

Mountain View VOICE



**NEW HOME
& GARDEN
MAGAZINE**

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INSIDE: HEALTH & FITNESS | PAGE 25

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School bus fares to jump

TEACHERS ALSO AGREE TO FORGO RAISES AS DISTRICT TRIMS BUDGET

By Casey Weiss

Facing a loss of \$3 million in next year's budget, local school administrators plan to double school bus fares for several hundred students and eliminate one route all together. Teachers, meanwhile, have agreed to skip a raise in order to help balance the books.

The Mountain View Whisman school district hopes to reduce its transportation costs by \$100,000, which administrators say is important as they face the cuts likely under the current state budget proposal. The district hopes to save another \$500,000 through salary negotiations with staff members and the teacher's unions.

"If we have to remember one thing in this cost-cutting, it is that this is another sign of the state inadequately funding us, and it is embarrassing," Superintendent Maurice Ghysels said at last week's meeting. "It is disheartening to see that kids don't have better access."

Approximately 500 of the 4,300 students in the district use the buses. By cutting a bus route, the district will have an extra driver to transport special education students, who currently use a private, more expensive provider.

Under the fare hike, full-year passes will increase from \$180 to \$360 for the 2008-09 school year, and half-year passes will cost \$200. Trustees decided on the changes last Thursday after debating equity, safety and transparency regarding the new costs.

The school will also stop serving four stops: California/Mariposa,

► See **BUDGET**, page 10



DANIELLE VERNON

WIND UP: Joe Squatrito (left) and Ira Duran (top) of Duran Construction build a non-functional windmill behind the historic Rengstorff House on Friday, March 21.

Google buys Pear Avenue Theatre

ARE TECH TITANS IN A FIGHT OVER REAL ESTATE?

By Daniel DeBolt

In what may be a competition with Microsoft over real estate in the North Bayshore area, Google recently purchased the building that houses a small local theater group at 1220 Pear Ave.

It is unclear what Google's plans

are for the building that houses the Pear Avenue Theatre playhouse. Some speculate it may be part of a strategy to block Microsoft from buying up all of the property in the neighborhood.

A Microsoft sign recently appeared on another Pear Avenue building, and Microsoft already

has a large campus a block south of Pear Avenue on La Avenida. Google's headquarters, and a dozen other Google buildings, are less than a mile away.

In an e-mail, Google spokesperson John Murchinson said

► See **GOOGLE**, page 9

Police see dip in gang crime

DEPARTMENT'S 'GANG SUPPRESSION TEAM' CREDITED WITH KEEPING NUMBERS DOWN

By Daniel DeBolt

Despite two murders in February involving gang members, police say gang-related crime in Mountain View has actually been on a slow and steady decrease since 2005, likely thanks to the efforts of a special unit within the department.

"The slow decrease is, in part, due to the gang suppression team," said police spokesperson Liz Wylie. "It absolutely has had something to do with that."

Police formed the gang suppression team following Mountain View's only gang-related murder in recent years, the shooting of Alejandro Fernandez in 2004. By 2005, a group of specially trained detectives and patrol officers started collectively tracking gang activity.

Police say gang-related crime peaked in 2005 with 71 incidents, nearly double the number from previous years and nearing the all-time highs seen in the 1990s. But then gang-related crime dropped

by 6 percent in 2006, and another 7 percent in 2007.

One bust that may have made an especially big impact was the January 2007 arrest of the "zip-tie robbers," a group of seven gang members active in Mountain View who were robbing stores from here to San Jose.

"You will have some very high-end gang members stirring the

pot and it tends to get bad," said Bruce Barsi, a former officer of the gang suppression team and current board president of the Community

Health Awareness Council, which councils at-risk children and youth. "Maybe these members move on, but the cycle continues. We haven't been very successful at getting at the root of that cycle that keeps repeating."

As criminals like the zip-tie robbers are tracked and prosecuted, police are compiling a list of known gang members in the city, and its number has risen since 2005. Currently, police say, there are 26 registered active gang members in Mountain View, although they say it's nearly impossible to have an exact number, and difficult to distinguish which are serious criminals and which are just "posers" — young teens trying to fit in.

"We certainly haven't noticed a decrease in gang members," Wylie said. "Their numbers appear to have increased."

The significant gang crimes this year include the non-fatal stabbing of a perceived Sureño in January. Alleged Norteños George Oseida, 21, and Jacob Dewitt, 19, were

► See **GANGS**, page 13

INSIDE

GOINGS ON **22** | MARKETPLACE **29** | MOVIES **20** | REAL ESTATE **34** | VIEWPOINT **14**

92.7% Current



We bet you've never seen this headline in any recent media coverage of the real estate market. Yet it is fact—92.7 percent of all mortgages in the United States are current. What's more, the "sub-prime mortgage crisis" refers to a tiny portion of sub-prime mortgages. Sub-prime mortgages represent only a fraction of all mortgages—and the vast majority of these are current.

- *Percent of U.S. mortgages that are current*
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- *Percent of U.S. mortgages that are sub-prime*
13.2%
- *Percent of sub-prime mortgages that are current*
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Source: Mortgage Bankers Association, 3Q07 Report

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* *Source: Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation*

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Voices

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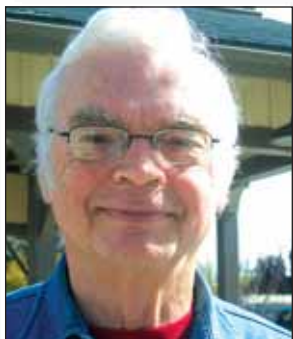
Asked in Downtown Mountain View. Pictures and interviews by Nicole Baldocchi.

What would you like to see the city put in the train depot?



"Bathrooms. They need rest-rooms here."

Latisha Alexander, San Jose



"You have to have a coffee shop. You can't live without a coffee shop."

Lynn Jacobson, Palo Alto



"I think a coffee shop, a newspaper stand, donuts and breakfast stuff."

Paul Minorini, St. Louis, Missouri



"I think a restaurant would be great."

Leo Shatokhin, San Mateo



"Maybe a coffee shop. It's faster and easier than a restaurant."

Julio Martinez and Victor Guzman, Mexico

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LocalNews

■ CRIMEWATCH

BATTERY, THEURKAUF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL, 3/21

A relative of a student pushed a school staff member and then left. An investigation is in progress.

look at them or a description. The two men left. The woman did not see a weapon and could not be sure it was even a weapon pushed into her back.

ROBBERY, 500 BLOCK WALKER DR., 3/22

Two men approached a woman from behind and stuck a hard object in her back. They told her they wanted her money. The woman gave them her money from her pocket. She did not turn around to get a

GRAND THEFT, 400 BLOCK MOFFETT BLVD., 3/23

Two adolescents stole a golf cart from the apartment complex and drove off in it. They were last seen headed westbound on Cypress Point from Moffett Blvd. They were about 5 feet tall and had on black hooded sweatshirts with the hoods up.

■ POLICE LOG

AUTO BURGLARY

Camp Avenue/Spring Street, 3/18
100 Block W. Dana St., 3/20
500 Block S. Rengstorff Ave., 3/21
2600 Terminal Blvd., 3/21
100 Block N. Whisman Rd., 3/23

PETTY THEFT

900 Block Mountain View Ave., 3/24
500 Block N. Rengstorff Ave., 3/24
Costco, 3/24
2600 Block Fayette Dr., 3/24
2200 Block Latham St., 3/24

BATTERY

Castro Street/W. El Camino Real, 3/19
Theurkauf School, 3/21
200 Block Castro St., 3/22
Latham Street/S. Shoreline Boulevard, 3/22

POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA

California Street/Del Medio Avenue, 3/20

ROBBERY

1300 Block W. El Camino Real, 3/19
500 Block Walker Dr., 3/22

COMMERCIAL BURGLARY

100 Block Calderon Ave., 3/21

STOLEN VEHICLE

1000 Block Wright Ave., 3/18

DISORDERLY CONDUCT

2600 Block California St., 3/19
Castro Street/W. El Camino Real, 3/20
Buddha Lounge, 3/22

GRAND THEFT

700 Block N. Shoreline Blvd., 3/18
2500 California St., 3/18
400 Block Moffett Blvd., 3/23

SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES/PERSON

200 Block S. Rengstorff Ave., 3/18
E. El Camino Real/Highway 85, 3/18
500 Block N. Shoreline Blvd., 3/18
El Camino Hospital, 3/19
Camino Medical Group, 3/20
400 Block Bella Corte, 3/20
500 Block Showers Dr., 3/22
800 Block California St., 3/23
300 Block Bryant St., 3/23
2600 Block California St., 3/23

PETTY THEFT

Franklin Street/Villa Street, 3/18
Walgreens-Rengstorff Ave., 3/18
600 Block W. Evelyn Ave., 3/18
Safeway-Miramonte Avenue, 3/19
E. El Camino Real/Grant Road, 3/20
1000 Block Grant Rd., 3/20
Inigo Way/La Avenida, 3/20
Safeway, N. Shoreline Boulevard, 3/21
80 Block W. El Camino Real, 3/21
Target, 3/21
1800 Block San Luis Ave., 3/22
100 Block N. Whisman Rd., 3/22
1900 Block Latham St., 3/23

VANDALISM

Cuesta Park, 3/19
300 Block Escuela Ave., 3/19
1600 Block Villa St., 3/20
W. Dana Street/Hope Street, 3/21
300 Block Bryant St., 3/22
2600 Block California St., 3/24
1600 Block Rock St., 3/24
100 Block E. Dana St., 3/24
1900 Block Gamel Way, 3/24
700 Block Continental Circle, 3/24

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Going somewhere?

By Don Frances

THE HEAD OF Mountain View's well-used downtown post office has informed us that the office will be hosting a "Passport Fair" next weekend.

Postmaster Debra Powell said the post office, located at 211 Hope Street, holds the event to accommodate residents who are otherwise unable to apply for passports during weekdays (when the post office has its normal hours for passport service).

The event is next Saturday, April 5, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m., and will include light refreshments. When I got my new passport a couple years ago, there were no light refreshments.

The idea of traveling outside the country leads me to wonder: How will you be paying for this trip? As of Wednesday, the U.S. dollar "traded within a cent of the record low against the euro," according to Bloomberg. So I hope you're not going to Europe.

Whatever the case, it's always good to have a passport handy. Call (650) 938-6922 for more information on next weekend's event.

THIS WEEKEND, stay home and plant a tree. Mountain View Trees, a local tree-hugging group, will hold a tree-planting event this Saturday, March 29 from 10 a.m. to noon along Steven's Creek Trail.

"Mountain View Trees is working with the city to offer one last planting occasion before warmer weather sets in for good," wrote group member Donna Davies.

Volunteers will be taught how to plant, and tools, water and snacks will be provided. Remember to wear sturdy shoes and work clothes.

Call (650) 969-3697 or e-mail info@mountainviewtrees.org for details on exactly where to meet. ■

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



A picture of Lt. Ken Ballard of Mountain View stands behind lit candles during a vigil Monday evening honoring the 4,000 American soldiers killed in Iraq.

Grim milestone for Iraq war

VIGIL HELD DOWNTOWN FOR THE 4,000 U.S. SOLDIERS LOST IN THE CONFLICT

By Casey Weiss

Standing in front of a makeshift wall covered with the names of Americans killed in the Iraq war, Karen Meredith told a small group of demonstrators that ever since the day her son was killed in the conflict, she feels the loss of life deep down.

"When another soldier dies, a part of me dies," said Meredith, a Mountain View resident and prominent member of Mountain View Voices for Peace. Her own

son, Lt. Ken Ballard, died during a firefight in Iraq nearly four years ago.

On Monday evening, less than 24 hours after the toll of American soldiers killed in the Iraq war reached 4,000, approximately 50 local residents held a candlelight vigil on the corner of Castro Street and El Camino Real to remember them. Meredith and the other demonstrators read the names of the 426 Californians who have died since the war started in March 2002, including that

of Ballard, who graduated from Mountain View High School in 1995.

With the casualties steadily mounting, the Mountain View group's members, and their counterparts in Los Altos and Sunnyvale, say they had been expecting the number to soon reach 4,000, and organized the vigil in one day. They came prepared with anti-war songs and candles for participants, although the event

► See **VIGIL**, page 6

MVHS picks new assistant principal

MIKE MATHIESEN TO BEGIN NEW ROLE THIS SUMMER

By Casey Weiss

Monday was a big day for local teacher Mike Mathiesen: His wife had a baby, and he was named the new assistant principal of Mountain View High School.

Although Mathiesen was at the hospital with his family, trustees at the Mountain View Los Altos High School District confirmed him as the assistant principal during Monday's meeting. In

July he will replace current assistant principal Gayle Larson, who is retiring.

Mathiesen, who has been a social studies teacher at the school for seven years, said he hopes to encourage collaboration among staff members as assistant principal. His role will be to supervise instructional leadership, attendance and discipline, school activities and a curricular department, which has yet to be designated.

Mathiesen has held many leadership roles at the school, including a position as co-leader of an accreditation focus group.

He is "a dedicated and passionate educator at our school whose judgment and perspective on critical matters are valuable assets," said MVHS Principal Keith Moody in a press release.

Students, staffers and parents in the hiring committees were

► See **MATHIESEN**, page 10

■ CITY COUNCIL

Community garden proposal whacked

CITY ALSO ADOPTS RATINGS FOR GREEN DEVELOPMENT

By Daniel DeBolt

In a meeting Tuesday night that lasted almost seven hours, the City Council killed a proposal for a community garden between Bonnie and Beatrice streets, adopted standards of measurement for green buildings and discussed the Day Worker Center's new building.

After several years of pursuit by the city, the proposed community garden was stopped in a 5-2 vote, with council members Matt Pear and Ronit Bryant its only supporters. The garden was supposed to ease the high demand for the two existing city gardens, which have a waiting list several years long.

City staff had recommended that the garden be rejected after the Parks And Recreation Commission voted 3-1 in opposition in January.

"It's the wrong place for a garden," said resident Nora Rudin.

Neighbors of the site said there was almost unanimous opposition there, with 92 neighbors signing a petition opposing the garden. They said they didn't oppose gardens in theory, but that the neighborhood of single-family homes would not be served as well as a more high-density neighborhood would.

Council member Ronit Bryant said she supported the garden because open space was limited in the city. But others on the council used the same argument to say that the piece of land, currently a "weed patch," should be turned into a community park instead, something everyone in the neighborhood could use.

Five public speakers opposed the garden, but 14 were supportive, many of them Willowgate gardeners.

"I know people who say they would love to garden, but the list is so long," said resident Judy Leavey about the 140-person waiting list for the Willowgate and Senior Cen-

► See **COUNCIL**, page 8

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■ SEEN AROUND TOWN

Chess time at Theurkauf



Lisa Whitfield, a parent volunteer at Theurkauf Elementary School's Chess Club, sent in this photo of the club doing what it does best. "We meet Tuesday and Thursday mornings before school and have a lot of dedicated players," she wrote. "Parent volunteers monitor the club and we also have a member of the school board who attends once a week."

Whitfield also said the club is gearing up for one of its most important yearly events, the District Chess Tournament, to be held at Graham Middle School this Saturday, March 29.

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.

VIGIL

► Continued from page 5

attracted fewer locals than usual.

The demonstrators walked up and down Castro and El Camino, chanting and holding signs reading "Peace instead," "End the war" and "Honk for no more war."

Drivers honked constantly in support during the almost two-hour vigil.

"It feels really good that people come out to honor the troops and show outrage that this war has lasted for five years," Meredith said. "The Iraq war has seemed to have fallen off the front page, and people need to be reminded that young men and women are dying in their name."

Ballard, who died in April 2004, is the only Mountain View resident to be killed in Iraq. There are 50 casualties from the Bay Area, said

Meredith, who coordinates local vigils and peace protests, and also helped organize a memorial at the same location last week to mark the fifth anniversary of the war.

"We are fairly prosperous and most people have choices here," said Los Altos resident Leslie Keenan, whose son is returning to the United States this week after serving in the Air Force in both Afghanistan and Iraq. "Fewer of them [local people] end up in the military."

Even so, "California has had its fair share of casualties," Meredith said.

Meredith and the Rev. Archer Summers, senior pastor of the First United Methodist Church of Palo Alto, spoke against the war before the names of the fallen Californians were read. Dozens of candles in red cups surrounded the makeshift display, and a photograph of Ballard stood in the middle of the plaza.

With a sign in hand, Stephanie

Reader, president of the Peninsula Peace and Justice Center, noted that in addition to 4,000 American deaths, nearly 30,000 soldiers have severe physical injuries, and many more have suffered psychological trauma.

"Sometimes, we don't even begin to see the damage," she said. "There have been so many stresses on their marriages."

"We already have substantial numbers of homeless Iraq veterans on the street," said Paul George of the Peace and Justice group.

Many of the same activists gathered last week for vigils in Palo Alto, Mountain View and Los Altos on the fifth anniversary of the war. More than 100 people came to a Mountain View vigil on, Wednesday, March 19.

"Every time we do this, we say we hope someone shows up," said Ray Shuster of Los Altos Voices for Peace. "And they always do." ▀

Rengstorff crossing closed for construction this weekend

Starting this Saturday, Mountain View residents will have to detour around the Rengstorff Avenue train crossing as Caltrain crews repair rails for two consecutive weekends. The tracks will be closed on March 28 to 31 and April 4 to 7 while workers reconstruct the crossing.

Drivers will have to use nearby crossings, including at Shoreline

Boulevard and San Antonio Road, but Caltrain will provide a free shuttle for pedestrians during the construction. The shuttle will run from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. both weekends, stopping at Crisanto Avenue by Rengstorff Park for eastbound foot traffic, and at the gas station at the corner of Rengstorff and Central Expressway for westbound foot traffic.

Caltrain's trains will run on a single track through the construction zone, but this will not have an affect on schedules or service, according to a Caltrain press release. All passengers at San Antonio and downtown Mountain stations will board from the north platform during the first weekend and the south platform the second weekend.

— Casey Weiss



While serving time at the Washington State Penitentiary, Jimi Simmons often participated in sweat lodges with fellow Native Americans. His story is told in the documentary film "Making the River."

COURTESY PHOTO

'It's just amazing that Jimi's out'

DOCUMENTARY ON IMPRISONED NATIVE AMERICAN RAISES FUNDS FOR BILL WILSON CENTER, WHICH IS REOPENING CASA SAY

By Nicole Baldocchi

These days, Jimi Simmons is living the good life in Los Altos with his wife and two children. But it's been a long hard road to get there.

Simmons spent much of the first 30 years of his life in institutions, mostly orphanages and prisons. Following the poor treatment of his Native American tribe, which resulted in its disbandment in the 1940s, Simmons was born into a troubled life, and wound up in an orphanage as a toddler. By 18 he was in and out of jail for stealing, and later he went to prison for more violent robberies.

A new documentary film, "Making the River," follows the story of Simmons' life. It aired last week in San Jose, with proceeds from the showing going to the Bill Wilson Center, a foster care and youth services agency serving Santa Clara County. Sometime next month, the Bill Wilson Center is taking over operation of Mountain View's Casa SAY youth shelter on View Street.

While Simmons and his brother were serving time — together they were arrested for mugging someone, and eventually for stabbing an undercover officer — they were accused of killing a prison guard. Jimi's brother, George, confessed, but to this day it's not known if he really did it as his story changed with every retelling. Simmons was found to be innocent of the crime.

Eventually, Simmons was paroled to Karen Rudolph, an activist who formed a defense

committee to raise money for Simmons case. The two later married.

"It's just amazing that Jimi's out and he's able to have a regular conversation with somebody," said Paul Stoll. Stoll, 26, produced "Making the River" while Sarah Del Seronde, 30, directed. The Arizona residents kept a temporary office in Mountain View while they worked on the film.

The film was shot on a \$200,000 budget through production company Aboriginal Lens. "It was a challenge," said Stoll. "A lot of the cost was traveling and trying to find these people."

Last week's screening, with tickets at \$45 each, went toward funding the expansion of the Bill Wilson Center into Mountain View. The center will be taking over the Casa SAY shelter at 509 View Street, according to Judy Whittier, director of community resources for the Bill Wilson Center.

Casa SAY is set to reopen sometime in mid to late April, with its focus on becoming a group home for runaway kids, said Whittier. ■

E-mail Nicole Baldocchi at nbaldocchi@mv-voice.com

■ INFORMATION

"Making the River," directed by Sarah Del Seronde and produced by Aboriginal Lens, is currently only being shown at film festivals, but will be released on DVD soon. For more information, visit www.aboriginalallens.com or e-mail info@aboriginalallens.com. To learn more about the Bill Wilson Center, visit www.billwilsoncenter.org.

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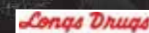
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Photo of Mr. Stan Adermann's 4th grade class (PACT School) on a field trip at the Pinnacles National Monument, California. They were doing a study of condors.

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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COUNCIL

► Continued from page 5

ter gardens.

Several neighbors of the Willowgate garden spoke in support of the garden. "I find it to be the greatest neighbor," said one woman with a view of it through her window.

Many were shocked that anyone would oppose the garden, saying that neighbors were simply "afraid of the unknown."

Neighbors had raised concerns about traffic, but at Willowgate, which has more than 80 plots, neighbors said gardeners trickle in and out and they never see more than three cars parked there at a time.

Mayor Tom Means said he agreed that the pictures they had shown of the Willowgate garden "didn't look very nice," and that the new garden would have to look better.

Means and council member Laura Macias supported pursuit of another site which staff has looked into, also on the Hetch Hetchy right of way, adjacent to Stierlin Road. But city manager Kevin Duggan said the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission doesn't want a garden there because it already has a good tenant, a nearby Buddhist temple that uses it for parking on occasion.

The council voted 6-1 to discuss a new location for a garden, with one possible site being the open space between Highway 85 and Stevens Creek just south of El Camino Real. The heritage farm, which also has been proposed for that site, will be discussed as well.

Worker Center reaches first funding goal

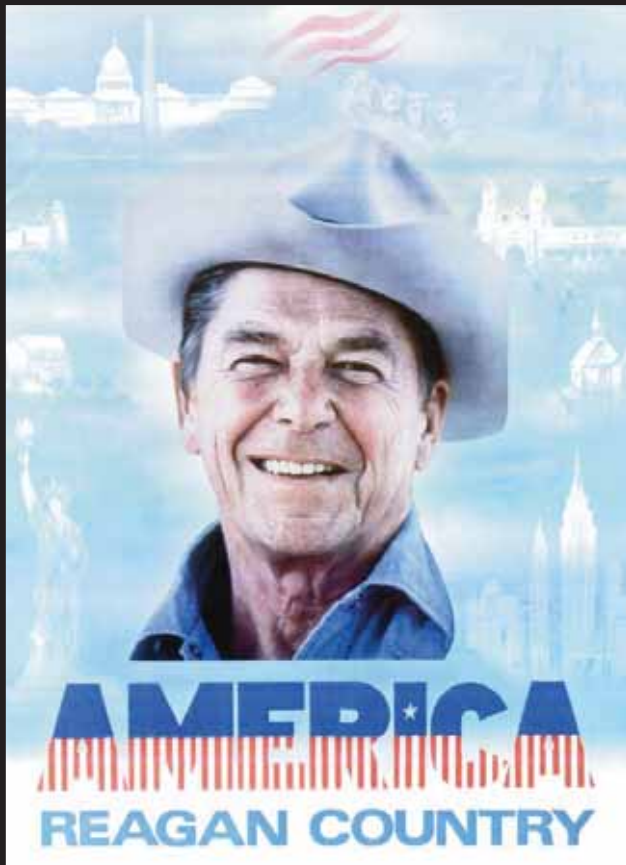
While Mountain View's council met Tuesday night, the Los Altos council approved \$50,000 in funding for a new Day Worker Center at 117 Escuela Ave., bringing the center to its goal of \$350,000 to purchase the building. Neighboring Los Altos Hills had approved \$25,000, conditionally, last week.

Mountain View did not provide money last night, which would have had to be over \$200,000 to meet the conditions of the donation from LA Hills. But in closed session, the council discussed a long-term lease for the small city-owned lot next to the building which would be required for parking. A conditional use permit will also have to be issued for the building, because it is currently zoned for residential use.

"It's zoned residential for a reason," said a neighbor who said he lives on the 100 block of Escuela. He and another speaker alleged that the Worker Center increases crime rates wherever it goes, and that it is simply illegal for it to provide work for illegal immigrants, citing state and federal law.

City attorney Michael Martello assured council members that

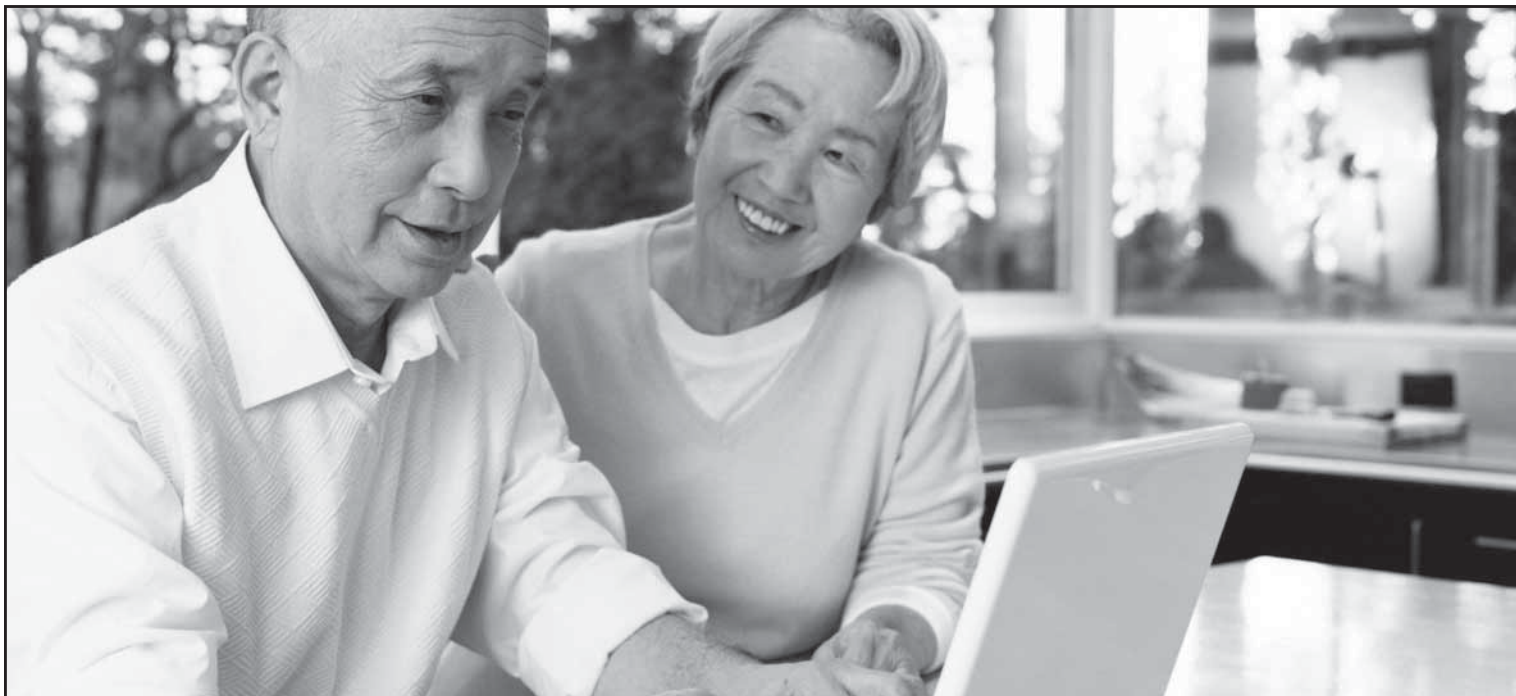
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GOOGLE

► Continued from page 1

the purchase of the small warehouse is part of Google's "long-term growth strategy and it will be treated as an investment." The price and exact size of the parcel were not immediately available.

By conservative estimates, the company already owns a third of the six million square feet of office space in the Shoreline district. That could increase if Google leases the now vacant 450,000-square-foot Alza building next to the Googleplex.

A block north of Pear Avenue, Google owns 64 acres of land zoned for office space surrounding Shorebird Way, where, like many of its other properties, there is not a clear timeline for development.

"To me the line will be crossed when they are given massive up-zoning in return for building a hotel," said former City Council member Greg Perry, referring to Google's desire to triple the density on Shorebird Way while also negotiating with the city to build a hotel and conference center, long desired by the city at the corner of Shoreline Boulevard and Charleston Road.

What will happen to The Pear is uncertain. Its lease expires this

October.

"We assume that at some point there is a good chance Google will want to do something with that space," said Diane Tasca, artistic director of The Pear. "They also bought the building next to us."

The 15,000-square-foot building has several other tenants, including a photo studio, a glass shop and a Pilates studio, some of which have longer leases than The Pear, Tasca said. The longest lease runs until July 2009.

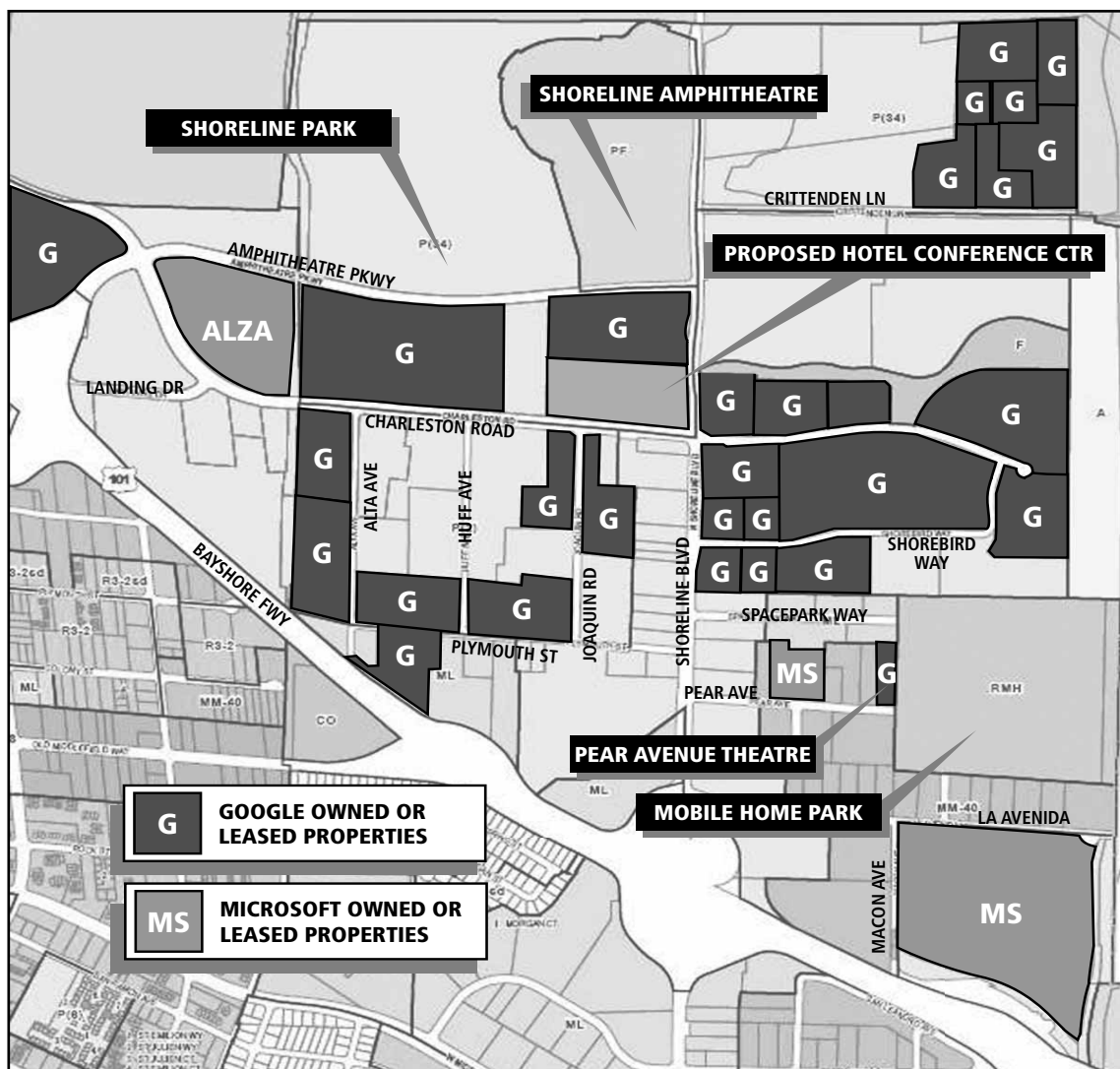
Zoning administrator Peter Gilli said in an e-mail that Google would have to rezone the site to build office space there.

After talking to someone close to the deal, Tasca speculated that Google bought the building in a "strategic" move — in order to keep Microsoft "in check."

Tasca said she was planning to meet with Google representatives to find out how long The Pear would be able to stay.

"If they are going to keep the building so The Pear can keep running, that's great," Perry said. "I used to go to The Pear frequently. It's a great local theater." ▀

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SOURCE: VOICE STAFF AND THE CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW.

► Continued from previous page

"there's nothing illegal about a Day Worker Center."

Council member Nick Galiotto, a former police officer and lawyer, concurred with Martello.

"There's no way I could support an illegal organization with my background," Galiotto said.

Council member Jac Siegel seemed convinced that the building would have to be demolished and rebuilt, but supporters of the center said they were confident it could be restored — for another \$350,000.

City's green checklist

To familiarize local developers with green building techniques, builders will now have to fill out a checklist as part of a building application that will ask questions about things like open space, natural light and energy efficiency.

The council passed the proposed rating systems from Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, put forth by member Ronit Bryant, in a 6-1 vote. Member Nick Galiotto said the ratings should go the environmental sustainability task force for analysis first, but other members said it was time to move forward because the rating systems have already become industry standards.

The new checklist does not make green building in Mountain View a requirement. ▀

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BUDGET

► Continued from page 1

Devonshire Park, San Vernon/San Lucas and Wyandotte/Reinert.

The district's bus fares — covering five buses giving rides to and from school — were among the lowest in the region, with Palo Alto Unified, by comparison, charging around \$700 a year. To help about 400 students, the district was covering \$80,000 in transportation costs out of its own funds. There are 80 other students from Moffett Field who use the bus, but Moffett covers

those costs.

"By comparison to neighboring districts, we think it is reasonable," a district official said.

The fare increase will not affect students with disabilities or those who are already exempt from paying the fees because of economic restraints.

The board agreed not to cut the Space Park Way stop after trustee Philip Palmer said he did not think the board was being "transparent" enough about the rise in fares, which could substantially impact some low-income families. He was also concerned over safety for

children who would have to walk across freeway overpasses to new stops. Seven students from Space Park Way would have had to cross an overpass and on- and off-ramps to reach their new bus stop.

If students do not have any alternate transportation, "because they are low-income and that is how they get to school, I feel this is going to be an ill-effected move," Palmer told other board members. "There is some issue for equality."

The district made an even bigger stride toward improving its budget situation after the local teacher's union agreed to forgo a yearly cost-

of-living adjustment earlier this month. Teachers in the Mountain View Educators Association will still receive the adjustment if the district's cuts are less than projected, but administrators say they are anticipating steep cuts.

Instead of the adjustment, teachers — along with school administrators, who are not in a union — will receive a one-time bonus of 1 percent of their salary.

The district's "classified staff" union is still in negotiations, but if they make the same agreement, the district will save around \$500,000, according to a district official.

Salaries make up 80 percent of the district's budget.

The cost-of-living adjustments vary year to year, depending on the economy and the district's finances, an official said, and have been as low as 1 or 2 percent in the past.

The board is hoping that Mountain View residents will approve renewal of a parcel tax, which they say will help compensate for the loss in state funding. No other cuts or budget restrictions have been made yet. ▣

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

MATHIESEN

► Continued from page 5

impressed with Mathiesen's service in these positions, as well as with his personality, according to Superintendent Barry Groves. The committee recommended Mathiesen, who then met with district and school administrators for a final interview.

"He has a very positive reputation among the students and staff as someone who listens and is passionate," Groves said. "He has a calm demeanor, but can be decisive, and he is extremely well-liked."

Mathiesen, who comes from a family of teachers, currently teaches economics and world studies at the high school. His father and grandfather were educators in Fremont. Mathiesen studied history and economics at Stanford University, and earned masters degrees from Stanford and San Jose State University. ▣

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

■ **OBITUARY**

FRANCES C.E. CAMERON

Longtime Mountain View resident Frances C.E. Cameron died in Oklahoma City on March 14. She was 95 years old.

Cameron was born Nov. 2, 1912 in Winters, Calif. She was raised in Winters and lived in the Mountain View area for many years.

Cameron was married to Lt. Col. Don I. Cameron. Together they attended many military functions, and she was very active in her community, family members said.

She is preceded in death by her parents, sister, brothers and her husband. She is survived by her daughters Francine Wagner and her husband George, Dixine Sanford and her husband David; her grandchildren Ryan Wagner, Blaine Wagner, Shalene Smith, Micah Sanford and Noel Medina; and her great-grandchildren.

The service was scheduled to be held in San Diego.

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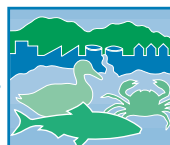


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Local administrators say ruling won't stop home schooling

By Casey Weiss

Urged on by the state's top education official, local schools are continuing to support families who teach their children at home, despite a recent appellate court ruling that says only parents with teaching credentials can do so.

Mountain View Whisman School District administrators say the 50 students who participate in the district's independent home schooling program will not be affected by the appeals court ruling. The district is following directions from Jack O'Connell, state superintendent of public instruction, who said in an announcement last week that there is no legal basis for the ruling, and that all parents still have the right to make the best educational choice for their children.

Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger also condemned the February ruling, which was made in Los Angeles County after a parent was accused of neglect and abuse.

"Unless we receive a directive from [the California Department of Education], we are not reporting whether our parents of students in our home schooling program have teaching credentials, and we currently don't possess this information," Superintendent Maurice Ghysels said in an e-mail to the *Voice*.

Ghysels does not think the ruling will affect the elementary school district or other independent study programs supervised through public schools, since the district provides credentialed supervisors to work with home schooling families. However, there is some confusion regarding what programs will be affected by the ruling. Mountain View Whisman administrators say they are waiting for more information from the state Department of Education.

"I personally didn't get a direction, but we are just operating as we always have done," said Michiko Hashimoto, the district's director of home schooling. "As with all court rulings, it is going to take a long time and there are going to be challenges."

The ruling has no impact on the Mountain View Los Altos high school district, which rarely has home schoolers.

The elementary school district offers "independent study" home schooling programs to Mountain View and Los Altos kindergarten through eighth grade students as part of its elective choice programs. These families work with

Hashimoto to receive teaching manuals and textbooks, and students come to the homeschooling office at Crittenden Middle School for field trips and science projects.

Since they are all enrolled in the public school system, home schooling students must also take standardized tests.

"Because we are a public school, we are pretty defined in terms of expectations," Hashimoto said.

She added there is no information on how home schoolers perform as a group.

The state's education department allows parents to register home schoolers through charter, private and public schools, Hashimoto said. District officials must verify that there is a responsible adult at home to teach the student before families can register with the independent home schooling program.

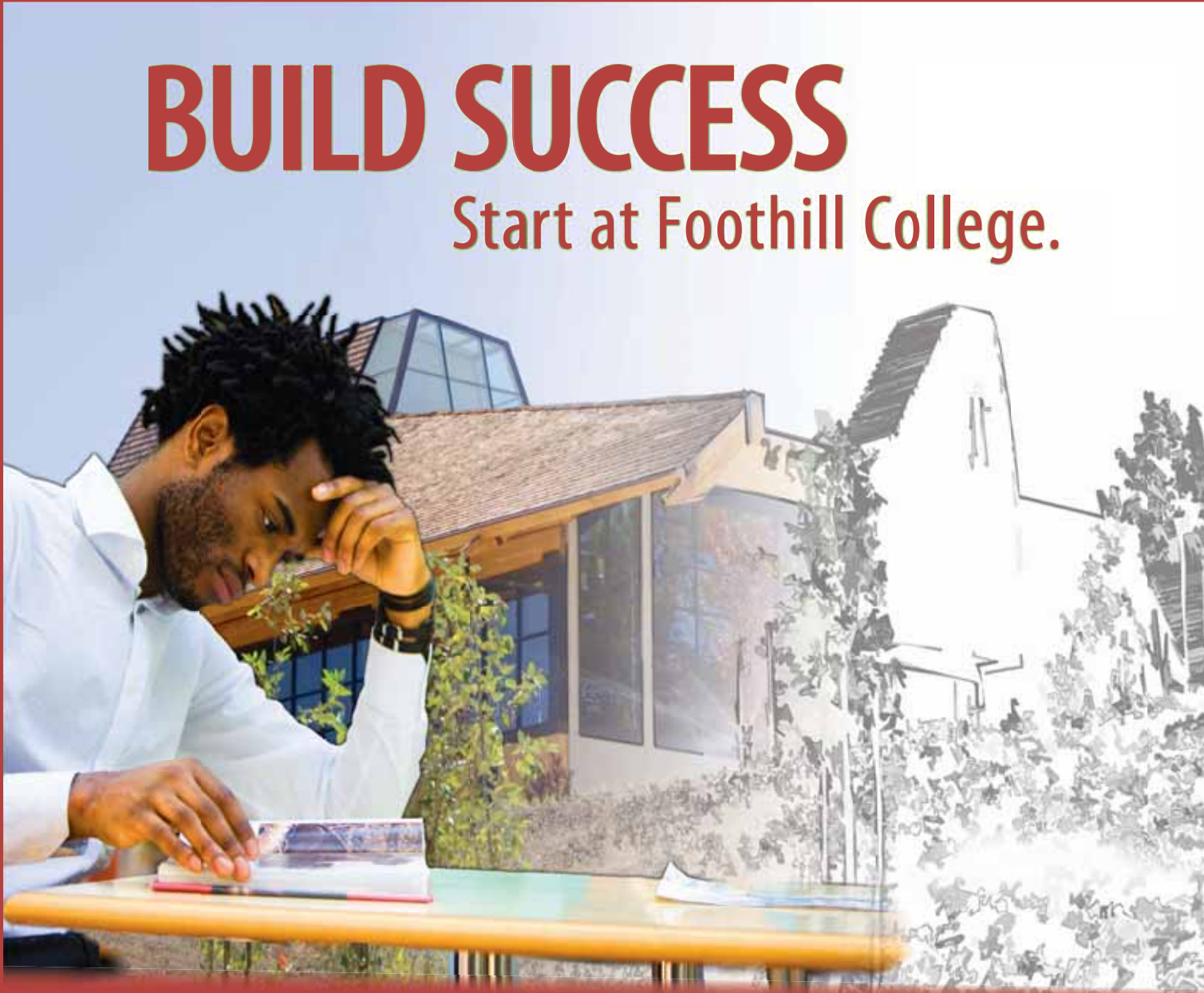
"We have an excellent program ... which is monitored by the state," said Stephanie Totter, the district's director of administrative services. "We are going to proceed as usual."

Administrators at the local high school district, which currently has only one home schooler in its ranks, said that because it's rare for older students to learn at home, the district only receives a few requests each year.

To qualify, the students must get an affidavit through the state, according to Brigitte Sarraf, associate superintendent of educational services.

"It has been a non-issue for us," Sarraf said. "Most parents opt for public or private education once the student becomes a teenager." ▀

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




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GANGS

► Continued from page 1

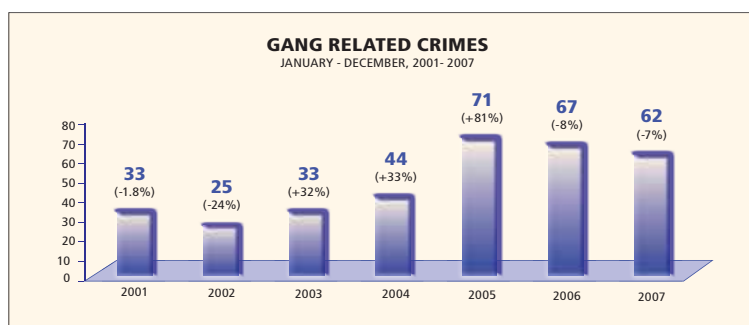
arrested and charged in the crime.

There was also an incident Jan. 22 when a gang member took a baseball bat to a rival member and his car, and another on Jan. 14 when a gang member tried to dissuade a witness from testifying about a gang-related robbery. So far this year there have been three "significant" gang-related crimes, police say, down from four during the same period last year.

Even so, worry about gang violence spread through the community on the heels of two murders in February that involved gang members, but were not technically considered to be gang-related. The subject of gangs was a top concern for the City Council last week during a discussion on city goals.

Monique Kane, executive director of CHAC, told council members that "We've seen the gang issues worsen each year for the last six years. Kids are telling us they can't get away from it."

Police said the Feb. 7 murder of 20-year-old Jeffrey Johnson may have had "gang undertones" because it involved at least one gang



SOURCE: MOUNTAIN VIEW POLICE DEPARTMENT

member, but in fact the shooting, which occurred during a drug deal, probably was not motivated by gang activity. Because the case is still under investigation, police would not disclose further details, although one suspect, 19-year-old Nathan Talarico, faces murder charges and remains in custody.

Last week, police revealed that in the Feb. 26 murder of 17-year-old Jose Merales, the likely motive was a "love triangle": Merales, a Sureño, was apparently sleeping with a fellow Sureño's wife. Police have charged 19-year-old Hugo Garcia, a San Jose resident, with the crime.

Inter-gang violence also occurred last September when Marco Jaugui, 25, of Milpitas, was arrested for fatally shooting Rene Escalante, 24, at Whisman Park in the 300

block of Easy Street in front of two witnesses. Both the victim and suspect were affiliated with the Sureños.

Last year police started to track crimes like these, done by gang members but not considered to be specifically gang-motivated. There were 148 such crimes in 2007, and 105 in 2006. The crimes appear to be significantly down so far this year.

Police anticipate a possible jump in gang activity next month and through the summer, a trend shown in previous years.

But with the gang suppression team at work, the City Council focused on the problem and officers patrolling Rengstorff Park, "We're just hoping for a nice peaceful summer," Wylie said. ▀

Was Merales' murder a crime of passion?

POLICE: VICTIM CAUGHT IN 'LOVE TRIANGLE'

By Daniel DeBolt

Police are looking into the possibility that 17-year-old Jose Merales, shot to death Feb. 26 near his home on Higdon Avenue, was murdered because he was sleeping with another man's wife.

Police said last week that Merales was dating the wife of his suspected murderer, 19-year-old Hugo Garcia. Investigators believe Garcia acted alone and are not looking for any other suspects.

"There was a love triangle, that's a fact," said police spokesperson Liz Wylie. "We don't know if that's a motive for this — it's one of the theories."

Garcia may have been involved in gang activity in Mountain View.

But because Merales and Garcia were believed to be affiliated with the same gang, the Sureños, police say the shooting was not gang-related.

Garcia, a San Jose resident, is in a "common law marriage," which is not legally recognized in California but may have been recognized by their church. He and his wife have a child.

Police found Merales dead on the sidewalk near his home on the 100 block of Higdon Avenue, near Rengstorff Park, at 6:15 p.m. on Feb. 26. He was shot in the head and chest multiple times.

A court hearing for Garcia is scheduled for April 14. ▀

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

A window on gang life

MOUNTAIN VIEW GANG MEMBER — AND YOUNG FATHER — TALKS ABOUT HIS OWN PREDICAMENT AS NORTEÑO

By Casey Weiss and Daniel DeBolt

The Voice received an unexpected visit last week from a Mountain View Norteño who says he is trying to clean up his life for the sake of his child.

Although gang life has become too dangerous now that he has a family, he said, it is no longer a choice he is able to make.

The gang member, whose name is being withheld for his safety and his family's safety, wanted to shed light on the gang culture, and to discuss the failures of traditional schooling and traditional city gang prevention programs. He also said he wanted to help local youth who were headed down the same path.

The Norteño was wearing his gang color, red, and his body was covered in tattoos, including one with four dots that Norteños receive for various acts of violence toward Sureños.

"There's no denying that if you are a gang member you have to do those things," he said. "When I started it was bad, we used to look for people to beat up."

Now in his early 20s, he attended elementary, middle and high school in Mountain

View, but went to jail before graduating from high school. He has a sibling who attends a local high school. The sibling is a good student, he said, but is vulnerable to being labeled a gang member.

Although he moved back to Mountain View to raise his family, he was forced to leave when his rent increased by over \$600 a month. It was difficult finding jobs with his gang history and tattoos, and before he found his current job, he said selling drugs was seductive because it was a steady supply of money.

"If I didn't have it, I could have a fresh start," he said of his past experiences and criminal gang records.

Although he grew up in a poor neighborhood in Mountain View, he had a normal upbringing, and his parents were well-respected in the Latino community. By fifth grade, however, he started associating with gang members, and there was no stopping him, he said. He was too attracted to the money and the violence.

His parents tried to distract him by giving him jobs to do, and by arranging meetings with older gang members who told their stories — but he said this

just inspired him to rebel even more.

"If kids are considered at-risk there is no way to stop them," he said. "I wanted the friends, the cars and the money you get as a gang member."

"People think all gang members are abused, but I wasn't," he added.

He grew up with Alex Fernandez, the youth who was killed in 2004 in "the first real gang shooting in Mountain View," he said. The two had been friends, but joined different gangs just before middle schools.

"We split up in fifth grade just because of our different colors," he said.

He is trying to keep his young child out of that scene, but it will be difficult. He said he hopes to get his child involved in soccer and boxing, which helped him to find a release for his own anger. But he worries these outlets may not be enough.

Gang violence, he said, is closely connected with poor neighborhoods, and the city needs to invest more money in improving the quality of life there to keep kids out of gangs.

"Just because I can't afford to live in a safe place, I have to be violent," he said. ▀



CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW

COUNCIL NEIGHBORHOODS COMMITTEE
Community Meeting For
Mobile Home Park Residents

MOUNTAIN VIEW SENIOR CENTER
266 Escuela Street
April 3, 2008 at 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.

The City of Mountain View Council Neighborhoods Committee will be holding a community meeting with mobile home park residents starting at 6:30 p.m. on April 3, 2008

Residents are encouraged to participate in this meeting to discuss your thoughts about City services and how they might be improved. Council Committee members, City staff, and Project Sentinel staff will be available to respond to your questions and comments. This is an opportunity for you to express your ideas about ways to make your mobile home park and the community a better place to live.

For further information, please call the City's Neighborhood Preservation Division at (650) 903-6379

Viewpoint

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■ WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

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■ EDITORIAL THE OPINION OF THE VOICE

What to do about gangs

As a growing city, with a substantial population of teenagers ripe for recruitment into gang activity, Mountain View has some serious thinking to do about how it will counter the trend.

Although police say the recent murders of two young men are not the direct result of gang activity, the incidents nonetheless have many residents worried about gang violence. The City Council spent time last week talking about the issue, with a majority saying gangs are a top priority for them during this council year.

The most compelling testimony at the council meeting came from Monique Kane, executive director of the Community Health Awareness Council, or CHAC, which counsels children and families in some of the neighborhoods near Rengstorff Park.

Rengstorff Park is a favorite hotspot for gang activities. The park is near neighborhoods that are home to many local members of the Surenos and Nortenos, the two Latino-dominated gangs prevalent on the Peninsula.

"We've seen the gang issues worsen every year for the last six years," Kane said. "Kids are telling us that they can't get away from it." She also said her staff members are seeing younger children, some as young as fourth grade, come under the influence of gang culture.

Those are disturbing words, and at least four council members — Ronit Bryant, Nick Galiotto, Margaret Abe-Koga and Jack Siegel — made dealing with gangs a top priority in the goal-setting session last week. We hope the other council members follow suit and agree to take all reasonable steps to keep a firm grip on the growth of gang activity.

The most discussed option that could come from the city is creating a new youth center at Rengstorff Park. But such a building would be expensive and take up to four years to plan and build, a lag time that is unacceptable to some council members.

A better short-term option, we believe, is to find space at schools or on city property to locate after-school activities or other programs that might counter the appeal of gang activity.

Here are some ideas to counter gang recruitment:

- Increase funding and support for after-school youth sports programs, including soccer and boxing, to entice kids away from gang activity; the Police Activities League is already working in this direction.

- Vigorously pursue every gang-related crime, particularly by adding community-based policing in problem-prone neighborhoods.

- Ramp up support for Partners for a New Generation, the already established mentoring program designed to help kids who need a supportive, caring adult.

- Acknowledge and support school programs already underway that intervene as early as fourth grade to get kids on the right track.

- Launch an outreach campaign urging community members to speak out about gang activity in their neighborhood and to help police find the criminals in their midst and testify against them in court. Without this support, it is very difficult to mount successful investigations and gain convictions in gang-related cases.

■ LETTERS VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

'ANONYMOUS' VANDALIZED MY CHURCH

Editor:

It is amazing to me how convoluted this story can become ("Scientology center draws downtown protest," March 21).

The fact is that "Anonymous" is a cyber-terrorist group that does just that — terrorizes people using the Internet. It's in their manifesto, it's in their videos. They clearly state that they laugh at others' pain. They pick individuals and groups randomly. A few years ago it was the NFL, then Fox News, today it is the Church of Scientology, in between random citizens. Tomorrow it will be ... you?

Then you have the few people who simply hate religion. Blend these two together and you get what looks like a dysfunctional Oakland Raiders pep rally.

I took a peek at their message last week and it was all over the map. Some said that Scientology worked and it should be free, others said Scientologists should be refused their First Amendment right to practice their own religious beliefs.

In my opinion what you actually have here are a few con artists who have hijacked a rather nutty group of high school cyber-geeks and convinced them that they can commit some petty crimes with impunity. Their activities are promoting criminal actions.

How do I know? My church was vandalized. I scrubbed the spray-painted "Anonymous" off the walls personally and I paid to replace the windows that were broken. The bomb threats are real. I've heard

them. The local police and the FBI are investigating them.

I just hope these teenagers wake up before the real criminals talk them into something that they never really intended to do and destroy their lives. When that happens, the actual criminals will walk away anonymously while LOL ("Laughing Out Loud" at someone else's misfortune).

John Allender
Thorton Way

TRAIN STATION DESERVES MORE RESPECT

Editor:

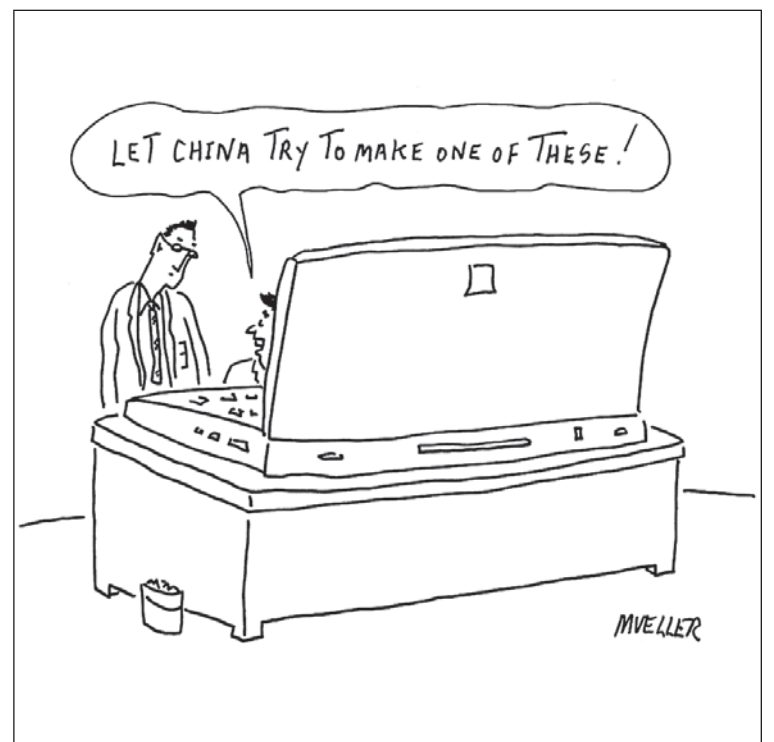
I couldn't agree with you more about the "depot" downtown ("Depot should serve passengers," March 21). That the building sat idle for so long is a scandal. Train riders need shelter (I'm not talking about some perforated metal so-called shelter here), a nice place to hang out while waiting for the next train which won't come for one-plus hours, and most importantly, *restrooms*.

One might also ask why the building was placed so far from where folks wait for the train, but that would simply beg some bureaucratic response about inter-agency complications.

When we look at the bucks lavished on the 85/101 interchange and compare it to this situation, it's clear why this country is the laughingstock of developed nations when it comes to rail transport.

Bill Michel
Ortega Avenue

► Continued on next page



► Continued from previous page

DON'T PHONE HOME FROM EL CAMINO

Editor:

My wife underwent surgery at El Camino Hospital in Mountain View. When she got out of surgery, she used the phone next to her bed to call our residence in Sunnyvale, which is only four miles away. For this half-hour collect long distance call, we were billed \$55.81. (That adds up to over \$100 an hour!)

The hospital advises patients to leave money at home, so my wife had to use that phone. AT&T (who sent us the bill) says they have no jurisdiction over the hospital phones, even though they are the ones who billed us. Apparently, AT&T can have our phone disconnected, but can't tell us to whom the hospital phones are connected.

Other parties claiming to have no jurisdiction are El Camino Hospital, the Palo Alto Medical Foundation, Sprint and the California Public Utilities Commission — and something known only as "ILD Teleservices."

I can call home from Japan for less than I can call home from El Camino Hospital. What's wrong with this picture?

El Sabb

W. Olive Avenue, Sunnyvale

SOME TIPS ON WALKABILITY NEAR RENGSTORFF

Editor:

Thanks to John Inks for having joined us at the "Walkability Workshop," which I participated in on March 15 at the Mountain View Community Center.

Hopefully, matters/problems of concern which we noted as we walked around the immediate neighborhood during the workshop will be delivered to City Hall to those responsible for the running and maintenance of city affairs, as well as for looking after the safety and well being of our residents as a whole.

On south Rengstorff, starting at the railroad tracks and ending at the apartment complex at 2060 California Ave., we noted three dangerous situations:

1. The long angled crosswalk across Rengstorff to Crisanto/Rengstorff Park does not allow sufficient time for pedestrians to make it completely across, and they are left in dangerous situations because not all drivers will stop for them. There is need for an island and a push button at the center of the roadway there.

2. A section of the sidewalk along the main driveway

► See **LETTERS**, page 16

■ GUEST OPINION

Six reasons to keep Annex level

By Bob Schick

In a recent edition of the *Voice*, I read that Save Open Space Mountain View and our history association endorsed the Santa Clara Water District's proposal to create a tiered flood retention basin ranging from five to 20 feet deep in the front one third of the Cuesta Annex ("Support surges for Cuesta flood basin," Feb. 29).

These two organizations have noble motives: increase natural habitat, provide flood protection and preserve mountain views from Cuesta Drive. But as an artist and an Annex user for 40-plus years, allow me to list the positive attributes that will be decreased by this proposal.

1) A gentle flat topography. Many natural open spaces, like Rancho San Antonio, have dramatic elevation changes; the Annex provides a unique rural valley floor view of the Santa Cruz Mountains.

2) A historic venter. The Cuesta Annex has been evolving since human beings first encountered the Santa Clara Valley. Today, the

oak savanna experienced by Native Americans and Spanish explorers co-exists with the remains of a 19th century prune orchard, connecting current and future visitors (and artists) to past generations via a shared sensual landscape experience. Among artists, the popularity of the Annex has greatly increased over the last three years. These visiting artists increase our local economy, and their paintings of the Annex advertise the beauty of Mountain View in local museums.

3) Annex visibility from the street. Thousands of current commuters and pedestrians traveling on Cuesta Drive have been fortunate to witness great blue herons hunting for gophers in the Annex's front meadow, and observe the blossoming of fruit trees. The 2006 "plan B" proposal would have planted more fruit trees closer to the street, increasing Annex visibility. The proposed flood basin will actually push the tree line farther from the road.

4) Mountain views. The mountains appear to rise above the annex tree line, as you get closer

to Cuesta Drive. By lowering the ground level (and eye level) in the proposed basin, annex walkers will lose mountain views they currently enjoy.

5) Level surface. Long shadows will fill the deep basin if the ground slopes steeper than 35 degrees on the south slopes. If parts of this basin never receive direct sun, will plant life decrease, and erosion increase?

6) Mosquito abatement. If a new basin holds standing water, is there a plan to prevent mosquitoes that does not require harmful pesticides?

A possible solution: Place the bulk of the new flood basin underground, beneath the back half of the tennis court parking lot and the adjacent Cuesta Park practice field. This will allow terracing of the Annex to be minimal, with the goal of enhancing its natural beauty the number one priority.

Bob Schick leads art classes at CSMA and in the Cuesta Annex. A former Mountain View resident, he now lives in Los Altos Hills.

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LETTERS

► Continued from page 15

entrance to 255 Parkview West is in a dangerous state of disrepair and unsafe for pedestrians.

3. Along 2060 California at Rengstorff, on the apartment building property and city parking strip area, there is a wide, blind spot at the corner due to very tall shrubs which obstruct visibility there, making for a very dangerous situation.

Additionally, I think there is a real need for speed bumps along the long driveway beginning at Escuela, at the Senior Center entrance and ending up at the back parking lot where the park begins. Not every driver or pedestrian using the area is mindful or careful of what they are doing as they go through.

Frances Trimmer
S. Rengstorff Avenue

IN KIND RESPONSE TO THE RAGING GRANNIES

Editor:

My letter is in response to the recent Raging Grannies column ("Why we protest at recruitment centers," March 7).

I understand her concern with the different tactics that some (please emphasize some) recruiters use to enlist our young men and woman into our military. As the wife of a local military recruiter, let me reassure you of this:

For everyone who chooses to enlist, they are the ones to make the last decision. They are the ones who choose, either way, to speak with the recruiter. In addition, they are the ones signing their name, and taking the oath of enlistment.

As for promises of college money, health care and career training, these are not false promises; these are the true benefits of serving our country. I know this because my husband has served his county for the last 10 years and we have seen all of these benefits.

Of course, a percent of the military disagrees with this current war. They have either seen their brothers die or become seriously injured, or have sustained injuries themselves. However, they know what their job is and they continue to fight for us.

I want to thank some of the Grannies for their loved ones' service to our country. Without these brave men and women, most of whom went through a recruiting office, our country would not be as beautiful as it is today. They defend our freedom to write our opinions, speak our minds and walk the streets freely.

Kim Honigschmidt
Macon Drive

'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.

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■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

Whatsamatta you?

GO FOR THE PIZZA AT GUMBA'S IN SUNNYVALE, WHERE THE FOOD IS LIGHT ON BOTH TASTE BUDS AND POCKETBOOK

By Andrew MacLeod Doerschuk

Memories can be so imprecise, selectively glossing over certain experiences while romanticizing others. Case in point: It had been a couple years since I last ate at Gumba's Ristorante Italiano in Sunnyvale, a home-style establishment that I'd enthusiastically recommended to friends more than once. Yet after recent visits, I'm now convinced that either the food underwent a change, or I had successfully erased a few unfavorable impressions of it from my memory banks.

Upon return to Gumba's, I was reminded how much I enjoyed this throwback to Italian-American restaurants of yore. Chains like Bucca Di Beppo and Olive Garden are mere corporatized imitations of Gumba's authentic decor, with its red checked oilcloth tablecloths and dusty array of memorabilia — empty Chianti bottles, garlands of garlic cloves, old photographs, bunches of plastic grapes — crowding the walls and ceilings. On our recent visits, the dining room was packed with working class families and college-



NORBERT VON DER GROEBEN

► See **GUMBA'S**, page 18

Blackened catfish at Gumba's in Sunnyvale.

Sports Page

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NORBERT VON DER GROEBEN

Renoldo Garcia, chef at Gumba's, prepares a pizza.

dining on the town

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GUMBA'S

► Continued from page 17

age couples talking loudly and laughing, while a line of hungry people waited for tables.

Be prepared to read. Gumba's menu is enormous, brimming with vast pasta offerings, meat dishes, pizzas, calzones, fish and, incongruently, "New Orleans Cuisine."

We started with bruchetta for-maggio (\$5.50), one of the highlights of our meals. Gumba's slathers pesto sauce onto thick slices of garlic French bread, and then tops it with diced tomato and melted mozzarella. Unfortunately, we didn't read the menu closely enough to realize that our server would also deliver a half loaf of garlic bread, which comes with all meals (except pizza, sandwiches and calzones) along with a choice of soup or salad, and ice cream.

On our next visit, we sampled the antipasto Italian delacasa (\$6.95) — an enormous plate of sliced broccoli, red pepper strips, tomatoes, mushrooms, carrots, zucchini, cold Italian salami and cheese (including, strangely, thin slices of pro-

cessed American cheese right out of a package — an omen of things to come). You could easily fill up just on just this huge plate of munchies.

My companion ordered the minestrone while I chose the salad on our first visit, and both proved to be disappointing. My salad couldn't have been more boring, composed entirely of one tomato slice atop a thin layer of chopped iceberg lettuce dressed with Italian vinaigrette. And while the minestrone looked like minestrone, with chunks of veggies in a tomato broth, it was otherwise watery and so tasteless that neither salt nor pepper could rescue it.

**Gumba's menu
is enormous,
brimming with
vast pasta offerings,
meat dishes, pizzas,
calzones, fish ...**

On my second visit I tried the clam chowder, a much more successful effort with chunks of potato, celery slices and clams in a mildly seasoned thick white broth.

With veiled trepidation, we moved to the main courses. Our fettuccini arrabittini (\$9.95) was a simple concoction featuring slivers of basil, chopped tomato, red pepper slices and a heap of diced garlic tossed with fettuccini in olive oil. It would have been easy to salvage this recipe by using a fraction of the garlic that the chef threw into the pan,

► Continued on next page

If you would like to be listed in DINING ON THE TOWN please call Britt Callaway at the Voice at 964-6300



NORBERT VON DER GROEBEN

Mike Buchanan has lunch at Gumba's amid the Old World ambience.

► Continued from previous page

but instead the plate veritably radiated with the stuff. A garlic aftertaste still lingered on my palate the next morning.

The eggplant parmigiana (\$10.95) was a revelation by comparison. One-inch chunks of tender eggplant swam in a tomato sauce, topped with a sprinkling of Parmesan cheese. The dish came with a healthy portion of rigatoni in a thick marinara served on the side. While the eggplant's tomato sauce was thin and bland, the richer marinara atop the rigatoni saved the day.

We had a taste for fettuccini carbonara (\$10.95) on our next visit, and looked forward to that salty, heavy richness that

comes from combining pancetta with parmesan and egg yolk in steaming hot pasta. But I couldn't believe my eyes when the plate arrived as nothing more than fettuccini alfredo with some pancetta thrown into the buttery cream sauce.

We had all but given up on Gumba's until we noticed that most diners were eating pizza. So we ordered a medium pie with half margarita/half all-meat toppings (\$17), and hit pay dirt. First of all, there was nothing "medium" about the size of this pizza, which in any other establishment would be considered large. And fans of either thin or thick crust needn't worry — we got both in one package, since the center crust was thin and the edges were round and thick.

We found the tomato, garlic and basil in the margarita topping to be very refreshing, while the all-meat side was packed with salami, pepperoni, Italian sausage and linguisa.

So come to Gumba's for the Old World ambience, great prices, enormous portions — and the pizza. Your kids will have a ball, and your pocket-book will thank you for it. ▣

■ DINING NOTES

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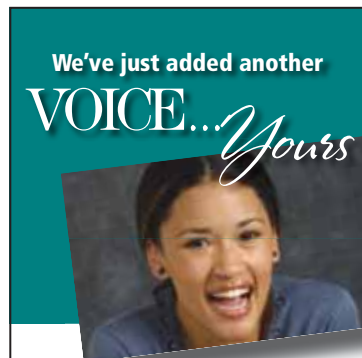
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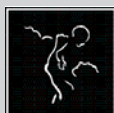
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Weekend

MOVIE TIMES

10,000 B.C. (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED) Century 16: 1:30, 4:15, 7:05 & 9:50 p.m. **Century 20:** 12:05, 1:50, 2:35, 4:25, 5:10, 6:15, 7:05, 8:55, 9:45 & 10:25 p.m. Sat. also at 11:15 a.m.

21 (PG-13) ★★★ Century 16: 12:35, 2, 3:30, 4:50, 6:30, 7:40, 9:20 & 10:30 p.m. **Century 20:** 12:15, 1:30, 3:05, 4:30, 6, 7:30, 9 & 10:30 p.m. Sat. also at 10:35 a.m.

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

THE BANK JOB (R) ★★★ Century 16: 1:20, 4:05, 7:20 & 9:55 p.m. **Century 12:** 1:20, 4:10, 7:20 & 10:05 p.m.

BE KIND REWIND (PG-13) ★★★1/2 Century 20: 1:10, 4, 7:10 & 9:50 p.m.

COLLEGE ROAD TRIP (G) (NOT REVIEWED) Century 16: 4:30 & 9:10 p.m. **Century 12:** 12:15, 2:15, 4:40 & 7:05 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 20: 1:25, 4:55, 7:35 & 10:20 p.m. Sat. also at 10:50 a.m.

DOOMSDAY (R) (NOT REVIEWED) Century 16: 1:40, 4:35, 7:15 & 10:10 p.m. **Century 12:** 1:05, 3:50, 7:25, 9:20* & 10:10 p.m. *Spanish subtitles

DR. SEUSS' HORTON HEARS A WHO! (G) ★★★ Century 16: 12:30, 1:15*, 1:55, 2:50, 3:35*, 4:20, 5:05, 5:55*, 6:45, 7:30, 8:10*, 9, 9:45 & 10:25 p.m.* *Spanish subtitles **Century 20:** Noon, 12:45, 1:30, 2:15, 2:55, 3:05, 3:50, 4:40, 5:40, 6:55, 7:55, 9:20 & 10:10 p.m. Sat. also at 10:30 & 11:10 a.m.

DRILLBIT TAYLOR (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED) Century 16: 1:25, 2:40, 4, 5:15, 7, 7:50, 9:35 & 10:20 p.m. **Century 20:** 12:35, 1:35, 3, 4:05, 5:30, 6:40, 8, 9:15 & 10:30 p.m. Sat. also at 11:05 a.m.

IN BRUGES (R) (NOT REVIEWED) Century 20: 12:10, 2:45, 5:15, 7:45 & 10:15 p.m. **Palo Alto Square:** 4:30 & 9:45 p.m.

JUMPER (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED) Century 12: 1, 3:20, 5:40, 8 & 10:30 p.m.

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

MARRIED LIFE (PG-13) ★★★ Century 16: 1:45 & 6:50 p.m. **Century 20:** 12:20, 2:35, 4:50, 7:15 & 9:35 p.m.

MEET THE BROWNS (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED) Century 16: 1, 3:50, 6:55 & 9:25 p.m. **Century 12:** 12:40, 1:50, 3:10, 4:30, 5:45, 7, 8:30 & 9:40 p.m.

MISS PETTIGREW LIVES FOR A DAY (PG-13) ★★★ Century 16: 12:50, 3:20, 5:40, 8 & 10:15 p.m. **Century 20:** 12:30, 2:45, 5:05, 7:25 & 9:50 p.m.

NEVER BACK DOWN (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED) Century 12: 1:40, 4:50, 7:40 & 10:25 p.m.

THE OTHER BOLEYN GIRL (PG-13) ★★ Century 20: Noon, 2:40, 5:20, 8:05 & 10:40 p.m. **Palo Alto Square:** 1:50 & 7:10 p.m.

RUN, FATBOY, RUN (PG-13) ★★★1/2 Aquarius: Noon, 2:30, 5, 7:30 & 10 p.m.

SEMI-PRO (R) (NOT REVIEWED) Century 20: 4:10 & 10:05 p.m.

SHUTTER (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED) Century 16: 12:45, 3:10, 5:30, 7:45 & 10 p.m. **Century 12:** 12:50, 2, 3, 4:20, 5:15, 6:30, 7:30, 9 & 10 p.m.

THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES (PG) ★★★ Century 12: 12:20, 2:50, 5:20, 7:50 & 10:20 p.m.

STOP-LOSS (R) (NOT REVIEWED) Century 20: 1:20, 4:20, 7:20 & 10 p.m. Sat. also at 10:40 a.m. **Palo Alto Square:** 1:30, 4:15, 7:05 & 9:50 p.m.

SUPERHERO MOVIE (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED) Century 16: 12:35, 2, 3:30, 4:50, 6:30, 7:40, 9:20 & 10:30 p.m. **Century 12:** 12:30, 2:45, 5, 7:15 & 9:30 p.m.

THERE WILL BE BLOOD (R) ★★★ Century 20: 12:40 & 6:45 p.m.

UNDER THE SAME MOON (LA MISMA LUNA) (NOT RATED) ★★★1/2 Century 20: 12:15, 2:50, 5:25, 8 & 10:35 p.m. **Aquarius:** 1:45, 4:30, 7 & 9:30 p.m.

VANTAGE POINT (PG-13) ★★★1/2 Century 16: 1:35, 4:25, 7:10 & 9:30 p.m. **Century 20:** 1, 3:15, 5:35, 7:55 & 10:15 p.m.

ZULA PATROL: ANIMAL ADVENTURES IN SPACE (NOT RATED) (NOT REVIEWED) Century 16: Sat. at 10 a.m. **Century 20:** Sat. at 10 a.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 BANK JOB ★★★

(Century 16, Century 12) British actor Jason Statham hits pay dirt with this compelling picture about the famed 1971 Baker Street bank robbery in London. The film starts slowly as Terry Leather (Statham), a family man with a criminal history, is approached by former flame Martine Love (Saffron Burrows) with a lucrative job offer. Terry and a ragtag group of thieves are to tunnel into the vault of Lloyds Bank and plunder the safety-deposit boxes. Renting the empty shop two doors down from the bank, Terry and company jackhammer through the concrete and soon reach the vault from below, where a wealth of valuables is there for the taking. "The Bank Job" quickly reaches a pulse-pounding fever pitch following the heist. Turns out two of the safety-deposit boxes belonged to cutthroat villains — pornographer Lew Vogel (David Suchet) and radical Michael X (Peter De Jersey) — and housed incriminating documents and photographs. Vogel's list of payoffs to dirty cops and Michael X's photos of the British princess engaged in a sleazy sexual tryst are now in the possession of Terry and his crew, and the villains will break laws and legs to get their goods back. Strong acting, excellent production values, a good script and historical context all make "The Bank Job" a steal at the box office. *Rated: R for sexual content, nudity, violence and language. 1 hour, 50 minutes.* — T.H.

UNDER THE SAME MOON ★★★1/2

(Aquarius) "Under the Same Moon" puts human faces on immigration woes. Adrian Alonso plays 9-year-old Carlitos with the perfect balance of childhood charm, big-hearted spirit and wisdom beyond his years. Every Sunday Carlitos excitedly waits for the pay phone to ring. It's the lifeline that connects him, living in Mexico, with his mother Rosario (Kate del Castillo) who works in East L.A. and sends the family \$300 each month. Carlitos lives in a vibrant Mexican village with a loving grandmother (Angelina Pelaez) and the saucy "La Coyota" (Carmen Salinas) who refuses to put the young boy into harm's way, despite his pleas to let a novice (America Ferrera) smuggle him across the border. The death of his grandmother changes everything. With a handful of savings and a return address ripped off a letter from his mother, Carlitos sets off to find her. Tense moments alternate with funny incidents. Even when Carlitos seems most lost, you'll know exactly where this movie is headed. And nothing is more satisfying than the moment when the precocious little boy and his devoted mother are under the same moon, in the same place. *Rated: PG-13 for some mature thematic elements. In English and Spanish with English subtitles. 1 hour, 49 minutes.* — S.T.

► See MOVIES, page 21

MOVIES

► Continued from page 20

DR. SEUSS' HORTON HEARS A WHO!★★★★

(Century 16, Century 20) Blue Sky Studios' ("Ice Age," "Robots") production of "Dr. Seuss' Horton Hears A Who!" is a wonderfully faithful adaptation and expansion of the Seuss universe. Horton, a good-natured elephant (voiced by Jim Carrey), takes a sudden interest in the well-being of a speck of dust, or rather the world of Who-ville that exists on the speck. But Horton's newly discovered world is in jeopardy when the most bitter kangaroo in recent film history (voiced by Carol Burnett) becomes bent on destroying what she deems a non-existent menace that "has those kids using their imagination." Meanwhile, on the speck, the mayor of Who-Ville (voiced by Steve Carell) is struggling to convince his town that a giant invisible elephant may be the savior of their world. Blue Sky has expanded Seuss' drawings into a rich, three-dimensional Seussiverse. "Horton" redeems the Seuss film franchise with a moving tale that has something for every-sized Who. *Rated G. 86 minutes.* — D.D.

MARRIED LIFE★★★★

(Century 16) A stellar cast puts vintage spin on the ubiquitous underbelly of love and marriage. On the surface, 1949 is an era of post-war liberation and enduringly wedded bliss. Pat and Harry Allen (Patricia Clarkson and Chris Cooper) appear to be the picture-perfect couple, the envy of all their peers. But there are skeletons lurking in their closets, as Harry admits to best friend Richard Langley (Pierce Brosnan) when he confesses that he's found love with another woman (Rachel McAdams as the coolly breathtaking Kay Nesbitt). One look at Kay is all it takes for the rapacious Richard to fall down the rabbit hole himself: Voila! A messy little love triangle pitting husband and wife, friend and lover, cat and mouse. Harry is desperate to untangle himself from his stifling union but can't bear to see his wife suffer. Which she won't, he reasons, if he puts her out of her misery once and for all. What goes on behind closed doors? Only the shadows know. *Rated: PG-13 for some sexuality and mature themes. 1 hour, 30 minutes.* — J.A.

MISS PETTIGREW LIVES FOR A DAY★★★★

(Century 16, Century 20) Guinevere Pettigrew (Frances McDormand) is a full-blown failure as a governess: scalding the porridge, losing her young charges in local parks, etc. The nanny service refuses to recommend her, so as a last resort Miss Pettigrew nips a business card off the matron's desk and presents herself at the doorway of one Delysia Lafosse (the enchanting Amy Adams). Delysia isn't looking for a nanny, per se, and there's not a rugrat in sight. Instead the flighty and flirty ingenue is casting about for a proper social secretary to make sense of her hectic agenda. Miss Pettigrew to the rescue! As Delysia flutters through things

Cinderella-style, Pettigrew deftly cuts a swath through her jumbled social clutter. Pettigrew also endures an unexpected makeover while skillfully choreographing the hazards of Delysia's romantic roundelay in a manner both madcap and merry. The farce frays a bit at the edges as it telegraphs unmistakable idealisms, a tidy set-to of boy-meets-girl and girl-reserves-the-right-to-equivocate. A spare little trifle, clean and sweet. *Rated: PG-13 for some nudity, language and mature themes. 1 hour, 32 minutes.* — J.A.

THE COUNTERFEITERS★★★★1/2

(Guild) Oscar's Best Foreign Film winner plays the concentration-camp drama to dynamic effect. Salomon Sorowitsch (Karl Markovics) is a counterfeiter extraordinaire, a Russian Jew who's the best in the business. False passports and documents are all in a day's work until Sorowitsch's confidence gets the better of him and the Nazis come calling, sentencing him to the Sachsenhausen labor camp in Berlin. The Germans amass a large crew of Europe's most skilled laborers at Sachsenhausen — graphic artists, printers, copper engravers, etc. — with the concept of forging their own English pounds and American dollars and destabilizing those economies by flooding their markets with bogus bucks. Supporting the Nazi war effort is inconceivable but cooperation, and survival, is the inmates' psychological trump card. An ethical tug of war is the crux of the camp's infrastructure as the prisoners battle one another for moral high ground while struggling with harsh conditions and the day-to-day reality of exhaustion and malnutrition. There's not a lot of fresh ground to cover, but what there is is crafted with exacting detail and fervor. *Rated: R for violence, profanity and nudity. 1 hour, 44 minutes. In Russian and German with English subtitles.* — J.A.

THE OTHER BOLEYN GIRL★★★

(Century 16, Century 20) Natalie Portman plays Anne Boleyn, who lost her head over England's King Henry VIII, after being married to him for 1,000 days. Scarlett Johansson slips into the role of the other Boleyn girl — the one who lost only her heart to the Tudor monarch. Anne is the high-spirited, "special" sister. Her father (Mark Rylance) denies run-of-the-mill requests for her hand in marriage, as he has higher hopes for his dark-haired daughter. Mary? She's sweet, quiet and

genuine — and simply hopes her husband will love her. She lurks in the shadow of her star-wattage sister. Papa Boleyn can't arrange a marriage fast enough for her. The plot turns when the ambitious Duke of Norfolk (David Morrissey), uncle to the Boleyn girls, arranges for a royal visit so that Anne can catch the king's roving eye. A hunting accident puts the now-married Mary into the position of nursing King Henry VIII (Eric Bana) back to health. A historical drama without much political intrigue, "The Other Boleyn Girl" pays lip service to the king who wielded tremendous power and ushered in the English Reformation. See this only if you prefer histrionics to historical accuracy. *Rated: PG-13 for mature thematic elements, sexual content and some violent images. 1 hour 55 minutes.* — S.T.

THE SPIDERWICK CHRONICLES★★★★

(Century 12, Century 16) Jared Grace (Freddie Highmore of "Finding Neverland") is a troubled and troublesome young boy forced to move from New York when his parents split. Jared, his identical twin brother Simon (also Highmore), his sister Mallory (Irish actress Sarah Bolger) and his mother Helen (Mary-Louise Parker) settle in the secluded countryside mansion left to Helen by her great-uncle Arthur Spiderwick (David Strathairn). The restless Jared scours the house and discovers a path to Spiderwick's dust-filled office, where he finds a "field guide" littered with magical recipes and sketches of strange creatures. Turns out Spiderwick spent his life investigating bizarre phenomena, eventually uncovering a world populated by elves, ogres and hobgoblins. Once Jared opens the "field guide" he finds himself immersed in the otherwise invisible world. This fantasy-infused adventure is rich with visual effects, colorful characters and tear-jerking family dynamics. But adults should be warned that the depth stops there — compared to other myth-and-magic flicks such as "The Lord of the Rings" or "Pan's Labyrinth," "Spiderwick" feels like "Sesame Street." *Rated: PG for scary creature action and violence, peril and some thematic elements. 1 hour, 37 minutes.* — T.H.

■ **MOVIE CRITICS**

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



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■ HIGHLIGHT

THEATREWORKS PRESENTS "CAROLINE, OR CHANGE"

TheatreWorks closes the season with the Tony-nominated musical "Caroline, or Change." This production is a celebration of chutzpah and human fortitude by Pulitzer Prize-winning playwright Tony Kushner and Jeanine Tesori. Wed., April 2 through Sun., June 27, Tue.-Wed., 7:30 p.m., Thu.-Sat., 8 p.m.; Sun., 2 and 7 p.m. \$20-61 TheatreWorks at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. www.theatreworks.org

ART GALLERIES

"Compositions from the Mind's Eye"

Photographs by Jessica Lord are on exhibit at Books Inc. Cafe Gallery through April 2. 9 a.m.-11 p.m. Free. Books Inc. Cafe Gallery, 301 Castro St., Mountain View.

'Naomi Mindelzun - Selected Works'

Naomi Mindelzun is exhibiting recent mixed media and encaustic paintings. Depicted are images inspired by the Adriatic and other waterscapes, construction sites and wildlife. Through March 30, Gallery 9, 143 Main St., Los Altos. www.gallery9losaltos.com

"Plein Air-Here and There" Scenes of California and Provence, painted on location by Carol Mead. Through March 29, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. (closes at 3 p.m. on Sundays) Free. Viewpoints Gallery, 315 State St., Los Altos. www.viewpointsgallery.com

BENEFITS

A Salute to Maestro Donald Runnicles

Tenor Eleazar Rodriguez performs at this event to benefit San Francisco Opera Guild's Music in the Schools programs. The fundraiser, which features a champagne and hors d'oeuvres reception, honors Donald Runnicles for his contributions to San Francisco Opera over the past two decades. Sun., March 30, 3-5 p.m. \$50 - \$100. Vidovich estate, Los Altos Hills. Call 650-325-8451.

CLASSES/WORKSHOPS

Home Farming Workshop A hands-on workshop to give the skills needed to grow a "home farm" in a yard using Biointensive techniques. Three-day seminar: April 4 6:30-8 p.m.; April 5 and 6 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. \$145. Common Ground Garden Supply and Education Center, 559 College Ave., Palo Alto. www.commongroundinpalto.org

Jewelry Making Learn stringing, knotting, basic wire techniques. Bring pictures and design ideas to create different styles of jewelry. Learn about significance and history of beads. Beginners welcome; for ages 10-adult. Sun., April 6, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. \$105. Community School of Music and Arts at Finn Center, 230 San Antonio Circle, Mountain View. Call 650-917-6800. www.arts4all.org

Photographic Genres Analyze the technical and aesthetic evolution of the photographic image in the 20th century through various genres and specialization of the photographic work: artistic, documentary, advertising. Instructor: Jano Cortijo. Sat., March 29, 9:15 a.m.-3:15 p.m. \$90. Community School of Music and Arts at Finn Center, 230 San Antonio Circle, Mountain View.

Self Defense for Women Jennifer Schachner, M.S. and professor at San Jose State will teach a small group class that will teach theory as well as practical skills for self defense for women. Wednesdays through April 30, 7-8:30 p.m. \$125 ; \$85 for YMCA members. Palo Alto Family YMCA, 3412 Ross Road, Palo Alto. Call 650-842-2706. www.ymcamidpen.org

CLUBS/MEETINGS

Inked Books: The Graphic Novel Book Club Inked Books is a drop-in discussion group for those interested in graphic novels and comics. They meet on the second Wed. of each month. This month they will discuss Alan Moore's "The Watchmen." Wed., April 9, 4 p.m. Books Inc Palo Alto, 855 El Camino Real #74, Palo Alto. Call 650-321-0600. www.booksinc.net

Palo Alto Scrabble Just for fun. Open to players of all levels. All equipment provided. Mondays, ongoing, 6-10 p.m. Free. Boston Market Restaurant, 3375 El Camino Real, Palo Alto. Call 650-326-6243. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/pa-scrabble>

Women and Leadership AAUW-PA, the LWV, and Stanford's Claymen Institute for Gender Research co-sponsor. Speakers: Deborah L. Rhode, Stanford professor of law and local women leaders. Sat., March 29, 10 a.m.-noon. Free. Mitchell Park Community Center, 3800 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Call 650-961-6426. www.aauw-paloalto.org

COMMUNITY EVENTS

"Beyond Tolerance in Muslim Spain"

"Beyond Tolerance: When Muslims, Christians and Jews Built a Magnificent Civilization in Muslim Spain" by Audrey Shabbas, director of Arab World and Islamic Resources (AWAIR). Presented by Los Altos Voices for Peace and the Los Altos Library. Wed., April 2, 7-9 p.m. Free. Los Altos Library, 13 S. San Antonio Road, Los Altos. Call 650-948-7683. www.santaclaracountylib.org/losaltos

How To Adopt Internationally Informational meeting sponsored by Bay Area Adoption Services. Mon., March 31, 7:30-9:15 p.m. Free. Mountain View Business Center, 465 Fairchild Dr., Suite 214, Mountain View. Call 650-964-3800. www.baas.org

Los Altos Art Docents Student Art Show Featuring artwork by every student in the Los Altos Elementary School District. Artwork by Blach and Egan Junior High School students will also be on display. April 4-6, Fri. 2:30 to 5 p.m.; Sat. and Sun. 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. Hillview Community Center, 97 Hillview Ave., Los Altos. Call 650-947-1195. losaltosartdocents.org

Tree Planting on Stevens Creek Trail Instructions on how to plant a tree and tools will be provided. Snacks will be provided. Call 650 969 3697 or e-mail info@mountainviewtrees.org for specific directions. Sat., March 29, 10 a.m.-noon. Free. Visit www.mountainviewtrees.org. Mountain View Trees

Tree Planting on Stevens Creek Trail Instructions on how to plant a tree and tools will be provided. Snacks will be provided. Call or e-mail for directions. Sat., March 29, 10 a.m.-noon. Free. Mountain View Trees. www.mountainviewtrees.org

CONCERTS

How Studying Theory Makes You Musical Not sure why studying music theory is important? Find out as CSMA faculty members Carrie Campbell, Daniel Wood and Richard Roper demonstrate how studying theory makes you a better performer. Thu., April 3, 7 p.m. Free. Community School of Music and Arts at Finn Center, 230 San Antonio Circle, Mountain View. Call 650-917-6800 x305. www.arts4all.org

Piano concert Pianist Carmencita Apiras presents a concert. Benefit for Children's Library in Palo Alto's sister city of Palo, Leyte, the Philippines. Fri., April 4, 7-9:30 p.m. \$15. Palo Alto Cart Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto. Call 650-326-8885.

DANCE

English Country Dancing Traditional and modern set dances to live music in a contemporary social atmosphere. Beginners welcome. All dances taught, no partner required. First, third and fifth Wednesdays through June. 8-10 p.m. \$9 (students \$5). Flex-It Studio, 425 Evelyn Ave., Mountain View. Call 650-493-6012.

"Urban Nights Dance Fusion" Cardinal Ballet Company presents "Urban Nights Dance Fusion." The performance features 11 of Stanford University's student dance groups and showcases a dozen different dance styles. One-hundred-and-fifty dancers take the stage together in a collaborative work. April 4-5, 8-10 p.m. General admission \$10, (Free with SUID). Dinkelspiel Auditorium, 471 Lagunita Drive, Stanford. Call 650-996-1572. cardinalballet.group.stanford.edu

KIMONO DESIGN BOOKS FROM KYOTO



Exhibition of woodblock-printed "zuancho," design idea books, used in the textile trade in Kyoto ca. 1890-1940. Works on display show a transition in surface design for kimono from a painterly style to a "modern," graphic approach featuring bold synthetic colors, kinetic lines, and geometric shapes. Through April 16, no charge Peterson Gallery, Green Library, Stanford University, Stanford. Call 650-725-1020. http://www.sul.stanford.edu/depts/spc/exhibits/kimono_exhibit.html

Ballroom Dancing West Coast Swing (California state dance) will be taught Fri., Mar. 28, 8 p.m. Lessons for beginning and intermediate levels, no experience and no partner necessary. General dance party 9 p.m.-midnight. Singles and couples welcome. Free refreshments. Casual attire. \$8. Cubberley Community Center Pavilion, 4000 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Call 650-856-9930. www.readybyte.com/fridaynightdance

Music of the Big Band Era Dance to the music of the Big Band era, including popular hit songs from the '40s and beyond: Glenn Miller, Duke Ellington, Bert Kaempfert, Nelson Riddle and others. La Comida. Fri., April 4, 2-3:30 p.m. Free. Avenidas, 450 Bryant St., Palo Alto. Call 650-289-5427. Avenidas.org

Scottish Country Dancing Classes Beginning and experienced classes in Scotland's traditional ballroom dance style. Good exercise, no partner necessary, casual attire. Parties with live music. Wednesday evenings in Mountain View. Through May 21, 7:45-10 p.m. \$5 per night. Mt. View Sports Pavilion, 1185 Castro Ave., Mountain View. Call 650-962-1939. www.mtview-rsdc.org

ENVIRONMENT

The Greening of the Bay Area The Los Altos Library presents Richard A. Walker, professor of geography at U.C. Berkeley and author of "The Country in the City: The Greening of the San Francisco Bay Area," talks about the greenbelt and how the Bay Area got 900,000 acres of publicly owned open space, the most in the country. Wed., April 9, 7:30-9 p.m. Free. Los Altos Library, 13 S. San Antonio Road, Los Altos. Call 650-948-7683. www.santaclaracountylib.org/losaltos

EXHIBITS

Bonfires and Bugs The history, science and art of camping. March 7-Aug. 8, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. Museum of American Heritage, 351 Homer Ave., Palo Alto. Call 650-321-1004. www.moah.org

Lucile, David Packard: Valued Partners Personal, business, and philanthropic legacy of Lucile and David Packard. A replica of the historic HP garage, new video interviews with Packard associates, business and personal artifacts, interactive children's area, talks by Julie Packard, early HP executives, Lucile Packard panel, and more. Through June 22, noon-4 p.m. Free. Los Altos History Museum, 51 S. San Antonio Road, Los Altos. Call 650 948-9427 ext. 10. www.losaltoshistory.org/packard.htm

Moffett Field Historical Society Museum Museum displays memorabilia, artifacts, photos and aircraft models; tours of museum and view of the exterior of Hangar One. 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Wed.-Sat. Free. Moffett Field Historical Society Museum, Building 126, Moffett Federal Airfield, off Highway 101, Mountain View.

The Art of Larry Gonick The Gallery at Cogswell is showcasing the works of nonfiction cartoonist Larry Gonick through Mar. to Apr. 19, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Free. Gallery at Cogswell, 1175 Bordeaux Drive, Sunnyvale. www.cogswell.edu

FAMILY AND KIDS

Little Acorns Preschool Spring Festival Jump house, face painting and children games. Food for sale. Raffle and silent auction. Sat., April 5, 9 a.m.-noon. Little Acorns Preschool, 1667 Miramonte Ave., Mountain View. Call 415-341-4950.

Palo Alto Junior Museum and Zoo Dads and donuts: Krispy Kreme donuts, coffee, juice, Dan Chan the Magic Man. Members of the Friends of the PA Junior Museum are Zoo are free. Join at the door. Sun., April 6, 9 a.m.-noon. Free. PA Junior Museum and Zoo, 1451 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Call 650-326-6338. www.friendsjnmz.org

Seining the Lagoon Work as a team pulling the seining net to capture aquatic creatures. Wear boots or old shoes and be prepared to get a bit wet and muddy. Ages 8 and up. Pre-register at Lucie Stern or Enjoy online. Sat., April 26, 9-10:30 a.m. \$9 Palo Alto residents / \$12 nonresidents. Baylands Nature Preserve,

2775 Embarcadero Road, Palo Alto. Call 650-329-2506. <http://enjoyonline.cityofpaloalto.org>

Tom Chapin Family Concerts Two performances by Tom Chapin. Celebrating 20 years of performing for kids, these are Tom's only Bay Area performances. Tickets available at the door. Sun., March 30, 1-2 p.m.; 4-5 p.m. \$14. Smithwick Theater, Foothill College, 12345 El Monte Road, Los Altos. Call 650-949-3390. www.lindentreebooks.com

Wild Cat Adventure Presentation Features five live wild cats from Leopards, Etc. Learn about their habits, habitat and survival issues and what can be done to save these animals from extinction. Sun., March 30, 2 p.m. Adults \$10; children under 12 \$5. Foothill College, 12345 El Monte Road, Room 5015, Los Altos Hills.

FILM

"Darwin's Nightmare" Part of "The Ethics of Food and the Environment" series. Post-film discussion led by Rosamond Naylor (Food Security and the Environment). Thu., April 10, 7-10 p.m. Free. Cubberley Auditorium, Lasuen Mall, Stanford. Call 650-723-0997. <http://ethicsinsociety.stanford.edu>

HEALTH

Yoga and Meditation Cora Wen blends the meditative, educative and transformative aspects of yoga. Wednesdays through May 7, 7:30-9 p.m. \$15-drop in, \$13-series. California Yoga Center, 570 Showers Drive Suite 5, Mountain View. Call 650-383-5103. www.corawen.com

LIVE MUSIC

Amy Obenski: Poetic Jazzy Folk-Rock Obenski, whose song, "Carousel", was recently played on the hit TV show, Grey's Anatomy will perform on March 28 at Mountain View's Red Rock. 8 p.m. Free Red Rock, 201 Castro Street, Mountain View. Call 650-967-4473. <http://www.redrockcoffee.org>

Braeburn Rock /alternative/pop. Fri., April 4, 8 p.m. Free. Dana Street Roasting Co, 744 W. Dana St., Mountain View. <http://www.myspace.com/thebraeburnyoulove>

Wicker Vault Wicker Vault will play their blend of classic rock, pop standards, country and requests. Fri, April 5, 8-11 p.m. Free. The Cantakerous Fish, 420 Castro St., Mountain View. www.wickervault.com

ON STAGE

"And Baby Makes Seven" Helen and Ruth, along with their friend Peter, are expecting their first child. The trio of adults currently lives with three imaginary children and make the decision to get rid of the pretend kids before the real baby arrives. When the imaginary kids find out, though, they have other ideas. March 16-April 6, 2-3:30 p.m. \$20. Dragon Theatre, 535 Alma St., Palo Alto. Call 415-433-1235.

"The Magic Fish-Bone" In this Dickens story, the Fairy Grandmarina helps the penniless King and his daughter Princess Alicia by offering her a wish via an enchanted fishbone. Performed by Nixon students at Nixon Elementary School: Thu., April 3, at 7:30 p.m., Fri., April 4, at 4:30 and 7:30 p.m., Sat., April 5, at 2:30 p.m. \$8 adult, \$4 child. Nixon Elementary School Theatre, 1711 Stanford Ave., Stanford. Call 650-463-4930. www.cityof-paloalto.org/depts/csd/activities_and_recreation/attractions/childrens_theatre.asp

"The Pirates of Penzance, Junior" Lyrics and book by Sir William Schwenck Gilbert; music by Sir Arthur Seymour Sullivan. Tickets on sale at door. Presented by Graham Middle School. March 23-29, 7-9 p.m. \$5 students; \$7 adults. Graham Middle School, 1175 Castro St., Mountain View.

TheatreWorks presents "Southern Comforts" TheatreWorks presents the West Coast Premiere of late-in-life love story

"Southern Comforts." Weds., March 5 through Sun., March 30, T-W, 7:30pm, Thu. ñ Sat., 8pm; Sun, 2 and 7pm. \$20-56. TheatreWorks at the Lucie Stern Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. www.theatreworks.org

RELIGION/ SPIRITUALITY

Freedom Seder to End Human Trafficking Interfaith freedom Seder using stories, music, prayer, film and speakers to celebrate freedom and learn how to fight modern-day slavery. Accompanied with a traditional Passover Seder meal. Sun., March 30, \$18. Christ Episcopal Church, 1040 Border Road, Los Altos. Call 650-961-1922. www.jvalley.org

SENIORS

Tax-return Assistance Free preparation of state and federal tax returns provided by IRS/AARP trained volunteers during tax season at Mountain View Senior Center every Tuesday and Wednesday, 9 a.m. to noon. 266 Escuela Ave., Mountain View. Call 650-903-6330.

SPECIAL EVENTS

Create a Birdhouse: Call for Entries Create a unique birdhouse for auction at the Environmental Volunteers Birds and Blooms party and auction on Sun., June 1, and support science education at local schools. Ribbons awarded. Entry forms due May 16. Forms, rules and resources available at Web site. Environmental Volunteers, 3921 E Bayshore Road, Palo Alto. Call 650-961-0545. www.evols.org

Dwell Open House in MountainView The Dwell NextHouse by Emyrean is holding an open house. Register online. March 29-30, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. \$8 online/\$10 in person. Dwell NextHouse, 850 California Ave., MountainView. Call 415-871-1662. www.Dwell.com/siliconvalley

SPORTS

St. Francis Track Alumni Event St. Francis High School in Mountain View welcomes track and field alumni to the 25th annual St. Francis Invitational Sat., March 29. Photo taken at 12:30 p.m. RSVP by March 27. 8 a.m.-5 p.m. St. Francis High School, 1885 Miramonte Ave., Mountain View. www.sfhs.com

SUPPORT GROUPS

DBSA Bipolar/Unipolar Support Group DBSA Bipolar and Depression Support Group for consumers only. First, second and third Wednesdays of month, ongoing. Katherine Lerer, Facilitator. 6:30-8:30 p.m. Free. DBSA Bipolar/Unipolar Support Group, 4153A El Camino Way, Palo Alto. Call 650-326-6313. www.DBSA PaloAlto.org

TALKS/AUTHORS

Foreign-born entrepreneurs share their story The panelists will discuss what influenced them in their lives, how they persevered and how they give back to communities that helped them succeed. Wed., Apr. 9, 6-9 p.m. \$15 members, \$20 nonmembers, \$30 at the door. SAP Labs, Building D, 3410 Hillview Ave., Palo Alto. Call 650-386-5015. http://www.gaba-network.org/index.php?option=com_events&task=view_detail&id=287&year=2008&month=04&day=09&Itemid=116

Gender Inequality: Continuing Progress? The Stanford Center for the Study of Poverty and Inequality is hosting a talk by Francine Blau (Cornell University) on the current status of gender inequality in the United States. Wine and cheese reception will follow the talk. Wed., April 2, 5-6:30 p.m. Free. Stanford University, Room 370, Building 370, Stanford. Call 650-724-6910. http://www.stanford.edu/group/scspi/index.html

HP Phenomenon Six Hewlett Packard pioneers talk about their experiences and anecdotes working with David Packard and helping to shape the company. Wed., April 9,

7-9 p.m. \$10. Eagle Theater, 201 Almond Ave., Los Altos. Call 650-948-9427. www.losaltoshistory.org/packard.htm

Living Healthy in a Toxic World Mr. Michael Wisner, author and environmental health expert, discusses ways to live healthier. Also discusses program to expel toxins from the body. Fri., April 4, 7-9 p.m. Free. Dianetics and Scientology Life Improvement Center, 331 Castro St., Mountain View. Call 650-605-9000.

Madeline Levine - Price of Privilege A presentation by Dr. Madeline Levine, psychologist and author of "The Price of Privilege: How parental pressure and material advantage are creating a generation of disconnected and unhappy kids." Wed., April 9, Spanish translation available. Parking is limited, carpooling recommended. 6:15-9 p.m. Free. Spangenberg Theater - Gunn High School, 780 Arastradero Ave., Palo Alto. Call 650-380-0200. www.paloaltopta.org

Robert Hofstadter Memorial Lecture Larry Abbott, professor of theoretical neuroscience at Columbia University, will give a free lecture entitled, "Remembering the Future, Predicting the Past" at Stanford University. A lecture on how cellular processes work together to retain and recall memories. Mon., April 7, 8-10 p.m. Hewlett Teaching Center at Stanford University, 370 Serra Mall, Rm. 200, Stanford. Call 650-723-4347.

VOLUNTEERS

Environmental Docents Training Shoreline at Mountain View is launching a new Environmental Docent program. To get involved as a docent, please call to participate in training and a test walk on Sat., March 30, 9-11 a.m. Free. Shoreline at Mountain View,

3070 N. Shoreline, Mountain View. Call 650-903-6073. http://www.ci.mountainview.ca.us/

Interpretive Tour Leaders Develop and lead outdoor nature walks, this spring and beyond. City of Mountain View, 3070 N. Shoreline, Mountain View. Call 650-903-6073. http://www.ci.mountainview.ca.us/

REI Service Project Join REI and the City of Mountain View for a community service project at Shoreline Regional Wildlife and Recreation Area. Remove Russian thistle, stinkwort and other invasive plants to help restore native habitat in the Northeast Meadowlands section of this 750-acre wildlife area. 9 a.m.-noon. Free. Shoreline Park, 3070 N Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View. Call 650-969-1938. www.rei.com/mountainview

Volunteer guide opportunity Volunteer to introduce children to nature, an organic gar-

den and farm animals. No experience needed. Training is provided. Opportunities ongoing. Hidden Villa, 26870 Moody Road, Los Altos. Call 650-949-8655. www.hiddenvilla.org

Volunteer Rangers Shoreline at Mountain View seeks volunteer rangers to educate the public and assist visitors at the 750-acre wildlife/recreation area and nearby Stevens Creek Trail. Flexible scheduling for gatehouse, bicycle and/or foot patrol positions. City of Mountain View, 3070 N. Shoreline, Mountain View. Call 650-903-6073. http://www.ci.mountainview.ca.us/

■ MORE LISTINGS

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



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Coming Soon in Los Altos



Upcoming fabulous 3200 sf North Los Altos home beautifully remodeled and expanded in 2005. Grand marble entry, 2 granite fireplaces, chef's kitchen with top of the line appliances and granite counter tops, huge family room, formal dining room, nook with romantic windows, master suite with granite bath, walk-in closet and den. Freshly painted interior and exterior. Paver bricks walkway and driveway.

New Listing in Palo Alto



This cozy ranch-style home in Barron Park is walking and biking distance to Gunn, Terman, Juana Briones schools and Juana Briones park. This 3BR/2BA house with bonus room and detached 2-room shed is surrounded by mature trees and beautiful landscape. A deep lot with a private paved courtyard, wood deck facing the backyard and abundant tranquility. An unique sunken dining room area with a vintage, curved brick fireplace.

551 Maybell Avenue, Palo Alto

Commercial Real Estate in Mountain View



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