpace — they'll keep up." ▀

E-mail Casey Weiss at cweiss@mv-voice.com

LIBRARY

► Continued from page 5

As part of the changes, library staffers are better equipped to assist customers. Employees also will be walking around the library, available to help, Burnett said.

"Instead of sitting at a desk, we are now out assisting people if they need it," she said.

Friends of Mountain View Library

will host a reopening celebration on Saturday, March 15 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., with a ribbon cutting at 9:50 a.m. The celebration will include refreshments and tours.

Besides last-minute touches to the display area, most renovations are finished, Burnett said, and customers already have been using the updated technology. ▀

E-mail Casey Weiss at Cweiss@mv-voice.com



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EVELYN

► Continued from page 5

balance must be struck between quality of the building and quality of the management and maintenance of the complex long afterwards.

Member Nick Galiotto, a former police officer, said, "I really want to emphasize the follow-up management as one of the critical issues to be looked at."

Member Ronit Bryant said her vote would hinge on the after-school programs and outreach services for low-income residents provided by each company.

Also in the pool of applicants was the Mid-Peninsula Housing Coalition, which built one of the city's first affordable housing projects in 1968, the San Veron Park apartments on Middlefield Road and Moffett Boulevard. The company said that complex was still very well maintained.

Before the council commits to a developer later this year, members decided they would visit existing Bay Area developments built by each company that might be similar to the Evelyn project. ▣

■ CITY BRIEFS

ARBOR DAY PARTY RETURNS TO PIONEER PARK

This Saturday, March 8, the city will once again hold its annual Arbor Day celebration at Pioneer Park, with activities for kids and tree experts ready to inform residents about "trees, composting and conservation."

The celebration starts at 10:15 a.m. in the library, where there will be an Arbor Day-themed book reading. At 11 a.m. the action moves to the park and will include free hot dogs and drinks, live bluegrass music, a guided tree walk and a tree climbing demonstration by the forestry division. For the kids there will be face painting arts and crafts. The celebration ends at 1 p.m.

For more information, call the forestry division at (650) 903-6273.

WATCH COUNCIL MEETINGS ONLINE

Beginning March 25, the city will begin broadcasting City Council meetings on the Internet, a new service complete with a video archive of meetings.


The service is the result of the city's new in-house Information Systems Division. In May, Environmental Planning Commission meetings also will be available online.

See www.mountainview.gov/news/city for updates.

— Daniel DeBolt

The City of Mountain View is accepting proposals for the lease of the Train Depot at Centennial Plaza. For a copy of the Request for Proposals, please contact:

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COUNCIL

► Continued from page 1

Despite the presentation, almost everyone on the council had suggestions for shuttle service. Member Jac Siegel suggested a trolley going up and down Castro Street, and member Nick Galiotto suggested something similar that would take people around downtown when parking was scarce during lunchtime. Also suggested were shuttles for seniors to help them do their grocery shopping, and a shuttle for kids to get from local schools to after-school programs such as those offered at the Community School of Music and Arts — which CSMA's Evy Shiffman spoke in support of.

When asked to provide possible routes, Skinner said, "Frankly, that is what we were struggling with."

Adding a shuttle service to underserved, low-ridership areas could mean there would only be one person riding at a time, he said, which means you haven't taken any cars off the road.

Margaret Abe-Koga suggested complimenting heavily used VTA bus routes with the free shuttles, making transit a more attractive alternative.

In Palo Alto, the city's free shuttle service has become popular enough to result in cuts to VTA service on some routes, Skinner said. Middle school and high school kids make up about half of Palo Alto's rider ship, he added.

"Why don't our kids take the bus?" asked Siegel.

"It's not cool," said transportation manager Joan Jenkins, half jokingly.

Council member Margaret Abe-Koga added that "schools can't afford the bus anymore" for middle and high school students.

The cost of the shuttle service could range from \$500,000 to \$1.5 million for two routes, depending on the frequency of service.

Member Nick Galiotto said the funding was not there, with city budget revenues predicted to decline.

"Once we have more buy-in, maybe the funding will be more obvious," said member Ronit Bryant.

City manager Kevin Duggan said staff would fold the discus-

sion into this year's effort to revise the general plan.

Parting ways with Home Depot

After making it apparent in December that Home Depot would not be allowed at San Antonio Center, the City Council made it official on Tuesday with a 5-1 vote.

The council voted to amend the center's precise plan to prohibit "large-scale, warehouse-type building material stores and lumber stores." Mayor Tom Means opposed the motion, and member Matt Pear recused himself due to the proximity of his home.

On Feb. 20, planning commissioners didn't want to rubber stamp the precise plan amendment, and at least one commissioner wanted the council to reject Home Depot head-on. Whether Home Depot was a good idea was not the focus of the commission's discussion.

A neighbor said that with all of the nearby homes, San Antonio "has great potential to be a thriving, pedestrian-friendly shopping center."

"A lumber yard or building supply store would ruin this potential," she said.

Ex-mayor criticizes Dana development

Also Tuesday, former Mayor Ralph Faravelli asked the council to follow up on the homes under construction at Calderon and Dana Street after hearing numerous complaints from his neighbors.

"I've seen better developments on the Air Force bases I've served on," he said. As to his neighbor's remarks, he said, "I won't repeat the verbiage they used."

Martello discusses safety

Meanwhile, appearing on the council agenda Tuesday was a closed session topic titled "Threat to public services or facilities." City attorney Michael Martello explained that the city was discussing possible strategies for dealing with violence during council meetings. The conversation was spurred, he said, by the February shooting at a council meeting in Kirkwood, Missouri that left two council members and three city employees dead.

"We just have to have a strategy," Martello said, adding that making it public would defeat its purpose. ■

E-mail Daniel Debolt at Ddebolt@mv-voice.com



Larry's Knows...

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When you start your car in the morning, it is normal for wisps of water vapor to emerge from the tailpipe. However, if you see thick, billowing smoke coming out of the exhaust pipe, you have a problem. Engine oil that looks "chocolatey" is another possible indication of trouble. This condition is caused by engine coolant leaking into the combustion chamber. The coolant may either be leaking through the cylinder head gasket or a crack in the cylinder head or block. A compression test may isolate the problem cylinder and lead to a determination of the extent of the problem. This condition should be addressed quickly because it can rapidly lead to low levels of coolant and engine overheating.

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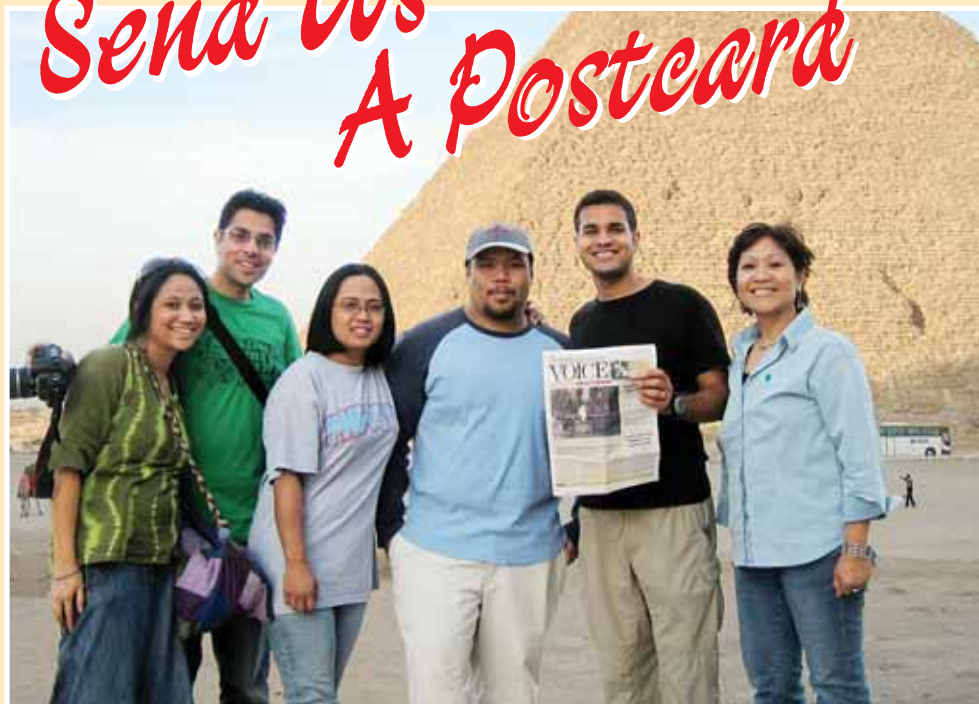


Photo of Regina Manzana-Sawhney, Akshay Sawhney, Rita Manzana, Richmond Manzana, Rohit Sawhney and Guia Manzana on a family trip standing in front of one of the pyramids in Giza, Cairo, Egypt.

Take a photo with the Mountain View Voice on your next trip and email to dmartin@mv-voice.com or mail to Postcards, P.O. Box 405, Mountain View, CA 94042.

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ALTA VISTA

► Continued from page 1

mostly in pocket change — and Pierce, a powerfully built man with a kind face, looked pale and distraught after handing the money over to Merales' mother.

"Boy, that was hard," he said.

Given Alta Vista's small student body, most of its students and teachers knew Merales. Though Pierce would not give details about when Merales stopped attending or where he was headed, he said the former student had been involved in extracurricular activities there, and that at the time of the murder, Merales was "in transition" but had not dropped out.

"It is very frustrating since we don't know who or why," Pierce said about the shooting.

On Tuesday evening, Feb. 26, after neighbors heard several shots fired, Merales' body was found on the sidewalk near his Higdon Avenue home. Police have no leads in the case, and are offering a \$1,000 reward for information leading to the arrest of his killers.

His shooting rocked Alta Vista, which was already dealing with bad news of a different sort: Another former student, 19-year-old Nathan Talarico, had been arrested the previous Friday as

a suspect in the Feb. 7 shooting death of Jeffrey Johnson. (A second suspect, 19-year-old Jose Alfredo Romero, was arrested Feb. 27 in connection with Johnson's murder. School administrators would neither confirm nor deny that Romero also was a former Alta Vista student.)

Despite these upheavals, the campus is normally a quiet place where students can receive help in and out of the classroom, said Pierce, who has been with the school for 21 years. He noted that while gang activity was particularly heavy a decade ago, there has been very little violence on campus in the last 10 years.

He said he debriefed both staff and students the day after Merales was killed, and additional counseling has been made available.

High graduation rate

Merales was one of 300 students a year who attend the alternative high school, located next to the Mountain-View-Los Altos Union District Office on Bryant Avenue. Students from high schools in Mountain View, Los Altos and Palo Alto are referred to Alta Vista because of problems with attendance or credit deficiency, and some students choose to come for the smaller classes and more flexible schedule.



A view of the shrine memorializing murder victim Jose Merales, on the 100 block of Higdon Avenue where he was shot.

MARIAN SADOUGHI

Alta Vista classes end before 1 p.m., and although teachers offer unstructured tutoring in the afternoon, many students attend community college classes or go to work. With no quarter or semester system, students graduate throughout the year, and Alta Vista boasts a 95 percent graduation rate. To pass, students must show competency, and the high school does not accept any grades lower than a C.

Students also receive counseling, and the school offers non-academic resources and services.

"Some of the students are troubled. Some come here because they function better in a smaller environment," explained district director of case management Hinda Weber, who meets all new students and families. "The goal is to find out why they are here."

Weber provides resources for non-academic problems, such as health and immigration concerns, and is currently working to help the mother of an Alta Vista student who lost her job and cannot afford housing.

Weber said she often refers students to the on-site "HealthVan," operated by Lucille Packard Children's Hospital, where they can receive nutritional, psychiatric and social services as well as vision and dental care.

'A safe place to be'

Pierce, who also has a background in psychology and counseling, is equally focused on school security. As a result of the school's efforts, he said, "This is a place where you don't have to worry about watching your back."

From his office in the corner of the campus, he has a full view of the quad and surrounding portables, and personally questions any young people who don't seem to belong there.

He also works closely with the local police and gang prevention programs to keep tabs on the students, resulting in "a very limited gang presence" at the school, he said.

The recent killings, Pierce said, have sparked discussion at Alta Vista, but "I don't see policies changing." Those policies include, among other things, a dress code forbidding gang colors, symbols and other attire.

"We know bad things happen on Friday and Saturday night," Pierce said. "Our job is to create a safe place to be and then work with students on how to be safe when not here."

He said that after Merales was shot, he met with vice principals from Mountain View and Los Altos High schools to discuss gang and violence prevention efforts in the district.

"We are always looking at policies when something like this happens, and we find ourselves second-guessing." ■

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Police offer reward in Merales case

By Daniel DeBolt

Police are offering a \$1,000 reward for information leading to arrests in the murder of 17-year-old Jose Merales, shot the evening of Feb. 26 on Higdon Avenue.

Merales was found dead on the sidewalk after being shot at 6:15 p.m., police said. So far no headway has been made in the case. Neighbors living near the crime scene said they have no idea what happened.

Although police have not yet established a motive or found any eyewitnesses, "I'm positive there are people out there who have an idea of what might have happened and they aren't coming forward," police spokesperson Liz Wylie said last week.

"We need help from the public — we need their information, anything that might be remotely helpful."

Merales was murdered on the 100 block, a few buildings away from his own home on Higdon Avenue. The U-shaped street forms a pocket of run-down apartments near Villa Street and Escuela Avenue, two blocks from Rengstorff Park. It's a neighborhood known for its crime rate, low rents and intermittent gang activity.

Neither family members nor friends of the family wished to speak about Merales, although many created a small shrine of flowers and candles at the scene of the shooting.

Wylie said police had contact with Merales "going back a few years" on numerous occasions, and that not every incident was positive. Because he was a juvenile, criminal records cannot be released.

Police have not ruled out that the shooting was gang-related. They say there is no connection with his murder and that of 20-year-old Jeffrey Johnson on Feb. 7.

Those with information are urged to call the police tip line at (650) 903-6344. Tips may be left anonymously. ■

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

Police make second arrest in Jeff Johnson murder case

By Daniel DeBolt

Police arrested a second suspect last Wednesday evening in the murder of 20-year-old Mountain View resident Jeffrey Johnson.

Jose Alfredo Romero, 19, was apprehended as he walked out of the Jack in the Box on El Camino Real near Ehrhorn Avenue — only a few yards from where the Feb. 7 shooting took place.

The first suspect, Nathan Talarico, 19, was arrested the previous Friday while getting off a bus in Mobile, Ala. At least one other suspect remains at large.

Police said Romero, a Mountain View resident, was arrested "without incident" at 6 p.m. after police spotted him driving into Jack in the Box with a female friend.

According to an affidavit filed by an FBI agent, Johnson was murdered during a marijuana deal in the parking lot of the Happi House restaurant, located next door to the

Jack in the Box on El Camino. The affidavit, citing a witness who was with Johnson, said the shooter was one of three men who arrived during the deal. It said the three men were acting strangely and that one of them, Talarico, claimed to be "coked up."

The affidavit reports that Johnson, driving his white Ford Explorer, and a passenger became uncomfortable and tried to flee the scene, but one of the three men shot him in the chest. Johnson drove away down El Cami-

no Real, but crashed soon after due to his injuries. He was pronounced dead at El Camino Hospital.

After Johnson's shooting, the three suspects began chasing his acquaintances in a separate car, resulting in another victim being shot in the leg during a car chase and shootout on Highway 85.

Anyone with information is urged to call (650) 903-6344. ■

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DANIELLE VERNON

Happy parents Jin Jin Feng (left) and Qing Jeon Qin laugh while trying to decide how to celebrate the birthday of their newborn baby, Andy Qin, who was born on the extra day of the leap year, Feb. 29.

LEAPERS

► Continued from page 1

come in March," Endo said. "I have to learn more about leap years."

Many leapers celebrate their birthday in late February, according to the Honor Society of Leap Year Day Babies, an advocacy group working to make leap day an official holiday on the American calendar.

For some leapers, it already is: Last Friday, restaurants and shops everywhere celebrated with gifts and free meals for the world's 4 million leapers. The group estimates there are 200,000 leapers in the United States.

Nurses at El Camino said that although they typically have

three or four induced labors scheduled each day, no one had planned to have a C-section on the recent leap day — though several were done unexpectedly.

"I don't know if it is a lucky thing or not," said Jody Charles, clinical manager of the nursery. "It's not a very typical day; it's quieter."

Andy's mother, Jin Jin Feng, said she did not expect Andy to be born until mid-March, but was sent to El Camino for induced labor after a regular doctor's appointment on Feb. 28. Andy, weighing 6 pounds 13 ounces, was born just after midnight.

"I didn't realize the date until my husband told me he would be born on Feb. 29 if he could wait

until midnight," she said.

Feng and Qin, who live in Sunnyvale, say they're still deciding whether to celebrate their son's birthdays — three out of four of them, anyway — on Feb. 28 or March 1.

All afternoon, a recorded lullaby played throughout the nursery to mark the birth of a new baby. Although the parents acknowledged they now had to sort out what to do about birthdays for their leapers, they were too excited to worry about it just yet.

"We are happy we have a healthy child and made it through the night," Hirabayashi said. ▀

E-mail Casey Weiss at cweiss@mv-voice.com

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SCHOOL BUDGET

► Continued from page 5

district is in wait-and-see mode. He said no decisions will be made until the state finalizes a budget.

"By May, we will have a lot more clarity," he said.

MVWSD trustees were scheduled to vote on the opposition letter on Thursday night, after the *Voice* went to press, but administrators said that if board members adopted the resolution, they would send the letter to the governor on Friday.

Trustees at MVWSD also have approved a parcel tax for the June ballot which could raise an additional \$1.3 million for the district. Neither district is anticipating layoffs.

New transfer and enrollment policies
 The Mountain View Whisman

Board of Trustees covered other issues during last Thursday's meeting, such as welcoming new school board member Ed Bailey and adopting new transfer and enrollment policies.

The trustees' revised policies, which cover the district's so-called "Choice Programs," such as Dual Immersion and PACT, give out-of-town siblings applying for an alternative program priority over out-of-town siblings applying to a neighborhood school.

Students of salaried district staff were also addressed in the revisions.

"The Choice Programs needed more clarification about enrollment policies and procedures," Assistant Superintendent Stephanie Totter said.

The revised policies list enrollment preferences, prioritizing students who were enrolled at the same school the year before, fol-

lowed by students whose parents are MVWSD salaried employees. They also give higher priority to siblings of students already participating in the PACT Dual Immersion programs.

The policies distinguish between students who live in the district and want to transfer (a.k.a. "intradistrict") and students who live out of the district and want to transfer into a choice program ("interdistrict").

"The board approved a fair policy that honors currently enrolled families, recognizes the value of district employees, and protects the interest of the district," wrote parent James Morales in an e-mail. "The district staff and board did a good job navigating a complicated matter." ▀

E-mail Casey Weiss at cweiss@mv-voice.com

Viewpoint

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Member, Mountain View Chamber of Commerce

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■ EDITORIAL THE OPINION OF THE VOICE

Heightened call for a teen center

The mini-epidemic in shooting deaths of young Mountain View residents is disheartening and has caused some soul-searching in the community.

This city is not accustomed to seeing murders at all, and many residents are shocked at seeing two, twice last year's total, within the first two months of the year. Two suspects have been arrested in the Feb. 7 killing of Jeffrey Johnson, 20; but police have no leads in the mysterious death of Jose Merales, 17, who was gunned down Feb. 26 near his Higdon Avenue home.

From all accounts, Merales was well-liked, although he had recently left Alta Vista, the continuation school he attended, and was known to have had several encounters with police.

Whatever explanation is ultimately given for Merales' death, city leaders and law enforcement personnel are sure to agree that there is too much firepower on our streets, and that too many of these incidents trace back to an egregious and pointless motive: gang disputes.

As documented in last year's *Voice* series "Gangs in Mountain View," youth are often exposed to gangs around middle school age. The pressure on young men and women to join them is tremendous, and those who turn from them down are likely to feel the sting of retaliation.

In a January case, Jacob DeWitt, 19, who grew up in Mountain View, was arrested and charged in a gang-related knifing incident that could put him behind bars for many years.

One Mountain View group working to keep kids out of gangs is Mesa de la Comunidad, which sponsors local events for youth, particularly Latino youth. Mesa is on the right track, trying to reach kids before they turn to gang activity, but its efforts can only scratch the surface.

That's why Mesa president Oscar Garcia told the *Voice* this week that the city needs to "streamline" the approval process for establishing a new teen center near Rengstorff Park, which would offer the city's youth a place to go and things to do after school.

"We, as a community, need to create a place for kids that want to be part of PAL [the Police Action League] or an after-school activity that is much more appealing than what the gang life can provide them," he said.

To that end, 200 Latino youth and their parents crowded into the basement of St. Joseph Church last May to advance the idea that the city needs to get moving on planning for a teen center.

This is a good idea, and a new teen center should be put on the fast track, especially in light of 2008's rocky start, with groups like Mesa and PAL (spearheaded by police Chief Scott Vermeer) leading the way. Note that the city need not wait for a whole new building to establish a teen center: Let's set up a temporary location right away to provide some after-school outreach programs for teens.

No strategy is guaranteed to halt violence, but we know at least one simple, straightforward way to move in that direction.

■ LETTERS VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

EDUCATION CUTS ARE SHORTSIGHTED SAVINGS

Editor:

As a lower-income parent struggling to survive in Silicon Valley, I am appalled by the proposed state budget cuts to education.

What gets me through the tough times is the hope that my children will fare better than I if they get a good education. These cuts will hurt their chances of succeeding. If children are not given a decent education, they stand a good chance of being on some form of public assistance in later years. How will this help the state's budget then?

We live in one of the most progressive states in the nation, yet our leaders seem oblivious to the fact that we are only hurting our state's future by compromising our children's future. Even though I struggle financially, I would rather pay additional taxes in other areas if it meant saving the education budget.

We need to be investing more money in our children's futures, not less. We can best help California by giving children the tools they need to flourish in adulthood. By doing so, we reduce the poverty levels and the need for public assistance. Education cuts are just a quick fix—one that will backfire in the coming years.

Mardou Locke
Montecito Avenue

WHO PAYS IF CITY LOSES LAWSUIT?

Editor:

In last week's *Voice* you report that the city received a "goose egg" in the multi-million dollar lawsuit against its former accountants ("City seeks retrial of Shoreline auditors suit").

I suppose Mountain View residents will have to pay both the city's expenses to private lawyers and the accountants' legal fees. This could easily result in \$3 million (or more) of taxpayer money gone for no city benefit.

Of course, this misfeasance is easily covered up by city attorney Michael Martello and city auditor Robert Locke, and local newspapers, so the exact losses are never made public—hence no public outcry.

But, if the city auditor and the city auditor are not directly responsible for these huge unnecessary costs, who is?

Donald Letcher
N. Rengstorff Avenue

SAVE MONTA LOMA'S TREES

Editor:

I am writing out of concern for the decisions the city is making about its trees. I grew up in Mountain View and my parents live in the Monta Loma neighborhood,

► See *LETTERS*, page 15



■ TOWNSQUARE POSTINGS

ON PROTEST AT RECRUITMENT CENTER:

Most recruiters are themselves war veterans. Most recruiters did not volunteer for the duty, they are on a temporary assignment that was given to them.

Do you see the absurdity in it? "Protest recruiters but love the troops." Recruiters *are* the troops.

The rhetoric of the Raging Grannies is anti-military, pure and simple. They don't honor military service. They think it's a bad thing. They don't honor war veterans. They consider them poor, hapless victims who fell victim to their gullibility.

To infantrymen on the front lines ... to the radiologist working in an Army hospital ... to the soldier working in administration ... to the mechanic working in the motor pool ... their message is loud and clear: You do *not* have a real career. Killing is not a career. You only joined because you were too stupid to know better, and it's up to the Raging Grannies to warn others.

The Raging Grannies are a disgrace.

Posted by Dale

ON JEFF JOHNSON'S MURDER:

As a close friend of the victim and his family (Johnson's), I hold many biases and, I guess, am definitely looking at the situation differently than I would had I not known the victim.

My first thought regarding this whole situation was that Jeff got in this way over his head. I grew up in the area and was part of the same type of "crowd" as Jeff was (only a few years before him). I had many close friends who habitually used drugs and alcohol, dealt drugs, etc. Growing up in the Mountain View-Los Altos area we were pretty sheltered from the outside world. Our lives, outside of school, consisted primarily of recreational drug use and "partying."

Every Friday and Saturday night we would make phone calls, and drive around looking for parties to go to (usually we would end up in some multi-

million dollar home in the hills). Generally speaking these "parties" would get broken up by the Los Altos or MV police, who would turn a blind eye to the abundance of drugs and alcohol present, and send us on our way. This was also the case when people would get caught with drugs in their car or on their person. The police would break their pipes and take their drugs, and again, send the person on their way.

The reason for my bringing this up is that I believe that living in this area is a blessing in disguise. Because most kids around here do have wealthy parents who care a great deal about their children's success in life (and have a lot of \$\$\$ to give to their children, and the ability to get their children out of any "messes" they find themselves in), and a crew of police officers who generally let kids off the hook, kids are really set up to not learn real lessons about the dangers of this type of lifestyle until something really awful and tragic occurs.

I believe that what needs to

happen is that people (parents, teachers, police, etc.) need to start making kids more accountable for their actions, thus teaching them that this type of lifestyle is *not* OK. Otherwise, my worry is that more and more kids from this area will start to learn these lessons the hard way.

Posted by PT

ON DWELL HOME CONTROVERSY:

I live around the corner from this house and I'm not a big fan of modern architecture, but think it is terrific! I have been watching it since they broke ground and I'm really impressed by the quality of construction and the speed at which it has gone up.

I even chatted with of the owners while walking past the construction site and he told me all about it. This is going to be a great place for them to raise their family and I am happy to learn that it is built with green materials and is super energy efficient. I actually think they are doing

a lot to make a modern house fit into this neighborhood. Despite the fact that it is two stories house that has a flat roof, they are using lap siding and the house has a beautiful front porch that looks like the other homes on the street. I think that once it is painted and landscaped that this house will be a beautiful addition to the neighborhood. I know that it will significantly increase my property value and I can't wait to see it when it's finished.

By the way, Mountain View Avenue is full of two-story houses and a range of type and (mostly bad) condition, plus there has been a ton of new construction lately ... so you can't really say that there is just one architectural style.

Posted by Judie
(resident of Old Mountain View)

Times change. Mountain View is a high tech city. I expect a lot of more of this type of change to come to MV ... and it's part of the reason I live here.

Posted by MV-HiT
(resident of Whisman Station)

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■ GUEST OPINION

Why we protest at recruitment centers

By Gail Sredanovic

The Raging Grannies have asked me to write a few words to clarify our position about the military and military recruitment. We have made several quite peaceful visits to date to recruiting offices and have spoken with recruiters about their work and studied the contract they use. We have among our Granny members both veterans and mothers of service people and we often work closely with Veterans for Peace.

We are keenly aware of the many ways this administration abuses the military. These include repeated deployments, stop-loss extensions of tours of duty, poor equipment and delay and denial of both benefits and health care. We were speaking and singing out about these issues long before the Walter Reed scandal broke and we lobby our legislators on behalf of veterans as well.

At the same time we have well founded and well documented concerns about the way the recruiters approach adolescents (whose judgment is less than adult), the promises they make and the deceptive way the enlistment contract is formatted. In our contacts with minority parents they tell us of harassment by recruiters and are hungry for information about how to finance college or find a career path other than through the military.

We go to recruiting centers less as protesters and more as educators and consumer advocates. We do, however, hope to contribute to slowing down the recruitment of young people as a means to end the current disastrous wars. We want to see our sons and daughters brought home and taken care of when they get here. We do have strong reservations about the uses to which the military has historically been put in U.S. history. An excellent and very readable resource on this topic is the book "Addicted to War" by Joel Andreas.

We notice that the opponents who have on one occasion shown up to shout insults at us seem disturbed by any criticism, however reasonable, of U.S. policies. They seem to be motivated by fear and anger and to be in deep denial about the real motives behind the Middle East wars. Conversations indicate an inability to contemplate combating terrorism by any means other than war, and acceptance of a pretty wide range of administration lies. We are saddened by this, but remind ourselves that the American people know better.

In fact, the *Military Times* reported in December of 2006 that only 41 percent of the military polled said that we should have gone to war in Iraq in the first place.

Gail Sredanovic is a member of the Raging Grannies. She lives in Menlo Park.

LETTERS

► Continued from page 13

where there are some disturbing redevelopment plans.

Right now as spring is approaching there are hundreds of birds of many species making their home in these trees, of which a countless number will be lost when the project begins. These trees are destined for the chopping block or transplanting.

Will that mean this neighborhood will go through its own "Silent Spring?" As a former biologist for the state Department of Fish and Game, I am concerned about the disregard and loss of habitat for these birds. There are about 12 trees along Nita Avenue that have been there for at least 15 years.

Why move all these beautiful, healthy trees and plant new ones? Money. It saddens me to see my home town make decisions based on monetary profit only.

Nita Avenue should be preserved, and as many trees as possible should be kept where they are, not dug up and transplanted. Also, was a complete environmental impact report made? When is the bird survey being conducted? If it is not conducted during nesting season (now) the data will not be accurate.

I hope to see Mountain View as a city leading the green revolution, which is of utmost importance in this time of climate change due to anthropogenic activity.

Charlene Chow
Aldean Avenue

NOTES ON A PEACE VIGIL

Editor:

A year ago, as the war in Iraq

neared its fourth anniversary, I fleetingly considered the question that appeared on my computer — "Will you participate in the Peace Vigil?" — before agreeing to attend. So much about the war troubled me.

At the vigil, the lawn fluttered with flags. We were asked to pluck a flag, step to the mike, and read the name affixed to it. I studied the label, and spoke the name of this stranger: Corporal Ming Sun.

With quiet respect, we listened to the names of the men and women, of every imaginable rank and branch of service, for which Iraq or Afghanistan had proved to be the end of the line.

"They died for no clearly articulated, valid cause, their lives wasted," one speaker said. "For the sake of the grieving family, never label their loved one's life as wasted," admonished another. Both rang true.

The dead outnumbered the living in this place, so we were urged to take more flags. The names were heavily Hispanic, predominantly male. They were commissioned, enlisted, reservists.

How I hoped that night, a year ago, that there would be no fifth anniversary.

Norma Jean Bodey Galier
Carmelita Drive

CITY NEEDS ARCHITECTURE REVIEW BOARD

Editor:

In conversations with neighbors, I've found that it is the lack of any input in the planning process as much as the Dwell Home itself that people object to ("Outside the box," Feb. 22).

Far from being some bastion

of modernity, Mountain View is behind the times in providing a mechanism for community comment when new construction is being planned. I imagine such a house would be difficult to build in Los Gatos, Los Altos, Saratoga, Menlo Park or Palo Alto without some form of public scrutiny.

Mountain View currently has procedures for citizen input when a tree is to be cut, but not when a neighborhood is being changed. That seems bizarre. I believe Mountain View would benefit from a process of neighborhood notification and comment along with an architectural review board. Admittedly, my take on what constitutes good governance is just a matter of taste.

Architectural review is a conflict resolution tool. The conflicts are certainly real enough. The serious objections to architectural review include the added burden to the homeowner, the administrative costs and a deep-down appeal of private property rights. However, the risk of being judged by history for stifling some yet-to-be-recognized architectural genius is not one of those serious objections.

I have some good news in all this: One of the neighbors interviewed in the original article is moving to a new residence on Taaffe Street in Sunnyvale, close by the town center. Since the late 1970s, that entire block of homes has received protections to preserve the scale (modest) and architectural style (eclectic). That's good news for Sunnyvale.

Paul King
Snow Street

'08 Hydrant Flushing

The City of Mountain View will begin its **annual flushing of hydrants** in your neighborhood beginning Tuesday, February 19, 2008, finishing all areas within the City by the end of June 2008 or until all hydrants are successfully refreshed.

Water main flushing is a process used to clear water lines of sand and sediment that may have accumulated during the year. Signs and barricades will be posted in neighborhoods the day before flushing is to take place to alert residents.

If you would like more information about the City's water main flushing program, or have questions or concerns while City personnel are in your neighborhood flushing water mains, please contact the City's Public Services Division at 650-903-6329, or visit our website at **www.mountainview.gov**.



CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW



MOFFETT FIELD Restoration Advisory Board Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) for former Naval Air Station (NAS) Moffett Field will be held:

On: Thursday, March 13, 2008
7 to 9:30 p.m.

At: Moffett Field, Building 943, Mountain View, CA

Building 943 (Public Affairs Building) is located just before the main gate on NASA Parkway.

The RAB reviews and comments on plans and activities about the ongoing environmental studies and restoration activities under way at Moffett Field. Regular RAB meetings are open to the public and the Navy encourages your involvement. **To review documents** on Moffett Field environmental restoration projects, please visit the information repository located at the Mountain View Public Library, 585 Franklin St., Mountain View, CA 94041, 650-903-6337.

For more information, contact Mr. Darren Newton, Navy BRAC Environmental Coordinator, at 619-532-0963 or darren.newton@navy.mil.

■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

■ MOVIE TIMES

■ BEST BETS FOR ENTERTAINMENT



The "Sultan Ibrahim" entree, which is sea bass over a roasted tomato and onion sauce, at Dishdash Restaurant in Sunnyvale.

DANIELLE VERNON

■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

The Dishdash dash

HARRIED SUNNYVALE EATERY SERVES UP DELICIOUS MIDDLE EASTERN COMFORT FOOD

By Andrew MacLeod Doerschuk

A heavily embroidered garment lays flat against one wall, illuminated by a spotlight. It's a detail customers might overlook in this Sunnyvale restaurant decorated in cozy mustard and burnt orange hues.

In fact, the traditional Arab garment is deeply symbolic to Dishdash owner Emad Ibrahim, who named his business after it due to its cultural connotations of warmth, comfort and relaxation.

Yet after witnessing the frantic pace the staff must maintain while attending to overflowing crowds at the popular Sunnyvale spot, it's easy to assume that the

name actually signifies the act of madly sprinting around with plates of food. Indeed, since it first opened in 2001, Dishdash has been so overwhelmed with customers that they leased the adjacent restaurant space, vacated by Off The Hookah in 2006, just to keep pace. Since then, they've simply escorted overflow diners back out of Dishdash's entrance and into the one next door.

On a recent visit, we were surprised to find a large, conspicuous plywood structure jutting from a wall, apparently hiding unfinished construction behind it. We would learn that Ibrahim finally took the

► Continued on next page

Sports Page

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► Continued from previous page

plunge and opened up an archway between his original storefront and the new expansion to double his capacity for both lunch and dinner seating — and boy, he needs it. Between the crowds pressing against the host station waiting for a table, the roaring volume, and the visibly hustling wait staff, the ambiance borders on frenzied. Amazingly though, to our waiter's credit, our service was friendly, efficient and professional.

Our baba ghanouj (\$5.95) arrived quickly. This chilled, creamy appetizer is a showcase for smoked eggplant. Rendered into a paste and combined with lemon juice, olive oil, garlic and cumin, the flavor blooms into a spicy and sweet dip that assures a cleaned plate. It came garnished with kalamata olives, pickled turnip strips and cherry tomato slices for both sweet and tart accents.

We also sampled falafel (\$4.95). Perhaps the most familiar Middle Eastern appetizer, these round, deep-fried fritters were made from a coarse batter of crushed garbanzo beans, parsley and onions. Served hot and dry to the touch, they were just right — crunchy on the outside and doughy inside. Their subtle spiciness married nicely with the accompanying tahini dipping sauce, which revealed a

hint of sumac.

The massive Greek salad (\$9.95) was served in a big, deep-set bowl brimming with lettuce, cucumber chunks, halved cherry tomatoes, red onion slices, crumbled feta, pitted Greek olives and a triangle of deep-fried pita bread. Coated with a cool and sharp dressing, it is ample either as a main course or to split between two diners as a starter.

I ordered mansaf (\$15.95), my favorite Dishdash entree. Traditionally served at Jordanian weddings and births, this dish buries hunks of tender lamb beneath a mound of rice that rises from a pool of aged yoghurt broth. Garnished with sprinkles of roasted almond slices, mansaf is both simple and satisfying.

Visually akin to mansaf but notably sweeter in flavor, beriani (\$14.95) features rice dotted with garbanzo beans and raisins covering beef cooked in yoghurt and highlighted with cinnamon.

The lamb in the mansaf was so succulent that we couldn't resist ordering zahra (\$15.95) on our next visit. A baked lamb shank falling off of the bone was served swimming in a yoghurt sauce accented with onion, sauteed garlic and a trace of sumac. It was accompanied by smoky grilled

► See **DISHDASH**, page 18

■ DINING NOTES

Dishdash
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Dishdash's "Mo, The Kind of Kebabs" entree.

DANIELLE VERNON

DISHDASH

▶ Continued from page 17

cauliflower and a mound of rice topped with slivered almonds. Finely diced parsley was sprinkled over the plate to dress up this feast for lamb fans.

Faced with such tempting lamb dishes, it's easy to miss the restaurant's seafood selection. We tried shakshuka (\$15.95), and weren't disappointed. A circle of five jumbo prawns rested in a mild red curry sauce made of eggplant, onion, peppers, tomato and dry lime. Accompanied by only a scoop of rice, the shrimp and thick, rich sauce were uncomplicated and filling.

We were warned that cho-kolata (\$6.95) would take 15 minutes to prepare, and our waiter wasn't exaggerating. Served alongside a scoop of creamy Ciao Bella Gelato vanilla ice cream and strawberry slices, the small, disc-shaped cake offered a slight crunch outside, and warm brownie dough filling with occasional nut pieces. Vanilla ice cream was the centerpiece for the ultra-sweet and self-explanatory baklava crumble (\$6.95), in which warm, crumbled baklava melted the ice cream into a velvety masterpiece.

Despite the constant commotion, we had a wonderful experience at Dishdash. The beer and wine list is extensive. Servings are enormous. Best of all, Dishdash offers food that is subtly spiced — never hot, but consistently engaging. ■

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MOVIE TIMES

10,000 B.C. (PG-13) Century 16: 12:30, 1:30, 2:30, 3:15, 4:15, 5:15, 6, 7, 8, 8:45, 9:45 & 10:35 p.m. Century 20: Noon, 12:40, 1:20, 2, 2:35, 3:20, 4, 4:35, 5:10, 6, 6:40, 7:20, 7:50, 8:40, 9:20, 10 & 10:30 p.m.

ALVIN AND THE CHIPMUNKS (PG) ★★★
Century 12: 12:45, 3:05, 5:25 & 7:45 p.m.

ATONEMENT (R) ★★★1/2
Century 16: 4 & 9:45 p.m. Century 20: 1:30 & 7:15 p.m.

THE BAND'S VISIT (PG-13) ★★★1/2
Aquarius: 2:15, 4:30, 7 & 9:15 p.m.

THE BANK JOB (R) Century 16: 1:20, 4:10, 7:25, 10:10 p.m.
Century 12: 1, 4, 7 & 10 p.m.

BE KIND REWIND (PG-13) ★★★1/2 Century 16: 12:55 & 6:50 p.m. Century 20: 12:25, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35 & 10:10 p.m.

THE BUCKET LIST (PG-13) ★1/2 Century 12: 10:10 p.m.

CHARLIE BARTLETT (R) ★★ Century 12: 4:40 & 9:45 p.m.

CHARLIE WILSON'S WAR (R) ★★★1/2
Century 12: 1:20, 4:10, 7:20 & 9:55 p.m.

CJ7 (PG) Palo Alto Square: 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50 & 10 p.m.

COLLEGE ROAD TRIP (G) Century 16: 12:35, 2:45, 5, 7:15 & 9:35 p.m. Century 12: 12:30, 1:40, 2:45, 3:50, 5, 6:15, 7:15, 8:30 & 9:30 p.m.

THE COUNTERFEITERS (R) ★★★1/2
Guild: 2:15, 4:45, 7:10 & 9:40 p.m.

DEFINITELY, MAYBE (PG-13) ★★★1/2 Century 16: 1:05 & 6:05 p.m. Century 20: 1:45, 4:50, 7:40 & 10:25 p.m.

THE DIVING BELL AND THE BUTTERFLY (PG-13) ★★★★★
Century 16: 3:45 & 9:30 p.m. Century 20: 3:55 & 9:10 p.m.

ENCHANTED (PG) Century 12: 1:50 & 7:05 p.m.

FOOL'S GOLD (PG-13) Century 20: 4:20 & 10:05 p.m.

HANNAH MONTANA & MILEY CYRUS: BEST OF BOTH WORLDS DISNEY 3D (G) Century 16: 1:10, 3:20 & 5:20 p.m.

IN BRUGES (R) Century 20: 12:10, 1:15, 2:40, 5:15, 6:35, 7:45 & 10:25 p.m. Palo Alto Square: 1:40, 4:20, 7:10 & 9:35 p.m.

JUMPER (PG-13) Century 16: 12:30, 2:50, 5:10, 7:55 & 10:20 p.m.
Century 20: 12:20, 2:30, 4:40, 7, 9:15 & 10:35 p.m.

JUNO (PG-13) ★★★ Century 20: 12:05, 2:20, 4:45, 7:10 & 9:30 p.m. Aquarius: 2:40, 5, 7:30 & 9:45 p.m.

MISS PETTIGREW LIVES FOR A DAY (PG-13) ★★★
Century 16: 12:40, 3, 5:35, 7:55 & 10:15 p.m. Century 20: 12:25, 2:50, 5:05, 7:30 & 9:50 p.m.

NATIONAL TREASURE: BOOK OF SECRETS (PG)
Century 12: 9:40 p.m.

THE OTHER BOLEYN GIRL (PG-13) ★★
Century 16: 1, 3:55, 7:10 & 9:55 p.m.
Century 20: Noon, 1:10, 2:40, 4:05, 5:20, 6:50, 8, 9:35 & 10:40 p.m.

PENELOPE (PG) ★★★ Century 16: 12:50, 3:15, 5:30, 7:50 & 10:05 p.m. Century 12: 12:35, 2:50, 5:10, 7:40 & 10:20 p.m.

THE PIRATES WHO DON'T DO ANYTHING: A VEGGIE-TALES MOVIE (G) Century 12: 1:25, 2:35, 4:50 & 7:25 p.m.

SEMI-PRO (R) Century 16: 12:45, 2, 3:10, 4:20, 5:40, 7:05, 8:05, 9:25 & 10:25 p.m. Century 20: 12:15, 1:10, 2:25, 3:30, 4:40, 5:50, 7, 8:15, 9:20 & 10:35 p.m.

THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES (PG) ★★★ Century 16: 1:45, 4:45, 7:20 & 9:45 P.M. Century 12: 12:40, 1:30*, 2, 3:10, 3:55*, 4:30, 5:40, 6:30*, 7:30, 8:05, 10:05 & 10:30 p.m. *Spanish subtitles

STEP UP 2: THE STREETS (PG-13)
Century 12: 1:10, 4:20, 7:10, 9* & 9:50 p.m. *Spanish subtitles

THERE WILL BE BLOOD (R) ★★★★★
Century 20: 12:10, 3:25, 6:45 & 10:05 p.m.

U2:3D (G) Century 16: 7:30 & 9:40 p.m.

VANTAGE POINT (PG-13) ★★★1/2 Century 16: 12:40, 3:05, 5:25, 7:45 & 10 p.m. Century 20: 12:05, 1, 2:15, 3:15, 4:30, 5:40, 7:05, 8:05, 9:25 & 10:20 p.m.

THE WATER HORSE: LEGEND OF THE DEEP (PG)
Century 20: 12:15, 2:45, 5:20 & 7:55 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)

- ★ 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

THE BAND'S VISIT ★★★1/2

(Aquarius) Ethnic tensions take a back-seat to human kindness in this charming Israeli indie. The Alexandria Police Ceremonial Orchestra is stuck. Invited to speak at the opening of an Arab cultural center, the musicians unexpectedly find themselves stranded in an Israeli desert town with little money, no lodging and no transportation. The band's leader (Sasson Gabai as Tewfiq) is a proud man who insists that his group of law-enforcement musicians conduct themselves with propriety, even when faced with the disdain of a motley assortment of locals led by sultry cafe owner Dina (the gorgeous Ronit Elkabetz). When Dina offers to put the band up for the night, divvying them up among neighboring homes, Tewfiq struggles to maintain decorum but has no choice but to accept. That solitary evening is the backbone of this sweet and poignant import that speaks understated volumes about Israeli-Arab relations. The dialogue is spare, in turns tender and awkward, yet always with an eye towards the universal language of hope. *Rated: PG-13 for mature themes. 1 hour, 29 minutes. In Hebrew, Arabic and English with English subtitles.* — J.A.

PENELOPE ★★★

(Century 16, Century 12) The daughter of wealthy socialite parents (Catherine O'Hara and Robert E. Grant), Penelope Wilhern (Christina Ricci) suffers from a witch's curse that has haunted the Wilhern family for generations. She was born with a pig snout and ears, strange features that send any prospective suitor screaming off in horror. Her parents keep Penelope out of public view — convincing the world she died as a child — and surreptitiously seek out a blue-blooded husband in order to break the curse. Lemon (Peter Dinklage) an ambitious tabloid reporter, is convinced Penelope is alive and becomes desperate to get a photograph of the unique girl. Enter Max (James McAvoy), a down-on-his-luck gambler in need of an easy payday. Lemon quickly convinces Max to act the part of interested suitor and snap a photo of Penelope. But when Penelope reveals herself to Max following several heartfelt conversations through a two-way mirror, his startled reaction convinces her to hide her face and run away. Viewers must be patient as the curse concept and Penelope's strange features strain believability. Once they're past the initial knee-jerk reaction, however, it becomes easy to appreciate the heartfelt, romantic and uplifting core that shines through. *Rated: PG for thematic elements, some innuendo and language. 1 hour, 29 minutes.* — T.H.

MOVIE CRITICS

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

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