

MountainView VOICE

APRIL 25, 2008 VOLUME 16, NO. 16

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The
good
book
ARTS &
EVENTS
| P.25



Spring
Real
Estate
IN THIS
ISSUE

Court sides with Bullis

CHARTER SCHOOL CAN
FAVOR LOS ALTOS
HILLS STUDENTS

By Casey Weiss

Bullis Charter School does not have to change its enrollment policies, and can continue to grant attendance preference to some Los Altos Hills students and their siblings, a Santa Clara County judge ruled this month.

The decision ended a legal battle that peaked in January when the Los Altos School District sued the Santa Clara County Office of Education for approving Bullis enrollment preferences that benefited certain students in the district.

The county Office of Education helped open the charter school in 2004 when LASD closed down Bullis-Purissima Elementary School, and Bullis and LASD have been debating school policies and jurisdiction ever since.

On April 15, Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge Kevin Murphy denied the petition from LASD, ruling that the county office did not overstep its discretion when approving enrollment priority for students living within the former Bullis school boundaries.

"It was a cut-and-dried legal argument," said attorney Richard Noack, who represented the county in the case. "The county Board of Education reviewed this as a legal matter; it was not personal."

Noack added that "the judge made it pretty clear the district has no jurisdiction to challenge" the education office. Although the district is required to provide facilities to the charter school, counties oversee the school, Noack said.

Under the ruling, Bullis Charter School can continue to give first enrollment preference to siblings of current students, followed by

► See **BULLIS**, page 13



DAVID CENZER

Joshua enjoys the extra-slippery concrete slide at Rengstorff Park last Friday afternoon.

Council flushes Hetch Hetchy housing project

By Daniel DeBolt

A litany of fiery statements Tuesday night did not stop the City Council from cleaning the slate at 450 Whisman Road, rejecting a proposal for 64 homes on the Hetch Hetchy right of way.

The council unanimously sided with neighbors and city staff who wanted a major redesign of the project to improve its architecture and lower its density. The move particularly incensed Hetch Hetchy's landowners, the San Francisco Public

Utilities Commission.

"We're here to express our high level of frustration of your staff's recommendation to reject the project," said Gary Dowd, director of real estate for the SFPUC.

"After years of meetings, expenditures of hundreds of thousands of dollars," the city's desires

■ **INSIDE**
**CITY LOSES BID
FOR RETRIAL IN
SHORELINE SUIT**

See p.5

"have been a moving target," he said. "The project needs to be released from the chains of bureaucracy."

Dowd said the housing project would have helped fund the commission's \$4.5 billion rebuild of the Hetch Hetchy water pipeline, which runs under the site at 450 Whisman.

"Monies from the sale of this property go directly to that effort," Dowd said.

Developer Bruce Burman said he had followed the rules as he went over the numerous changes he'd made to the project in response to the council and city staff's directions, including lowering building heights from 34 to 29 feet, adding a central park and breaking up the 58 row homes into smaller groups.

Despite those changes, members of the council's slower-growth majority said the developer was essentially coming back with "the same thing," and some worried that unless it was rejected the pattern would continue, which is "one definition of insanity," said member Laura

► See **COUNCIL**, page 15

State probe clears former school officials

FRAUD ALLEGATIONS DROPPED AGAINST YICK, ARCHIBEQUE

By Casey Weiss

Two former local school administrators have been cleared of fraud allegations after the state concluded a year-long audit of the elementary school district's financial policies and procedures.

Mountain View Whisman School District administrators requested the audit in November 2006 from the California State Teachers Retirement System (CalSTRS) after it received an anonymous letter alleging that two high-level staff members had inflated their salaries to receive

more retirement benefits.

As a result, CalSTRS, the state agency which oversees retirement systems for teachers and certified administrators, investigated earnings, compensations and other records to determine the district's compliance with retirement law.

Former Superintendent Eleanor Yick, former Assistant Superintendent Modrite Archibeque and the district were cleared of all charges on March 5 by CalSTRS. In a letter to district Superintendent Maurice Ghysels, the agency's audit services department concluded that "the district reported information to CalSTRS

in compliance with the Teacher's Retirement Law."

After reviewing the audit, the Santa Clara District Attorney's Office also said it will not press charges.

In a press release, Ghysels stated that "The district has been looking forward to a resolution to this lengthy process and remains committed to operating with integrity, efficiency, effectiveness and transparency."

As part of the investigation, CalSTRS employees visited the school district to review records,

► See **YICK**, page 13

INSIDE

GOINGS ON 28 | MARKETPLACE 30 | MOVIES 21 | REAL ESTATE 35 | VIEWPOINT 16

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

Jim & Jimmy Nappo



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Dorothy Liu



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Lisa Walker



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Stephanie Schley



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Voices

A R O U N D T O W N

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

What is your favorite restaurant?



"3TA and The Los Altos Bar and Grill."

Michael Marchese, Mountain View



"There's a Mexican Restaurant called Los Charros — go there a lot."

Thah Vo, Mountain View



"My favorite restaurant would have to be Hangen Szechuan."

Jim Radcliff, Mountain View



"My favorite restaurant is Taco Grande in my town and the Mongolian barbeque place I just went to here."

Will Hornblower, Carpinteria



"I'm going to the Queen's House right now. Go there for very good deals and quick and good food."

Jing Liu, Mountain View

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9:45 am Church School Nursery
11:00 am Worship in the Sanctuary,
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We invite you to hear Interim Pastor Richard Spencer's Sermon Topics for April & May: "Series: The Commandments" (See Web Site for interesting details)

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Sunday Worship Service 10:30 AM



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LocalNews

CRIMEWATCH

PROSTITUTION, PACIFIC INN, 4/19

An investigative team conducted a sting operation out of the Pacific Inn. First, police got in touch with women advertising for sex via Craigslist, and eventually arrested three women at the hotel.

Three women were arrested for loitering for prostitution. Two other women and a 16-year-old minor drove the women to the hotel and were booked for aiding prostitution, pimping and pandering a juvenile, procuring a juvenile for prostitution and several child pornography charges.

ASSAULT, 1800 BLOCK LIMETREE LANE, 4/18

A resident became upset after coming home to find that Comcast utility workers had accessed his backyard to work on a utility pole without getting his permission.

The resident and the Comcast workers began to argue, and the resident threw a large wire spool over the fence, just barely missing one of the workers. The worker did not want to prosecute.

POLICE LOG

AUTO BURGLARY

800 Block Central Ave., 4/16
500 Block Clyde Ave., 4/20

BATTERY

Walgreens - Rengstorff Ave., 4/18
1800 Block Limetree Lane, 4/18
1100 Block Grant Rd., 4/19

COMMERCIAL BURGLARY

Valero - Moffett Boulevard, 4/16
2100 W. El Camino Real, 4/21

DISORDERLY CONDUCT

800 Block Heatherstone Way, 4/15
Rengstorff Park, 4/17
Pioneer Park, 4/18
W. El Camino Real/Mountain View Avenue, 4/18
Central Expressway/N. Rengstorff Avenue, 4/19
600 Block Showers Dr., 4/20

DISTURBANCE

2500 Block Dierick Dr., 4/15
700 Block Winston Place, 4/21

GRAND THEFT

2400 Block Grant Rd., 4/15
500 Block Paul Ave., 4/18
2500 Block Grant Rd., 4/18
500 Block Showers Dr., 4/18
100 Block Centre St., 4/18
1200 Block Terra Bella Ave., 4/21

PETTY THEFT

1100 Block Villa St., 4/15
3500 Block Truman Ave., 4/15
500 Block Franklin St., 4/16
2000 Block California St., 4/17

PETTY THEFT

900 Block California St., 4/19
Wal-Mart, 4/20
1000 Block Grant Rd., 4/20
Sears Dept. Store, 4/20
Mervyns Dept. Store, 4/20
Crittenden Lane/Stevens Creek Trail, 4/21

POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA

Clyde Avenue/Maude Avenue, 4/15
Leong Drive/Moffett Boulevard, 4/21

ROBBERY

400 Block Moffett Blvd., 4/21

STOLEN VEHICLE

200 Block Pamela Dr., 4/17
100 Block Evandale Ave., 4/18
1500 Block N. Shoreline Blvd., 4/18

SUSPECTED CHILD ABUSE

1000 Block Villa St., 4/16

SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES/PERSON

2500 Mardell Way, 4/16
2600 Block California St., 4/18

TRESPASSING

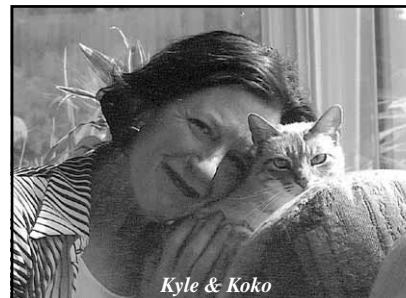
800 Block E. El Camino Real, 4/15

VANDALISM

600 Block San Antonio Rd., 4/19
100 Block Bryant St., 4/19
700 Block W. Middlefield Rd., 4/19
E. El Camino Real/Sylvan Avenue, 4/19
800 Block N. Rengstorff Ave., 4/21
1600 Block San Luis Ave., 4/21

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■ NEWS BRIEFS

MAN DIES AFTER FIGHT AT MOBILE HOME PARK

A man died Wednesday night following a fight in a mobile home at 440 Moffett Blvd., and Mountain View police are treating the death as suspicious.

Police were called to the home at 6:45 p.m. after receiving a 911 call regarding a fight between three men. The officers arrived to find two of the men with minor injuries, and the third unresponsive. Paramedics transported him to a local hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

He is described as a 42-year old white man and a resident of Mountain View. His identity is being withheld pending notification of next of kin.

Police say the man had no visible injuries, and that the other two men did not seek medical attention. They are considering this death to be suspicious, and more information will be released as the investigation continues.

— Nicole Baldocchi

LOCAL MERCHANTS CITED FOR SELLING TO MINOR

Three Mountain View store clerks received citations last week for selling alcohol to minors during a sting operation conducted jointly by the Mountain View and Los Altos police departments.

The April 17 sting was done with the help of a 19-year-old girl trained to be a decoy. When asked, the minor showed her driver's license and told clerks she was 19. But three clerks didn't ask, and the minor successfully bought alcohol from Nijiya Market at 143 E. El Camino Real, Jennifer's Taqueria at 1929 Latham St., and Mercado Marlen at 2512 California St.

The "minor decoy operations" are conducted periodically with a grant from the state Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control.

— Casey Weiss



BACK NEXT WEEK



SUSAN BRADLEY

Jerry Karmin stands behind his homemade electric vehicle at a building site in Palo Alto, where workers were using its power supply to run their tools.

Made in the shade

JERRY KARMIN'S SUN POWERED THREE-WHEELER RUNS CIRCLES AROUND HIGH GAS PRICES

By Daniel DeBolt

As the price of gas hovers around \$4 a gallon, Jerry Karmin continues to pay the same rate he's always paid for his commute: nothing.

Karmin, a Mountain View resident, rides around town on a contraption of his own making: a solar powered three-wheeler. He often can be seen at the helm of this strange vehicle cruising down Castro Street on the way to Posh Bagel, his favorite downtown eatery.

The electric trike, which he made seven years ago out of junk motorcycle parts and about \$200 worth of steel, would go nowhere without its special canopy: four solar panels mounted over the driver's seat.

By day Karmin is a tugboat captain who works out of San Francisco. His commuter car is a Honda Insight hybrid, which he drives from Mountain View to a San Francisco dock. Although the Honda gets up to 70 miles to the gallon, Karmin has plans for an affordable electric vehicle that can make the 100-mile commute without gas.

In the meantime, he built his trike for running around town, and for towing behind his van when he travels across the country. It won't win any awards for looks or speed, but Karmin believes that over the last seven years his vehicle has demonstrated the utility of a \$2,400 set of solar panels, which constantly charge the

► See **TRIKE**, page 8

City loses bid for new trial

COUNCIL WILL DECIDE ON WHETHER TO AGAIN FILE SUIT AGAINST SHORELINE AUDITOR

By Daniel DeBolt

City Hall officials received some unwanted news Monday: The city's request for a new trial in the Shoreline Amphitheatre lawsuit had been denied.

The city made its case April 1 before San Francisco Superior Court Judge Ronald E. Quidachay, saying there was misconduct by jurors during the first trial in February. The jury had come to a surprising verdict in that trial, finding the auditors at fault but not awarding any damages to the city.

According to the city, that trial was tainted by two members of the jury, one of whom was a lawyer who allegedly broke the rules by giving legal advice to the rest of the jury. The motion for a new trial was a "tough request, but one we were fairly optimistic about," said city attorney Michael Martello.

Attorney Farley Neumann, representing defendants Daoro, Zydel & Holland, has called the motion for a new trial to award damages "sour grapes" and said the city was wasting taxpayer money.

During the February trial, investigators hired by the city testified

that DZH was responsible for \$22 million in damages between 1986 and 2004, when it acted as Mountain View's auditor during a lawsuit against the operators of Shoreline Amphitheatre — Clear Channel's Bill Graham Presents and, later, Live Nation, a Clear Channel spin-off. The city won a \$10 million settlement from Live Nation in 2006.

What city officials didn't know was that DZH was also working for Clear Channel during that time. The city says the defendants helped hide millions of dollars owed by the operators, and should be held responsible for its role in the fraud.

Also on trial was Robert Yoshioka and Wilson, McCall & Daoro, said by investigators to be responsible for damages of over \$2.6 million.

Neumann argued that DZH made mistakes, but that the firm's actions caused no harm to the city.

The City Council may discuss filing another suit in closed session on May 13.

A new trial "isn't a thing that's handed out easily," Martello said. "The judge may have decided to just let the appellate court sort it out." ■

Pew Chung school mourns loss of teacher

PIET VAN ALLEN, WHO TAUGHT ART AND MUSIC, DIED IN MOTORCYCLE ACCIDENT ON APRIL 14

By Casey Weiss

When Piet Van Allen died in a motorcycle accident last week in San Jose, it left a gaping hole among the students and faculty at Pew Chung International School, where he had been a teacher for the last school year.



Piet Van Allen

A resident of San Jose, Van Allen died April 14 in an accident on Highway 87 while on

his way to work. Fellow teachers say that although Van Allen had worked only a short time at the English-Mandarin immersion school, his enthusiasm and generosity made lasting impressions.

"One of the parents said he was like our school mascot," said preschool director Theresa Hu. "He was the type of person who wound up affecting everyone."

► See **VAN ALLEN**, page 10

GARAGE SALE SHOPPERS!

THE PLACE TO SHOP IS . . .



CITY-WIDE GARAGE SALE

MAY 3, 2008—8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Map and List of Homes Available:
 May 2—*Mountain View Voice*,
 local coffeehouses
 and online at www.mvrecycle.org



COMMUNITY YARD SALE

Rengstorff Park
 201 South Rengstorff Avenue
MAY 10, 2008—8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.



■ SEEN AROUND TOWN

Photo shoot for fun



While wrapping up one of his plein air painting classes at the Cuesta Annex recently, Bob Schick noticed a group of young people setting up photography equipment. "I asked if the photographers were shooting photos for a wedding or for a magazine," he wrote, "and the youngest photographer answered, 'We're just photographing for fun.'"

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.

Foundation awards \$182 million in grants

Mountain View's Silicon Valley Community Foundation announced Monday that it awarded \$182 million in grants in 2007, its first full year of existence.

The foundation administered an additional \$60 million worth of grants from corporate, non-profit and supporting organization funds for a 2007 total of \$242 million in awarded grants.

"This is an exceptional first-year milestone for us and con-

firms our commitment to meeting community needs," foundation CEO Emmett Carson said. "Many donors have invested their philanthropic dollars to support the common good of our communities and it is our responsibility to identify and better meet the challenges in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, the nation and the world."

The largest share of the grants, \$174 million, was made through the more than 1,500 donor advised funds.

The foundation is the result of

the 2006 merger of the former Community Foundation Silicon Valley and the Peninsula Community Foundation. Since the merger took effect, the combined foundation has continued to make grants to local nonprofit organizations based of the guidelines established by the two original foundations. The foundation, headquartered at 2440 El Camino Real, is scheduled to announce a new grant-making structure later this year.

— Bay City News

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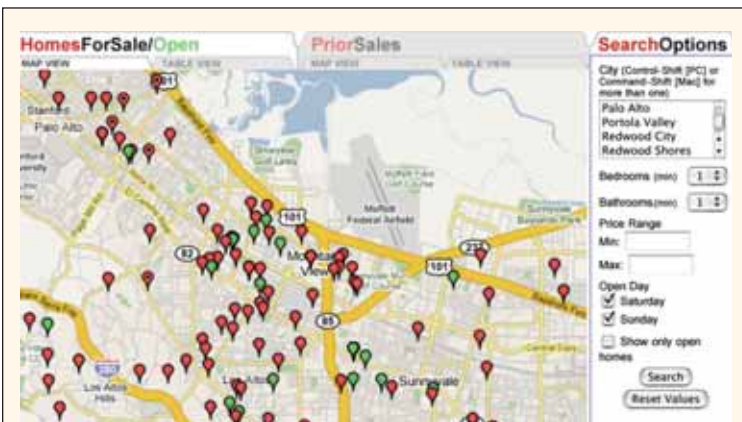
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Voice launches real estate site

HOMES FOR SALE, OPEN HOMES, PRIOR SALES INFO AVAILABLE IN MAPS AND CHARTS

Staff Reports

A comprehensive online guide to local real estate was launched this week by Mountain View Online, the Voice's news and information site that is affiliated with Palo Alto Online.

To visit the site, go to www.mountainviewonline.com and click on the "Real Estate" link in the navigation bar on the left, or enter mountainviewonline.com/real_estate in your browser.

The site features maps, photos, pricing and other information on most homes and condominiums currently for sale on the Midpeninsula, as well as all open-home showings scheduled for the upcoming weekend, and sales price information on homes sold dating back to 1994.

It also includes links to real estate agent directories, recent real estate articles, and neighborhood guides for each community prepared by the staffs of *The Almanac*, the *Palo Alto Weekly* and the *Voice*.

"While national real estate Web sites have some of the same information we are providing, we have focused on pulling all the information a home buyer or local resident could want into one convenient, locally oriented

site," said Tom Gibboney, publisher of the *Voice*.

"The *Voice* and the *Palo Alto Weekly* have long been the Midpeninsula's leading sources of information on local real estate activity and the only place publishing a comprehensive guide to open homes each weekend," Gibboney said. "With the launch of our new online real estate site, users will be able to quickly see all homes that are on the market, print out maps or lists, and research prior sales."

The site will include virtual tours of featured homes paid for by the listing real estate agent or company.

The site draws its information directly from RE InfoLink, the Multiple Listing Service for the area, and then supplements it with information from other sources, including reporting and databases by the *Voice*, *Almanac* and *Weekly* staffs.

The site uses Google's mapping technology to present homes and condominiums for sale and to map open homes and prior home sales data.

For a small fee, Realtors will be able to enhance the basic listings shown on the site and include a link to the Web site for a specific home listing and to the agent's general Web site. ■

COMMUNITY BRIEF

CALTRAIN SEEKS PEOPLE FOR ADVISORY BOARD

Caltrain is looking for applicants for its Citizens Advisory Committee for Santa Clara and San Mateo counties. The committee, made up of nine volunteer members, provides input on the many needs of Caltrain's customers and future customers.

Applicants must be residents of either county, and applications

are due by 5 p.m. on Wednesday, May 14.

The committee meets on the third Wednesday of every month at 6 p.m. in San Carlos. All meetings are open to the public.

Those interested can download an application from the Caltrain Web site at www.caltrain.com, or call (650) 508-6223.

— Nicole Baldocchi

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NASA, universities begin talks on research park

By Daniel DeBolt

Local universities, lead by UC Santa Cruz, have begun formally discussing the creation of a major new campus at Moffett Field intended to conduct research on space travel.

UCSC, Santa Clara University, the Foothill-De Anza College District and Carnegie Mellon University have all signed a letter of intent with NASA Ames, with all of them seeking a major presence in the NASA Research Park planned for Moffett.

"It's an agreement to hold open discussions between us and NASA to see if we can arrive at a plan that will allow us to implement a vision for the research park," said Bill Berry, managing director of UCSC's Affiliated Research Center.

The schools already have a small presence at Moffett, offering graduate programs in math, science and engineering — and Foothill-De Anza has an internship program that employs students at NASA Ames. But to qualify for the research park, they must contribute to NASA's mission in

space.

If an agreement is reached, the current programs would expand, at least in UCSC's case, to include "a broad academic program," Berry said. Students would be able to study biology, nanotechnology, even the business-related subject of "managing tech innovation in a global economy," Berry said.

Berry cautioned that "We are very far from any kind of agreement about what we will do."

"The UC has a mandate to establish a Silicon Valley center," Berry said. "If we can make it work this would be an ideal location — the regents agreed a number of years ago this would be an ideal site."

A memorandum of understanding for the research park was signed with Mountain View and Sunnyvale in 1998. Eventually the project could take up four to five million square feet of office space for colleges and private business, and another two million square feet for housing.

When all is said and done, NASA Ames will add up to 5,000 people at Moffett, said NASA Research Park director Michael Marlaire last year.

At the time, Marlaire also

said that to complete the first phase — for 200,000 square feet of office space and 1,000 units of housing — NASA would be receiving bids as early as last month. But instead of developer bids, NASA is looking at a "long term lease" with the universities, he said through NASA spokesperson Mike McWhinney.

"Everything we do out there has to take into consideration housing as a component," Berry said. The project "links traffic, housing and jobs. We have to move all of them forward together."

NASA's environmental impact study for the research park requires that housing be built to mitigate traffic impacts.

For its part, Foothill-De Anza has allocated \$300,000 to study a new campus in the area and is expected to make a decision sometime this year.

In 2005, Google announced plans for a one-million-square-foot campus in the northwestern corner of Moffett. Those plans are currently on hold. ▀

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

TRIKE

► Continued from page 5

trike's batteries.

Using only eight six-volt batteries, the trike's top speed is about 35 miles per hour, with a range of about 30 miles. His normal routes around town allow the panels

to keep the batteries charged — although, if heavily used, the batteries may need two days for to re-charge using the panels (a regular wall socket charger could do it in a few hours).

Karmin has a voltmeter mounted on the trike to keep track.

Altogether, the batteries — placed between the rear wheels to keep the vehicle from tipping — put out a paltry 48 volts. But add more batteries and a higher amperage controller for the twin Etek motors, and the trike would really "jump," Karmin said.

One of the trickier parts to

make was the brakes, he said. The motorcycle discs that came with the wheels wouldn't stop the trike fast enough, so Karmin had some large discs custom-made. The trike doesn't have reverse — Karmin said he's foregone the \$300 reversing solenoids, for now.

"I just push it back with my feet," he said.

***The trike doesn't have reverse.
"I just push it back with my feet,"
Kaman said.***

When the *Voice* caught up with Karmin, he was loaning his trike to about a dozen construction workers who were using it as a self-contained power supply as they tore down a house in Palo Alto. Karmin said it provided more than enough power for the job — "way too much," in fact. The crew's gas-powered generator was not working, and besides,

it would run continuously, even when not in use, burning up to four gallons of gas a day and spewing out however much pollution.

Karmin is no newcomer to solar power; he even sold solar panels in the late 1970s. Back then, he said, the belief was that the panels would pay for themselves in one year over power produced by a gas-powered generator. "Now it's a lot faster," he said.

For his next EV project, Karmin said he would invest in a set of expensive lithium nano-phosphate batteries made by A123.

"A good battery that works, that's all we need. Then fuel cells can go to hell and gas can go to hell," he said. "Once an electric vehicle can do 500 miles on a charge, there's no reason to do anything else." ▀

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



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The 30th Annual Downtown Spring Family Parade is coming to Castro Street this Saturday, promising to deliver, once more, a day of fresh air, floats, food and fun.

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Pioneer Park is located directly behind City Hall at 500 Castro Street. For more information, call the Recreation Division at (650) 903-6331.

— Staff Reports

OBITUARY

MARILYN JOAN GOIN

Marilyn Joan Goin, a long-time Mountain View resident, died April 14 in Mountain View. She was 69.

Born July 5, 1938 in Chicago, Marilyn spent her early years in Mountain View, graduating in 1956 from Mountain View High School. She went on to become supervisor of communications at Santa Theresa Hospital, and was in medical billing at El Camino Hospital for 20 years. She spent her later years quietly with her husband Joe in Sunnyvale.

She is survived by her husband, Joe Goin of Sunnyvale; her brother Ronald Cox of Santa Cruz; sons Phillip A. Bertuccio of Sunnyvale and Frank G. Bertuccio of Mountain View; daughter Tamara L. Bertuccio of Mountain View; and grandchildren Angie Ayala, Lindsey Jarboe, and Ryan Sherbino. She was preceded in death by her mother, Violet Cox; brothers Franze, Jr., Richard and Phillip Cox; and sister Barbara Cox.

Funeral services will be held April 26 at 1 p.m. at the Lima Family Mortuary in Fremont.

VAN ALLEN

▶ Continued from page 5

On Thursday, local students, teachers and parents were releasing 200 butterflies in their community garden in memory of Van Allen, the school's art and music teacher. A gardening enthusiast, he put in countless weekend hours planting flowers and vegetables on campus, his colleagues said.

Teachers say Van Allen brought in home-cooked food to the teacher's lounge every day, and also served "Piet's coffee." The lounge is still decorated with the recyclable goods he donated.

"He never took credit for any of those things," said teacher Alex Salzmann, "but, we always knew where they came from."

Carol Underwood, the school's director of development and marketing, said Van Allen quickly became part of the campus family after joining the school. Teachers said Van Allen, who was also a member of the San Jose Opera, was passionate about his job, and always happy while singing.

"He loved to sing when the kids were doing art," Underwood said. "He would light up with excitement."

With approximately 200 students attending the small school, everyone on campus knew Van

Allen. He visited each class with his colorful "art cart," decorated with paper flowers, and taught lessons in the preschool even though it was outside of his normal duties.

Located on Easy Street in Mountain View, Pew Chung is a "blended community" of Asian students and non-Asian students who want to learn Mandarin, according to Underwood. The school offers pre-kindergarten to fifth grade classes.

Pew Chung teachers do not use textbooks, but instead consider themselves to be facilitators. Salzmann said that instead of lecturing, lessons are "inquiry based." Van Allen "really embraced this," she said.

"His energy will be carried through us, through living our everyday lives," wrote preschool teacher Hatsue Tsatsos in a letter to other teachers. "We will honor him by appreciating the beautiful things in the world and smiling when we know that Piet would have enjoyed this or that."

According to a press release from Underwood, during an April 24 memorial, after the *Voice* went to press, Pew Chung students were to release Painted Lady butterflies from envelopes reading, "Whisper a wish for Piet Van Allen and it will be taken to the heavens on the wings of a butterfly and be granted." ■



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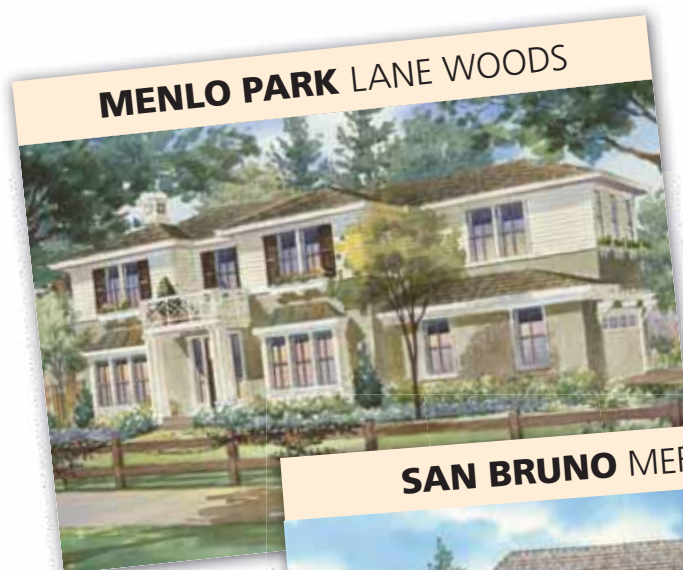
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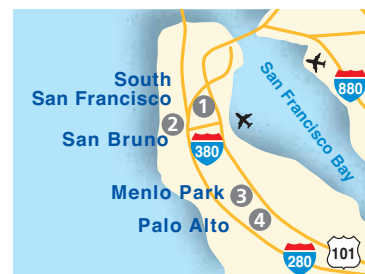
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■ EDUCATION BRIEFS

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SAINT FRANCIS READIES FOR CREATIVE ARTS BUILDING

After celebrating the initial stages of a new \$13 million creative arts building this month, Saint Francis High School students, teachers and parents are now only waiting for the city to approve final building permits before construction begins on the project.

The 20,000-square-foot building, which is fully funded by donors, will house a theater with over 400 seats, a flyspace for constructing sets, orchestra pit and set shop. School spokesperson Holly Elkins said the construction project is much needed since the school currently has a small theater, and its two annual plays and other large performances are held in the gym.

The new building, the biggest construction project at the high school in the last 50 years, is scheduled to open next spring.

CAMERA-SHY SCHOOL BOARD AGREES TO BE ON TV

After much hesitation, the school board of the Mountain View-Los Altos Union High School District will take part in a televised meeting with the Los Altos City Council, despite reluctance to be on camera.

Although the council normally televises its meetings, district trustees originally did not want take part in a joint meeting on June 9 because, board members said, they work best when they're not on television.

"It is a work session and in reality they don't have their work sessions on TV," school board president Judy Hannemann said.

MVLA trustees and the council will plan their agenda in May for the June meeting, and Hannemann said trustees hope to discuss the ongoing issues of parking around Los Altos High School, and of mobile vendor laws in the area around the high school.

MESA GIVES OUT SUMMER CAMP SCHOLARSHIPS

Community leaders and youth advocates held a ceremony recently honoring

local middle school students for their academic achievements.

Mesa de la Comunidad presented 17 Graham and Crittenden Middle School students, all of whom participate in the free and reduced lunch programs, with scholarships to arts, music and technology camps this summer.

The scholarships, sponsored by Kiwanis Mountain View and Community School of Music and Art, allow the students to attend week-long camps or weekly seminars at CSMA, Peninsula Youth Theatre and the local television station KMVT.

Mesa, an advocacy group for underrepresented groups in Mountain View, is also providing two students with summer internships at the Krause Center for Innovation at Foothill College.

Garcia, speaking in both Spanish and English, told the assembled students and families he hoped the scholarships would help local youth become involved in community and civic work, something that is often difficult for students with two working parents.

NEW SUPERINTENDENT JOINS COUNTY

Complete with a \$300,000 yearly salary and non-interest home loans, Dr. Charles Weis accepted the position as Santa Clara County superintendent, and was sworn in earlier this month.

Weis, currently the Ventura County superintendent of schools, was selected after a month-long search. He will begin his new job on July 1.

As superintendent of Santa Clara County, Weis will report to the Board of Education and oversee a budget of nearly \$300 million, providing payrolls and additional support to 32 school districts and 1,900 staff members. Weis, who has been with the Ventura district since 1993, also owned a consulting firm which worked with California school districts and businesses.

Weis will replace former superintendent Colleen Wilcox, who resigned earlier this year under accusations of harassment.

—Casey Weiss

YICK

► Continued from page 1

processes and procedures, and they interviewed administrators. The audits vary in length, said agency spokesperson Sherry Reser, especially since the agency reconstructed its policies this year. It is not unusual that the district's audit lasted over a year, she added.

"We want to keep going in a timely fashion," Reser said, "but we are very careful and it can take" some time.

The accusatory letter, signed by "an Anonymous and Concerned Mountain View Whisman School District Staff Member," charged Yick and Archibeque of "spiking" their salary or including their health benefits and reimbursable expenses to inflate the salaries reported to the agency. Retirement benefits are calculated by considering several components, including yearly salary, sick leave and other service credit.

The letter said that although Yick's contract salary with the district during her final year was \$167,200, she reported her salary

The accusatory letter charged Yick and Archibeque of "spiking" their salary to inflate the salaries reported to the agency.

as \$177,524 to CalSTRS. She used health benefits and mileage and phone reimbursement to inflate her salary, the letter alleged.

The anonymous letter also said director of administrative services Stephanie Totter was "compliant when it comes to inflating and spiking administrative salaries" for Yick and Archibeque. Totter did not return calls from the *Voice* this week.

By the time the district, government agencies and the media received the letter, Yick was already retired and Archibeque had started a new job. Neither were immediately available for comment.

The agency released 33 other audits and drafted 11 from July 2007 through March 2008, according to Reser. While some audits are conducted after CalSTRS receives allegations, others are standard procedure, she said.

"We are always thorough," she said. "We go through the same process each time." ▣

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

BULLIS

► Continued from page 1

students who live in the former Bullis neighborhood of Los Altos Hills.

Board members of the charter school said they hope the enrollment preferences will continue to create a community environment at the school. They said they're pleased with the court ruling, and ready to start concentrating on school policies.

"I am happy we have reached this conclusion, but it is an unfortunate use of money to have to go to court," Bullis board president Ken Moore said. "It was diverting us from spending it on educational aspects."

The district originally sued the county office for overstepping its duties and passing discriminatory enrollment policies that could exclude some LASD students from

attending the school. The education code prevents a school from "granting a residency preference to students from part of a district," Dino Velez, who represented the district, wrote in a case brief. "The district felt it had the right to protect students from discrimination," he told the *Voice*.

District Superintendent Tim Justus added, "We interpreted the law one way, and according to the judge we were wrong."

Since the ruling was made during LASD's spring break, the district board has not had time to discuss next steps, Justus said. The board is scheduled to review the case during its next meeting on Monday, April 28.

In an e-mail to the *Voice*, LASD board president Mark Goines said trustees are taking it "one step at a time." ▣

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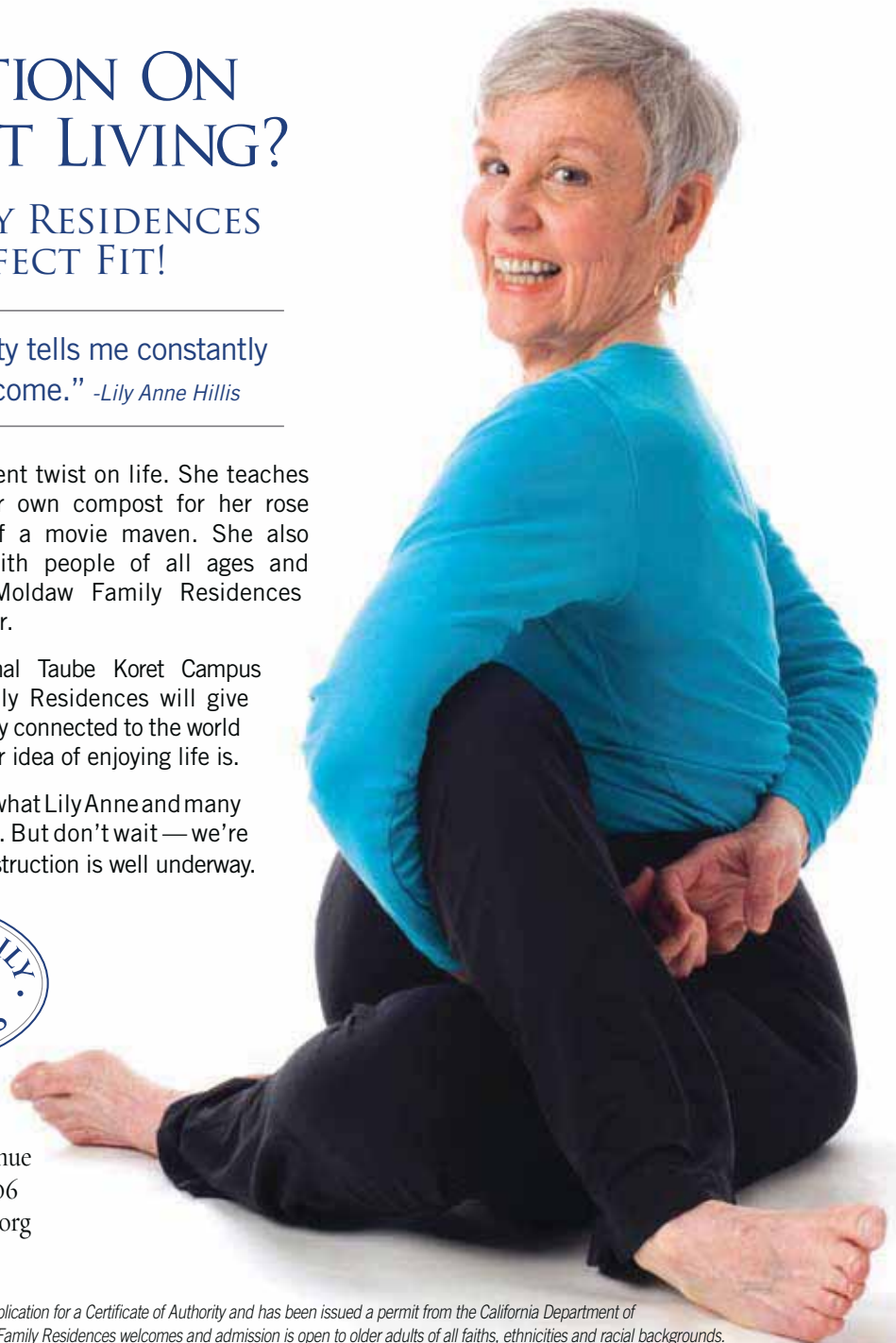
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Time for green ideas

CITY'S NEW TASK FORCE GETS AN EARFUL FROM RESIDENTS

By Casey Weiss

On the day before Earth Day, more than three dozen residents attended the first public input meeting for the city's newly minted environmental task force. Only a handful of those in attendance spoke up, however, to offer energy-saving ideas for the group to consider.

Those who did speak up advocated for better public transportation, more environmental education and financial incentives for going green.

The Mountain View Environmental Sustainability Task Force, which is researching ways to reduce the city's carbon footprint, invited residents to participate in open discussions on emission reduction. About 40 residents attended the meeting, held Monday in the City Council chambers, and five presented ideas and led discussions.

Following a short presentation by task force chair Bruce Karney, residents were given three minutes to present their ideas. Dur-

ing the input sessions members of the task force, who each head a subgroup, also discussed their research and asked for more people to participate in the 11 working groups.

Karney said Mountain View is "uniquely positioned as one of the most innovative cities in the world," with the ability to be a green leader. Residents agreed the meeting was especially important after Santa Clara County recently was ranked seventh among the top 20 carbon dioxide-emitting counties in the United States.

North Whisman resident Ev Shafir, one of the first to speak, suggested that the city make it easier for people to ride and park their bicycles.

"I don't think parking for bikes downtown is easy," Shafir said. "There are 1,000 solutions — let's do something."

Others called for additional police patrols on the Stevens Creek Trail, increased VTA bus stops and more incentives for taking public transportation. Mountain View should follow

the lead of other cities that offer tax breaks for hybrid cars and solar panels, they said.

Green education was another big topic at the meeting. Residents advised the "Communications, Green Business, Public and School Outreach" working group to look into adding recycling and carbon emissions classes at local schools. They suggested the city hold workshops to educate residents about native plants, which require less water, and also to do more outreach to lower income and minority groups.

The task force provided translators in Russian, Spanish and Mandarin, but no one used the services.

Resident Leila Forouhi asked the task force members to keep in mind the city's poorest residents. "These are the most vulnerable people in our community. They are going to be the most impacted." ▀

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

New city priority: gang prevention

By Daniel DeBolt

On Monday night the City Council set about picking new goals for the year, with gang prevention making the top of the list and a plan to increase city revenues coming in second.

Continuing a council discussion from March 18 where gang issues were a top concern, Police Chief Scott Vermeer said he wants a handful of officers dedicated to early gang member identification and intervention, reaching out to them as they grow up.

"Once we lose them to juvenile hall, we are perpetuating their delinquency," Vermeer said. "Right now, that's one of our only options."

Vermeer provided some statistics that shed light on the issue of gang violence. Data showed that police made contact with gang members more and more every year from 2000 to 2007. There were also spikes in gang violence in the 1990s similar to what the city is experiencing now.

"A review of the last 20 years of Mountain View data indicates that gang crimes and juvenile arrests

have been cyclical," Vermeer wrote in a report to council members. "There is a pattern of spikes in the number of gang crimes and juvenile arrests followed by a focused effort by the police department and a corresponding dip in those numbers."

Six of the 10 homicides between 2000 and 2008 were gang related or involved gang members, compared to two of 12 homicides between 1992 and 1999. A larger majority of attempted homicides were also gang related over the last eight years.

To help counter the allure of gang activity, the council chose "positive activities for youth," as one of its six new priorities. The positive activities include "opportunities for volunteering, jobs, accountability and skill building."

Mayor Tom Means thought the gains would be "marginal" because the middle and high schools already provide after-school activities.

"Not everyone is involved in sports," said council member Ronit Bryant.

"What about music, drama,

► Continued on next page

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■ CITY BRIEFS

MVHS PARKING APPROVED

In what was called a “band aid” solution to a difficult problem, the City Council on Tuesday opened up parking on portions of Truman and Bryant streets along Mountain View High School.

Many neighbors supported the move, complaining that students were parking in front of their homes. But bicycle advocates opposed it, saying the new row of cars on the narrow streets won't allow for a bike lane and that high school students are not cautious enough, leaving the possibility of car doors opening in front of moving bicyclists.

City analyst Peter Skinner said the cars would only pose a danger to bicyclists during the short periods before and after school.

The new plan opens the portion of Truman running along the football field and on Bryant along the high school. The plan also includes crosswalk improvements, “Share the road” signs and a new pick-up and drop-off area on Truman.

COUNCIL STUDIES WHISMAN PROJECT

An environmental impact report has been set up to study a plan for as many as 1,100 homes on 38 acres along Ferguson Drive, though Drew Hudacek of builder Regis Homes said plans aren't in the works to build “anywhere near that many.”

Early proposals discussed Tuesday include a centrally located three-acre park, a set of detached row homes to the west that council members seemed to favor, and streets organized in a traditional grid design.

Some members said retail at the site was important to make the project “walkable,” despite a study paid for by Regis Homes that showed it wouldn't be economically viable at the “isolated” location.

— Daniel DeBolt

► Continued from previous page

literature?” Means said. “What's missing? Jobs?”

Vermeer said he appreciated the council making it a new goal to revitalize Rengstorff Park and the surrounding neighborhood, which is one of the city's “hotspots” of gang activity.

A new teen center was advocated by several youth and youth advocates. The council is discussing such a center at Rengstorff Park as part of its capital improvement program, though the \$50 million price tag may require a bond measure.

Also on the list of top goals is the city's longtime pursuit of an expensive Rengstorff Avenue undercrossing at the railroad tracks, which could be funded by the VTA. ▀

COUNCIL

► Continued from page 1

Macias.

Nevertheless, city staff recommended denial of the project, making several “qualitative” recommendations with which the City Council agreed: better architecture, 100 foot building widths, 25 foot spaces between buildings, reduction of the third story massing on the rear of the buildings, reconfiguration of the single-family homes and the 12 row homes facing the northwest perimeter.

“Meeting the guidelines of a development is not an entitlement,” said council member Jac Siegel.

Burman took issue with the city's dislike of the project's new architecture, saying that it wasn't much different from the previous design that was approved.

Council member Ronit Bryant said the problem was that it was essentially a “miniaturized version” of the previous design. Council member Nick Galiotto said the reduced height of the second and third story caused the dormers to not look as pronounced, which was why the design was called “monotonous” by the design review committee.

In response to the criticisms, Burman's lawyer, Owen Bird, said the issue wasn't about design, but governance and the “winds of change” in city politics since the project started in 2005. It was a “lecture on governance” that Siegel said he did not appreciate.

“Change is a risk a developer assumes,” Galiotto said, “Shake the dice and see what happens in November.”

Also in response to Bird's comments, city attorney Michael Martello said, “It may be convenient to say that, but that's

really not what's going on here. The project has always been like trying to fit 10 pounds into a five-pound bag.”

Macias offered a similar metaphor, saying working with the difficult site layout was “like trying to fit into a size 2 dress.”

But several environmental activists supported the project.

“This represents sustainable development and should be approved,” said Marilyn Drive resident Tamara Colby. The project would reduce commuting and auto emissions, she said, which are “the fastest growing source of greenhouse gases in the state of California.”

Another speaker said he was “disgusted” by the neighborhood association's “witch hunt” against the developer.

In a slideshow presentation, Lisa Matichak, president of the newly created Wagon Wheel Neighborhood Association,

compared the project's density and height with the rest of the neighborhood of one- and two-story homes.

“The issue with three stories is, there's a whole lot more windows looking down” into the adjacent backyards, Matichak said. “We just want something that fits the neighborhood.”

Council member Matt Pear made a motion to modify the project based on staff recommendations, which failed 3-4. Members Siegel, Bryant, Macias and Margaret Abe-Koga said they wanted to see something totally new, and the council unanimously voted to deny the project “without prejudice,” so that it can come back anytime. A majority seemed to agree that the developer should not have to pay any more fees when he returns. ▀

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

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Member, Mountain View Chamber of Commerce

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■ EDITORIAL THE OPINION OF THE VOICE

How green is the city?

As Peninsula cities go, Mountain View is right up there when it comes to adopting policies and technologies that reduce production of greenhouse gases. From capturing the methane gas produced by landfills to trading in its gas-guzzling vehicles for hybrids or biodiesels, the city is stepping up to the global warming challenge.

So as the 38th Earth Day arrives this week, it is appropriate to highlight some of the green practices the city is using to reduce its carbon footprint. Of course there is much more to be done, but it's worthwhile to look at what has been done so far.

Here are a few of the more noteworthy actions, as noted by the city's *View* newspaper:

■ The city launched an Environmental Sustainability Task Force, complete with its own budget and well-qualified coordinator, Steve Attinger, who this week presided at the panel's first big meeting to solicit community input about all things green.

■ The city is capturing the methane gas produced by decaying garbage under the Shoreline industrial park in two ways: by using the gas to power micro turbines, which produce electricity for some city-owned buildings; and by supplying gas to 1900 Charleston Road, where it is used to produce power for the building. Combined, the two projects are expected to cut CO2 emissions by just over 17 million pounds in 10 years.

■ Solar-powered pumps have been installed at Shoreline Lake and city reservoirs to circulate the water.

■ The city helped develop a commuter-friendly transit hub downtown, linking riders of Caltrain, light rail and buses.

■ A huge photovoltaic system on the roof of the California Avenue parking garage produces 90 kilowatts of power.

■ The city also is saving 64 kilowatts of power every year by replacing incandescent traffic signals with LED bulbs.

■ The council has established green building practices for new city buildings, including the new Senior Center and Shoreline maintenance facility.

■ The city was designated a "bicycle friendly community" by the League of American Bicyclists. Earlier this month the city completed another leg of the Stevens Creek Trail, taking it under El Camino Real.

With the help of its new environmental task force, Mountain View is on its way to change many bad energy habits. The City Council and administration are setting an example that we hope will convince individual residents to reassess their own production of greenhouse gases. After all, good energy habits can begin at home, too, not just at City Hall.

■ LETTERS VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

GARDEN A GREAT IDEA FOR WAGON WHEEL SITE

Editor:

After reading about the City Council's 5-2 rejection of a proposed community garden site between Bonny and Beatrice streets ("Garden proposal whacked," March 28), I'd like to give an alternative location for consideration: the former Wagon Wheel site at the corner of Whisman and Middlefield.

A three-year waiting list for a garden plot and an underabundance of parkland speaks volumes about the high value residents place on maintaining access to some semblance of open space. I would rather stare over my fence at 80 or more garden plots or an acre of greenbelt than at another housing tract.

Apparently some residents would prefer housing (like at the former Grant Road farm parcel) over even a small sliver of farmland or a community garden area. Yet the need to get people involved in the outdoors in any capacity is greater than ever, and the former Wagon Wheel property is ideal.

I would feel privileged to have a community garden or public park situated behind my home — accessible to many with little or no room in their own yards — rather than the proposed 20-plus high-density housing units currently being considered for that spot. Which project would serve the needs of a greater number of people in the community?

As the city ponders the most expedient ways to over-build and pave over every corner of Mountain View, perhaps we should take a moment to get our priorities straight and retain as much open space as possible; once developed, these areas are gone forever.

Scott Haber
Flynn Avenue

INCENSED BY COUNCIL'S PET PROJECTS TAKING OVER PARKS

Editor:

I attend just about all of Mountain View's government meetings — often I am the only member of the public in attendance.

The April 15 "discretionary spending" meeting really opened my eyes. It appears \$12 million was left over after funding all of the city staff's requests for capital improvement programs based on the council's "discretionary spending" for their pet projects.

What truly bothers me is that the council can use community parkland for its own non-profit and "nice, but not necessary" buildings to take away open space and/or recreation space for "pet project" buildings until Rengstorff Park is almost completely built out. Now they want to give 12 acres of Cuesta Park to a private society.

If city councils continue to take away open space in our two com-

► See *LETTERS*, next page



LETTERS

► Continued from previous page

munity parks for single interest groups (Avenidas, Senior Center, child care center, and so on) then at least they should change the zoning from “park” to “commercial,” “service commercial” or “nonprofit.”

By leaving private interest buildings zoned “park” or open space clearly disguises the actual shortage of recommended community park areas in the city.

Donald Letcher
N. Rengstorff Avenue

STOP CHANGES IN HEALTH SAVINGS ACCOUNTS

Editor:

This is a letter I wrote to Rep. Anna Eshoo, who represents this district in Congress. I think many *Voice* readers will be interested in this assault on health savings accounts:

“I strongly oppose H.R. 5719, which would impose draconian new regulations on health savings accounts. Like many in your district, I am a self-employed engineer and an HSA is the only way I can buy affordable health care. The proposed bill would greatly increase administrative costs resulting in higher fees and increased paperwork for me.

“With soaring health care costs, we do not need additional regulations on a program that is already working and provides one of the few options for individuals to purchase health insurance.”

I received an e-mail reply from Rep. Eshoo saying that she disagreed with me and voted for the measure. The bill narrowly passed and now goes to the Senate. I urge everyone who is concerned about medical costs to write our senators.

Robert Alvarez
Laurel Lane

SCHOOL PARKING COULD CROWD OUT TRAIL ACCESS

Editor:

You may not be aware, but the city of Los Altos is attempting to find a suitable corridor for the Stevens Creek Trail farther south from its planned terminus at Mountain View High School.

The 30-foot high embankments make any creekside route via Sunnyvale impassible, and that idea has been rejected by Sunnyvale’s transportation manager, Jack Witthaus.

All remaining southbound routes for the trail use Truman and/or Bryant. It is critical that the city not set a precedent by allowing parking around Mountain View High School on Tru-

man and Bryant that does not allow space for those streets to have bike lanes added for Stevens Creek Trail street alignment.

The streets are narrow enough that parking on both sides with bike lanes would not be allowed under federal, state and VTA standards. The proposed plan would produce narrow abrupt choke points where parking currently is allowed across the street from the proposed parking additions.

Also, I find it symbolic that the council is making this choice of encouraging bike travel or providing car street parking on Earth Day, the very week gas hits \$4 a gallon and the United Nations responds to food riots around the world brought on by fuel shortages.

I pray for us all, and hope the council makes the morally right decision, even if it is politically tough in the short term.

Patrick Grant, president,
NASA Ames Bike Club

WATCH OUT FOR E-MAIL TAX SCAM

Editor:

I received an official-looking e-mail which offers me a \$134.50 tax refund. It came from irs@irs.com, and the reply address is noreply@irs.com.

It says “Internal Revenue Service Department of Treasury” on top, and it asked for my credit card number and pin code. Also, my Social Security number and my name, address, date of birth and phone number.

I looked at www.irs.com and it switches to a private bank information Web site. The real IRS Web site is www.irs.gov, not www.irs.com. It’s a scam.

Vijay Kumar
Alison Avenue

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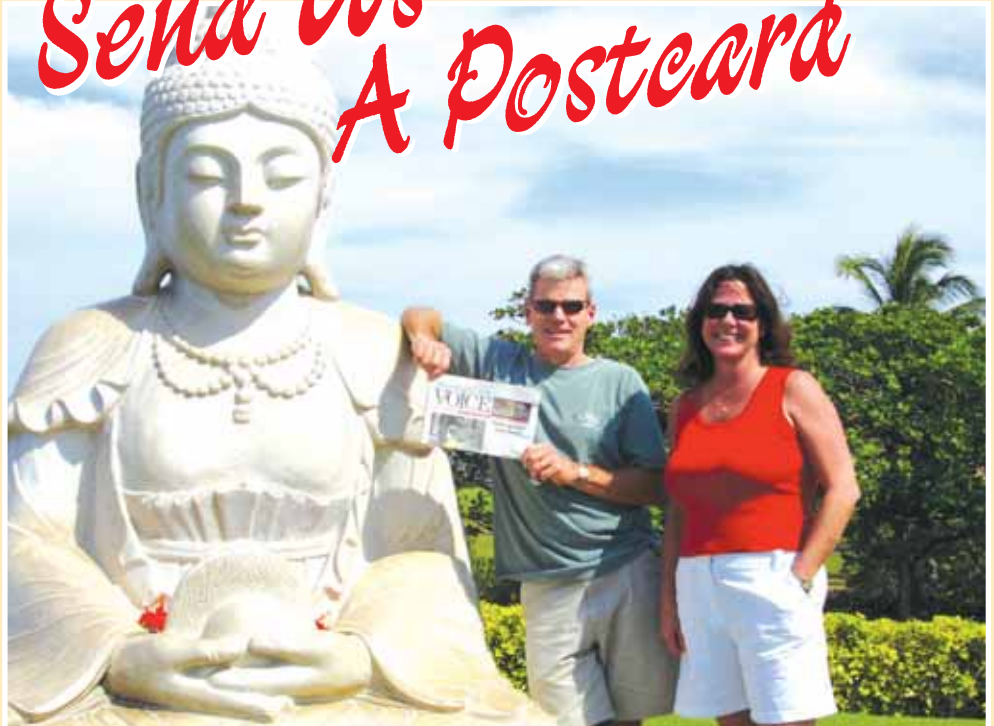


Photo of Todd and Lisa Bradrick with the Voice at Buddha Point, Waikoloa Village, Hawaii.

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■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

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The elegant entrance to L'Acquolina in Los Altos

SUSAN BRADLEY

■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

A passion for Mediterranean

L'ACQUOLINA IN LOS ALTOS FUSES ENTHUSIASM AND SKILL IN INSPIRED, SOPHISTICATED VENUE

By Dale F. Bentson

Fernando and Cynthia Urroz opened the quietly sophisticated L'Acquolina in downtown Los Altos in mid-January. It was a sweet opening after a long absence from the restaurant business: The couple once owned the highly regarded Tre Scalli in Sonoma but sold it years ago.

"Impossible for a couple to raise a family and operate a restaurant," Fernando said. "So I went to work in the high-tech business and tried to keep more regular hours.

Now, we just have one son still at home and wanted to get back into the business we love."

Urroz started cooking in college to earn money and ended up working at several San Francisco restaurants: Alexis Nob Hill, The Pacific Union Club and Doro's. Traveling abroad with his high-tech job, he became an aficionado of Mediterranean cooking. L'Acquolina's menu reflects Urroz's Cal/Med culinary passion.

For starters one night I ordered

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► Continued from previous page

the special asparagus soup (\$8). It was creamy and savory, as if flavor had been wrung out of the spears of asparagus and imbued into the soup stock. The warm, lush affair was studded with bits of the flavorful asparagus.

Other appetizers were carciofi al forno (\$8), a mouthwatering presentation of fresh artichoke heart baked in olive oil, garlic, anchovy and fresh herbs and served with a heady aioli sauce.

In the vol-au-vent au Morilles (\$9), dried morel mushrooms had been soaked in hot stock until plump, then added to a cream reduction and poured over Boursin, a soft creamy cheese from Normandy, wrapped and baked in a puff pastry shell. The result was delicately flavored and earthily aromatic.

Canard fume (\$11) were slices of melt-on-the-tongue, house-smoked, grilled duck breast complimented with zinfandel-poached pears and mache greens. The pears retained just enough sweetness to offset the smoky duck and slightly bitter greens.

On two of our visits, we decided to split a tempting pasta course to save room for the main

course. The server brought two separate plates but I was disappointed the kitchen did not divide the order for us.

Tortelloni ai coda (\$18) was braised oxtail-filled pasta in oxtail broth with cannellini beans, mixed vegetables and rough chopped tomatoes. The house-made tortelloni resembled a deconstructed mini-envelope where none of the flaps were glued. Yet, the meat was inside the pasta and the pretty vegetables laid atop. It was an artistic and delicious rendition.

Gnocchi (\$18) was made from baby carrots although that flavor was not evident in the cooked dumplings. Served with slow-cooked rabbit ragout and pecorino cheese, the dish was a tad heavy but complex and irresistible.

Main courses included wild Atlantic salmon (\$21), which had been poached in an enticing white wine and blood orange butter sauce. Everything was delicate on this plate, mild mannered and well behaved.

Pollo a la Catalano (\$21) was Spanish-style braised chicken with smoked pork cracklings, aged balsamic and caramelized, spiced,

► See **L'ACQUOLINA**, page 20

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SUSAN BRADLEY

Pollo a la Catalano at L'Acquolina in Los Altos

L'ACQUOLINA

► Continued from page 19

dried figs that had macerated in port. Cracklings are crisped pork rinds after the fat has been rendered. Here they were fried in pancetta, shallots, butter and onion. Unfortunately, the chicken proved to be chewy and the garlic mashed potatoes that accompanied were so garlicky they overpowered most everything else.

Vitello a la capricciosa (\$24) was a delectable pan-fried veal cutlet with a salad of warm basil, Roma tomatoes and sweet onion served with dreamy soft polenta. It was an exciting combination of textures and flavors.

Souris d'agneau (\$23) was braised lamb shank in red-wine sauce with flecks of diced vegetables, served with polenta. A side of asparagus tossed with shallots added a sweet savory nuance to the plate.

The desserts were quietly elegant. Biscuit tortoni (\$7) was house-made vanilla bean ice cream with chopped cherries that had macerated in port and sherry, then topped with almonds and crumbled Amaretti cookies.

Crostata (\$8) was an agreeable chocolate tart with toasted pistachios. It resembled a wedge-shaped brownie but chewier, lighter and nuttier. The Chantilly cream added the perfect sweetness.

The Grand Marnier Souffle Glace (\$8) was a light, frozen souffle with French Creole orange rum, Grand Marnier and surprise pieces of candied citrus: an excellent dessert choice for warm evenings.

Tiramisu L'Acquolina (\$8) were layers of ladyfingers, mascarpone cheese, espresso, with raspberry creme anglais. It was sufficiently gooey but I liked the other desserts better.

Urroz is currently assembling his wine cellar. Right now, he offers about four dozen European and California wines plus a selection of dessert wines. His prices are unusually fair and he has an excellent wine palate.

For example, one evening we enjoyed a Spanish wine, Fuentes, 2001, El Puig, a blend of Grenache, Carignan, Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot and Syrah. The wine was deep ruby-red, intense and persistent at the nose and tasted of rich dark fruit and spices, with a long, intense finish. A steal at \$55. ▣

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MOVIE TIMES

- 10,000 B.C. (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED)**
 Century 20: 12:05, 2:35, 5:10, 7:45 & 10:20 p.m.
- 21 (PG-13) ★★★** Century 16: 1:10, 4:10, 7:15 & 10:15 p.m.
 Century 20: 12:15, 1:35, 3:10, 4:30, 6, 7:30, 9 & 10:30 p.m.
- 88 MINUTES (R) (NOT REVIEWED)** Century 16: 12:40, 2:20, 3:20, 4:55, 6:45, 8, 9:25 & 10:35 p.m. Century 20: 12:05, 1:20, 2:40, 3:55, 5:10, 6:30, 7:50, 9:10 & 10:25 p.m.
- THE BANK JOB (R) ★★★** Century 16: 1:20, 4:05, 7:20 & 10:10 p.m.
 Century 12: 1:20, 4:40, 7:50 & 10:35 p.m.
- THE COUNTERFEITERS (R) ★★★1/2** Century 20: 12:30, 2:55, 5:20, 7:50 & 10:15 p.m. Aquarius: 4:30 & 9:30 p.m.
- DEFINITELY, MAYBE (PG-13) ★★★1/2** Century 12: 12:35, 3:20, 7:10 & 9:55 p.m.
- DR. SEUSS' HORTON HEARS A WHO! (G) ★★★**
 Century 16: 12:30, 2:45, 5:05, 7:30 & 9:50 p.m.
 Century 20: Noon, 2:20, 4:40, 6:55 & 9:20 p.m.
- DRILLBIT TAYLOR (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED)**
 Century 20: 12:35, 3, 5:30, 8:05 & 10:30 p.m.
- FLAWLESS (PG-13) ★★★1/2** Aquarius: 2 & 7 p.m.
- THE FORBIDDEN KINGDOM (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED)**
 Century 16: 12:45, 1:45, 3:30, 4:40, 7, 7:45, 9:40 & 10:25 p.m.
 Century 12: 1, 2*, 4, 5*, 7, 7:45*, 10 & 10:30 p.m. * Spanish subtitles
- FORGETTING SARAH MARSHALL (R) (NOT REVIEWED)**
 Century 16: 12:35, 2:15, 3:15, 5, 7:05, 7:55, 9:45 & 10:35 p.m. Century 20: Noon, 12:50, 1:40, 2:35, 3:30, 4:20, 5:15, 6:15, 7:05, 7:55, 8:55, 9:45 & 10:35 p.m.
- IN BRUGES (R) (NOT REVIEWED)** Century 20: 1, 4, 7 & 9:35 p.m.
- LEATHERHEADS (PG-13) ★★** Century 16: 1:05, 3:55, 6:50 & 9:35 p.m. Century 20: 1:25, 4:35, 7:15 & 10:10 p.m.
- MISS PETTIGREW LIVES FOR A DAY (PG-13) ★★★**
 Century 16: 1:50, 4:15, 6:40 & 8:55 p.m. Century 20: 12:30, 2:45, 5:05, 7:25 & 9:50 p.m.
- MY BLUEBERRY NIGHTS (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED)**
 Century 16: 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 7:50 & 10:05 p.m.
- NIM'S ISLAND (PG) (NOT REVIEWED)** Century 16: 1:40, 4:20, 7:10 & 9:30 p.m. Century 20: 12:20, 1:45, 2:40, 4:10, 5, 6:30, 7:20, 8:50 & 9:40 p.m.
- THE OTHER BOLEYN GIRL (PG-13) ★★**
 Century 12: 1:10, 4:30, 7:40 & 10:25 p.m.
- PRICELESS (R) (NOT REVIEWED)** Guild: 1:30, 4:15, 7 & 9:40 p.m.
- PROM NIGHT (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED)** Century 16: 12:45, 3:05, 5:20, 7:40 & 10 p.m. Century 12: 12:45, 1:40, 3, 4:10, 5:30, 6:30, 8, 9:30 & 10:20 p.m.
- THE RUINS (R) (NOT REVIEWED)** Century 12: 12:25, 2:50, 5:15, 7:55 & 10:15 p.m.
- RUN, FAT BOY, RUN (PG-13) ★★★1/2** Century 20: 12:25, 2:55, 5:15, 7:40 & 10:05 p.m.
- SHINE A LIGHT (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED)** Century 20: 1:05, 4:15, 7:10 & 10 p.m.
- SMART PEOPLE (R) ★★** Century 20: 12:10, 2:30, 4:50, 7:35 & 9:55 p.m.
 Palo Alto Square: 2, 4:30, 7:10 & 9:35 p.m.
- STOP-LOSS (R) (NOT REVIEWED)**
 Century 12: 12:50, 3:40, 7:20 & 10:05 p.m.
- STREET KINGS (R) ★★** Century 16: 12:55, 2, 4, 5:10, 6:55, 7:50, 9:35 & 10:30 p.m. Century 12: 12:30*, 1:30, 3:15*, 4:20, 6*, 7:15, 9*, & 10:10 p.m.
 *Spanish subtitles
- SUPERHERO MOVIE (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED)** Century 12: 12:40, 2:55, 5:10, 7:30 & 9:45 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.
 Palo Alto Square: 1:45, 4:20, 7 & 9:40 p.m.
- WHERE IN THE WORLD IS OSAMA BIN LADEN? (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED)** Aquarius: 2:30, 5, 7:30 & 10 p.m. Sat. & Sun. also at 12:15 p.m.

Note: Screenings are for Friday through Tuesday only.

AQUARIUS: 430 Emerson St., Palo Alto (266-9260)
CENTURY CINEMA 16: 1500 N. Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View (960-0970)
CENTURY PARK 12: 557 E. Bayshore Blvd., Redwood City (365-9000)
CENTURY 20 DOWNTOWN: 825 Middlefield Road, Redwood City (369-3456)
CINEARTS AT PALO ALTO SQUARE: 3000 El Camino Real, Palo Alto (493-3456)
GUILD: 949 El Camino Real, Menlo Park (266-9260)
SPANGENBERG THEATRE: 780 Arastradero Road, Palo Alto (354-8263)
 For show times, plot synopses and more information about any films playing at the Aquarius, Guild and Park, visit www.LandmarkTheatres.com

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

For show times, plot synopses, trailers and more movie info, visit www.mv-voice.com and click on movies.



MOVIE REVIEWS

SMART PEOPLE★★

(CineArts) With his face puckered into a permanent scowl, Dennis Quaid lumbers through the part of Lawrence Wetherhold, an angry, self-absorbed literature professor at Carnegie Mellon whose most recent academic tome can't find a publisher. Ellen Page wisecracks her way through "Juno"-like dialogue as his college-bound daughter Vanessa. Her older sibling (Ashton Holmes) lives in the university dorms and snarls at his emotionally distant father every chance he gets. And Thomas Haden Church seems to have wandered "Sideways" into the role of Chuck, the down-on-his-luck-but-likable loser who moves in with his widowed brother. Novelist Mark Poirier's first script features underwritten parts that display a typical male film fantasy: the younger woman who inexplicably falls for the older man. Twice. "Smart People" offers some amusing moments and dialogue exchanges. It's not the worst film currently in theaters — nor is it one to recommend. *Rated: R for language, brief teen drug and alcohol use, and for some sexuality. 1 hour 35 minutes.* — S.T.

STREET KINGS★★

(Century 16, Century 12) Keanu Reeves is Tom Ludlow, a vodka-chugging LAPD detective still struggling with the untimely death of his wife. Ludlow works closely with Captain Jack Wander (Forest Whitaker) in Wander's vice unit (which includes Jay Mohr of "Jerry Maguire" and John Corbett of "My Big Fat Greek Wedding"). But Wander and company have lawless methods of effecting justice, which include planting weapons, swiping evidence and killing unarmed criminals. The murder of Ludlow's former partner leads him on a vengeance quest that unearths a morass of police corruption and double-crossing. Alongside go-getter cop Paul "Disco" Diskant (Chris Evans of "Fantastic Four"), Ludlow combs the streets of L.A. in an effort to find his old friend's killers and redeem himself for past misdeeds. The result produces enough blood to satisfy Dracula for a lifetime. Fans of Reeves and Whitaker will appreciate Reeves' heavy screen time and Whitaker's performance, but both actors deserve material that doesn't leave the viewer queasy and in need of a long shower. *Rated: R for strong violence and pervasive language. 1 hour, 47 minutes.* — T.H.

FLAWLESS★★★1/2

(Aquarius) In 1960s London, Laura Quinn (Demi Moore) is the sole female senior executive at London Diamond Corporation. Not surprisingly Laura is passed over time and again for bigger and better positions, continually bumping up against the glass ceiling. Frustration mounts as the old boys' club persistently closes ranks. Salvation arrives in the curious form of building janitor Mr. Hobbs (Michael Caine), who has his ear to the ground and eyes in the waste bin, and fully grasps the measure of Laura's dissatisfaction. Rumor has it the big brass intends to terminate the girl with nary a fare-thee-well. To that end Hobbs offers to cut Laura in on a deal: Help him procure the combination to the main vault, and he will gain entrance on

► Continued on next page



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The Mountain View City Council has scheduled a study session for Tuesday, May 6, 2008 to consider the Fiscal Year 2008-09 budget for the Revitalization Authority, Shoreline Regional Park Community, Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste Management Funds and Reserves, including utility rates and various city fees. In addition, the study session will include follow-up from the April 1, Narrative Budget – General Fund study session. The study session is scheduled to begin at 7:00 p.m. or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard, in the Council Chambers, 500 Castro Street, Mountain View.

If you are unable to attend the meeting but would like the City Council and staff to know your views, please send a letter to the City Council at P.O. Box 7540, Mountain View, CA 94039 or an e-mail to city.clerk@mountainview.gov by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, May 2, 2008.

Copies of the Fiscal Year 2008-09 Narrative Budget Report – Special and Utility Funds will be available for review by 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 1, 2008 at City Hall in the City Clerk's Office, 500 Castro Street, 3rd floor, Mountain View, 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and at the Mountain View Public Library, 585 Franklin St, Mountain View. The report will also be available that day on the City's website at www.mountainview.gov/BudgetDocuments.asp

CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW FISCAL YEAR 2008-09
 UPCOMING BUDGET SCHEDULE:

- May 6 Study Session: Narrative Budget Report (Part II) – Special and Utility Funds and General Fund follow-up
- May 27 (tentative) Council Meeting: Adoption of Annual Goals and CIP
- June 2 Council Meeting: Budget Public Hearing
- June 10 Council Meeting: Public Hearings regarding Budget Adoption and increases in City Utility Rates

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Weekend

► Continued from previous page

his rounds and walk out with a thermos full of diamonds. "Flawless" is a bit of a revelation, 1 hour, 56 minutes. J.A.

LEATHERHEADS★★

(Century 16, Century 20) George Clooney's third directorial effort has neither the snap of a screwball comedy nor the excitement of a gridiron film. Dodge Connelly (Clooney) is a pro football player for the Duluth Bulldogs. Two story threads converge in the simple plot. Chicago Daily Tribune ace reporter Lexie Littleton's (Renee Zellweger) assignment is to expose the Great War heroics of Carter

"The Bullet" Rutherford (John Krasinski) as "a crock." Now drawing big crowds playing football for Princeton, the handsome "Hero of the Argonne" had allegedly single-handedly engineered a German surrender. Fans pack the stadium to cheer for the dashing golden boy. In an attempt to save the season for his beloved-but-bankrupt Bulldogs and bring more attention to pro-level football, Dodge convinces the college pigskin star to join his ragtag Minnesota team. Why shouldn't Rutherford get paid for his talent instead of paying tuition to Princeton? The young man's agent (Jonathan Pryce) seals the deal. Posing as a sports writer, Lexie travels by train with the team to get her story.

Despite a Hail Mary plot twist as the clock winds down, Clooney doesn't win this one. *Rated: PG-13 for brief strong language.* 1 hour 54 minutes. —S.T.

21 ★★★

(Century 16, Century 20) Ben Campbell (Jim Sturgess) is a shy MIT senior who's been accepted to Harvard Med but needs a scholarship. Math professor Mickey Rosa (Kevin Spacey) discovers that Ben has a brain like a Pentium chip and makes him an offer he can't refuse: learn to count cards and make a killing in Vegas. Ben sets out to study the tricks of the trade and work hard enough to generate \$300,000, enough to cover tuition and living expenses on the way to becoming Dr. Campbell. His plans begin to sour when a daily diet of vectors and formulas segues into high-roller suites, fantasy clubs and the irresistible lure of teammate Jill Taylor (Kate Bosworth). The plot generates sharp narrative comment on the downside of seduction and desire, but an awkward climax puts an idealistic spin on beating the odds. *Rated: PG-13 for some violence and partial nudity.* 1 hour, 58 minutes. —J.A.

RUN FATBOY RUN★★1/2

(Aquarius) Simon Pegg is lovable loser Dennis, a classic commitment-phobe who walks out on heavily pregnant fiancée Libby (Thandie Newton) on their wedding day. Five years later Dennis is pulling dead-end hours as a security guard and sleeping in a seedy North London basement apartment. Libby has moved on to bigger and better things, most notably rich and handsome financier Whit (Hank Azaria). Tired of being a nearly man and determined to impress Libby and their son Jake, Dennis vows to run in the same 26-mile charity marathon for which Whit is training obsessively. Naturally Dennis is hopelessly unfit (though not exactly the fatboy the title suggests), and seemingly incapable of completing even menial tasks. The film is altogether trite but true to the kind of comic roots that include the timeless workout montage, clash of the male egos and heartstring-tugging finish-line drama. Not a surprise in sight: just predictable losers-are-people-too jesting raised a notch by the quality work of professionals who are better than their material. *Rated: PG-13 for language and mature themes.* 1 hour, 39 minutes. —J.A.

THE BANK JOB ★★★

(Century 16, Century 12) British actor Jason Statham hits pay dirt with this compelling picture about the 1971 Baker Street bank robbery in London. 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 a nearby empty shop, Terry and company jackhammer through the concrete and soon reach the vault. The film quickly reaches a fever pitch following the heist. Turns out two of the 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,



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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

(Century 16, Century 20) "Under the Same Moon" puts human faces on immigration woes. Adrian Alonso plays 9-year-old Carlitos with the perfect balance of charm, spirit and wisdom. 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 boy and his 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.*

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.*

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 the Nazis sentence him to a Berlin labor camp. The Germans amass a large crew of Europe's most skilled

laborers — 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 exhaustion and malnutrition. There's not a lot of fresh ground to cover, but the film 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.*

MISS PETTIGREW LIVES FOR A DAY ★★★

(Century 16, Century 20) Guinevere Pettigrew (Frances McDormand) is 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 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 ingenue is casting about for a proper social secretary to make sense of her agenda. Miss Pettigrew to the rescue! As Delysia flutters through things Cinderella-style, Pettigrew deftly cuts a swath through her jumbled social clutter. 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.*

■ **MOVIE CRITICS**

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

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