

# Mountain View VOICE



Heroic  
2009  
'Best Of'  
Winners  
SECTION 2

AUGUST 28, 2009 VOLUME 17, NO. 34

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## Ad hoc BMX park bulldozed by city

By Daniel DeBolt

In the name of safety and to protect itself from lawsuits, the city took a bulldozer last week to the result of years of work by local youths: The informal BMX park known as "Creek Trails," located in plain sight of the Stevens Creek Trail at Central Avenue.

The dirt bicycle track had been there for at least 20 years, its large jumps and berms built and rebuilt by daring bicyclists, usually teens, with the intention of getting airborne on their bikes.

It may not have been the first time the area faced a bulldozer, but it was no doubt a bummer for many.

"Friday was a sad day for me,"

wrote Jeral Poskey in a post on the *Voice's* Town Square forum. "As I rode my bike to work along the Stevens Creek Trail, I witnessed bulldozers flattening the dirt bike recreation area. This area was always inspiring to me. I don't know the full history, but it appeared to be homemade by determined kids."

Poskey said it seemed like an unfortunate thing to happen as the city tries to figure out how to build a teen center. In response, others commented about how American society has become overly litigious; that there was nothing for kids to do anymore; and some wondered if it meant the city would finally build an official BMX park — an idea that has been on hold for years.

City attorney Michael Martello owned up to having "Creek Trails" removed. Although he said it was an easy decision to make intellectually, his sentiments were also with the BMX riders.

"This comes under the heading of one of the times where you hate to be an adult," Martello said.

Martello said his decision came out of discussions about liability and safety. Unless such jumps are city approved and maintained to city certified design, the city is highly exposed to a lawsuit if someone gets hurt.

Martello pointed to an \$8 million claim filed with the city of San Jose by the father of a 16-year-old who paralyzed himself at Calabazas BMX park in San Jose. The action prompted San Jose to bulldoze the informal park and put in a certified set of jumps at a cost of \$800,000.

The increasing prevalence of "certified" BMX parks has reportedly made it easier to sue cities if someone is injured at an informal park, especially if it can be proved that the city was aware of the exist-



SANDY BARTLETT

With help from students, Superintendent Maurice Ghysels cuts the ribbon at Stevenson Elementary School last Friday. The new school's first day was Tuesday.

## School year begins for younger students

MOUNTAIN VIEW WHISMAN CUTS RIBBON ON NEW ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

By Kelsey Mesher

Elementary and middle school students in the Mountain View Whisman School District bid farewell to summer on Tuesday as they headed back to class.

As of last week, the district's enrollment is up by almost 250 students, 120 of them kindergartners. This pushes the district's total student population to over 4,700.

The district had "more growth than we anticipated last year," said Stephanie Totter, director of administrative services.

To accommodate the increased enrollment, the district has opened a new school, Stevenson Elementary. The campus, located in renovated buildings adjacent to the district office, houses the district-wide Parent, Child, Teacher program known as PACT. The board of trustees voted last year to move the pro-

gram from Castro Elementary to the new campus to alleviate overcrowding at Castro.

Meanwhile, several alternative elementary schools have begun classes as well. At the German International School of Silicon Valley, which welcomed 54 new students last week, German Consul General Peter Rothen visited the students on their first day.

"You will have a great time at a great school," he told them. ▀

## Districts sift through STAR test results

By Kelsey Mesher

This year's standardized test results show that local schools are working hard to improve their scores. The question is: Are they improving enough?

The state Department of

Education released the 2009 California Standards Test (CST) scores last week, a significant component in the state's overall Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program.

The test results, which are highly scrutinized but diffi-

cult to analyze, have varying implications for the Mountain View-Los Altos and Mountain View Whisman school districts. Though results from both districts showed general improvement, math continues

► See *STAR*, page 11

## Council supports McKelvey Park flood basin

By Daniel DeBolt

The Mountain View City Council appeared to support transforming McKelvey Park into a 15-foot-deep flood basin in a plan that would provide new baseball facilities there at no cost to the city.

Though no formal decision was made at the Tuesday night study session, comments from council members agreed with the concept as long as there were no unforeseen problems.

"I support this project (at

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► See *BMX*, page 8

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UHG-1-MVW



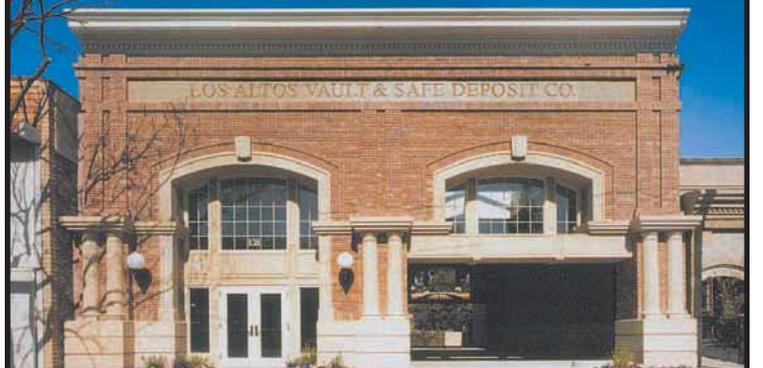
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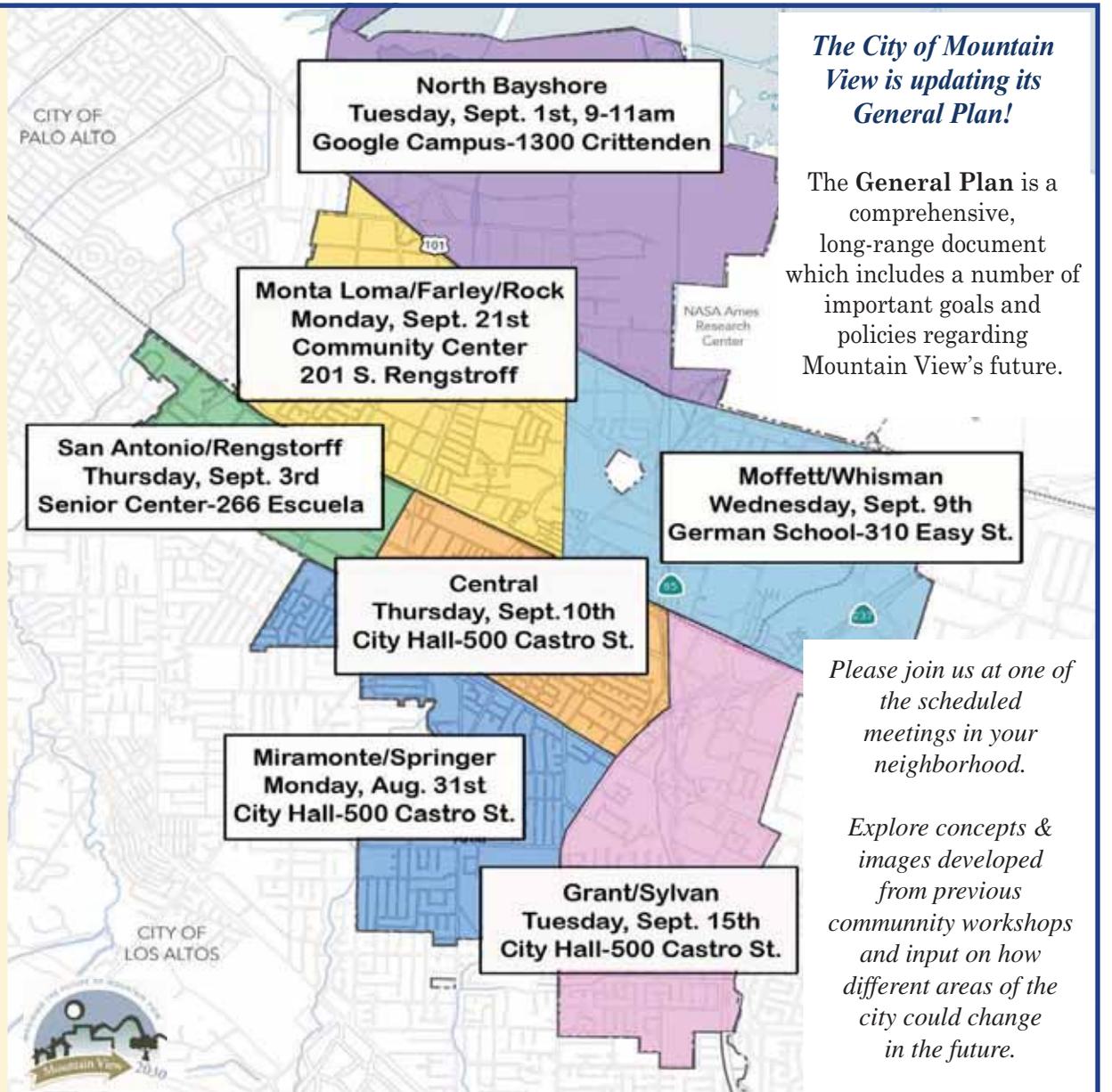
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## GENERAL PLAN UPDATE COMMUNITY MEETINGS

Schedule and Map of Meeting Areas  
All Meetings 6:30 to 8:30 pm unless noted otherwise

For more information, please visit [www.mountainview2030.com](http://www.mountainview2030.com).

If you have any questions or comments, please contact the Community Development Department at (650) 903-6306 or e-mail: [community.dev@mountainview.gov](mailto:community.dev@mountainview.gov).



The City of Mountain View is updating its General Plan!

The General Plan is a comprehensive, long-range document which includes a number of important goals and policies regarding Mountain View's future.

Please join us at one of the scheduled meetings in your neighborhood.

Explore concepts & images developed from previous community workshops and input on how different areas of the city could change in the future.

# Voices

A R O U N D T O W N

Asked in Downtown Mountain View. Pictures and interviews by Katherine Tolentino.

## What teacher had the greatest effect on you?



*"My music teacher, Mr. Spitzer. He really captured my interest in music, and fueled the flames, I guess."*

**Ryan Johnson**, Mountain View



*"One of my speech/communication teachers. When I studied engineering, I used to ask myself when I would need to use calculus. I never use calculus now, but I use speech and communications every day."*

**Saleem Baber**, San Jose



*"A flute teacher I had in Chicago, Mary Louise Poor. She was inspirational ... she was basically my mentor. I studied with her for three years and she just worked me to death."*

**Laurie Benson**, Redwood City



*"My film teacher in high school, Mr. Rosenberg. He turned me on to my major."*

**David Cala**, Cupertino



*"Mrs. Dewar, my sophomore year English teacher. I never really enjoyed English until her class — she taught me how to read things and analyze, which kind of applies to everything."*

**Sarah Rempel**, Los Altos

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9:30am Breakfast@Union #2 Worship  
9:45 am Church School Nursery  
11:00 am Worship in the Sanctuary,  
Club Sunday for Children, Nursery

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HINT: When it comes to automatic transmission repairs, don't assume the worst until a technician has a chance to diagnose the problem.

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**AUTO BURGLARY**

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700 block Continental Ct, 8/20  
500 block W Middlefield Rd, 8/21  
700 block Continental Ct, 8/21  
100 block San Luis Av, 8/22  
200 block Cypress Point Dr, 8/22

**COMMERCIAL BURGLARY**

400 block Castro St, 8/17  
1100 block W El Camino Real, 8/17  
100 block Castro St, 8/17  
400 block San Antonio Rd, 8/19

**RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY**

700 block N Shoreline Bl, 8/17  
100 block Van Buren Ct, 8/20

**SHOPLIFTING BURGLARY**

500 block N Shoreline Bl, 8/17

**ROBBERY**

400 block Tyrella Av, 8/17  
San Ramon Av/Sierra Vista Av, 8/17

**PETTY THEFT**

200 block California St, 8/17  
100 block Space Park Way, 8/17  
400 block San Antonio Rd, 8/17  
700 block Sylvan Av, 8/17  
600 block Showers Dr, 8/18  
200 block Ortega Wy, 8/18  
100 block Grant Rd, 8/18  
Sears Dept Store, 8/19  
2400 block Charleston Rd, 8/19  
Century 16 Cinema, 8/19  
200 block S Rengstorff Wy, 8/20  
100 block N Shoreline Av, 8/21  
200 block Sierra Vista Av, 8/1  
700 block Castro St, 8/21  
600 block Showers Dr, 8/21

**GRAND THEFT**

100 block Plymouth St, 8/18  
800 block E El Camino Real, 8/19  
100 block Gamel Wy, 8/20  
200 block Latham St, 8/20  
0 block Amphitheatre Pkwy, 8/20  
200 block Middlefield Rd, 8/21  
100 block Higdon Av, 8/21

**IDENTITY THEFT**

0 block Tyrella Ct, 8/18  
500 block W Middlefield Rd, 8/20

**THEFT BY FRAUD**

100 block Higdon Av, 8/20

**STOLEN VEHICLE**

500 block S Rengstorff Av, 8/19  
200 block Fayette Dr, 8/22

**BATTERY**

700 block Castro St, 8/20  
0 block Amphitheatre Pkwy, 8/20

**VANDALISM**

200 block California St, 8/17  
200 block Escuela Av, 8/17  
200 block Whitney Dr, 8/19  
200 block Rock St, 8/20  
200 block Calderon Av, 8/22  
200 block Katrina Wy, 8/22

**SUSPICIOUS CIRCUMSTANCES/PERSONS**

700 block San Carrizo Way, 8/17  
200 block Monroe Dr, 8/18  
200 block Sunnyview Ln, 8/19

**OBSCENE/ANNOYING PHONE CALL**

100 block Springer Rd, 8/17  
800 N Rengstorff Av, 8/18  
100 block Space Park Wy, 8/21

**DISORDERLY CONDUCT**

1000 block N Rengstorff Av, 8/17  
300 block Whisman Station Dr, 8/19  
Alibi Bar  
Shoreline Amphitheatre, 8/22

**EMBEZZLEMENT**

100 block El Camino Real, 8/21

**POSSESSION OF SWITCHBLADE**

W El Camino Real/El Monte Av, 8/20

**POSSESSION OF MARIJUANA**

100 E El Camino Real, 8/19  
100 block N Shoreline Bl, 8/20

**DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE**

Leong Dr/Moffett Bl, 8/17  
Leghorn St/N Rengstorff Av, 8/17  
California St/Ortega Av, 8/19  
200 block Castro St, 8/20  
700 block Whisman, 8/22

**MISSING PERSON-JUVENILE**

0 block Starlite Ct, 8/19  
200 block Calderon Av, 8/22

**MISSING PERSON-ADULT**

200 BLOCK Mardell Wy, 8/22

**ASSAULT WITH A DEADLY WEAPON**

100 block N Rengstorff Av, 8/17

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## Un-Dahn

By Don Frances

**N**OT LONG ago I wrote about Dahn Yoga, and the fact that Mayor Margaret Abe-Koga had declared an official “Brain Education Day” in honor of ... well, some kind of pie-in-the-sky philosophy advocated by the people who run Dahn Yoga.

Now it looks like neither the mayor nor I should have given them this publicity.

According to an August article in Forbes magazine, 27 former Dahn practitioners filed suit against the company in May, “claiming the group subjected them to psychological manipulation and fraudulently induced them to spend thousands of dollars on Dahn yoga classes and retreats.”

The accusations against the company are extreme: “The punishing techniques, they say, included forced isolation from friends and families, exercises like bowing 3,000 times all night long without breaks, disciplining members by sticking their heads in the toilet and making them lick other members’ feet, and having them hold certain poses, like the push-up position, for 20 to 30 minutes at a time. On top of those charges, the suit alleges that Ilchi Lee, the 57-year-old Korean founder of Dahn and its spiritual leader, sexually preyed on young female disciples.”

Naturally, Lee and the Dahn people deny all these charges. But I think the mayor ought to rescind “Brain Education Day” all the same.

**IN MUCH HAPPIER** news, the organizers at Deer Hollow are looking for volunteer tour guides.

“It’s time for our annual

► See **EDITOR’S DESK**, page 6



MICHELLE LE

One of four unfinished homes, which neighbors say are attracting squatters.

## Unfinished business on Mountain View Ave.

HALF-CONSTRUCTED HOMES BEHIND MCKELVEY PARK AN EYESORE, NEIGHBORS SAY

By Daniel DeBolt

**I**t’s been two years since a developer walked away from an unfinished project behind McKelvey Park, leaving behind four partially constructed houses and problematic site for neighbors. Now those neighbors say they have a solution in mind that could benefit everybody.

“Those four single-family homes are just sitting there,” said City Council member

Laura Macias, who lives nearby. “What the neighboring community would like to do is buy that land and enlarge the park.”

Neighbors have asked city officials and a Santa Clara Valley Water District manager about buying the property and demolishing the homes to extend McKelvey Park, possibly as part of a proposal by the Water District to lower the park by 15 feet so it can double as a flood basin.

One neighbor was excited enough about the possibilities for the park that a question about the possibility of using eminent domain was met with enthusiasm.

“I can’t think of a more appropriate application of the eminent domain law,” said neighbor Steve Cutcomb in an e-mail. “When you look at the times other cities have used eminent domain to acquire properties, typically to

► See **UNFINISHED**, page 8

## Coroner releases name of 13-year-old train victim

By Jay Thorwaldson

**C**atrina Holmes, 13, of Palo Alto, was officially identified as the girl who stepped in front of a passenger train on Friday night of last week, ending her life.

The Santa Clara County Medical Examiner-Coroner’s Office late Tuesday afternoon confirmed her identity, which already was widely known in the community.

Holmes was the daughter of Thomas J. Holmes, a well-known aerospace engineer, and Natasha Holmes.

Her name was being withheld by

school and counseling agency officials but was extensively published on Twitter and Facebook, two social-networking services. A link on Twitter points to an extensive posting of photos of Holmes at different ages.

Her parents are reportedly in isolation.

Her death has rocked Palo Alto emotionally, as it follows two earlier adolescent suicides on the train tracks, at least one suicide attempt by another teenager, and an earlier suicide of a 29-year-old Palo Alto woman.

In an effort to prevent future

suicides, school, city, Caltrain and health care officials are joining forces with counselors in plans to put together a community-wide coalition. The coalition would design and implement an aggressive mental-health program targeted at adolescents and families.

Liz Kniss, president of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, said the board’s Health and Hospital Committee, which she chairs, will take up a proposed “Suicide Prevention Task Force” on which the council mental health staff has

► See **CALTRAIN**, page 10

## Foothill-De Anza board picks trustee candidates

By Kelsey Mesher

**I**n a special meeting last week, trustees of the Foothill-De Anza district board selected final interview candidates — four in all — to fill the position vacated by Hal Plotkin.

Plotkin served on the board of trustees for seven years before being tapped by Chancellor Martha Kanter to serve as a policy advisor in the U.S. Department of Education. Kanter herself was tapped as undersecretary of education for the Obama administration.

The finalists will be interviewed at the regular board meeting on Aug. 31. After the interview process, trustees will make a decision and the finalist will be appointed and seated that very night.

Joan Barram has served as a trustee in the Cupertino Union School District and been involved with Foothill-De Anza in various ways over the past 20 years. Barram is especially concerned with the selection of a new chancellor and the opportunity to develop the NASA Research Park and prepare students for jobs in the “clean tech, green tech” industry.

Richard Bernhardt has held administrative and teaching positions in the community. He served as the director of the University of California Lobby representing undergraduates and graduates in the UC system, and also as chairman and president of the Sunnyvale Chamber of Commerce. He believes education is an investment that comes back to the community “tenfold.”

Jeannie Conner has worked with elected officials, foundations and nonprofit boards in professional and volunteer capacities, most recently working as the political director for State Sen. Joe Simitian. Conner’s priorities, if appointed, included aligning K-12 curriculums with community colleges, especially in math and science; ensuring financial discipline; seeking out new and sustainable funding sources; and improving outreach to underserved populations.

Anita Manwani-Bhagat has served as a business leader at NASA, Hewlett Packard and Agi-

► See **FOOTHILL**, page 7

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■ SEEN AROUND TOWN

## Gorgeous sunset over Shoreline



"I took a walk out to Shoreline Park after dinner (the other) night," wrote Debbie Ryan of Polk Court, "and took this photo of the sunset."

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](mailto:editor@mv-voice.com).

■ NEWS BRIEFS

### GOOGLE EMPLOYEE CHARGED WITH GRAND THEFT

A Google employee entrusted with maintaining the Internet giant's server installations countrywide has been arrested for allegedly stealing \$80,000 worth of Google's network hardware.

Leonard Izbicki, a 28-year-old Mountain View resident, was arrested and charged with grand theft Tuesday. Police spokesperson Liz Wylie said Google investigated Izbicki after being tipped off by a Sacramento equipment trading company that became suspicious when Izbicki allegedly tried to sell the company three pieces of industrial Internet hardware for \$25,000.

Google also alleges that Izbicki sold four other pieces of hardware to a San Diego company for \$25,000. The total non-street value of the seven pieces of hardware Izbicki is alleged to have stolen is estimated to be \$80,000, Wylie said.

### MOTORCYCLIST EVADES POLICE, CRASHES

Mountain View police say a man who allegedly fled from officers on his motorcycle wound up crashing on El Camino Real and fleeing on foot before being tracked down by a police dog.

Police say they found Zachary Shaw, a 33-year-old San Diego resident, hiding in the bushes at 632 Chiquita Ave. on Thursday, Aug. 20. They said a police dog followed his scent from where he had crashed his 2006 Kawasaki 636 near the Tropicana Lodge.

Initially, police say, they chased Shaw through residential portions of downtown Mountain View at around 10:13 p.m. that night. Police are still trying to identify a second motorcyclist who got away. The chase began when officers saw that one of the motorcycles had a portion of its license plate covered up.

Police allege that Shaw blew through two red lights at about 75 miles per hour along El Camino Real at Castro Street

and Shoreline Boulevard. That's when officers decided not to pursue Shaw at high speeds.

"We've had that policy for years and years," said police spokesperson Liz Wylie. "We only chase major felonies and violent misdemeanors."

Shaw was arrested and charged with violating his parole, driving without a license, felony evasion of police and leaving the scene of an accident. He was booked into county main jail and faces six months to a year for evading police and a \$1,000 to \$10,000 fine for that charge alone.

Earlier that same evening, at 9:15 p.m., the driver of a minivan eluded police by going 95 mph down Central Expressway towards Palo Alto and running the red light at Charleston Avenue. He was never caught, Wylie said.

"Most criminals know full well that many jurisdictions cannot pursue for traffic violations, so they are willing to risk their lives and the lives of others to try to get away," Wylie said.

— Daniel DeBolt

### EDITOR'S DESK

► Continued from page 5

docent recruitment drive at Deer Hollow Farm," writes Gail Nyhan. "Volunteers are needed to lead small groups of elemen-

tary school children as they visit farm animals, explore a wilderness preserve, or discover local history and culture in a replica Ohlone village."

To find out more, come to an introductory meeting on Thursday, Sept. 10 from 10:30 to 11:30

a.m. in the downtown library's Community Room. Or call (650) 903-6430 or write [dhfarms@mountainview.gov](mailto:dhfarms@mountainview.gov).

Don Frances can be reached at [dfrances@mv-voice.com](mailto:dfrances@mv-voice.com).

## Second 'telephone town hall' goes smoothly

CONGRESSWOMAN ANNA ESHOO HOLDS SERIES OF PHONE-ONLY MEETINGS ON HEALTH CARE — AND A LIVE MEETING NEXT WEEK

*Palo Alto Weekly and Staff Reports*

A second "telephone town hall" held Monday evening by Congresswoman Anna Eshoo went smoothly and won praise from callers in Palo Alto, Mountain View and other parts of the 14th Congressional District.

Eshoo's staff seemed to have worked out some of the kinks after the first meeting, held on Wednesday of last week, failed to connect some callers. Eshoo said that meeting was a success, however, with more than 7,000 participants.

She also announced this week that she has scheduled a face-to-face forum on health care issues for Wednesday, Sept. 2, at Gunn High School in Palo Alto.

Meanwhile, two more "telephone town hall" meetings were planned for Thursday, Aug. 27, after the *Voice* went to press. District residents could sign up for the meetings — held from 1 to 2:30 p.m. and from 6:40 to 7:40 p.m. — by filling out an online form on Eshoo's Web site.

Responding to questions Monday, Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, defended the need for health care reform and said that much of the added costs will be offset by savings by making health care delivery more efficient and rational.

During last week's meeting, Eshoo elaborated on why she endorses the much-discussed "public option."

"I'm four-square for it and let me tell you why," she said. "I believe that in the reforms that need to be done, the public option will bring about competition — competition between private health plans and the government-run but nonprofit health care plan. The public option will be government-run, but it is a nonprofit plan that will be available to people by the Exchange.

"Like Medicare, it will not be funded by government subsidies,

but solely by premiums it collects, like private plans do. I think it will bring about real competition — will bring about cost savings. It will give people a choice, and the public option will be required to follow the same regulations that are placed on private insurance companies, including staying financially solvent.

"The whole issue of lowering health care costs and improving efficiencies and driving costs down are absolutely essential. If we don't bring the costs down that are part of the overall health-care system in our country, it could bankrupt our country."

Eshoo added: "I think it would be a march to folly if in fact the public option were dropped."

The congresswoman also provided an overview on the current state of health care reform as it works its way through the House.

"There are three House committees that have responsibility over the issue of health care," she said. "Each committee wrote its own section of legislation and passed it. Now these three versions have to be melded into one bill to be considered by the full House when the House reconvenes next month." Eshoo is a member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, one of the three committees charged with drafting portions of the bill.

In response to earlier press reports that she hadn't scheduled a town hall session on health care, Eshoo said she has held more face-to-face town halls on public issues than almost any other member of Congress. ■

### ■ INFORMATION

The face-to-face "Health Care Town Hall Meeting," hosted by Anna Eshoo, will be held Wednesday, Sept. 2 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at Gunn High School's Spangenberg Theatre, 780 Arastradero Road, Palo Alto. More information is available on Eshoo's Web site, [eshoo.house.gov](http://eshoo.house.gov).

regarding maintaining the budget under tough economic conditions, moving forward with a new campus at NASA Ames, and continuing emphasis on serving a diverse population of students and staff.

The finalists' full applications and resumes have been posted online, and can be reviewed by visiting [www.fhda.edu](http://www.fhda.edu). ■

### FOOTHILL

► Continued from page 5

lent and is the current president of the Foundation Board of Foothill-De Anza. She believes her business experience will help her to make analytic decisions

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This family-based, behavioral and educational weight management program promotes healthy eating and exercise habits for overweight children and their families. More than 80% of children achieve long-term weight loss through this program — and parents lose weight too! Call (650) 725-4424 for information.

- Monday, August 17: 7:00 - 8:00 pm

### \* CAR SEAT EDUCATION & INSTALLATION

The Kohl's Child Safety and Outreach Program at LPCH offers a free car seat check and installation education at Kohl's in Santa Clara. Appointments made by calling 650-736-2981.

- Wednesday, August 26: 11:00 am - 3:00 pm

### \* MOTHERS OF SONS: THE JOYS AND CHALLENGES OF GUIDING YOUR SON THROUGH ADOLESCENCE

Robert Lehman, MD, co-creator of the "Heart to Heart" program will host an evening just for mothers of adolescent sons. Emphasis will be on understanding and encouraging open communication between parents and children.

- Tuesday, September 8: 7:00 - 8:30 pm

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**Stephen Early**, of Mountain View, catches air on his BMX bike in December 2007 as friend Chris Ricana pedals behind at the "Creek Trails" course near Central Avenue.

MOUNTAIN VIEW VOICE  
FILE PHOTO

## BMX

► Continued from page 1

tence of uncertified jumps. In San Jose, the most damning evidence was a shed the city had built at Calabazas for riders to store shovels and other track-building tools.

"When you ask the city attorney about it, there is really only one answer the city attorney can give," Martello said.

There is hope for the city's dirt bicyclists, however. The city has already budgeted \$60,000 for an official BMX park that would likely have broader appeal to both novice and highly skilled BMX and mountain bike riders. The city has even selected a site for the park: a long slice of land which sits between a levy at Shoreline Park and Google's Crittenden Lane Campus under a set of PG&E power poles.

The City Council, however, has not moved the project forward for several years. Martello said the project, which was originally envisioned to cost only \$60,000 — to simply dump dirt and have volunteers build a track — is likely to be significantly more expensive if the jumps have to be designed and certified for safety. ▀

## UNFINISHED

► Continued from page 5

help fulfill some business development theme area ... this seems even more sincere and civic minded."

The four homes are located directly behind the bleachers of the large McKelvey baseball field on a lot where two small homes were razed in 2001 to prepare for the development. Exactly what stopped the development, after six years of slow construction, is a mystery to neighbors. Macias said construction started in 2001 and was off and on before stopping in 2005.

Neighbors had been excited to see construction seem to start again in 2007, but something killed the project for good that same year. Nothing has happened since, except occasional weed abatement.

The Water District initially showed interest in using the property to save money on its Permanente Creek flood protection project. Under an arrangement considered by the Water District, the city would have purchased the property for itself with Water District funds.

"It would have been ideal," said Saeid Hosseini, a project manager at the Santa Clara Val-

ley Water District, who said the deal would have negated the need for expensive retaining walls around the baseball fields. "But it didn't seem affordable for the project."

Some neighbors say they would like to see the homes finished. But others believe the structures have probably suffered too much weather exposure by now.

"I wonder who would want to move in after the tar paper has been rained on?" asked neighbor Dave Koberstein.

Cutcomb and Koberstein recently found a notice of foreclosure posted on the fence, with an auction scheduled for Aug. 11 with a starting bid of \$1.085 million to cover interest that had accrued on a loan of \$719,000. Koberstein considered bidding on the property, until he realized it was for only one of the four homes.

"People have asked the city, 'Why don't we buy it?'" said city attorney Michael Martello. "But it would probably be a pretty expensive purchase."

But he added, "We could definitely try to acquire the property, no question about that." ▀

E-mail Daniel DeBolt at [ddebolt@mv-voice.com](mailto:ddebolt@mv-voice.com)



CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW

## NOTICE OF COMMUNITY MEETING

### PERMANENTE CREEK TRAIL PROJECT

Tuesday, September 1, 2009

6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Mountain View Community Center-Auditorium  
201 South Rengstorff  
Mountain View, CA 94040

The community is invited to attend this second public meeting to review and comment on the Permanente Creek Pedestrian/Bicycle Trail Project from Highway 101 to Old Middlefield Way. The project will extend the trail from its current terminus north of Highway 101 to the south side of Old Middlefield Way by constructing a pedestrian/bicycle bridge over Highway 101 and a tunnel under Old Middlefield

Way. At the meeting, City staff will provide an update, review the latest conceptual renderings, and hear questions and comments about the project. Comments received at this meeting will be considered in the design of the project.

Construction is scheduled to begin in spring 2010.

Additional information about the project can be found at [www.mountainview.gov](http://www.mountainview.gov) or by calling Sean Rose, Senior Civil Engineer, at (650) 903-6311.

Written comments may be submitted by email to [rose@mountainview.gov](mailto:rose@mountainview.gov) or by mail to Sean Rose, City of Mountain View Public Works Department, P.O. Box 7540, Mountain View, California, 94039-7540.

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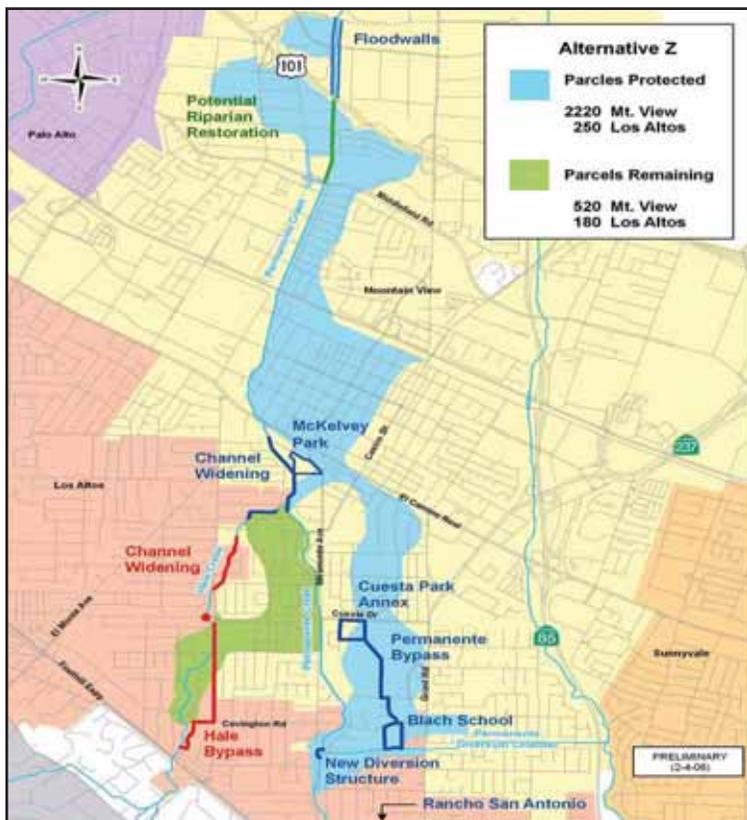
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*This map shows the flooding that would occur in the event of a "100-year flood."*

## COUNCIL

► Continued from page 1

McKelvey), I think it's a win-win," said Mayor Margaret Abe-Koga. The Santa Clara Valley Water District says the flood basin would help keep Permanente Creek from overflowing its banks in a major storm.

City manager Kevin Duggan said his staff would take a conceptual plan to the Parks and Recreation Commission and to a public hearing for the surrounding neighborhood to gather feedback before an official council vote on the concept. Duggan said it would be a significant amount of time before the council approves a detailed plan.

If the concept ever does make its way to fruition, the city "will have a great new amenity we can take advantage of," said council member Mike Kasperzak.

The Water District has already garnered support from the local Little League and other teams who use the two baseball fields at McKelvey. Elaine Spence, president of Mountain View Babe Ruth baseball, told the *Voice* that the concept was a "win-win" for flood control and for the teams happy to get new baseball facilities.

The "win-win" theme was hit on more than once Tuesday night.

"I don't know why this isn't a win-win — it seems like it is," said council member Jac Siegel, who seemed to be the most concerned and critical of the six members present. (Although she has been sharply critical of the flood basin idea, council member Laura Macias recused herself from Tuesday's discussion due to the proximity of her home to

McKelvey Park.)

According to the Water District, the McKelvey flood basin — along with flood basins proposed for Blach Middle School and Rancho San Antonio in Los Altos and for the Cuesta Park Annex — would help protect 2,250 properties in Mountain View in the event of a 100-year flood. The entire project would be funded by \$38 million from a flood control measure passed by 70 percent of Mountain View residents in 2000, said Patrick Kwok, District Five director for the Water District.

While Macias and other community members have questioned the need for more flood control along Permanente Creek,

council member John Inks said he wasn't going to second guess the Water District's claims.

Council member said global warming and the resulting rise in sea level would mean that floods predicted once every 100 years could happen twice as often in the near future.

The concept was also supported by council members Ronit Bryant, who said global warming would result in more frequent floods, and Tom Means, who countered complaints that the plan would ruin the park's baseball fields.

"A lot of fields are sunken. The fields at Stanford are sunken. It is an easy way to get stands in," he said. ■

## CITY BRIEFS

### RESIDENTS GET DISCOUNT ON MEDICINE

Mountain View residents will now receive a discount on pharmaceutical drugs whether or not they have health insurance, thanks to a new city-sponsored program.

After Aug. 29, the city will be issuing "prescription discount cards" to residents of all backgrounds and ages. The cards are accepted at 59,000 pharmacies nationwide. When used to buy prescription drugs, residents will be able to save an average of

20 percent on the cost. The city partnered with the National League of Cities to provide the benefit to residents.

The cards can be picked up at City Hall at 500 Castro Street, the Senior Center at 266 Escuela Ave., the Mountain View Library, the Community Center at Rengstorff Park, or at the police station at 1000 Villa Street.

For more information, call Rochelle Kiner at (650) 903-6309 or visit [www.mountainview.gov](http://www.mountainview.gov).

— Daniel DeBolt



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*Photo of Alison and Larry Sokoloff in Moscow, Russia.*

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### CALTRAIN

► Continued from page 5

been working since June.

Kniss said she proposed the task force following the second adolescent death in early June. Nancy Pina, head of the county's Mental Health Department, has been working on it since.

On Monday, Caltrain officials echoed Kniss' call for a community-wide effort to address mental health issues.

Caltrain spokesman Mark Simon said at a news conference in San Carlos that the transit agency's employees are "devastated" by every death on the tracks. Caltrain is committed to preventing further deaths, Simon said, and is participating in the mental health task force in Palo Alto.

The agency conducts regular training for its transit security

deputies and others to help them spot different types of mental illness, and defuse situations where people wish to harm themselves, according to Simon.

Caltrain considers awareness tactics more effective than reactive measures, such as surveillance cameras and extra police patrols, Simon said, adding that it is more realistic, and effective, to address the mental health issues behind these deaths than to focus on the tracks themselves.

"We have to find a way to encourage people not to step in front of our trains," he said. "You can't stop the train the way people would like us to."

Caltrain's service area, which includes San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, sees an average of 300 suicide deaths a year. ▀

*Bay City News contributed to this report.*

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## Caltrain to cut service, hike parking fees

In an effort to eliminate a \$2.7 million deficit, Caltrain will increase parking fees and reduce train frequency effective Monday, Aug. 31, the agency announced.

As of Aug. 31, trains will run every hour instead of every half-hour between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., eliminating eight mid-day trains and saving about \$1.93 million, according to Caltrain spokeswoman Christine Dunn.

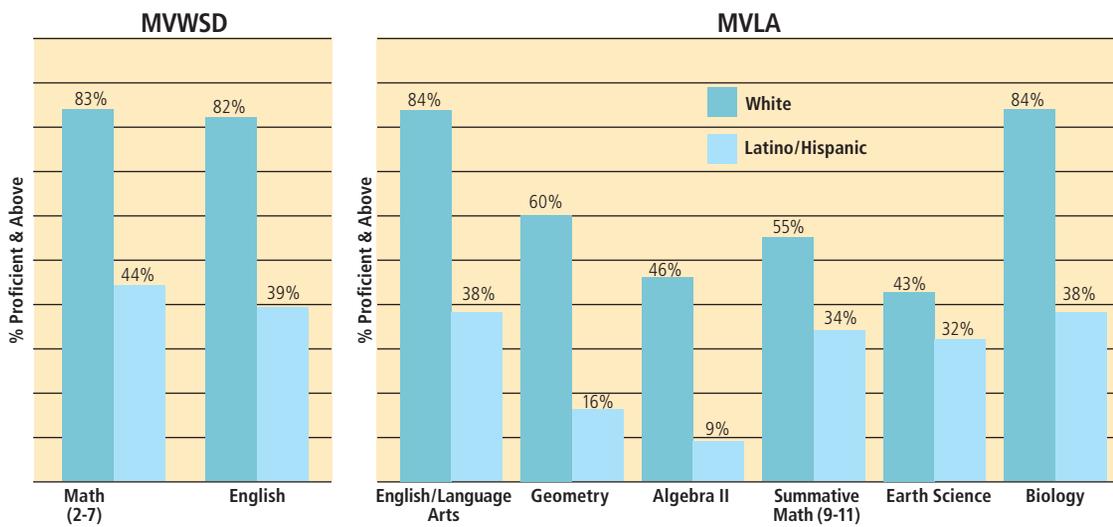
Parking fees will increase from \$2 to \$3 a day, and monthly parking fees will increase from \$20 to \$30, she said. Those changes are expected to generate about \$420,000.

On Aug. 1, the rate employers pay for a "GO Pass" increased from \$112.75 to \$140 a month, a change that will generate about \$263,000, she said.

The Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board declared a fiscal emergency at its July 2 meeting and unanimously approved the changes, she added.

The board in May considered cutting weekend service, suspending service to Gilroy and raising fares, but those options were taken off the table due to resistance from the public.

— Bay City News



**STAR**

► Continued from page 1

to be an issue for students, especially those from disadvantaged populations.

Not yet released are the state's Academic Performance Index (API) scores, or how the districts stacked up against the federal government's Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) goals, established by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. While both measurements are indicative of school growth, the yearly progress goals determine whether or not a district or school will get the "Program Improvement" label, which marks them as not meeting accepted standards. Currently neither district has been hit with that label, though Mountain View Whisman administrators say they probably will be soon.

**Catching up at MVLA**

Administrators at Mountain View-Los Altos said they were very pleased with progress in their district.

In the English-Language Arts category, the district improved by an average of three points to 71 percent, well over the county average of 56 percent.

"The thing that we are really excited about is Los Altos has gained in virtually every area," said Brigitte Saraff, associate superintendent of educational services. This is good news for the district, as in the past, Los Altos High School students have tended to score lower than Mountain View High School students.

"We are now very busy trying to analyze what caused those results," Saraff said.

Los Altos High students made notable gains in language arts, including a 10-point gain in the ninth grade, from 66 percent proficiency in 2008 to 76 percent proficiency this year.

Students also made major gains in world history, with 65 percent of students scoring proficient, up from 60 percent in

2008 and just 48 percent in 2007. Administrators said this jump in proficiency could be attributed to a change in history requirements from three years to three and a half years.

"Our big challenge still continues to be math," Saraff said.

The district saw a one percentage point drop in summative math from 2008, placing it below the county average. However, in certain classes like geometry, students excelled. Saraff said this could be attributed a new math placement system where students were admitted to certain classes based on their previous CST test results.

**"Our big challenge still continues to be math."**

BRIGITTE SARAFF

Though scores indicate that a significant achievement gap still exists, Hispanic students at MVLA performed better than Hispanic students state and countywide in nearly every subject area. Hispanics continue to struggle in mathematics, a trend that echoes the district.

"We are most excited to see growth in our Latino subgroup," Saraff said. "We see definite trends in closing our achievement gap."

"We are looking at what produced this," she added, saying it has to do with a variety of issues. She said the district has been working to align its curriculum with standards taught on the test, and improved the pacing of courses so that students learn the materials before the test is administered every year.

Saraff also said the culture around the test has changed since its inception nearly a decade ago, and that teachers and students are more accepting that their schools are being publicly judged and rated on these scores.

"The public has become much more discerning and aware of this, and that affects the schools' attitude, our attitude," she said.

MV Whisman improves

The local elementary and middle school district also saw some progress on the standardized test.

"Everybody improved, but some improved more than others," said Mary Lairon, assistant superintendent for the Mountain View Whisman School District.

Overall, the district improved its English-Language Arts scores by seven percentage points from 2008, with more students scoring at the "advanced" level than last year. Hispanic, English language learners and economically disadvantaged students in the district scored higher in that category than their respective subgroups at the county and state levels.

In mathematics, the district in general improved, although each of the mentioned subgroups saw a slight decline.

"We'd like to close the achievement gap, not make it bigger, and I felt like we didn't close it this year," Lairon said.

Though a slight decrease in scores from one year to the next is not necessarily cause for concern, the district's 2009 CST scores will almost certainly fall below this year's new AYP goal of 46 percent proficiency.

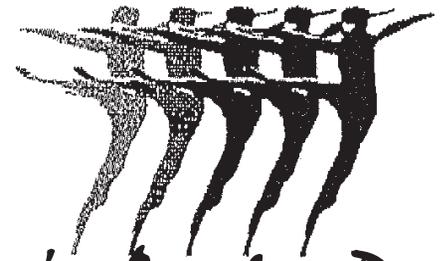
Since NCLB was enacted, federal proficiency standards have increased significantly. Starting in 2007, standards began increasing by approximately 11 percent each year, making it difficult for already struggling districts — especially those with many disadvantaged students — to keep up.

"We're almost sure that we'll go into Program Improvement," Lairon said. "But what we're going to celebrate is progress."

The California Department of Education is tentatively scheduled to release API scores, yearly progress and program improvement data on Tuesday, Sept. 15. ▀

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# Super-green building to sprout at NASA Ames

'SUSTAINABILITY BASE' WILL USE SPACECRAFT TECHNOLOGY FOR PLATINUM LEEDS RATING

By Daniel DeBolt

NASA Ames is set to begin construction this month on a new building that the agency promises will be the greenest in the entire U.S. federal government, if not in Silicon Valley.

"This is going to be the most advanced building of its kind,"

said Steve Zornetzer, associate center director at NASA Ames.

With a goal of "net zero" energy use, the building will have solar panels, fuel cells, geothermal wells and a NASA-developed computer system that will "learn" over time to optimize the building's efficiency. The building will be located just inside the NASA Ames security

gate on a now-vacant lot to the north of the Moffett Historic District.

NASA plans to spend \$20.6 million on the new 50,000-square-foot building, which Swinerton Inc. is under contract to construct by the fall of 2010.

The building has been named "Sustainability Base" in homage to the location of the first

moon landing, called "Tranquility Base" by astronaut Neil Armstrong.

The building is supposed to fetch the highest rating possible for its green design: LEED platinum. There are other LEED platinum buildings in Silicon Valley, but Ames is shooting for "platinum plus," Zornetzer said.

"We're really shooting to blow the lid off the top of the scale here."

A sophisticated computer system will work with sensors first developed on spacecraft to mea-

The building will use 90 percent less water than a conventional building by recycling its own water and using rainwater for irrigation of native plants.

Construction will start in September with the digging of 72 geothermal wells, taking advantage of the earth's temperature for cooling and heating by circulating a special fluid deep into the ground.

The research center was able to pay for the project by successfully proposing the idea through a program to replace NASA's aging buildings all over the country.

When a rare opportunity knocks,



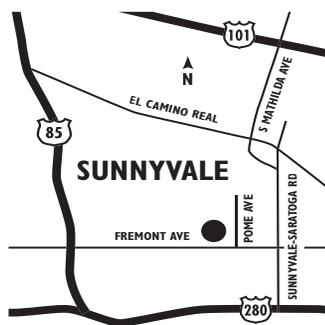
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**"We're really shooting to blow the lid off the top of the (LEED) scale here."**

STEVE ZORNETZER

sure wind velocity and direction, letting it know when to open windows for ventilation. The building's computer system will also be able to "go on the Web and get weather forecasts and optimize its energy use in real time," Zornetzer said.

Consideration of conference room schedules would also allow the computer to turn the air conditioning on only when necessary.

In order to "take this building off the grid completely," Zornetzer said, Ames is in talks with two companies to use fuel cells to generate electricity. Though the fuel cells would be powered by natural gas, they will have little or no emissions and a "much smaller footprint than other forms of producing energy," Zornetzer said.

It will be the first new building at Ames in 25 years, Zornetzer said.

Partnering in the design is a firm led by William McDonough, the architect who helped Google design its futuristic building concept proposed for an empty lot near Google's Mountain View headquarters. Though the Google building could compete with the Sustainability Base as the greenest office building ever built, that project is now on hold due to Google's financial belt-tightening.

For more information, including a video on the Sustainability Base, visit [www.nasa.gov/centers/ames/greenspace](http://www.nasa.gov/centers/ames/greenspace).

E-mail Daniel DeBolt at [ddebolt@mv-voice.com](mailto:ddebolt@mv-voice.com)



An artist's rendition of NASA Ames' Sustainability Base

# Viewpoint

- EDITORIAL
- YOUR LETTERS
- GUEST OPINIONS

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All views must include a home address and contact phone number. Published letters will also appear on the web site, [www.MountainViewOnline.com](http://www.MountainViewOnline.com), and occasionally on the Town Square forum.

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### ■ EDITORIAL THE OPINION OF THE VOICE

## Eshoo sidesteps raucous factor in health care forums

For Rep. Anna Eshoo, the low-tech telephone, coupled with a high-tech telephone network, proved to be the best way to filter out the noise — everything from incoherent right-wing ranting to straightforward but harsh talk from constituents — over pending health care legislation.

The strategy worked like a charm Aug. 19, after Rep. Eshoo's staff quickly threw together a schedule to conduct several teleconferences for residents of the 14th District, which includes Mountain View. Three more such teleconferences, which her staff is calling "telephone town hall meetings," were scheduled for Monday and Thursday of this week.

The "telephone town hall" gambit proved effective, but there was some confusion early in the process, due to the short notice, about how to take part. Participants were told on Eshoo's Web site that they had to sign up there, but it turned out the requirement applied only to constituent voters who lived outside San Mateo County and wanted to participate. The automated calling system was adjusted to contact registered district voters who live in the county and are not on the do-not-call lists. Callers were invited to ask questions by an Eshoo staff member, who introduced participants one at a time, giving a first name and hometown, somewhat like a radio call-in show.

Overall, the congresswoman handled the occasion with aplomb, showing a broad knowledge of what the core legislation will and won't do should it ever be passed. And she made clear to one questioner that no bill has actually passed the House yet, although three versions have made it out of different committees and will have to be blended into one approved measure before being sent to the Senate.

If both houses pass a bill, the final version produced by a House/Senate conference committee must then be approved by both houses before it is sent to President Barack Obama for his signature.

Will the final legislation include a public option? Eshoo strongly supported this in the town hall meeting last week, but it is looking dicey. What seems clear is that she and House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, D-San Francisco, along with other members of the Bay Area delegation, are committed to passage of a strong health care bill.

The telephone discussions won't make sensational headlines or be covered by Fox News, and are an excellent platform for Eshoo to lead a reasoned discussion about the pros and cons of the health care legislation. Nevertheless, we agree with those constituents who say Eshoo should hold several face-to-face town hall meetings despite the threat of heckling, chanting or other childish behavior.

In fact, on Tuesday Eshoo announced that she would be holding one in-person town hall meeting on health care. The meeting is Wednesday, Sept. 2, at Gunn High School in Palo Alto.

We're looking forward to it. Rep. Eshoo is more than capable of holding her own against those who let their emotions do the talking on this subject. (And here on the Peninsula, she can probably expect a good deal of support from the audience anyway.) This issue is simply too important to let it pass by our congressional district without a thorough — and we hope rational — debate.

### ■ LETTERS VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

#### GET ENGAGED ON COLLEGE BOARD APPOINTMENT

Editor:

The Foothill-De Anza Community College Board of Trustees has posted on its Web site the names of applicants for the seat that Hal Plotkin has vacated, along with their resumes and letters of application. The League of Women Voters urges the community to take a moment to read this important information and to write to the Foothill-De Anza Board of Trustees with their comments.

Why is it important for the public to do this? The Hal Plotkin seat will be the third seat that has been filled by an appointment (There is no competition for the two seats that were up for election this year as the incumbents were not challenged.) While it appears that these appointments were unavoidable, it has meant that the issues of the college district have not been talked about in an open forum for some time, and these issues are important. They include the appointment of a new chancellor, the closing of a budget gap, decisions about a partnership with UC Santa Cruz and the NASA Ames Research Center at Moffett Field, and implementation of Measure C.

The Board of Trustees will appoint the new trustee at its Aug. 31 board meeting after interviews. For up-to-date information on the applicants, go to [www.fhda.edu](http://www.fhda.edu) and click on "Applicants for Trustee Vacancy."

**Sue Graham, president,  
League of Women Voters  
Los Altos-Mountain View**

#### CLOSING LINE 34 WOULD BE SHORTSIGHTED

Editor:

My 76-year-old mother recently moved to Mountain View to be close to me and my children. While her health is excellent, her eyesight and stamina are not as good as they once were, making public transit a critical city service for her. Who knows how long she will be able to drive to the grocery store: already, she feels unsafe driving at night.

As a result, when she was evaluating houses to buy, she had one vital objective: proximity to shopping and transit. We felt very lucky when she found a house close to us and to VTA Line 34. But now we hear that the VTA is considering eliminating this line entirely, leaving hundreds of seniors, including my mother, stranded ("Line 34 bus service hangs in the balance," Aug. 21).

I am shocked by this. At a time when the city is making lots of noise about — and spending lots of money on — environmental responsibility and development of housing close to transit, to even consider eliminating a bus line seems hypocritical at worst and short-sighted at best. Not to mention the fact that the recent expansion of the low-cost senior housing at Hackett and Sierra Vista will leave even more seniors, lured here by the accessibility of the area, high and dry if this line goes away.

Do we have a commitment to seniors? Do we have a commitment to environmental responsibility and social justice? What does Mountain View stand for anyway?

**Anne Cheilek  
Sierra Vista Avenue**



## ■ GUEST OPINION

## Our representatives should fight closure of Line 34

By Art Takahara

First, I would like to thank the *Voice* on its excellent coverage of the VTA meeting recently on the proposed closure of bus Line 34 ("Line 34 bus service hangs in the balance," Aug. 21). Both the coverage of the meeting and your editorial ("Save Line 34, a lifeline for seniors") were very timely.

I also spoke at this meeting, but I think we need to really review the whole issue in proper perspective in order to have a chance to save the line.

I have been involved with the VTA regarding Bus 34 for the past 20 years. While on the City Council in the early 1990s there was a move by the VTA to close the route through Sylvan Avenue. We held a neighborhood meeting, and after

much discussion they chose to keep the line open. Then a few years ago they finally dropped the line.

For years, the importance of Line 34 was that it was the one line that weaved between the major roads from El Camino to Middlefield, and from the Palo Alto border to the Sunnyvale border. As years went by, the line has been shortened to where it no longer covers the east-to-west borders.

For this route to be successful we need to take it back to these borders, and also stop right at the Senior Center and other senior facilities besides the present ones.

Ridership numbers should not be the only criteria for closing a route. There are many other routes in the VTA system with less ridership that are not targeted to be closed.

The proposed savings of \$181,000 is a small number compared to the total that is being sought for budget reduction. Let's look at other alternatives for reducing the budget.

The bottom line of whether Bus 34 stays or not is not based on the criteria as mentioned above. It is a political vote of the full board of the VTA, which represents all the cities of Santa Clara County.

Our mayor and City Council should contact the VTA board members and let them know that Mountain View wants this line to stay, and that we want to see a new route that serves more of the community. I believe there still is hope.

*Art Takahara is a former mayor of Mountain View. He lives on Foxborough Drive.*

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## ■ GUEST OPINION

El Camino Hospital Board  
should answer to taxpayers

By Bill Krepick

Bravo for your editorial, "Hospital out of touch on raises" (Aug. 14). You are right on with your criticism of the El Camino Hospital Board. It is unfortunate that they do not understand that as a nonprofit, taxpayer-funded community hospital they are responsible to the community — not to their employees and executives.

We, the taxpayers, have essentially financed ECH's success for 40 years with our hundreds of millions of dollars in tax assessments, below-market tax exempt bonds, and tax savings for its nonprofit status. The board seems to believe that the ECH branding slogan ("Whatever it takes") means it should spend more on health care, not improve the economics of health care delivery and provide cost effective and affordable health care. No wonder we have a health care crisis in this country!

It is sad that Wes Alles, in his guest editorial ("Hospital salaries are carefully considered"), responds with the same tired monologue of how ECH strives to pay its executives a fair compensation to reward them for their superior performance. For once I would

like to hear how ECH has brought improvements and efficiencies to health care delivery, rather than simply spending money on image advertising, new programs and institutes that are never subjected to financial analysis, and other assorted expenditures that reward its executives and favorite physicians with handsome pay.

The Los Gatos Hospital acquisition was initially pegged at \$45 million, and is now well over \$100 million in cost. ECH refuses to report on the financial performance of the Los Gatos hospital. The new Mountain View hospital was supposed to open in June and now it is delayed until October. The once unassailable 10 percent operating margin has now shrunk to the 2 percent range. I can't wait to see how the contract negotiations go with the nurses and service employees.

ECH claimed over \$70 million in Community Benefits last fiscal year — and when pressed they footnoted a \$35 million "mistake" in accounting — admitting that they never should have included Medicare shortfalls in Community Benefits. You call this responsible fiscal management?

*Bill Krepick lives on Meadow Lane.*

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■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

## A space to settle in

LIBERAL LIBATIONS, GOOD FOOD AND A SANE DECIBEL LEVEL MAKE SCOTTY'S IN PALO ALTO A GREAT HANGOUT FOR ADULTS

By Dale F. Bentson

Scotty's is that cozy combination of well-stocked bar and well-made comfort food that easily converts first-time customers into regular clients. The convenient Emerson Street location helps too, sited between University and Hamilton Avenues in downtown Palo Alto, where the closed Cafe Fino once stood.

Inside, the amiable, 10-table, 15-seat bar area is Art Deco-styled, with the wood furniture crisp and walls a soothing celadon. While there are two big screen TVs, the expanse is not

bombarded by a competing juke box. Conversation is doable; this is a space made for mature adults to relax and socialize.

Owner Scott Bailey learned the business while managing the bar at the nearby Empire Tap Room for 13 years. "I had wanted my own business for some time," he said. "The foot traffic is continuous here, just fantastic." Scotty's has been open since late April, and Bailey says he has seen the business increase every week since inception.

Bar food is usually simple and straightforward, and everything

► See **SCOTTY'S**, page 16



The skirt steak sandwich at Scotty's Bar is served with a side of fries.

VERONICA WEBER

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**Buon appetito!** Chef Marco Salvi

### SCALOPPINE DI VITELLO AL MARSALA

- 1 pound veal medallions
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- All-purpose flour
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 large shallot, minced
- 1 pound fresh button mushrooms, sliced
- ½ cup dry Marsala wine
- 2 clove garlic, chopped
- 1 tablespoon butter

#### Preparation instructions:

Add 2 tablespoon olive oil in a skillet over medium-high heat. Lightly season the veal with salt and pepper coat each medallion in flour, shaking to remove excess flour. Place in the heated skillet until golden brown on each side, about 5 minutes. Remove medallions from the skillet, place in a baking dish covered with foil, and keep warm in the preheated oven until ready to serve.

Heat the remaining olive oil in the skillet over medium low heat, and sauté the shallot, garlic and mushrooms, scraping up any browned bits, until shallots are tender. Increase heat to medium high, and stir in the Marsala. Cook and stir until thickened. Remove from heat, and whisk in the butter until melted. Pour sauce over the veal and serve with a wedge of lemon. Serves 4



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**SCOTTY'S**

► Continued from page 15

is well-made, fresh and tasty. Oswaldo Arellano, also from the Empire Tap Room, ably handles the kitchen.

The buffalo chicken wings (\$8), crisp and meaty, were brought to the table blazing hot from the fryer. Served with a side of blue cheese dressing and a piquant sassy red sauce made with cayenne, Tabasco and chili flakes, these are not for the meek.

The bruschetta (\$6) is a take-off on the Tuscan classic. Scotty's version substituted cilantro for basil and added onion to the diced Roma tomatoes on garlic-rubbed sourdough bread. The five-piece presentation made for a sparkling dinner appetizer but

could also have served as a good munchie later in the evening.

I was somewhat disappointed with "mom's three-bean chili" (\$7). It was supposed to be made with cannellini (misspelled on the menu), white and red kidney beans, tomato and onion, with a blend of spices. Since cannellini beans are white, I was not sure what the other "white beans" were. In any case, there were only a couple white beans in evidence and the chili was bland. I mentioned this to my server and the chili was graciously removed from my check.

The margherita pizza (\$11), piping hot from the oven, gooey and flavor-intense, had just the right blend of mozzarella, chopped fresh basil and light tomato sauce. The crust was

► Continued on next page

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► Continued from previous page

thin but not cracker-like. It was the best pizza I've had in some time. Four other varieties with meat run \$12 to \$15 per each 10-inch pizza.

The tender, marinated grilled chicken breast (\$14) was served with a heap of fresh zucchini and carrots. I opted for the French fries over the other choices of seasonal vegetables, potato salad or steamed rice. The fries were amongst the best around town: crisp, not starchy, and perfectly fried.

Marinated skirt steak sandwich (\$14) was a mammoth affair, complete with sauteed onions on sourdough bread and pile of fries. The problem was in the eating. The sandwich was so thick and cumbersome it needed sawing in half. Yet the puny knife provided wouldn't cut through warm butter. What started as a sandwich soon looked more demolition zone than an appetizing entree, though the deconstructed parts were tasty.

The cheeseburger (\$12), on the other hand, was manageable. Flavorful angus beef, oozing with jack cheese, made for one delicious burger. Again, the side of fries was the way to go.

The BBQ beef sandwich (\$11) was piled high with thin slices of tender, melt-in-the-mouth beef. The sauce was on the tame side but didn't take away from the overall flavors, which were enhanced with sauteed onions. This sandwich was served on toasted sourdough bread, which was easily cut into controllable pieces.

The vegetarian sandwich was a good deal at \$8. Portobello mushrooms were improved with sauteed onions and served on a crisp sweet roll. Portobello mushrooms, by the way, are common crimini mushrooms allowed unrestrained growth.

Several pasta dishes are also on the menu, as well as a non-sandwich skirt steak, broiled salmon, and a half-dozen side dishes that make great nibblers.

At present Scotty's offers no desserts, although a half-dozen house-made small sugar donuts with a Chambord (black raspberry) dipping sauce can be had for \$3.

The wine list is serviceable enough for a bar: about a dozen and half California labels covering as broad a spectrum as possible. Lots of beers, but, at present, nothing on tap. Cocktails are well constructed and generous.

Scotty's is everything a good adult hang-out bar should be: clean and friendly, with a sane decibel level, good food, quality libations and one of the best locations in town. ■

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Century 16: 12:15, 2:45, 5:25, 7:55 & 10:20 p.m.

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#### DISTRICT 9 (R) (NOT REVIEWED)

Century 16: 11:50 a.m.; 1:30, 2:50, 4:40, 6:15, 7:30, 9 & 10:25 p.m.

Century 20: 11:25 a.m.; 2, 3:20, 4:45, 6, 7:30, 8:50 & 10:10 p.m.

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Century 16: 12:30, 2:40, 4:50, 7 & 9:05 p.m. In 3D at 11:25 a.m.; 1:35, 3:45, 5:50, 8:05 & 10:15 p.m.

Century 20: 12:45, 3, 5:10, 7:20 & 9:35 p.m. Sun. also at 10:35 a.m. In 3D at 11:50 a.m.; 1:55, 4:05, 6:15, 8:25 & 10:35 p.m.

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#### G-FORCE (PG) (NOT REVIEWED)

Century 20: 12:20, 2:35 & 4:55 p.m.

#### THE GOODS: LIVE HARD. SELL HARD. (R) (NOT REVIEWED) Century 20: 12:35 p.m.

#### HALLOWEEN II (R) (NOT REVIEWED)

Century 16: 12:25, 2:55, 5:30, 8 & 10:30 p.m.

Century 20: 12:05, 1:20, 2:40, 4, 5:20, 6:35, 8, 9:10 & 10:30 p.m. Sun. also at 10:45 a.m.

#### THE HANGOVER (R) ★★★1/2

Century 20: 12:25, 3:05, 5:30, 8:05 & 10:30 p.m.

#### HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE (PG)

★★★1/2

Century 16: 11:25 a.m.; 2:50, 6:35 & 10 p.m.

Century 20: 12:15, 3:35, 7:05 & 10:25 p.m.

#### IN THE LOOP (NOT RATED) ★★★1/2 Guild: 3:30 & 8:30 p.m.

#### INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS (R) ★★★

Century 16: 11:30 a.m.; 12:40, 1:50, 3, 4:10, 5:20, 6:30, 7:40, 8:50 & 10 p.m.

Century 20: 11:25 a.m.; noon, 12:50, 1:45, 2:45, 3:30, 4:20, 5:15, 6, 7, 7:45, 8:45, 9:30 & 10:20 p.m. Sun. also at 10:30 a.m.

#### IT MIGHT GET LOUD (PG) ★★★

Aquarius: 2, 4:30, 7 & 9:30 p.m.

#### JULIE & JULIA (PG-13) ★★★

Century 16: 1, 4, 7:10 & 10:05 p.m.

Century 20: 11:30 a.m.; 2:15, 5, 7:50 & 10:35 p.m.

#### PLAY THE GAME (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED)

Century 16: 11:35 a.m.; 2:20, 4:50, 7:20 & 9:50 p.m.

#### PONYO (G) ★★★1/2

Century 16: 1:40, 4:45, 7:25 & 10:10 p.m.

Century 20: 2, 4:30, 7 & 9:25 p.m. Fri.-Sat. & Mon.-Thu. also at 11:30 a.m.

#### POST GRAD (PG-13) (NOT REVIEWED)

Century 16: 9:20 p.m. Century 20: 7:15 & 9:50 p.m.

#### SHORTS (PG) ★★ Century 16: 11:40 a.m.; 2, 4:30 & 6:55 p.m.

Century 20: 11:35 a.m.; 1:50, 4:15, 6:55 & 9:15 p.m.

#### TAKING WOODSTOCK (R) (NOT REVIEWED)

Century 16: 1:40, 4:30 & 7:20 p.m. Fri.-Sat. also at 10:05 p.m.

Century 20: 1:35, 4:25, 7:10 & 10 p.m. Sun. also at 10:50 a.m.

#### THIRST (R) (NOT REVIEWED) Aquarius: 2:30, 5:30 & 8:30 p.m.

#### THE TIME TRAVELER'S WIFE (PG-13) ★★1/2

Century 16: 1:10, 4:20, 7:15 & 10:05 p.m.

Century 20: 1, 3:50, 6:45 & 9:20 p.m. Sun. also at 10:30 a.m.

*Note: Screenings are for Friday through Tuesday only.*

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For show times, plot synopses and more information about any films playing at the Aquarius, Guild and Park, visit [www.LandmarkTheatres.com](http://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](http://www.mv-voice.com) and click on movies.



### MOVIE REVIEWS

#### (500) DAYS OF SUMMER ★★★1/2

(Century 16) This Generation Y story goes against the romantic-comedy grain. Boy meets girl. Boy thinks he understands girl. Boy oh boy. The film takes the male point of view; that's not to say that Zoey Deschanel doesn't get a good role. But we follow the roller coaster of Tom (Joseph Gordon-Levitt). When he strikes up a romance with Deschanel's Summer, we've been warned. Not only have we seen Tom distraught from their eventual breakup, but the film's narrator has told us, "You should know up front: This is not a love story." The film's brilliant gimmick is to flip through the 500 days of the relationship as if they were in a Rolodex. With very funny observational humor, screenwriters Scott Neustadter and Michael H. Weber add insight to the formula. *Rated PG-13 for sexual material and language. One hour, 35 minutes.* — P.C.

#### ADAM ★1/2

(Guild) "Adam" is a tale about the relationship between Beth Buchwald (Rose Byrne) and Adam Raki (Hugh Dancy), who has Asperger's syndrome, a mild form of autism. He can't make eye contact, can't gauge people's reactions to him, can't stop talking about the things that interest him: astronomy, space. Written and directed by Max Mayer, the film is marketed as a romantic comedy and is sweet and well-intentioned, but it lacks credibility on many levels. The relationship doesn't feel real, and both Adam and Beth live in ridiculously large (for New York) apartments, on a street that has two, maybe three, cars driving down it during midday. What universe does this New York exist on? *Rated PG-13 for thematic material, sexual content and language. 99 minutes.* — R.P.

#### THE HANGOVER ★★★1/2

(Century 16, Century 20) Doug Billings (Justin Bartha) wants simply to have fun with his friends before tying the knot. Teacher Phil Wenneck (Bradley) is a smart rabble-rouser. Alan Garner (Zach Galifianakis) is a well-meaning misfit. And Stu Price (Ed Helms) has allowed an abusive girlfriend to quash him. Doug, Phil, Alan and Stu drive to Las Vegas for the bachelor party and alcohol-fueled debauchery. Stu, Phil and Alan wake up the next morning in a trashed hotel room with no memory of the previous night. They also discover two unusual guests in the room: a baby boy and a Bengal tiger. Plus, Doug is nowhere to be found. Panic sets in as the trio tries to piece together the night's events. *Rated: R for drug material, pervasive language, sexual content and nudity. 1 hour, 40 minutes.* — T.H.

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**HARRY POTTER AND THE HALF-BLOOD PRINCE**

★★★★1/2

(Century 16, Century 20) Based on the penultimate novel of J.K. Rowling's seven-novel series, director David Yates' latest "Harry Potter" film makes Rowling's characters and environs richer and deeper with (coming of) age. Hogwarts headmaster Albus Dumbledore (Michael Gambon) focuses on preparing Harry (Daniel Radcliffe) to defeat evil. The key to defeating dark wizard Voldemort is a memory locked away in the mind of his former professor Horace Slughorn (Jim Broadbent, brilliant here), who reluctantly agrees to return to Hogwarts. As Harry plies for Slughorn's secret, the school is thick with romantic entanglements. Harry's best friends Hermione (Emma Watson) and Ron (Rupert Grint) are meant for each other, though they haven't yet acknowledged it; meanwhile, Harry pines for Ron's sister Ginny (Bonnie Wright). *Rated PG for scary images, some violence, language and mild sensuality. Two hours, 33 minutes.* — P.C.

**INGLOURIOUS BASTERDS**

(Century 16, Century 20) There's no mistaking "Inglourious Basterds" for anything other than a Quentin Tarantino film. "Inglourious Basterds" is a comedy for the film-savvy. The crux of the plot is the story of Shoshanna Dreyfus (Melanie Laurent), a Jewish survivor of a Nazi slaughter, as she plots revenge against the Nazis in general and, in particular, the man who killed her family. Now hiding in plain sight as the proprietress of a Parisian cinema, Shoshanna falls into the opportunity to wipe out the Nazi leadership at the premiere of a propaganda film. Meanwhile, the British government targets the same premiere. The whole enchilada turns out to be a self-referential commentary on the power of the medium, figuratively as propaganda or violent entertainment, and literally as the highly flammable fuel to a fire. *Rated R for strong graphic violence, language and brief sexuality. Two hours, 33 minutes.* — P.C.

**IN THE LOOP** ★★★★★1/2

(Aquarius) Politics, clearly, are comedy gold (just ask Jon Stewart and Stephen Colbert), and yet smart political comedies seem to arrive at theaters only once or twice a decade. Thanks to "In the Loop," it's again time to think and laugh at the same time. One part "Dr. Strangelove" and two parts "The Office," "In the Loop" is a shaky-cam satire that savages government movers and shakers on both sides of the Atlantic. The plot concerns the secret committee plotting a war in the Middle East on behalf of the U.S. President and U.K. Prime Minister, and those trying to block the war with strategic leaks and other maneuvers. With a bite that's going to

leave a mark, "In the Loop" is the year's best comedy to date. *Not MPAA rated. One hour, 49 minutes.* — P.C.

**JULIE & JULIA** ★★★★★

(Century 16, Century 20) "Julie" rests heavily on the sprightly charm of its two lead actresses, and there's plenty to go around. Its structure unfurls in overlapping roles. There's Julie herself (Meryl Streep) as she embarks on a lifelong love of cuisine while in Paris with State Department husband Paul (Stanley Tucci). And Julie Powell (Amy Adams), an unfulfilled government worker in Queens, N.Y., who sets herself a lofty goal: cook every recipe in Julia's enigmatic bible and blog about it. In the end Ephron doesn't quite seal the deal — surrendering nuance for fluff and rendering the climax flat as a failed soufflé — but the whole is a tasty confection that goes down with ease. *Rated: PG-13 for language and mature themes. 2 hours, 4 minutes.* — J.A.

**PONYO** ★★★★★1/2

(Century 16, Century 20) The new work from master Japanese animator Hayao Miyazaki, "Ponyo," is wondrous, weird and sweetly innocent. The story concerns the fish-y offspring of the androgynous undersea wizard Fujimoto (Liam Neeson), a gruff professor who can't understand his daughter's defiance. The daughter, Brunnhilde, is one of a school of curious fish with humanoid faces. When Brunnhilde swims away from home, she washes up by the cliffside home of 5-year-old Sosuke (Frankie Jonas), who promptly adopts her and names her Ponyo (Noah Cyrus). Ponyo wants to be a real girl but there's a serious problem. The magical creature isn't where she belongs, and as a consequence, the world has been thrown out of balance. *Rated G. One hour, 41 minutes.* — P.C.

**SHORTS** ★★★★★

(Century 16, Century 20) The gimmick of "Shorts" is a pun: Not only is the movie for the short-pants set, but it's constructed of six short films,

the episodes shuffled to be training-wheels Tarantino. In the corporatized town of Black Falls, everyone works for Black Box Unlimited Worldwide Industries, Inc., under the watchful glare of CEO Carbon Black (James Spader). Eleven-year-old eccentric Toe Thompson (Jimmy Bennett) languishes at Black Falls Company School, where he's bullied by Mr. Black's spawn: Cole Black (Devon Gearhart) and Helvetica Black (Jolie Vanier), the leader of the pack. Everything changes when Toe happens upon a rainbow-colored "wishing rock." Naturally, the wishing rock changes hands with troublesome regularity, conjuring up alligators, a pterodactyl, a mucus monster, and an unlimited supply of brand-name candy bars, among other inconveniences. The spelled-out lesson: "Be sure you are wishing for something worth wishing for." *Rated PG for mild action and some rude humor. One hour, 29 minutes.* — P.C.

**THE TIME TRAVELER'S WIFE** ★★★★★1/2

(Century 16, Century 20) Adapted from Audrey Niffenegger's novel by Bruce Joel Rubin, "The Time Traveler's Wife" isn't very deep, but it can be taken as a metaphor for lovingly coping with the inconvenience and emotional whiplash of illness. More to the point, this love story made up of signs and wonders suggests savoring the time you have. Rachel McAdams plays Clare Abshire, a Chicago artist destined to marry the time-hopping Henry DeTamble (Eric Bana). Plagued by a genetic anomaly dubbed "chrono-impairment," Henry unpredictably and against his will jumps in time, making him the ultimate in unreliable romantic partners. *Rated PG-13 for thematic elements, brief disturbing images, nudity and sexuality. One hour, 48 minutes.* — P.C.

MOVIE CRITICS

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



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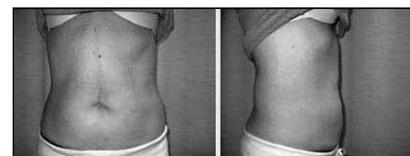
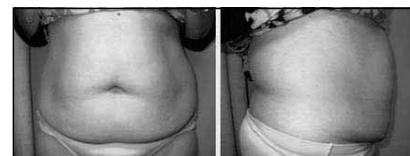
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# Father of Two Returns to the Slopes after Frightening Accident

## Herniated/Bulging Disc Patient Successfully Avoids Back Surgery

LAST JANUARY - Kevin Janover, a 42-year old father of two children took a hard tumble off the side of a slope and into the pine trees after a day of "black diamond" skiing. After that day, Kevin ruminated over the fact that he might never click on his skis again and feel the joy of skiing down his favorite mountain in Tahoe. Although Kevin did not have any head injuries he did suffer severe back injuries. As he tumbled head over heels into the pines he "felt a strong pop or crack" in his lower back that sent a sharp pain down his left leg. He struggled to his feet and after disconnecting his skis flagged down his 12-year-old son, Jake, who had stopped for help when he saw his father fall. "I think I can make it down the slope," he told his son Jake, "but I've got a feeling this is going to get worse."

Kevin discovered after one hospital visit and an MRI that he had a bulging / herniated disc in his lower back. Incapacitated by lower back and leg pain for months, Kevin faced an upcoming surgery. "I could not stand the pain but wanted to avoid surgery at all costs," he says, "and you never know what you will feel like after back surgery. If it goes bad, you can't undo it." Skeptical about surgery; Kevin sought second, third and fourth opinions. "I did two epidural injections in my back and even tried physical therapy. But nothing was solving my issue."

"We discovered that the pain I was experiencing was sciatica and had resulted from the bulging disc, so I researched surgery alternatives online and read about spinal decompression therapy and this new machine, the DRX 9000," Kevin says.

Kevin lives in Mountain View, CA and was looking for a local practitioner. He found Dr. Shervin Parvini, D.C. and DRX 9000 advocate. "He

limped in and I could see right away the kind of pain he was in," says Dr. Parvini. "After a careful evaluation, I decided that he was a good candidate for the DRX9000 spinal decompression treatment."

After two weeks, Kevin felt markedly better. Three weeks later, Kevin lost his limp. "I was really worried that I had permanently damaged my body," Kevin says, "and now I can gladly say that I avoided back surgery." After six weeks of spinal decompression treatment, Kevin completed rehabilitation, could function pain-free and returned to his normal life. Kevin and Jake anxiously wait for the 2009 ski season in Tahoe.

### What it feels like to have a disc problem:

People with bulging, herniated or degenerative discs often experience one or all of the following symptoms:

- Pain or pressure in back or neck
- Extreme discomfort while sitting or standing for long periods of time
- Sharp, shooting pains from back to legs or neck to arms
- Tingling (a "pins-and-needles" sensation) or numbness in the leg or buttock

### How People Develop Disc Problems:

The most common way people injure their backs and discs are NOT with a slip and fall. Most back injuries are the result of years of bad posture, improper lifting and wear and tear.



- Bending & Twisting – Gardening, cleaning
- Lifting Heavy Loads – Moving furniture
- Wear & Tear – Daily improper lifting for many years
- Repetitive Motions – Extended keyboard or computer usage
- Injuries – Auto accidents, sports or workout injuries
- Stress – Increased muscle tension
- Overweight – 20 lbs additional weight increases the likelihood of bulging discs by 300%

### Solving the problem WITHOUT Surgery:

After advising patients to experiment with medications, exercise, physical therapy and other potentially unproductive methods of pain relief, many doctors will prescribe surgery as the best and final solution for back and neck pain. The problem is that according to a recent article in the Journal of the American Medical Association\*, patients who did surgery vs. no-surgery had the same results!

Like Kevin Janover, millions of back and neck pain sufferers are willing to do anything to alleviate their painful symptoms. Until recently, surgery – though drastic and often unsuccessful – seemed like the "hail mary" solution to the problem.

### DR. PARVINI D.C. AT SILICON VALLEY SPINE & DISC CENTER:

My name is Dr. Shervin Parvini, D.C. and I have been successfully treating people with pain for the past eight years.

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*"I have been in pain for the last 30 years and nothing seemed to help. After my first appointment I was able to take a long pain free walk for the first time in two years! My pain is completely gone and I've been able to be active again."*

**Abigale T. –Retired**

*"When I came here 2 months ago it was the worst I'd ever felt. My back pain was already bad enough, but when it started to shoot down my left leg, that's when I knew I was in real trouble. I'm a sheet-metal worker so I can't afford my back to quit on me. It's been over a year now since Dr. Parvini accepted me as a patient and I haven't had any pain since!"*

**David M. - Steelworker**

*"I couldn't sit, walk upstairs, or sleep comfortably and driving was getting worse and worse. But the MOST FRUSTRATING THING was that I couldn't bend down to tie my shoes. I just wore sandals all the time, for almost a year! I took heavy pain killers just to make it through the day. So fast forward to today... I almost cried when I was able to put on my shoes again. My pain is completely gone! I'm back to Normal!!"*

**Martin G.- Retired**

*I came to see Dr. Parvini on crutches and a herniated disc and at high risk of surgery (which I refused). Back then I was not able to walk or sit and was in severe pain which even the epidural spine shots did not help me much with. The treatments were VERY successful! I never thought "Normal" could feel so good again.*

**Stephen P. – High Tech Semiconductors**

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