

Mountain View VOICE

Winter
Class Guide
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DECEMBER 7, 2012 VOLUME 20, NO. 47

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MICHELLE LE

SEASON'S MISGIVINGS

Julian Mendez experiences a change of heart about meeting Santa. The 4-year-old clings to his mother, Clotilde Gres, as she tries to deposit him on Santa's lap. The visit from the jolly old elf was part of the city's annual Community Tree Lighting Celebration, held on Monday, Dec. 3. For more photos from the festivities, go to page 10.

Neighbors threaten to sue over McKelvey plan

By Daniel DeBolt

A plan to turn McKelvey Park into a flood detention basin has drawn the ire of neighbors who say they may sue over plans that may increase noise from the park's baseball fields while removing the large redwood trees that shade their homes.

Neighbors Elizabeth Thompson and Tapan Bhat said on Tuesday that a group of will oppose the redesign of the park as a flood basin at the Dec. 11 City Council

meeting. It is up for a vote along with a larger Permanente Creek flood project that may or may not include a similar basin at the Cuest Annex.

Neighbors say the plan to lower the park by 15 feet flips the orientation of the park's highly used baseball fields, putting the bleachers up against neighboring homes where there is now just an outfield. And nearly all of the park's trees will be removed, including a row of "old, big, gorgeous redwood trees" along their back fences that create a noise

buffer with the park, Thompson said. The footprint of the trees would be replaced by the concrete walls around the edge of the flood basin that double as bleachers and walkways.

"They've got all the noise and lights where the people's houses are, which doesn't seem terribly logical," said Bhat, one of a dozen homeowners adjacent to the park.

"It seems that once it was brought up it should have been

► See **MCKELVEY**, page 9

Council OKs plastic bag ban

STARTING IN APRIL, PLASTIC GROCERY BAGS WILL BE THING OF THE PAST

By Daniel DeBolt

The days of plastic grocery bags in Mountain View are numbered. City Council members voted on Tuesday to ban the distribution of most plastic bags in Mountain View starting on Earth Day next year.

"There have been a few emails saying, 'This is silly, don't you have more important things to do?'" said council member Ronit Bryant. "This is not silly. This is about our waterways basically being clogged by plastic bags, this is about islands of plastic bags in the ocean. There are serious costs for the city every year."

With council members Tom Means and John Inks opposed,

council members voted 5-2 in favor of the ban, which is designed to encourage the use of reusable bags, beginning April 22, 2013. Grocery stores will still be able to offer paper bags, but at a minimum cost of 10 cents per bag, going up to 25 cents in two years. Restaurants and non-profit thrift stores are exempt.

"Protective" plastic bags will still be allowed for such items as meat, nuts and bolts at hardware stores, prescriptions, newspapers, dry cleaning and greeting cards, said Cynthia Palacio, senior analyst for the city's public works department.

Mountain View joined San Mateo County and several other

cities in Santa Clara County to do the environmental impact report necessary to propose the ordinance, saving the city the costs of the analysis. Palo Alto, San Jose and unincorporated Santa Clara County already have similar bans and council members said it's been well received in those areas.

Council member Laura Macias noted that in San Jose, after its ban was put in place, "the number of plastic bags found in a storm drain was reduced by 89 percent" and the number of bags on streets was "reduced by 59 percent."

"I would love to see that decrease of bags in Mountain View," she said "Every time I see one, I think it's a waste."

Not everyone is happy about the ordinance. Two residents raised concern about germs spreading in grocery stores from unwashed reusable grocery bags.

Tim James, a representative of the California State Grocers Association, supported the ban and said he had not heard any concern about the spread of germs from grocers or health inspectors. The association is in contact with "health safety officers in all 58 counties and we've never heard any concern," James said.

Inks and Means opposed what they saw as a limit on personal freedom.

► See **BAG BAN**, page 7

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**ACCREDITED CHEST PAIN CENTERS
TYPICALLY REDUCE MORTALITY BY 37%.**



WINTER WARNING.

**HEART ATTACKS CAN
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WINTER. WE'RE STRIKING
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CARDIOVASCULAR CARE.**

From left: Hardeep Ahluwalia, MD, medical director, Vascular Surgery, El Camino Hospital Los Gatos; James Joye, DO, director of research and education, Heart & Vascular Institute; Jane Lombard, MD, cardiologist; and Chad Rammohan, MD, medical director, Chest Pain Center and Cardiac Cath Lab.

Along with the inevitable colds and flu, winter can bring a significant rise in the incidence of heart attack. But El Camino Hospital can help. How? With quite possibly the finest cardiovascular program in the state. Our world-class specialists lead the way in the prevention and treatment of heart disease. That helped us earn designation in Mountain View as an Accredited Chest Pain Center — the first in the region! Studies show that fully Accredited Chest Pain Centers give quicker, better care, and can reduce mortality by 37 percent.* We screen patients immediately upon arrival to our ER, fast-tracking those who need immediate attention. We excel in the most advanced diagnostic and therapeutic interventional techniques. And we maintain an impressive “door-to-balloon” rate for rushing patients to the cath lab for lifesaving treatment. So this winter, fight heart disease — strike first by connecting with a physician from the Heart & Vascular Institute at El Camino Hospital.

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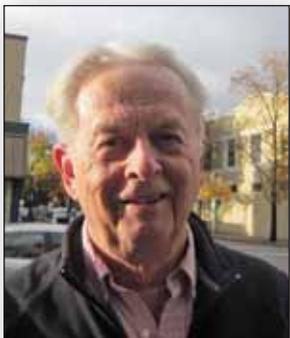
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*Sources: *Circulation: Journal of the American Heart Association*; also stated on the website of the Society of Cardiovascular Patient Care.

Voices

A R O U N D T O W N

Have you been feeling the effects of the rising cost of housing?



"The cost of housing is insane. It has been for 45 years. It doesn't seem to get any better."

Charles Class, Mountain View



"I moved out (to Mountain House) because it was little bit more affordable for me to get what I wanted. Being out here is kind of expensive so I commute a lot longer just to make something that's more affordable for me to live in."

Robert Sweat, Mountain House



"Yeah, I think I got affected by the rise in housing. I just renewed my lease and I think I got (an) 11-percent rise in the rent."

Carmen Tse, Mountain View



"No, because I bought my house over eight years ago, so it didn't impact me."

Lauren Weingran, Los Altos



"I have not been affected by the rising cost in housing."

Vijay Romani, Santa Clara

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2012 Income	1 Persons	2 Persons	3 Persons	4 Persons	5 Persons
Minimum Income (50% AMI)	\$36,750	\$42,000	\$47,250	\$52,500	\$56,700
Maximum Income (80% AMI)	\$53,000	\$60,600	\$68,150	\$75,700	\$81,800

The following groups will have priority for BMR apartments in the following order. Selection will then be based on a lottery system within each group.

1. Public safety employees of the City of Mountain View
2. Public school teachers who work in the City of Mountain View
3. Households who have lived in the City of Mountain View for at least two of the last four years.
4. Households who have worked in the City of Mountain View for at least two years.

To Obtain an Application

- Download it from the City's website at www.mountainview.gov under Announcements
- Call (650) 316-1211
- Come to the Community Development Department of City Hall located at 500 Castro Street in Mountain View between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (City offices closed Dec 24 – Jan 1)

Completed applications must be received or postmarked by December 21, 2012, 5 p.m. No late, faxed or incomplete applications will be accepted.
ONLY ONE APPLICATION PER HOUSEHOLD WILL BE CONSIDERED.

The City of Mountain View does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, physical or mental disability or any other Federal or State protected class in any of its policies, procedures, or practices. This nondiscrimination policy covers access and admission to services and employment provided by the City of Mountain View. Pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Mountain View will make reasonable efforts to accommodate persons with disabilities. If you require reasonable accommodations or have inquiries regarding our equal opportunity policies, please contact the Community Development Department at 650-903-6379. The hearing impaired can reach us through the California Relay System at 711 or (800) 735-2929.

LocalNews

■ CRIME BRIEFS

STOLEN CAR

Two young men were arrested in connection to a stolen car, which police found crashed and abandoned near the intersection of Shoreline Boulevard and Central Expressway last week.

The car, which had been reported stolen from another city, was a green Honda Accord. It was found crashed into a curb around 11 a.m. on Nov. 30, according to Sgt. Sean Thompson, public information officer for the Mountain View Police Department. When officers responded to the crash they discovered that the vehicle's airbags had been deployed and whoever had been driving had left the scene.

Police canvassed the area, Thompson said, and eventually apprehended two young men — Jose Escobar, an 18-year-old from Fresno; and Enrique Alchino, a 20-year-old from San Jose. The two were "soaking wet," according to Thompson, and each matched the descriptions provided by witnesses who saw men fleeing the site of the crash. Alchino was found at 240 Polaris St. Escobar was tracked down at the Safeway at 570 N. Shoreline Blvd.

They were both arrested for possession of stolen property and hit and run, Thompson said. They were booked into county jail.

LANDSCAPING TOOLS BURGLIED

Two gas-powered leaf blowers and a gas-powered edger were stolen from the garage of a single-family home on the 600 block of McCarty Avenue on Dec. 3, police said.

Investigators have no suspects, as no one saw who took the landscaping equipment out of the home's open garage sometime between 5 p.m. and 8 p.m., according to Sgt. Sean Thompson, public information officer for the Mountain View Police Department.

The leaf blowers were valued at about \$250 each and the edger was valued at about \$225, Thompson said. The victim, a 68-year-old man, told police that all of the pieces of equipment were made by the Echo brand.

■ POLICE LOG

AUTO BURGLARY

400 block Acalanes Dr., 12/01

STOLEN VEHICLE

100 block N. Whisman Rd., 11/30

BATTERY

600 block W. Dana St., 12/02

COMMERCIAL BURGLARY

200 block Almond Av., 12/03

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

700 block Palo Alto Av., 11/27

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A clean slate

OPERATION SECOND CHANCE GIVES LOW-LEVEL OFFENDERS A DO-OVER

By Nick Veronin

This holiday season, the Mountain View Police Department and Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office are giving a gift to those on the naughty list. Through the end of December, a month-long program called Operation Second Chance will effectively give a do-over to people wanted for a non-violent, misdemeanor criminal offense or an outstanding traffic violation.

The forgiveness program is only available to those wanted for non-violent misdemeanor and for those who have unresolved traffic violations, such as a speeding ticket, according to a press release from the MVPD. The program is "directed towards most misdemeanor warrants, no matter what the bail is, including those warrants stamped 'No Cite and Release,' and 'No Bail.'"

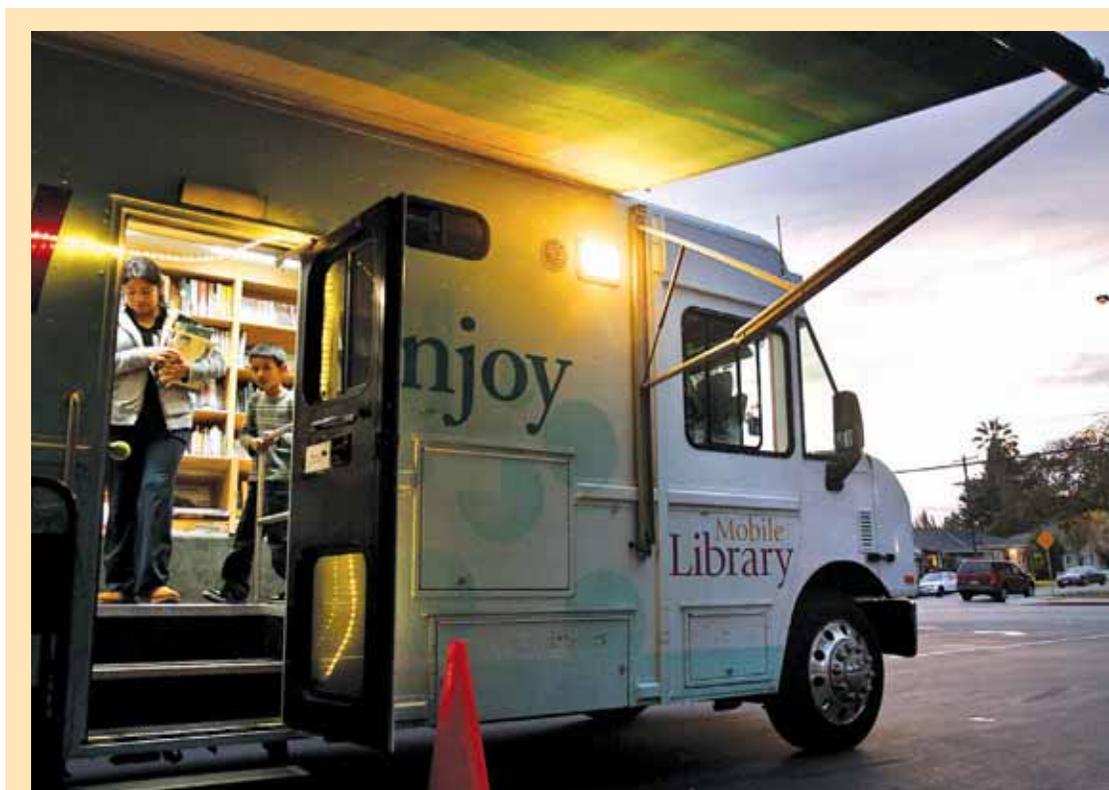
Those that qualify have the entire month of December to appear at any local police or sheriff's station and explain who they are. Those with warrants that meet the Operation Second Chance specifications will not be arrested or detained. Instead, they will be issued a new citation and court date.

Those wanted for a felony or a violent crime are not eligible for Operation Second Chance. "Persons with these types of warrants, however, are urged to take this opportunity to turn themselves in so they can take care of their matter in court," according to the police.

Now in its eighth year, the forgiveness program has proven "tremendously successful" in convincing low-level offenders to self-surrender, the press release said. More than 2,400 people have taken advantage of the program over the past seven years.

"We think it's good," said Sgt. Sean Thompson, public information officer for the MVPD. "It gives people a second chance to

► See **CLEAN SLATE**, page 9



MICHELLE LE

GOOGLE KEEPS BOOKMOBILE ROLLING

Books in hand, Claudia and her son Julio leave the Mountain View Bookmobile at Castro Elementary School on Dec. 4. On Tuesday, the City Council approved an \$89,000 donation from Google that will keep the city's bookmobile on the road through June of 2014. Originally purchased with a \$1 million grant from Google in 2006, the environmentally friendly, WiFi-equipped bookmobile stops at seven preschools, three corporate campuses, four senior facilities and Castro School. Over 70,900 items were checked out from it last year. With the new funds, two more schools will be served, and the library can begin loaning out laptops and tablet computers. Library director Rosanne Macek says the city is very fortunate to have Google's support.

Meeting: Little outcry over rise in cancer near toxic site

By Daniel DeBolt

Despite sensational TV news coverage, a rise in the number of people living near Mountain View's toxic sites with non-Hodgkin lymphoma did not result in much anger, panic or concern in a recent meeting.

In a meeting last week billed as a chance for the public to ask questions about the rise in non-Hodgkin lymphoma (NHL) rates, comments were sparse from residents of the affected area. In a portion of Northeastern Mountain View, nearly twice the expected rate of the disease was found among residents between 1996-2005 in a recent study by the Greater Bay Area Cancer Registry, reported by the Voice and by NBC 11 Bay Area.

Instead, more time was spent by experts who argued that the rise in cancer was either statistically insignificant or had no connection

to Trichloroethylene (TCE) contamination east of Whisman

The study looked at three cancers associated with TCE.

Road. The industrial solvent was dumped in the ground there by early computer component manufacturers including Fairchild Semiconductor and Intel and continues to be part of a lengthy cleanup effort.

In the presentation, part of the Moffett Field Restoration Advisory Board's Nov. 29 meeting, the Cancer registry's Kurt Snipes described it as "not a conventional true cancer cluster."

"Should residents be concerned about getting NHL if you lived in

those areas?" Snipes said. "Based on our best assessments — not any more than anybody else in the area."

Snipes said the study looked at three cancers associated with TCE — kidney and liver cancer and NHL. Kidney and liver cancer rates in north-eastern Mountain View were average. The study compared the number of cancer cases in the area between 1988 and 2010 with rates in several local counties. Between 1996 and 2005 researchers expected to find 17 cases of NHL but instead found 31 cases of the cancer, which starts in the blood and spreads throughout the body.

The area studied is roughly east Shoreline Boulevard, north of Central Expressway and south of Highway 101.

"Why did this group of people in that time period get non-Hodgkin Lymphoma?" Snipes

► See **TOXIC SITE**, page 7

Three face charges in child rape

TWO 17-YEAR-OLDS, 23-YEAR-OLD MAN IN CUSTODY'

By Nick Veronin

Investigators have yet to release more information in the case of a 13-year-old girl who was allegedly raped by two 17-year-old boys and a 23-year-old man last week.

Mountain View police arrested the suspects Nov. 28 in connection with the rape of the girl, who passers-by found intoxicated at Castro Park, near the intersection of Latham Street and Escuela Avenue.

The case is being classified "sexual assault via intoxication," according to Sgt. Sean Thompson, a spokesman with the department. The investigation is ongoing, but Thompson said police believe they have arrested everyone involved in the incident.

The victim, the two teens and the man met up to drink alcoholic beverages, Thompson said. The victim apparently knew the three suspects — all of whom are in custody and are still being interviewed by investigators.

The victim apparently knew the three suspects.

The two 17-year-old suspects have not been named, as they are juveniles. The 23-year-old was identified as Sunnyvale resident Mario Pinto.

Thompson said police are working to determine whether all three suspects forced themselves upon the girl or if some did not. The police representative declined to comment on the case until the investigation is concluded.

Anyone with any information about the suspects or the crime is asked to call Detective Nanez at 650-903-6356. ■

Getting businesses online

GOOGLE SEMINAR TEACHES LOCAL MERCHANTS HOW TO BUILD WEB PRESENCE

By Nick Veronin

Small business owners and employees from all over the Bay Area spent a day at Google's Mountain View campus on Dec. 4 to learn how to build websites and maintain an effective presence on the web.

The "California Get Your Business Online" program is part of a nationwide series of free business seminars geared toward teaching less tech-savvy small businesses how to use a variety of online tools, which event organizer Scott Levitan says are much easier for the novice than many might realize.

Levitan, director of small business engagement at Google, said that his research indicates that about 62 percent of businesses in California don't have a website. That includes many businesses whose owners would like to have an online presence. When Levitan and his team began researching why business owners don't get online, they found that the biggest reason was that many simply believe the process is too difficult, would cost too much to do right and would take too much time.

But with programs like the Intuit website that Levitan and

his team were using at the Google seminar, it can be as easy as dragging and dropping, copying and pasting.

"Anyone can do it," Levitan said. "If you can use the web and you can use Gmail, you can get your business online. We started this program to demystify the process for getting your business online."

Mountain View resident and start-up founder Glenn Robinson attended the event, which ran from 8:30 a.m. to about 7 p.m. "It was very professional, very well coordinated," Robinson said. "It was beyond my expectations." Seminar leaders and guest speakers guided the attendees through a series of easy-to-understand steps, Robinson said, and by the end of the day he had a functioning website, a domain name and had set up a server to host his website. The website for his fledgling business, Troovision, is very close to completion.

In addition to showing businesses how to build a simple website, Levitan and his team showed attendees what they need to do in order to get their businesses to show up prominently on a Google search, how to get their business' location to appear on Google Maps, and discussed the

benefits of optimizing websites for mobile devices, such as smart phones and tablet computers.

"Getting online really gets you to the starting line," Levitan said. "You want to be found where people are looking for you."

Google started the "Get Your Business Online" seminar series back in 2011, Levitan said. The seminar has been held in all 50 states and has helped more than 100,000 small businesses get online.

According to Levitan, Google holds the seminars for a three reasons: to help local businesses, to help stimulate the economy and because it is good for the search giant in the long run.

Businesses have the potential to grow much faster if they have an online presence, Levitan said. By that logic, if Google can encourage more businesses to get online, then the economy as a whole will grow at a faster clip. Finally, if more businesses are online, that will ultimately mean more business for Google, which is in the business of serving an ever-growing web.

"We think everyone wins," Levitan said.

More information about the program is at californiagetonline.com. ▀

State still owes \$14 million in tax refunds

MANY LOCALS HAVE YET TO RECEIVE MONEY OWED BY STATE, FEDS

By Nick Veronin

Every year people across the country do not collect the money they are owed in tax refunds simply because the IRS and California Franchise Tax Board don't have the correct addresses on their mailing lists.

The Franchise Tax Board recently announced that it is holding more than \$14 million in tax refunds that they received in envelopes marked "return to sender." And according to the agency's Denise Azimi, close to \$39,000 of that \$14 million is due to taxpayers who the Franchise

Tax Board has listed as Mountain View residents.

Azimi said the FTB has received 87 returned refunds from Mountain View — all of which add up to \$38,641. Her organization counts 1,681 returned refunds throughout Santa Clara County — a total of \$590,807.

The IRS does not have such a precise breakdown of returned tax refunds, according to a spokesman from that organization.

Both the IRS and the FTB want taxpayers to be able to claim their full refund, the spokespersons said, and each suggested

that taxpayers who believe they didn't get their refunds to call or visit websites for the IRS or FTB.

The IRS has a page on its website called "Where's My Refund," which can be found at www.irs.gov/refunds; a telephone service version of "Where's My Refund" can be accessed toll free at 800-829-1954.

The state FTB has a similar website for people to check the status of a refund. That site can be accessed at www.ftb.ca.gov/online/refund. Taxpayers can also call the following toll-free number: 1-800-852-5711. ▀

OBITUARY

RUSSELL ROBERSON

Russell Roberson, a 20-year resident of Mountain View, died December 2 in Brentwood, Calif. He was 54.

He recently bought a new home in Brentwood, where he lived with his wife, Pamela and son, Alex.

He received a bachelor's degree from San Jose State University, and was employed by NASA Ames. He was an active basketball player, runner and musician, and was a huge fan of the San Francisco Giants and the Warriors, his family said. He enjoyed playing his guitar, bass guitar and drums with a band, "War," in the 1980s, and

taught numerous people as a hobby, according to his wife.

Robertson is survived by his wife, Pamela Hilton of Brentwood; son Alex Roberson; step-daughters Christa Sanchez and Alyshia Sanchez; and two granddaughters, Raelyn and Maxine.

No memorial service is planned.



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TOXIC SITE

► Continued from page 5

said. "It is very hard to say. When the numbers are very small, the statistics can bounce around wildly and it's difficult to pin down significance."

Whisman Road resident Jane Horton, one of the few to have found unsafe levels of TCE vapors in their homes, still suspects a connection, especially those who live on and around Walker Drive where an "air stripper" may have exposed residents to TCE vapors until 2003. The air stripper was used as part of cleanup efforts by pumping contaminated groundwater to the surface so that TCE could evaporate. She wonders why other cancers weren't studied, like lung cancer and brain cancer.

"I've thought about this a lot," Horton said. "For people who breathe the vapors, we don't have data that says breathing TCE vapors causes X kind of cancer.

I don't believe there are studies that correlate that. There were 17 cases expected and it was 31. It was a spike. I don't know if these are people on Walker Drive. I don't know where they are.

The Cancer registry has declined to say exactly where the people lived in each case.

Testing of the outdoor air for TCE vapors around the air stripper was never done, though it was requested, said Lenny Siegel, director of Mountain View's Center for Public Environmental Oversight and a national expert on toxic cleanup.

"Some of us asked for sampling" before the air stripped was shut off, Siegel said. "It was not done."

"What we were told is based on contamination in the ground water the amount released into the air was not much higher than what you would find in the area," Siegel said. But he admitted that "we don't have good data, we just

have a calculation."

Siegel argued that there was no real pathway for the TCE to have reached residents in the three census tracts studied.

"We know that there's no evidence people have been drinking contaminated water," Siegel said. "The EPA and responsible parties have done a great deal of indoor air testing" and found safe indoor air in homes near the plume except that of Horton's home, a home at Whisman Station over the GTE Superfund site and "some commercial buildings." Everywhere else, "we have pretty good evidence people were not exposed to TCE from the plume," Siegel said.

"It's because we've all been working to prevent that," Siegel said. "It is irresponsible of news media to suggest that it was otherwise."

Snipes said NHL can also be "caused by viruses, HIV and pesticides." ■

BAG BAN

► Continued from page 1

"As an exclusive canvas bag shopper for 20 years, I kind of resent the fact that some people are trying to tell me I don't have that choice," Inks said, explaining his opposition.

"I wish we would be little more tolerant of people that make different choices," Means said. "I'm not going to support this. I don't think government should be in the role of one-size fits all."

Bryant, who has pushed for such an ordinance for four years, defended the need for the ordinance.

"Education doesn't work and plastic bags don't really recycle," Bryant said. "It's not been that long since we didn't use single-use plastic bags. It was only in mid 1980s that big industry decided to make more money by making plastic bags. Life can go on very well without single-use plastic bags."

"Not every detail of the proposal here seems to be me the best and most wonderful, but the critical point is a regional solution," Bryant said. "For businesses, what they want is a regional solution, the same set of guidelines, the same sets of rules. Many cities in the area are participating in the San Mateo EIR and so we have here a regional solution."

Several speakers and council members brought up the effects on wildlife, including Laura Kasa of Save Our Shores, a group which organizes 250 beach and waterway cleanups

a year. Kasa noticed a dramatic decrease in plastic bags on beaches as a result of recent bans in the area. She called plastic bags, even the compostable ones, "death machines" for marine life. Council member Jac Siegel agreed, calling plastic bags "devastating."

Macias recalled seeing a bird with a plastic bag stuck in its mouth at McKelvey Park. "I was just there hanging out with my dog and saw a bird struggling. Wrapped in its beak was a plastic bag," she said. "I know it was just a matter of time before this bird was exhausted. Of course this bird had no way of getting the plastic bag out of its mouth."

Three Mountain View High School students spoke in support of the ordinance and presented a petition with 140 signatures of support from students gathered during lunch period.

"A lot of people were saying, 'Mountain View doesn't have that yet?' and they were surprised," said Abby Cunniff, president of the Mountain View High School Environmental Club. "I know we're just kids now, but plastic is forever. It never breaks down and we're going to have to deal with that someday."

The ordinance will be enforced on a complaint basis and by surprise visits to stores, Palacio said. The city has budgeted \$10,000 to raise awareness about it and distribute reusable bags.

Email Daniel DeBolt at ddebolt@mv-voice.com

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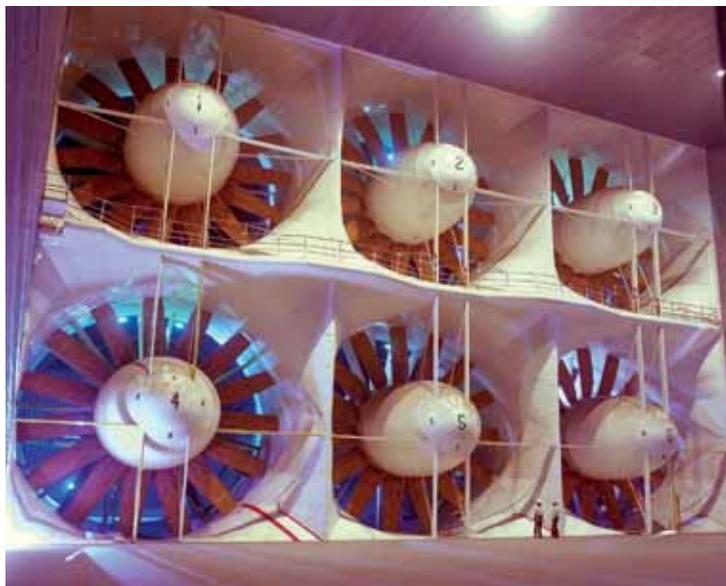
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Clockwise from top: The parachute designed to slow the descent of the Mars Curiosity Rover is tested; six drive fans can consume the power used by a city of 225,000; an XV-15 Tiltrotor aircraft. Photos courtesy NASA Ames.

Blowing people away

WORLD'S LARGEST WIND TUNNEL
AT NASA AMES CELEBRATES 25 YEARS

By Daniel DeBolt

A local building that draws more electricity than the entire city of Mountain View turns 25 next week.

The massive structure at NASA Ames Research Center is hard to miss from the Stevens Creek Trail, where its larger-than-a-football-field mouth sucks up air from across the bay and spits it out with such force that planes

are not allowed to fly overhead. Its six massive fans can generate 115 mile per hour winds while consuming the electrical load of a city of 225,000 people.

Inside, everything from Mars rover parachutes to jet planes have been blasted while keen eyes observe the laws of physics in action and read data collected by sensors hidden under the floor, and attached to aircraft through

struts.

The National Full Scale Aerodynamics Complex is home to the world's largest wind tunnel, and having been built in 1987, it celebrates a quarter century of existence on Dec. 11. In celebration, NASA Ames has organized a Dec. 11 talk by Dr. William Warmbrodt, who has worked in Ames' wind tunnels since 1978 and is chief of the aeromechanics

branch at Ames.

"When we turn on this facility, it's like introducing a city of 225,000 people onto the utility grid," Warmbrodt said, referring to the six, 18,000 horsepower fans which can draw a total of 104 megawatts. "It's surprising the lights don't dim at my house in Mountain View."

The National facility is used mostly by private aircraft com-

panies, NASA and the military, but is used to test the aerodynamics of more than just airplanes and spacecraft. Its 80-by-120 foot section, the largest anywhere, was used to test the parachute that helped the Curiosity rover land on Mars, has helped develop innovative helicopter designs, more efficient rotors on wind power generators and even aerodynamic semi truck designs for the Department of Transportation that are 10 percent more fuel efficient. A smaller, 40-by-80 foot test section at the NFAC, built in 1944, can generate 345 mile per hour winds and has been used to test a one-third scale model of the Space Shuttle and a replica of the Wright Brothers plane. Warmbrodt says one of the two sections is in use at any given time.

Suffice to say, it's not safe to stand inside when the fans are on full blast. But parachute engineers often want to be up close to see how their parachutes open at lower wind speeds.

"Parachute engineers love walking out into cold, windy test sections," Warmbrodt said. "They are crazy."

Warmbrodt said the NFAC gets calls from weathermen who want to have themselves filmed standing in hurricane force winds. Warmbrodt says the NFAC doesn't allow that, but says there is a wind tunnel facility on the East Coast that does.

The use of supercomputers at Ames to analyze aircraft design has not rendered NFAC obsolete, Warmbrodt said.

"The increase in our computer capability has allowed us to refine and reduce the amount of wind tunnel testing necessary, yet the ability to capture all physics of a complicated aircraft or rotor craft can and does require full scale wind tunnel testing," Warmbrodt said.

While there will not be public tours of the wind tunnel on Dec. 11, Warmbrodt will show and operate a 1/50 scale model that was used to develop the tunnel, complete with working fans.

"It's amazing, it's bigger than your living room," Warmbrodt said of the model. "I'm going to operate it during the talk. I'm going to blow people away," he chuckled.

To get a free ticket to the 250-seat, 7 p.m. event, visit the NASA Ames event page at tinyurl.com/NFAC25th.

Email Daniel DeBolt at ddebolt@mv-voice.com



COURTESY CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW

An overhead view of the redesign for **McKelvey Park**.

McKELVEY

► Continued from page 1

fixed,” said Thompson, former chair of the St. Francis Acres Neighborhood Association. “And now it’s coming down to a potential lawsuit — it shouldn’t have to come that.”

“We are talking about getting a lawyer to force some kind of legal action to get this redesigned,” Bhat said. “This is something we don’t want to do, but we are being left with no other choices.”

Thompson began raising the issues in 2010 when she and others proposed two smaller baseball fields at McKelvey to make more room for more for park space that would serve everyone, which they say the neighborhood lacks. Youth sports leagues strongly opposed the idea of losing what’s known as the “Big McKelvey” field. Thompson was not pushing that idea this week.

“We just want a design that is for the next 50 years that doesn’t negatively impact anybody, and I think it’s possible,” Thompson said. “At least try.”

“We are not arguing against

doing this project or against flood protection for the area,” Bhat said. “We just want this area redesigned. It’s OK to plan for the future but when it gets to the point when it is affecting your home, affecting your property values, it is getting personal.”

In the \$10 million revamp of McKelvey Park, local Little League teams were promised new ball field facilities, including new bleachers, a new snack shack, artificial turf and improved lighting, among other amenities. The park would also have a new mini park and playground for the neighborhood.

The Santa Clara Valley Water District has offered to pay for the revamp of the park in exchange for being able to use it as part of its Permanente Creek flood protection plan, a project that has barely stayed within its \$40 million budget so far. The project aims to protect over 1,600 properties north of El Camino Real in the event of a rare, 100-year flood of Permanente Creek. A so-called 100-year flood is a severe flood that has a 1 percent chance of

happening every year.

Similar basins proposed for Blach Middle School and Cuesta Annex have been cut from the Water District’s proposal, leaving McKelvey and a basin at Rancho San Antonio.

Thompson and Bhat say the design of the parking lot for the mini-park next to the ball-fields also remains a source of complaints from neighbors. They want to remove a second turn-around for cars next to the new neighborhood mini-park in order to increase the size of that section of the park.

“It puts this drop-off area there in which basically cars would drive into the driveway and immediately drop off the kids where the playground is. We are concerned with not only safety issues but a really big waste of space.”

The meeting is set for the evening of Dec. 11 at City Hall, 500 Castro Street. See mountainview.gov for a council agenda to be posted on Dec. 6.

Email Daniel DeBolt at ddebolt@mv-voice.com

CLEAN SLATE

► Continued from page 5

clear up their minor warrants without going to jail.”

Thompson said that information on whether an offense is a misdemeanor or a felony can be found on official documents, such as the original warrant or letters received from the court. Examples of non-violent misdemeanors are possession of a small

amount of marijuana or petty theft, Thompson said. An unresolved traffic violation can be anything from a parking ticket to a speeding ticket.

Mountain View Police Department will accept self-surrenders Monday through Friday, 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Anyone with questions related to the program may contact the Sheriff’s Office Records department by calling 408-808-4717. ■

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ADDING SPARKLE TO THE SEASON

From top of page: Risha Desai and her friend Riya Bapodara, left, react as the tree is lit; Alliyah, 4, contemplates whether to climb onto Santa's lap; Irina Petrova, left, sings with Russian House Kedry members.





Clockwise from top of page: Snacks and crafts share space with a Christmas tree in City Hall's lobby; snow was shipped in for the event; locals listen as choirs sing after the community tree is lit.



The holidays got into full swing in downtown Mountain View on Monday night, as the city held its annual Community Tree Lighting Ceremony. Choirs sang and children's eyes lit up along with the trees. From snowball fights to visits with old St. Nick, there was plenty of holiday cheer to go around.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY MICHELLE LE

Inspirations

a guide to the spiritual community

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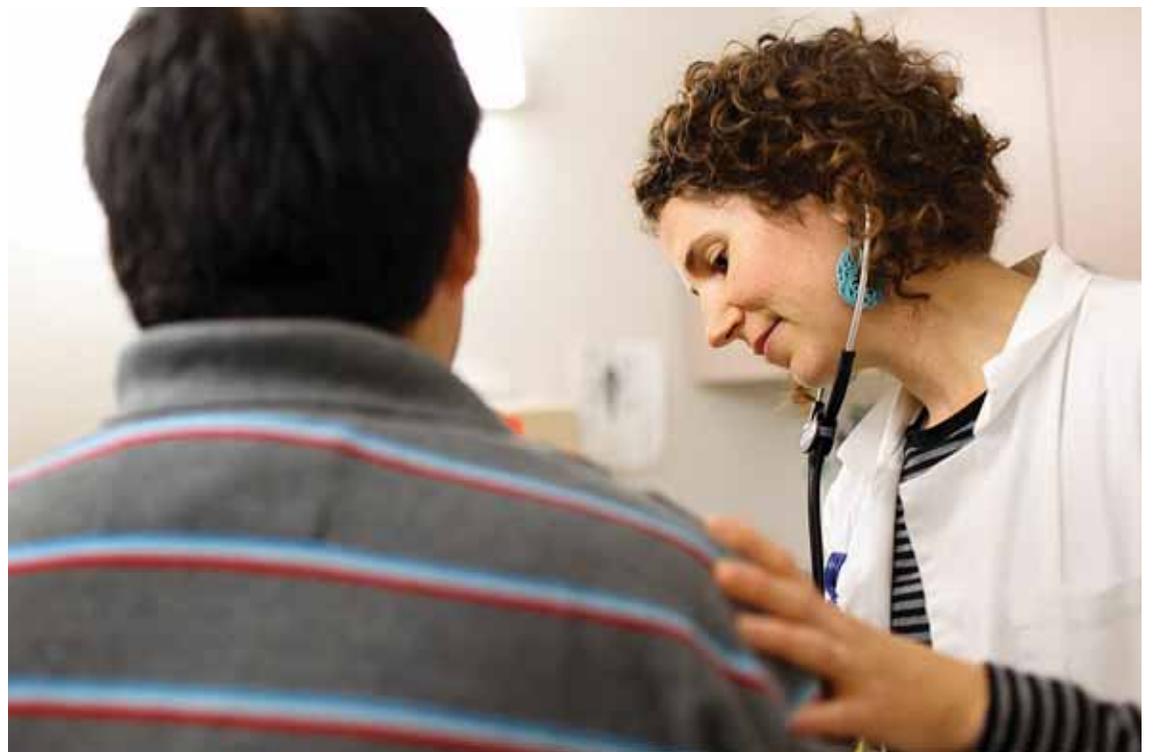
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Inspirations

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MICHELLE LE

Michelle Whetzel, a nurse practitioner who volunteers at Rotacare, checks the heartbeat of a patient on Nov. 30.

Rotacare volunteers are busier than ever

CLINIC OFFERS FREE HEALTH CARE TO THE COMMUNITY'S UNINSURED

By Ashley Finden

A lot of people donate food, gifts or money around the holidays, but there is a special group of people who give year-round — they give their time.

Mountain View Rotacare at 2400 Grant Road is one of 12 Rotacare clinics in the Bay Area that offer free healthcare for the community's uninsured.

"Our mission is to provide access to medical care to those with the least access available, said Mirella Nguyen, the manager.

Rotacare is staffed by fewer than 10 full-time employees — the rest are volunteers. There are around 110 physicians, with about half rotating through each month, and 235 nurses and support staff, she said. Patients can make appointments over the phone Mondays and Wednesdays at 2 p.m., but the clinic does not accept walk-ins, according to Nguyen.

Nguyen, who said she has been working for Rotacare for almost five years, said she has noticed a significant trend in her patients over the past two years.

"Most of our patients are working two jobs, which is not something I saw about five years ago, when I started," she said.

Nguyen explained how there is no "picture of uninsured poverty" anymore. She sees recent graduate students come in, or people who have lost their businesses bring in their families.

She said the cut in public funding at a state level impacted the lower class by narrowing the eligibility requirements for health services and many who qualified at one time don't qualify any more.

"You have to be the poorest of the poor in order to qualify for a lot these available programs," Nguyen said.

Nguyen said in the past 18 months, the clinic has noticed a spike in mental health issues. According to her, about one

"I think particularly in the last six months, things have gotten really bad," she said.

Rotacare is able to offer some help.

"We actually have a partnership with a mental health agency in Palo Alto that will actually see patients who are kind of more on the critical side," Nguyen said.

That happens in the more extreme cases, if a person may be a threat to themselves or others, she said. Internally, the clinic

has a part-time social worker and Rotacare officials are searching for a way to fund one on a more permanent basis that will allow them to open up more hours for patients, Nguyen said.

"The difficult thing is that volunteer social working is a little chal-

lenging because there is a lot of case management that kind of needs to happen with this type of work," she said.

Nguyen said that additional funding would allow for a social worker that can address a lot of issues — it's the non-physical needs people require help with. "You'd be surprised by how many people actually end up in the (emergency department) for suicide attempts and never get any follow-up care," she said.

Patients are being forced to choose between paying for food or their medications, she noted. Nguyen said they're also short in the medical dispensary and

"If you're coming through our doors ... you're here for a pretty major reason these days."

—MIRELLA NGUYEN

out of every three patients seen at Rotacare has a complaint about symptoms like headache, backache or lack of sleep which is usually the result of underlying depression or anxiety. Most aren't aware of it, and have not had it treated, she said.

"I think it really had a lot to do with just the housing crunch that the Valley was going through," she said.

The mental stress-related symptoms have been affecting patients of all ages, she said.

Nguyen said that depression and anxiety have probably been the two largest components of health that can contribute to physical health conditions on an ongoing basis.

► See **ROTACARE**, page 14



CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW

NOTICE OF CITY COUNCIL MEETING

SANTA CLARA VALLEY WATER DISTRICT PERMANENTE CREEK FLOOD PROTECTION PROJECT

MCKELVEY PARK

You are invited to the City of Mountain View Council meeting where the City Council will consider the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report for the Santa Clara Valley Water District's Permanente Creek Flood Protection Project, prepared by the Santa Clara Valley Water District; the conceptual design for the McKelvey Park ball fields and mini-park proposed as part of the project; and land-use and construction agreements with the Santa Clara Valley Water District. Additional details will be provided at the meeting on:

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 11, 2012—6:30 P.M.

**(OR AS SOON THEREAFTER
 AS THE ITEM CAN BE HEARD)**

CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS

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The report providing information on this item to the City Council will be published on the City's web site (www.mountainview.gov) on or about December 6, 2012. If you have any questions, please contact Sean Rose, Principal Civil Engineer (Acting), at (650) 903-6311. Comments may also be e-mailed to sean.rose@mountainview.gov.

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This year, the following agencies will be supported by the Holiday Fund:

Community Services Agency of Mountain View and Los Altos

CSA assists homeless families and seniors with short-term housing, medical care, and more. The nonprofit is a cooperative effort of 17 faith-based communities in Mountain View and Los Altos.

Community Health Awareness Council

CHAC serves Mountain View, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills and seven school districts. Among other things, it offers school-based programs to protect students from high-risk behaviors, such as drug and alcohol abuse.

Mountain View RotaCare Clinic

The RotaCare Clinic provides uninsured local residents with medical care and medications and is frequently the last resort for this underserved demographic group.

Day Worker Center of Mountain View

The Day Worker Center provides a secure place for workers and employers to negotiate wages. It serves 50 or more workers a day with jobs, English lessons and guidance.

YWCA Support Network for Domestic Violence

This group operates a 24-hour bilingual hotline and a safe shelter for women and their children. It also offers counseling and other services for families dealing with domestic violence.

Community School of Music and Arts

CSMA provides hands-on arts and music projects in the classrooms of the Mountain View Whisman School District. Nearly 40 percent of the students are low-income, and 28 percent have limited English proficiency.

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Use Pago to make a Holiday Fund donation

Anyone making a purchase at a participating local merchant can use a Pago account to make a donation to the Voice Holiday Fund. Here are the businesses participating in the Pago promotion: Amber India, Bajis Café, Baskin Robbins, Best Bite, Bushido, Chaat Paradise, El Paso Café, Han Gen, Las Muchachas, Neto Caffè, New York Pizza, Pasta Q, and Sunny Bowl. For more information on the Holiday Fund go to siliconvalleycf.org/mvv-holiday-fund

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ROTACARE

► Continued from page 12

people can't get their higher-cost prescriptions.

The part-time pharmacist, Lynn Wilson, said Nguyen understands every part of the clinic, and keeps track of every patient and immunization.

"It's not easy for anyone," Nguyen said. "If you're coming through our doors ... you're here for a pretty major reason these days."

People expect to be turned away or told no, Nguyen explained. She said patients

walk in already frustrated as a result of being denied help by other places.

"They're here and they're ready to fight because they've been fighting to try to get what they need," she said.

Rotacare doesn't turn people down, they try to figure out what they can do to help, according to Nguyen.

"We actually do still have a vested interest in making sure that our community remains healthy, that our community remains informed," she said.

For those who are interested in helping Rotacare, the clinic is

looking for a website designer to launch a website for them. Volunteers just need willingness to help and can be taught the skills needed to keep the clinic going, Nguyen said.

Another way to help is by giving to the Voice's Holiday Fund. Rotacare is one of seven local nonprofits serving Mountain View residents that benefits from contributions to the Holiday Fund. Administered by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, 100 percent of contributions to the Holiday Fund are divided evenly among this year's beneficiaries. ■

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Sundays in Advent:
 9:15 a.m. Christian Education for all ages
 8:30 & 10:30 a.m. Worship - Holy Communion

December 16: Santa Lucia Festival
 5:30 p.m. International Smörgåsbord
 7:00 p.m. Santa Lucia Program and Reception

December 24: Christmas Eve
 5:00 p.m. Family Service
 10:00 p.m. Choir and Orchestra Performance
 10:30 p.m. Candlelight Service

December 25: Christmas Day
 10:30 a.m. Lessons and Carols



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Sunday, December 23
 10:00 am University Public Worship w/Carol Sing

Monday, December 24 *NOTE NEW TIMES*
 4:00 pm Christmas Eve Family Service Special children's sermon.
 Please bring new, unwrapped toys for children in need. Doors open at 3:15 pm.
 8:00 pm Christmas Eve Festival Communion
 Sermon by Dean Scotty McLennan. An elegant service glowing with candlelight and holiday music! Doors open at 7:30 pm.

Tuesday, December 25
 12:00 am Catholic Midnight Christmas Mass
 12:00 pm Catholic Christmas Day Mass

Sunday, December 30
 10:00 am University Public Worship



Stanford | Office for Religious Life
 450 Serra Mall, Stanford, CA 94305 | <http://religiouslife.stanford.edu>

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 8:00 PM, A simple, peaceful worship service, special music and carols

CHRISTMAS DAY, 10:00 AM Service
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Christmas Eve
 Monday, December 24

4:00 pm
 Family Service with Children's Pageant

6:00 pm
 Candlelight Worship & Communion

11:00 pm
 Communion, Readings & Carols in English and German by Candlelight

Christmas Day
 Tuesday, December 25

10:00 am
 Communion, Carols & Lessons

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December 16, 2012

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Holiday



HAPPY HOLIDAYS



A sweet way to get together

Baking Norwegian
Christmas cookies
continues a
family tradition

By Carol Blitzer

Growing up in Berkeley, Karin Thorne always looked forward to the days leading up to Christmas when the family gathered to honor their Norwegian roots — and make cookies. Lots of cookies.

“I remember coming home from school to a house that smelled like every kid’s dream of Christmas. My mother’s kitchen was Santa’s workshop. We sampled every batch, and frequently,” she wrote in an email.

▶ *Continued on next page*





COURTESY ROD THORNE

Friends and family, including Chris and Janet Haugen, join in the cookie-baking tradition.

► Continued from previous page

She recalls her mother and grandmother starting early in December, filling every kitchen container, from lobster pots to canning kettles or soup terrines, to make vast quantities of traditional Norwegian treats. Her grandfather came from Norway in the 1890s, and graduated from St. Olaf College in Minnesota in 1906, she said.

As kids, Thorne and her sister and brother would deco-

rate shoe boxes with Christmas wrapping paper, which their mother would fill with cookies to be given to their father's work

colleagues, teachers and neighbors. Each of the 30 boxes would have a holiday note affixed.

Thorne, who teaches seventh-grade social studies at Jordan Middle School, has continued the tradition at her Palo Alto home. Her 19-year-old son has participated each year in the family-

and-friends gathering that starts with Thorne and her two siblings, who live in the Bay Area, agreeing on a baking day.

"Skipping a year is out of the question. It just wouldn't be the holidays without this ritual," according to Thorne.

This year they're gathering on Dec. 16, making all the same recipes, but "not in the same quantities." Friends and family get together to share the baking, then get to share the bounty at the end of the day.

And the recipes have evolved over time, with less butter and sugar.

"We talk about how we did it last time," Thorne said, adding that it's not formal. "If someone doesn't come on time, that's fine.

"It's the kind of thing that keeps families together, talking to each other," she said.

"Every year we look forward to doing it all over again!"

Below are the Haugen family's traditional Norwegian Christmas cookie recipes. ▣

Carol Blitzer, associate editor of the Voice's sister paper, the Palo Alto Weekly, can be emailed at cblitzer@paweb.com.

Berliner Kranser

1 C. sugar
4 cubes butter (1 lb. total)
7 egg yolks (whites not used)

5 C. flour (unbleached)
Cream together butter, margarine and sugar. Add egg yolks. Gradually add flour. Stir for a while then use hands to blend well; add additional flour until correct texture is obtained (dough should be waxy). Pat into a ball. Place ball of dough into a ziplock bag. Chill dough. Roll a small piece of dough to form a 4-inch-long pencil shape. Then overlap the ends of the pencil to form a wreath shape and dip one side in granulated sugar.

Place on cookie sheet with the sugar side up. Bake at 375°F for 15-17 minutes.

Fattigmands Bakkelse

Beat together:
15 egg yolks
1/2 C. sugar

Beat together:
1 C. whipping cream
1/2 C. sugar
7 T. cognac

Whip 2 egg whites until dry and fold into the yolks and whipping cream mixture.

Gradually add 4 3/4 C. flour and chill several hours.

Roll out and cut. Fry in lard at 370°F for about 3 minutes.

Place on paper towels to soak excess lard. Sprinkle with powdered sugar while still hot.

Mrs. Oldrup's Sandbakkles

1 C. sugar
1 C. (2 cubes) margarine or butter

1 whole egg
2 C. flour (unbleached)
1/4 t. salt

4 grated almonds (I blanch almonds, then grind in a food processor)

1/2 t. almond extract
3 T. Whipping cream
Cream together butter and sugar. Add egg, almond extract, whipping cream and grated almonds. Add flour, stir until well blended. The mixture will be sticky.

Leave the dough in the bowl, place a piece of plastic over the top. Chill dough until firm. Prepare the cookie tins with PAM or other non-stick spray. Press dough thinly into cookie tins. Press a small piece of dough into cookie tin. Place the cookie tins on a cookie sheet. Bake at 375°F. Throw the cookie tins upside down on a surface to release the cookies from the tins.

Spritz

2 C. sugar
2 C. (4 cubes) margarine (or butter)

4 egg yolks (whites not used)

5 C. flour (unbleached)
2 t. vanilla

Cream together butter and sugar. Add egg yolks and vanilla. Add flour a little at a time. Stir as long as you can, then use hands to blend well. Add as much additional flour needed to obtain correct texture. The dough should be firm. Pat the dough into a ball. Place the ball of dough into a ziplock bag. Chill the dough.

Place a portion of the dough into a cookie press. Press out star shapes on a cookie sheet. Cut maraschino cherries into small pieces and place in the center of each star shape.

Bake at 375°F 7-10 minutes.

Mandel Kager

Mix together:
1 C. soft shortening
1/2 C. sugar
1 egg

Sift together and stir in:

1 2/3 C. sifted flour
1/2 t. baking powder
1 T. cinnamon
1 t. ground cardamom

Mix in:

1/2 C. chopped toasted almonds

Chill dough. Roll into 1-inch balls. Place on ungreased baking sheet. Flatten slightly. Brush tops with egg glaze (1 slightly beaten egg yolk mixed with 1 T. water). Top each cookie with a blanched almond half. Bake until golden brown at 375°F for 10-12 minutes.

HussarenKnopfen (Soldier's Buttons)

1 C. butter
1/4 C. brown sugar
1/4 C. white sugar
2 egg yolks

2 C. white flour
1 t. almond extract

1 pint container of red candied cherries

Mix well. Roll into small balls, and dip in slightly beaten egg white, then ground nuts (almonds or walnuts). Press the center with a thimble and place a candied cherry in the hole.

Bake at 350°F approximately 18 minutes.

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What's new in gourmet foods?



Gluten-free pumpkin pie?

Bacon-laced donuts?

Salt-encrusted chocolate?

By Lisa Kellman



Like most fads, food trends come and go. This year's red velvet cake might be next year's lunchable.

So, what are the foodies — the personal chefs, grocery-store buyers and people who just love to cook (and eat) choosing this season?

Even during the holidays, health is driving many food selections.

"People are redoing pumpkin pie and doing (gluten-free) pumpkin cake ... and there is a remix of the stuffing. People are getting away from bread stuffing," Jonie Sare, a therapeutic chef and caterer, said.

Draeger's is carrying gluten-free stuffing for the first time to satisfy customer requests.

Gluten-free goods have spread beyond the grocery stores. Local chefs have found their clients requesting gluten-free goods, whether or not they have celiac disease, an autoimmune disorder that prevents the small intestine from digesting the grain-borne protein.

"Gluten-free has skyrocketed. ... It is a vital staple department," Mary Claire Draeger DeSoto, co-owner of Draeger's Market, said.

DeSoto even started a gluten-free club at Draeger's, which has more than 500 members. She also turned her family onto gluten-free goods, and now her children prefer gluten-free macaroni and

cheese over the original kind.

Consumers are more aware of what their foods contain. Ooshma Garg, the founder and CEO of Gobble, a marketplace for home-cooked meals from local chefs, finds that her customers want to know more about their food.



"People want to know where food comes from, who is making this food, is this really authentic to the culture or origin of the dish," Garg said.

Tony Draeger, vice president of Draeger's Market, said shoppers these days want to make sure their foods are sustainable, natural or organic. Sales of these foods are growing by 20 percent each year, he said.



Knowing where one's food comes from has driven other food trends, such as the "Paleo diet" to arise. The diet copies what cave-men would probably have eaten — meat, seafood, vegetables, and no processed

foods or carbohydrates. The most requested dietary restriction at Gobble is a low- or no-carb meal.

Several chefs credit the Paleo diet with boosting bacon consumption. Bacon now flavors chocolate, donuts, mayonnaise and shrimp.

Even as meat lovers enjoy the Paleo diet, vegetables are on the rise as vegetarians, vegan, raw-food dieters (those who don't consume food cooked over 115 degrees Fahrenheit) and those



► *Continued on next page*

► Continued from previous page

seeking a healthy lifestyle continue to increase.

Travis Queen, the assistant store manager of Mollie Stone's Market in Palo Alto, said that Mollie Stone's has increased the number of raw-food items including kale chips, raw date crackers and trail mix. The market now has a centralized wall dedicated to its raw-food goods.

Personal chefs Michelle Bailey and Jacquie Steiner have both seen street food and quick-food restaurants like Chipotle push more vegetables as well.

"There is definitely a push for a lot more vegetables and more elaborate side dishes," Bailey said.

Vegetables are becoming the main focus of many meals. Chef Sare has noticed a difference in the way vegetables are prepared.

"People are using ginger rather than garlic — ginger green beans. ... Ginger is bubbling up," Sare said.

In the past two years, Steiner has seen a surge in the use of bitter greens in home and restaurant meals.

"People are using vegetables they had seen but hadn't used before like purple cauliflower, which is delicious," she said.

Consumers want to know not only how food is cooked, but where it was originally prepared. They are moving away from American food and American-influenced ethnic

foods, according to Garg. They want to try the kinds of foods they might consume if they really were in another country.

"A number of people are looking for traditional European food or Peruvian food or Ethiopian food. It's harder to find authentic compared to the run-of-the-mill American version of a dish," Garg said.

This has expanded the ethnic-food aisle in many grocery stores.

Many individuals continue to leave their diets at the door in favor of full-fat gourmet treats. Salt seems to grace the most popular desserts these days. Draeger's salted caramel ice cream has been selling really well, Draeger said. Piazza's Fine Foods candy buyer, Sherri Love, says salted chocolate bars including its B.T. McElrath's Salty Dog Chocolate Bar, Vosges' Black Salt Caramel Bar and a dark chocolate caramel truffle sprinkled with Himalayan sea salt have been very



popular this year.

Food fads come and go, and how long they last is up for debate.

Remember the muffin shops and chocolate-chip cookie stores that graced every down-

town thoroughfare not that long ago? ■

Editorial Intern Lisa Kellman can be emailed at lkellman@paweekly.com.

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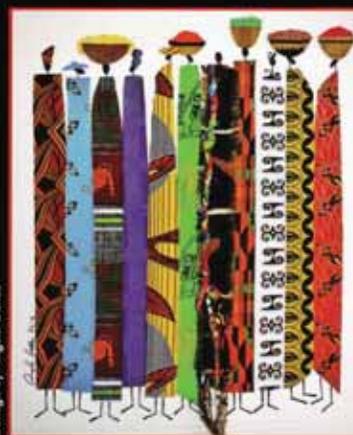
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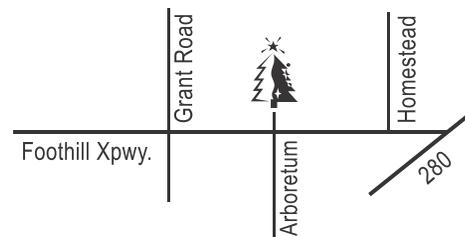
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■ EDITORIAL
THE OPINION OF THE VOICE

There is a better way to design our streets

Faced with ever more intense discussions and demands to improve the safety of pedestrians and cyclists on some of the city's most heavily traveled streets, the City Council appears to be getting the message, especially Ronit Bryant, who at a recent meeting said, "We have lots of great plans. The time has come to move forward and do it."

The linchpin in moving the council toward a solution likely was a spate of three accidents involving students crossing Castro Street at Graham Middle School. None were hurt seriously, but testimony by Graham Principal Kim Thompson at the Nov. 20 council study session demonstrated in graphic detail the danger her students face coming to school or going home.

"I've never experienced anything quite like this," she told the council. "I was behind the car that hit one of my students, so I saw it happen."

"It's a very short stretch of road between Castro (downtown) and Graham, and yet it's more like a speedway."

And vehicle speed, enhanced by Castro Street's four lanes as it heads to Graham from El Camino Real, tends to creep up despite signs warning of a school zone ahead. All the children hit were in the crosswalk, but they may not have been paying attention to speeding cars coming their way.

We are encouraged by the council's interest in bringing down speed limits and designing some busy arterial streets with dedicated bike lanes using a design known as a "road diet," that has been successful in Palo Alto and other communities grappling with a conflict between bikes, cars and pedestrians.

The city already has identified a handful of major "speedways," including California Street, where resident William Ware was killed in June by a speeding, out-of-control car while he was waiting for a bus. In most cases, the plan advises fewer car lanes and more space dedicated to bike lanes. This is an encouraging step and should move briskly with support from Bryant and some of her colleagues, who also signaled their support at the meeting.

Bike advocate Jarrett Mullen is seeking to reduce car lanes and

speed and add bike lanes on Renstorff Avenue, one of the streets cited for such work in the city's Pedestrian Master Plan. Others include some of the city's most heavily traveled arteries — Middlefield Road, California Street, Miramonte Avenue, Charleston Road east of Highway 101, Showers Drive and Cuesta Drive east of Miramonte Avenue. The six-lane portions of Shoreline Boulevard near downtown, which should be a serious candidate for accommodating bike lanes, is so far not on the list.

Bryant and Mayor Mike Kasperzak seem eager to put lane reduction projects on the fast track. Kasperzak said that the city is behind on bike and pedestrian safety and could easily get started by simply painting streets with shared lane arrows, known as sharrows.

"I would like to see Mountain View out in front on this, rather than behind," the mayor said.

Bryant said the city needs to decide how fast people should drive, and then design the streets accordingly.

"If it doesn't work, we'll take it out and try something else," she said.

There is little doubt that the city is moving in the right direction. It is no secret that speed is a factor in fatal pedestrian/automobile accidents. Mullen explains when a car hits a person at 40 miles per hour, "80 percent of pedestrians die. At 30 miles per hour, 40 percent die. Just by reducing speed from 40 to 30 miles per hour, you've cut the number of deaths in half. At 20 miles per hour, only 5 percent die. That is why speed matters. It impacts the stopping distance."

Clearly the most urgent problem for the city is protecting Graham students while they cross busy, four-lane Castro Street on their way school. A speed limit reduction, strongly enforced, would be a good first step. Another solution might be flashing lights installed in the street that would alert motorists that there are pedestrians in the crosswalk. This is a case where the council should not draw out the debate. It is time to protect the students at Graham.

■ LETTERS
VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

VTA BUSES SHOULD STICK TO RIGHT CURB

In light of the council's concern for pedestrian safety, the members favoring VTA's bus rapid transit concept may want to reconsider.

The concept calls for the express buses to use the two center lanes and for bus stop shelters to be in the center divide. This forces all bus passengers to cross El Camino Real, Mountain View's most heavily-traveled surface street, twice each time they use the bus.

I contend that the traditional bus stops at the curb on the right side of the road are much safer for pedestrians.

*Maarten Korringa
Eldora Drive*

OPEN UP POST OFFICE PARKING ON SUNDAY

I go to the Farmers Market every Sunday. Lately I noticed a No Parking sign in the Post Office lot on View Street.

A lot of people use it on Sunday morning. I have never seen a Post Office car parked there on Sunday. Why don't they let people use it on Sunday as parking is very limited elsewhere?

*Gil Grangier
Farley Street*

NO DATA TO SUPPORT ANNEX FLOOD BASIN

There is no empirical flood data to support the need for a flood basin in Cuesta Annex.

It is pure scare tactics on the

part of the Santa Clara Valley Water District, which must spend their \$40 million in taxes collected from taxpayers since 2000.

El Camino Hospital is in no

danger from flood water since the water district built the Permanente Creek Diversion Channel behind Blach Junior High in 1959. The hospital's

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LETTERS

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chief administrative officer, Ken King was being disingenuous when he said, "The Cuesta Annex flood detention facility is vital to our ability to provide hospital and health care services." The hospital has been providing health care services for more than 50 years without any incidence of flooding or the presence of a flood basin.

The water district's flood predictions are not based on real world data gathered along Permanente Creek. This data is ignored because it does not support the need for a flood basin. What the water district has also tried to keep a secret is their dependence on a 1-acre, 30-foot deep pond in Rogue Valley in Cupertino's Rancho San Antonio Park which has been successfully preventing a 1 percent flood event for over 50 years.

*Cynthia Riordan
Saratoga*

PROTESTERS INFLUENCED ANNEX VOTE

I attended the Nov. 20 Santa Clara Valley Water District meeting with 17 other annex basin protesters when they ratified a Permanente Creek flood plan excluding the Cuesta Park Annex.

Over 500 signatures have been collected protesting the annex basin. District CEO Beau Goldie stated the decision to remove the annex basin "reflects a process that works." Patrick Quok, the district board member who represents Mountain View, incorrectly stated during the meeting that the past election showed public support for the annex basin, although City Council member John Inks, who voted against the annex flood basin, was the top vote-getter. Because of Michael Hayden and Richard Moll's solid hydrology analysis, the water district admitted that a 30-foot-deep pond located along the Rogue Valley trail in Rancho San Antonio Park currently protects residents from a 1 percent flood event, but rather than preserve the existing pond, the water district prefers to spend more tax payer money to create unnecessary flood basins.

Kevin McBride, the only person to speak in support of the annex flood basin, had sent out a misleading email to his Cuesta Park neighborhood association two days prior, which probably generated the 12 letters of support. Kevin's email which does not mention the Rogue

Valley pond or the Permanente Diversion Channel (which has prevented floods since 1959) or that it can be modified to hold more flood water, claims that only one annex tree will be removed.

*Robert Schick
Los Altos Hills*

WRITER OFF-BASE ON VARGAS

Charlie Larson's letter about Jose Antonio Vargas last week shows that he just does not get it.

Vargas was only a child when he was brought to this country. He did not come on his own and was too young to realize that he did not have the appropriate legal documentation. Now Larson wants to send Vargas home.

Vargas grew up and went to school and college in this country and become a very good and now well-known journalist. The United States is the only country he knows. It is his home morally and justly speaking, just like it is the home of millions of other children who were brought to the U.S too young or by no fault of their own like Vargas was.

Under these circumstances he "lied" to get a driver's license and Social Security number. But when laws do not recognize the natural basic rights and dignity of a human being they don't have to be followed, morally speaking. Mr. Larson and all those like him need to accept the reality we all are living in and look at it from the just and moral point of view.

It is unjust and inhumane to only underline and complain about the undocumented people just because they are undocumented, without recognizing their great contribution to the progress of this country by means of their hard, and often underpaid, work. Thank God that many politicians are now accepting the national political reality by which President Obama was re-elected and hopefully that will give us a humane and comprehensive immigration reform.

*Job Lopez
McCarty Avenue*



VOICE FROM THE COMMUNITY

It may be time to drop high school football

By Gary Wesley

I read online that the first-year varsity football coach at Los Altos High School was let go after an 0-10 season. Mountain View High's team was 3-7 but it beat Los Altos 55-8.

This year, Mountain View was routed by more than 20 points by every above-average opponent including Milpitas 42-7 and Palo Alto 56-28.

It may be time to let go of football entirely. Football players suffer more and more serious injuries (including concussions) than participants in any other sport. Especially vulnerable are players with little training compared to their opponents.

Not all schools offer all sports. Very few high school players receive college scholarships in football, let alone reach the big-time entertainment business called the NFL.

Parents (mostly fathers) who want their sons to play high school football can send them to another public school (such as Homestead or Palo Alto) or to a private school such as St. Francis, which is located in Mountain View. And homecoming celebrations could be tied to another sport such as basketball.

Without football, the Mountain View Los Altos High School District can end the talk of double-crossing neighbors by adding lights to the stadiums. In securing passage of two bond measures, the district assured residents that no lights were planned. (By the way, night home football games for Mountain View and Los Altos have always been played at nearby Foothill College, which has no close neighbors.)

This year is not 1960 or 1970. Times have changed. We know now that football is too danger-

ous for high school students. In these times, students need to prepare for a future that involves competition of a different sort from all over the world.

Physical activities and education are vital. Group sports can promote camaraderie and cooperation; however, there are many group sports other than football.

I suggest that students learn social dancing in the high schools. It would serve them well in life. Students who think they may face ridicule if they actually learn to dance should be offered self-defense training. Indeed, self defense should be a staple of physical education. But it may be time to say goodbye to football as a team sport in this district. Other districts may follow suit, or just continue to live in the past: it's their choice.

*Gary Wesley lives
on Continental Circle*

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■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

Fast but not flashy

SPICE KIT FOLLOWS ASIAN STREET-FOOD TREND, BUT WITHOUT A LOT OF SPICE

By Sheila Himmel

Where frozen yogurt fizzled on Palo Alto's increasingly food-focused California Avenue, Spice Kit sizzles. No wonder. Here's a meal that's quick, clean and cost-effective, reliable for in-store lunch or take-home dinner.

The growth of fast casual Asian street foods must be giving McDonald's executives another reason — beyond



VERONICA WEBER

Clockwise from top: Lunchtime diners at Spice Kit in Palo Alto; Pork belly buns, with a side of fried lotus chips; the beef short ribs bowl with kimchi fried rice, cucumber, bean sprouts and lettuce.

trouble on Wall Street and in Europe, and management shakeups — to be shivering in their golden arches. As we learned in the recent national election, when demographics change, it matters. More Americans come from or have visited Asian countries, and younger people, particularly, are more than willing to expand their food horizons.

Along comes Spice Kit, brain-child of Stanford grad Will

Here's a meal that's quick, clean and cost-effective.

Pacio, with a Vietnamese-inspired menu featuring organic tofu and hormone-free meat.

Like Asian Box in Town & Country Village in Palo Alto, Spice Kit works on the Chipotle model. Depending on which of four proteins you pick, you come away with a drink and a satisfying salad, sandwich, wrap or rice bowl for around \$10. Side dishes top out at \$5 for two Kurobota pork belly buns, \$2.95 for one. They are cheaper

► Continued on next page



From left: Fred Tang, Spice Kit's manager, works to prepare orders with line cook Nathan Robinson and kitchen manager Tash Zareen on Dec. 3.

VERONICA WEBER

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Pescatrice al Tartufo con Pancetta Affumicata

MONKFISH WITH TRUFFLE SMOKED BACON

The Marche region of Italy is entirely bordered on the east by the Adriatic Sea and by the mountains to the west. There is little wonder why the varied foods of the area reflect the hearty country living of the locals. However the true kings of all local ingredients are the indigenous truffles. In classical times, their origins were a mystery that challenged many; Plutarch and others thought them to be the result of lightning, warmth and water in the soil, while Juvenal thought thunder and rain to be instrumental in their origin. Cicero deemed them children of the earth. We think they're simply a gift from the gods!

- 2 pounds boneless monkfish, trimmed of purple membrane and cut into 12 pieces
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 fresh crimini mushrooms
- 12 thin slices bacon
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- Truffle oil for drizzling
- 1 cup mashed potato
- Dry white wine
- 2 shallots, minced
- 1/4 cup heavy cream
- 2 tablespoons snipped chives

Preparation instructions:

Season the monkfish pieces evenly with salt and pepper. Cut 1/2 of the crimini into slices (dice remaining half-set aside) and lay one slice each over the pieces of monkfish; wrap each piece of monkfish in a slice of bacon to enclose.

Place the monkfish in sauté pan over medium high heat, drizzle with the olive oil, and cook until bacon is crisp and fish is done (the monkfish should feel firm to the touch and no longer be translucent).

Meanwhile, combine the olive oil and shallots in an 8-inch pan and sauté until shallots are softened. Add a splash of wine the wine and the mashed potatoes. Add just enough cream to soften to a creamy consistency. Season with salt and pepper; stir in the diced crimini and the chives, and remove from the heat. Place potatoes onto plate to form a base and arrange the monkfish on the potatoes; serve hot, with a light drizzle of truffle oil over all. Serves 6

► Continued from previous page

namese coffee brewers (called a *phin*).

(and smaller) than those at the San Francisco-based The Chairman food truck, but next to the food truck's steamed pork belly buns with turmeric pickled daikon and green shiso (\$3.75), just a tad generic.

Which is my problem with Spice Kit altogether. The banh mi, a much-beloved Vietnamese sandwich, hits bold spice notes with jalapenos and cilantro, but the toasted baguette is just very white-bread. The four proteins are inoffensive. Five-spice chicken (\$6.90), beef short ribs (\$7.95), roasted pork (\$7.75) and organic tofu (\$6.75) won't challenge anybody's taste buds.

My favorite format is the salad, a bed of organic baby lettuces with cucumber slices, sticks of crunchy jicama, sweet mango and spicy peanuts. Sesame vinaigrette brings it together nicely. Meanwhile, ginger-peanut slaw (\$1.95) is very liquidy, softening the peanuts.

Vietnamese iced coffee (\$2.95) suffered from the coffee's being premade. The brewed coffee cups were sitting on the counter, under their authentic individual-cup Viet-

Palo Alto got the second Spice Kit, after San Francisco. Certainly there will be more, despite the aw-shucks website: "We're just a couple guys who've worked in some great fine dining kitchens, like *per se*, The French Laundry, and The Ritz Carlton Dining Room — cooking complicated food all day long." That is, these guys, including Executive Chef Fred Tang and Chef Ming Lee, have worked at the finest restaurants in New York, the Napa Valley and San Francisco.

The site goes on to say: "Being French-trained chefs, we utilize the best techniques — from the sourcing of our ingredients to the way we pickle our vegetables. We believe this makes everything taste better."

We believe it, too, but come on, guys. Spice Kit has "marketing strategy" written all over it. And good for them. Now that Palo Alto has a Spice Kit and an Asian Box, what's next for compact, fast casual restaurants marrying Asian street foods to fresh California ingredients? (Spice Hut is taken by an Indian outfit.) May we suggest: Spice Box and Asian Hits. ▣



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MOVIE TIMES

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Anna Karenina (R) ★★	Aquarius Theatre: 2, 5 & 8 p.m.	Century 20: 12:55, 3:55, 7:05 & 10:05 p.m.
Argo (R) ★★1/2	Century 16: 12:20, 3:20, 6:20 & 9:45 p.m.	Century 20: 1:05, 3:50, 6:40 & 9:30 p.m.
End of Watch (R) ★★1/2	Century 20: 11:40 a.m.; 2:15, 4:55, 7:35 & 10:15 p.m.	
First Love (1939)	Stanford Theatre: Sat.-Mon. at 5:55 & 9:10 p.m.	
Flight (R) ★★★	Century 16: 11:30 a.m.; 3:10, 6:40 & 10:10 p.m.	Century 20: 12:05, 3:15, 6:25 & 9:35 p.m.
Hitchcock (PG-13) ★★	Century 20: Noon, 2:25, 4:55, 7:25 & 9:55 p.m.	Guild Theatre: 2:45, 5, 7:15 & 9:30 p.m.
The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey (PG-13)	Century 16: Thu. at 12:01 a.m.; In 3D Thu. at 12:01 a.m.	Century 20: Thu. at 12:02 a.m.; In 3D Thu. at 12:01 & 12:03 a.m.
Holy Motors	Aquarius Theatre: 2:30, 5:30 & 8:30 p.m.	
Home Alone (PG)	Century 16: Wed. at 2 & 7 p.m.	Century 20: Wed. at 2 & 7 p.m.
It's a Date (1940)	Stanford Theatre: Tue.-Thu. at 7:30 p.m.	
Killing Them Softly (R)	Century 16: 11:50 a.m.; 2:20, 4:50, 7:30 & 10:20 p.m.	Century 20: 12:15, 2:40, 5:05, 7:35 & 10:10 p.m.
Life of Pi (PG) ★★1/2	Century 20: 11:40 a.m.; 2:40, 5:40 & 8:40 p.m.; In 3D at 12:40, 3:40, 6:40 & 9:40 p.m.; In 3D Fri. also at 1:40, 4:40, 7:40 & 10:40 p.m.	Palo Alto Square: 2:30, 5:30 & 8:30 p.m.; In 3D at 4 & 7 p.m.; In 3D Fri. & Sat. also at 10 p.m.; In 3D Fri. & Sun. also at 1 p.m.
Lincoln (PG-13) ★★1/2	Century 16: 11 a.m.; noon, 2:15, 3:15, 6:10, 7, 9:40 & 10:30 p.m.	Century 20: 11:15 a.m.; 2:35, 3:35, 5:55, 6:55, 9:15 & 10:15 p.m.; Fri. & Sun. also at 12:20 p.m.
The Lord of the Rings Trilogy (PG-13)	Century 16: Sat. & Sun. at 11 a.m.	Century 20: Sat. & Sun. at 11 a.m.
Mad About Music (1938)	Stanford Theatre: Fri. at 7:30 p.m.	
The Metropolitan Opera: Un Ballo in Maschera	Century 20: Sat. at 9:55 a.m.	Palo Alto Square: Sat. at 9:55 a.m.
The Perks of Being a Wallflower (PG-13) ★★★	Century 16: 11:35 a.m.; 2:05, 4:40, 7:35 & 10:10 p.m.	
Playing for Keeps (PG-13)	Century 16: 11:10 a.m.; 1:40, 4:30, 7:30 & 10:30 p.m.	Century 20: 12:05, 2:40, 5:15, 7:50 & 10:25 p.m.
Red Dawn (PG-13) ★1/2	Century 16: 11:40 a.m.; 2:10, 4:50, 7:50 & 10:20 p.m.	Century 20: 12:50, 3:10, 5:30, 8 & 10:30 p.m.
Rise of the Guardians (PG) ★★1/2	Century 16: 11:20 a.m.; 1:45, 4:10, 7:05 & 9:55 p.m.; In 3D at 12:10, 2:40, 6:05 & 8:55 p.m.	Century 20: 11:30 a.m.; 1:55, 4:20, 6:45 & 9:10 p.m.; In 3D at 12:30, 3, 5:25, 7:55 & 10:25 p.m.
The Sessions (R) ★★★	Century 16: 11:25 a.m.; 1:50, 4:10, 6:30 & 9 p.m.	
Silver Linings Playbook (R)	Century 16: 12:15, 3:25, 6:35 & 9:55 p.m.	Century 20: 11:35 a.m.; 2:15, 5, 7:45 & 10:35 p.m.
Skyfall (PG-13) ★★1/2	Century 16: 11 a.m.; 2:30, 6:10 & 9:40 p.m.; Fri. also at noon, 3:30, 7 & 10:30 p.m.	Century 20: 11:20 a.m.; 12:45, 2:25, 4:05, 5:35, 7:20, 8:45 & 10:30 p.m.
Spring Parade (1940)	Stanford Theatre: Tue.-Thu. at 5:50 & 9:25 p.m.	
That Certain Age (1938)	Stanford Theatre: Fri. at 5:45 & 9:20 p.m.	
Three Smart Girls Grow Up (1939)	Stanford Theatre: Sat.-Mon. at 7:30 p.m.; Sat. & Sun. also at 4:15 p.m.	
The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn - Part 2 ★★	Century 16: 11:15 a.m.; 2, 4:45, 7:40 & 10:30 p.m.	Century 20: 11:25 a.m.; 2, 4:55, 7:50 & 10:45 p.m.
Wreck-It Ralph (PG) ★★★	Century 16: 1:35, 4:15, 6:55 & 9:50 p.m.; In 3D at 11 a.m.	Century 20: 11:15 a.m.; 1:50, 4:30, 7:10 & 9:50 p.m.

★ 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

ANNA KARENINA ★★

(Aquarius) There's a peril that, in chasing a fresh concept, a director will come up with something foolhardy, which brings us to Joe Wright's "Anna Karenina." No one has a bigger concept this year than Wright, who has transformed Tolstoy's novel into something conspicuously theatrical. Set amongst the aristocracy of Imperial Russia circa 1874, the novel concerns parallel romantic strivings and the pitfalls that threaten the maintenance of the respectable lifestyle of the upper class. One storyline follows the titular socialite (Keira Knightley), whose dull marriage to Karenin (Jude Law) pales in comparison to an affair with Count Vronsky (Aaron Taylor-Johnson). The film begins with an orchestra tuning up, then plays out in a derelict theater. Wright employs colorful costumes, twirling cameras, tableaux vivants, and whoosh-y, thump-y sound effects as if to say, "Take that, Baz Luhrmann!" In particular, the ballroom sequence technically marvels. But I'd trade in an instant this tiresome artificiality for some potent empathy. We're able to intellectualize why we should care, but we're too distracted to be moved. Rated R for sexuality and violence. *Two hours, 10 minutes.* — P.C.

ARGO ★★1/2

(Century 16, Century 20) The Ben Affleck of old has been shed like a husk, and what remains is a sharp and thoughtful filmmaker who is still in the embryonic phase of an impressive career. Sure, Affleck the actor is also along for the ride, but his skill behind the camera is what truly shines. After the assault on the U.S. Embassy in Tehran on Nov. 4, 1979, 52 Americans are taken hostage as Iranian revolutionaries storm the embassy, but six Americans manage to escape amidst the turmoil and hide out in the home of Canadian Ambassador Ken Taylor (Victor Garber). Back in the U.S., CIA operative Jack O'Donnell (Bryan Cranston) tasks "exfiltration specialist" Tony Mendez (Affleck) with hatching a plan to get the six Americans safely out before their true identities and whereabouts are discovered. Mendez conceives of a faux movie production that would make the six part of his filmmaking team. "Argo" is a nail-biter from beginning to end, and one of the year's best films. Affleck and his crew do a phenomenal job capturing the time period and casting actors who both look like their real-life counterparts and have the thespian chops to hit all the right notes. *Rated R for language and violent images. 2 hours.* — T.H.

CHASING MAVERICKS

★★1/2
(Century 20) These days, the typical teen movie panders with sunny fantasy or raunch, but as a sports movie concerned with the development of a young man, "Mavericks" fruitfully aspires to the likes of "Breaking Away." As the title suggests, the truth-based film takes place in Northern California, where in 1994 surf spot Mavericks was still considered a myth. Frosty Hesson (Gerard Butler) knows better, but 15-year-old Jay Moriarity (Jonny Weston) finds out and wants in. Though conflicted, Frosty agrees to train Jay in the survival skills he'll need to face the 30-to-80-foot waves of Mavericks, on the presumption that the kid will otherwise get himself killed. "Mavericks" turns out to be better than you'd think. And Butler functions bet-



Keira Knightley as "Anna Karenina."

ter than he has since, well, maybe ever. The knock against the film is its constant proximity to corniness, in keeping with the co-production by Fox 2000 and family-friendly Walden Media and the attendant "PG" rating. But it's partly just that corn level that allows the movie to blindsides you with unexpected insight and emotion. Rated PG for thematic elements and perilous action. *One hour, 56 minutes.* — P.C.

FLIGHT ★★★

(Century 16, Century 20) Director Robert Zemeckis typically invokes cinematic technique ranging on spectacle, and "Flight" delivers on that promise in a masterful aerial sequence, a crash scenario that characters will parse over the two hours to follow. "Flight" begins by establishing Washington's Captain "Whip" Whitaker as liquored up and therefore in need of a leveling cocaine bump before striding to the cockpit. What follows is, in part, an exploration of what it means to be a hero in a real world of human frailty and gray areas. Whip is heading for a personal crash of his own, and if he's to avoid it, he will need to embrace humility and accept help. But the inconvenient truth is that Whip is probably right when he insists, "Someone put me in a broken plane," and that "No one else could have landed that plane like I did." "Flight" offers much that's productively unsettling, anchored by Washington's old-school movie-star performance, filigreed with some quietly excellent supporting work from the likes of Bruce Greenwood and Peter Gerety, and culminating in a "Scent of a Woman"-style moral climax that offers a more relatable opportunity for modern heroism: the chance to take responsibility. Rated R for drug and alcohol abuse, language, sexuality/nudity and an intense action sequence. *Two hours, 18 minutes.* — P.C.

HITCHCOCK ★★

(Guild, Century 20) Many can relate to the childhood experience of getting wise to fakery. "Daddy, that's not Snow White!" "Mommy, Santa doesn't wear sneakers." Well, film fans may feel a pang of déjà vu when they sit down to "Hitchcock," which purports to revive the weighty filmmaker forever to be known as "The Master of Suspense." Stephen Rebello's nonfiction book "Alfred Hitchcock and the Making of Psycho" — hangs its hat on marital strain and the artistic and financial gamble that was Hitchcock's masterpiece "Psycho." For this latest feat of reenactment cinema, we get Anthony Hopkins as the corpulent filmmaker; Helen Mirren as his wife and trusted screenwriting consultant Alma Reville; Scarlett Johansson and James D'Arcy as "Psycho" stars Janet Leigh and Anthony

Perkins; and so on. At its best, "Hitchcock" reminds audiences not only of the risk represented by "Psycho," but its reinvigorating quality. But the film is generally pleased to be entertainingly glib. Hopkins is, of course, a likeable actor, but his power is muted by pounds of latex, and he doesn't quite capture the depths of Hitch's drollery. Mirren, miscast as Reville, comes off too glamorous and modern to play this intellectual used to being overlooked. On balance, "Hitchcock" is about as entertaining and as trustworthy as a tabloid. *Rated PG-13 for some violent images, sexual content and thematic material. One hour, 38 minutes.* — P.C.

LIFE OF PI ★★1/2

(Palo Alto Square) In Ang Lee's exhilarating "Life of Pi" — based upon the bestselling novel by Yann Martel — a boy adrift reads a "Survival at Sea" manual. "Telling stories is highly recommended," it says. "Above all, do not lose hope." In the hands of Ang Lee, "Life of Pi" elegantly walks Martel's philosophical line while also brilliantly using every modern cinematic tool to tell an epic yarn. Most prominent among these tools is 3D. Lee joins the ranks of auteurs using new 3D cameras, gallantly employing the technology for its full ViewMaster "pop" effect, but also in more magical ways. Suraj Sharma plays the teenage Piscine Molitor (aka "Pi"), who, having been raised in South India, winds up in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, warily sharing a lifeboat with a zebra, an orangutan and a Bengal tiger. As a boy, Pi (Ayush Tandon) becomes something of a "Catholic Hindu," who sees the gods of various religions as his "superheroes." Pi's spiritual picaresque shifts into a high gear once he's fighting for survival on the "life"boat. Pi's attempts to reach detente with the tiger create a fearful intimacy analogous to some people's experience of God. "I have to believe there was more in his eyes than my own reflection staring back at me," Pi says, but the film's visual motifs of mirrored surfaces might just as well suggest that people under sufficient emotional duress see what they want to see. *Rated PG for emotional thematic content throughout, and some scary action sequences and peril. Two hours, seven minutes.* — P.C.

LINCOLN ★★1/2

(Century 16, Century 20) Spielberg's "Lincoln" — which focuses on Lincoln's tragically shortened second term in office, the conclusion of the Civil War and the president's fight to pass the 13th Amendment (abolishing slavery) — plays a bit like a \$50 million history lesson. And while that's a boon for history buffs, the pacing suffers sporadically. Still, Spielberg and his team (including an A-list cast that

► Continued on next page

► Continued from previous page

features a spotlight-stealing performance by Tommy Lee Jones) deserve a wealth of credit for embracing a monumental task and succeeding. The film follows Lincoln (Day-Lewis) as he seeks to outlaw slavery and, thus, end the bloody Civil War. Lincoln juggles nation-changing decisions with personal-life issues: his wife Mary's (Sally Field) migraines, his older son Robert's (Joseph Gordon-Levitt) military ambitions and his young son Tad's (Gulliver McGrath) upbringing. Day-Lewis captures Lincoln as well as any actor could. From his vocal inflections to his mannerisms, it's clear he truly immersed himself in the difficult role. But it's Jones' performance that lends the film the spark it needed and would not have otherwise had. *Rated PG-13 for war violence, strong language and carnage. 2 hours, 29 minutes.* — T.H. (

THE PERKS OF BEING A WALLFLOWER ★★☆☆

(Century 16) In "Wallflower," novelist Stephen Chbosky directs a revealing film based on his own semi-autobiographical book. Witness specimen Charlie (Logan Lerman) — seen here entering the mating grounds of Mill Grove High School outside Pittsburgh in the early '90s — little understanding the pull that will lead him to join a pack, gravitate to his cool English teacher, fall for an unavailable female of the species, make mix tapes, have late-night "deep thought" epiphanies, and participate in ancient teenage rituals involving drugs, alcohol and/or "The Rocky Horror Picture Show." Charlie is painfully shy and inclined to lick the wounds of earlier tangles with predators. He is accepted by the impulsive seniors of the pack: attractive potential

mate Sam (Emma Watson) and gay Patrick (Ezra Miller), the latter performing that rare and complex dance of flamboyance, deception, confusion, fear and desire like a junior Oscar Wilde. One cannot blame our sentimental filmmaker or even you, gentle viewer, for seeing in these younglings something of ourselves. *Rated PG-13 for mature thematic material, drug and alcohol use, sexual content and a fight; all involving teens. One hour, 43 minutes.* — P.C.)

RED DAWN ★1/2

(Century 16) Oh boy, are we in for it. A second recession here, a bit of cyberterrorism there, and we'll be weak enough for North Korea to invade Spokane. Or so the new remake of "Red Dawn" would have it. Chris Hemsworth plays Jed Eckert, a Spokane-bred Marine recently returned from Iraq. Having barely checked in with brother Matt (Josh Peck) and their father Tom (Brett Cullen), Jed steps up to lead the local Resistance against North Korean occupiers, training scrawny boys to become militarized men. Since Jed accomplishes his task with the relative ease of a montage "Red Dawn" swiftly loses dramatic tension. To be fair, the picture kicks off with one helluva invasion sequence that delivers scary, visceral thrills, but one would have to go a long way to suspend disbelief at the premise's numerous implausibilities, which swiftly pile up. The notion that Americans used to being occupiers have now become homeland-defending insurgents remains either comfortably subtextual or deliberately muddled. The women folk (including Adriaane Palicki) remain demonstrably less tough-minded than the foregrounded men. The film is as desensitizing as the first-person shooter one of the teens says he misses. "Dude," his friend replies, "we're

living 'Call of Duty' — and it sucks!" *Rated PG-13 for intense war violence and action, and for language. One hour, 33 minutes.* — P.C.

RISE OF THE GUARDIANS

★★★1/2
(Century 16, Century 20) "Guardians," a flashy new animated adventure based on William Joyce's "The Guardians of Childhood" book series, takes Joyce's high concept — a superheroic team-up of kid-myth characters — and runs with it, allowing surly teen Jack Frost to discover himself and locate his vocation with the help of Santa Claus, the Easter Bunny, the Tooth Fairy and the Sandman. It's a faith-based tale of sorts, with baddie the Boogeyman (Jude Law) — aka Pitch, the Nightmare King — threatening to make kids believe only in fear and no longer in their heroes. Jack Frost (Chris Pine) must overcome his personal darkness to stop Pitch from plunging the world into what could be literal darkness. All this signifies something slightly weightier than a "Shrek" or "Madagascar," which is wise. But Ramsey is no Tim Burton. The knock against "Guardians" is its loose narrative's lurching pace, but the story's awkward patches don't do much damage. Those bred on the warmer classic Disney style may find this venture a bit icy in its near-photo-real CGI, but one can't deny the film is frequently visually resplendent and imaginative. *Rated PG for thematic elements and some mildly scary action. One hour, 37 minutes.* — P.C.

SKYFALL ★★☆☆1/2

(Century 16, Century 20) In this 23rd official Bond film, the most conspicuously repeated word is "game," the most dangerous of which Bond typically is, pursues

or plays. Directed by Oscar winner Sam Mendes "Skyfall" finds Daniel Craig's Bond musing aloud to Judi Dench's M, "We're both played out," and, soon thereafter, once more striding tux-clad into a house of games. The film's most satisfying scenes are the multiple rounds of verbal jousting: between Bond and "M"; Bond and "Q" (Ben Whishaw); Bond and fellow agent Eve (Naomie Harris); Bond and exotic beauty Severine (Berenice Lim Marlohe); and, of course, Bond and super-baddie Raoul Silva (Javier Bardem). Under Mendes' sensitive direction, Craig and company play each of these duets as a kind of seduction, Bond's specialty. "Skyfall" isn't a deep film. But this Bond proves elegantly designed and constructed, making it as classy as they've come over the last half-century. It's fair to say that "Skyfall" both ruthlessly rips off the tales of other iconic characters (Sherlock Holmes, the Dark Knight) and puts into play most of the classic Bond tropes as the picture deconstructs and reconstructs his universe. Bond makes a crack about "the circle of life," and indeed the series remains destined to retrace its steps, making the tracks just a bit deeper each time around. Mendes manages Bond's most haunted outing yet, captured in the image of his lone Aston Martin wending its way through a vast highland landscape, back to the world of hurt that long ago sent him running into the spy game. *Rated PG-13 for intense violent sequences, some sexuality, language and smoking. 2 hours, 23 minutes.* — P.C.

WRECK-IT RALPH ★★☆☆

(Century 16, Century 20) It's not easy being 9 feet tall and 643 pounds. And that's not even the hardest part about being "Wreck-It Ralph," the leading character of Walt Dis-

ney Animation's 52nd feature. The hardest part is being an arcade-game "bad guy," a professional wrecker tasked with endlessly destroying "Niceland" while heroic Fix-It Felix Jr. saves the day. Ralph (John C. Reilly) has begun to want more out of life. He attends a "Bad-Anon" meeting with the likes of Clyde the Ghost from "Pac-Man" and Bowser from "Super Mario Bros.," but no one tells him what he wants to hear: that he could be a hero, that he could dare to be liked. And so Ralph goes off the reservation, doing the unthinkable by leaving his game. Circumstances eventually deposit Ralph into a third arcade game for the lion's share of the picture. This is "Sugar Rush," an anime-inflected candy-land kart-racing game, and it's home to the annoyingly adorable. Vanellope von Schweetz (Sarah Silverman). Branded a "glitch" in her game, Vanellope is on her own quest for validation and thus forms an uneasy alliance with Ralph to get her across the game's finish line and allow Ralph passage home. The fantasy's grounding in real-world concerns speaks to all ages, and the story's creative path to self-actualization with its zeitgeisty anti-bullying theme and conclusion "There's no one I'd rather be than me" speak eloquently to kids. Mostly, though, "Wreck-It Ralph" is built for fun. Save up your quarters, kids: It's worth it. *Rated PG for thematic elements and some perilous action. One hour, 53 minutes.* — P.C.)

■ MOVIE CRITICS

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HIGHLIGHT

LOS ALTOS FIRST FRIDAY

There will be First Friday festivities in Downtown Los Altos. The theme is "All Aboard for the Holidays" and the evening includes free train rides, a visit from Santa, a raffle, and an after-hours holiday party at 359 State from 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Stores will remain open until 8 p.m. for holiday shopping. Dec. 7, 6-10 p.m. Downtown Los Altos, Main and State St., Los Altos. losaltosfirstfriday.org

ART GALLERIES

'Cuban at Heart: A Photographic Exhibition' Foothill College presents "Cuban at Heart: A Photographic Exhibition," which captures the magnetic pull of the Cuban people -- their warmth, openness, and resourcefulness -- as photographed by 16 Foothill College photography students and their instructor. Admission is free; parking is \$3. Nov. 28-Jan. 16, 7:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m. Krause Center for Innovation Gallery at Foothill College, 12345 El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills. Call 650-949-7082. cubanatheart.wordpress.com/

Art Exhibit by Abilities United Artists This event launches the Abilities United 50th year of service and celebrates the International Day of People with Disabilities. There will be original works of art by artists from Abilities United. Art is on exhibit Fri Dec. 7, 2-6 p.m. All art available for purchase. 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Microsoft Store Stanford Shopping Center, 660 Stanford Shopping, Palo Alto. Call 650-618-3319. www.abilitiesunited.org

Miniatures and More Gallery 9 Los Altos Holiday group exhibit features 30 local artists through Dec. 24. Small works in a variety of media: painting, sculpture, ceramics, printmaking, photography, mixed media, metal work and jewelry. Holiday reception: Fri., Dec. 7, 5-7:30 p.m. Gallery hours: Tues.-Sat., 11-5 p.m.; Sun. 12-4 p.m. Gallery 9, 143 Main St., Los Altos. www.gallery9losaltos.com

Portfolio Sale Opening Reception There will be an opening reception for the annual Portfolio Sale at the Pacific Art League. Attendees can enjoy the art, and maybe find someone on their holiday list a gift of original art. Dec. 7, 5:30-8 p.m. Pacific Art League, 668 Ramona St., Palo Alto. Call 650-321-3891. www.pacificartleague.org

BENEFITS

Whole Foods Shopping Day Whole Foods Los Altos is hosting a Shopping Day during which five percent of sales go to MVLA High School Foundation, which raises funds to bridge the funding gap between what taxes cover and the public school's program-rich environment. Dec. 12, 12 a.m.-12 p.m. Whole Foods Los Altos, 4800 El Camino Real, Los Altos. <http://mvlafoundation.org>

CLASSES/WORKSHOPS

'Behind the Scene' of a Musical Composition Behind every musical work stands the person who authored it - the composer. Most have heard of the legendary Mozart, Beethoven or Brahms, and may be even familiar with some of their works. But who has actually met a living composer? Thursdays, through Dec. 13. Pre-registration \$20/class, or \$25 individual class congregation Etz Chayim, 4161 Alma St., Palo Alto. Call 650-283-4541. www.nurijugend.com/A/Behind_the_Scene_of_a_Musical_Composition.html

E-Readers Petting Zoo at Los Altos Library Just in time for the holidays attendees can see different E-Readers at the E-Readers Petting Zoo. Look, play, and learn about E-Readers and how people use them with free e-books from the library. Dec. 10, 7-8:30 p.m. Los Altos Library Program Room, 13 S San Antonio Road, Los Altos. scl.org

eBook Drop-In Center Interested in checking out eBooks from the Palo Alto City Library? The eBook Drop-In Center is on the 1st Friday of each month, Dec-Feb, 3-5 p.m. Those interested can drop in to these informal sessions, ask questions, and get help. 3-5 p.m. Downtown Library, 270 Forest Ave., Palo Alto. Call 650-329-2436. www.cityofpaloalto.org/library

Foothill College Winter Registration Foothill College Winter Quarter registration is Nov. 26-Jan. 6. Classes run Jan. 7-March 27. Continuing students register Nov. 26-Jan. 6. New and former students register Nov. 30-Jan. 6. California residents pay \$31 per unit plus basic fees. Review instructions and class schedule at www.foothill.edu 5 a.m. California residents pay \$31 per unit plus basic fees. Foothill College, 12345 El Monte



Bayer Ballet Company - 'A Winter Fairy Tale'

Holiday youth ballet in world-famous Russian style. A magical book brings to life a New Year's Eve fairy tale. Includes fairyland creatures and animated toys. Dec. 14, 7 p.m.; Dec. 15, 5:30 p.m.; Dec. 16, 2:30 p.m., \$30/\$25 (12 and under, 62 and over). Mountain View Center for The Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. Call 650-988-9971. www.bayerballetacademy.com

Road, Los Altos Hills. Call 650-949-7325. www.foothill.fhda.edu/reg/winter13.php

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Gamble Garden Holiday Greens Sale and Arrangements Attendees can purchase fresh holiday greens or a custom greens arrangement. Dec. 8, 9 a.m.-12 p.m. Gamble Garden, 1431 Waverley St., Palo Alto. Call 650-329-1356 x201. www.gamblegarden.org

SPCS Open House Stanford Pre-Collegiate Studies is home to a range of programs that enrich and enhance the educational experience of pre-college students. Students and educators can come to its Open House to learn more about programs designed for students from elementary through high school. Dec. 9, 1-4 p.m. Arrillaga Alumni Center, 326 Galvez St., Stanford University, Stanford. Call 724-8040. spcs.stanford.edu/openhouse

CONCERTS

Bach's Christmas oratorio Soli Deo Gloria and orchestra perform Bach's monumental cantatas cover the whole story, from the census decree to the shepherds and angels to the circumcision to the visit of the Magi. Dec. 8, \$30/\$25. Unitarian Universalist Church, 505 E. Charleston Road, Palo Alto. sdgloria.org

California Youth Symphony Holiday Concert Attendees can listen to classical and seasonal favorites performed by the CYS Senior and Associate Orchestras. Dec. 9, 2:30 p.m. Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College, 12345 S. El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills. Call 650-325-6666. www.cys.org

Christmas Majesty Bay Choral Guild presents Christmas Majesty, a Christmas concert. Dec. 9, 4:30-6:30 p.m. \$25 general, \$20 senior, \$5 student. First Baptist Church, 305 North California Ave., Palo Alto. www.baychoralguild.org

Festival of lessons and carols The Stanford Memorial Church Choir under the direction of Dr. Robert Huw Morgan presents this ever-popular program of Advent music and readings in the tradition of the Chapel of the Kings College, Cambridge University. Dec. 8, 8-10 p.m. Stanford Memorial Church, 450 Serra Mall, Stanford. Call 650-723-1762. events.stanford.edu/events/333/33399/

Fortnightly Music Club - December Concert The December concert will include operatic selections by Mozart, Mendelssohn's "Variations Serieuses" and Saint-Saens' Piano Trio No. 1. Dec. 9, 7-8:30 p.m. Lucie Stern Community Center Ballroom, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. www.fortnightlymusicclub.org

Mid Peninsula Recorder Orchestra (MPRO) Holiday concert The Mid Peninsula Recorder Orchestra Holiday Concert, celebrating its 50th Anniversary, features works by Dufay, Praetorius, Schmelzer, Stradella, and Bay Area composer Nancy Bloomer Deussen. The MPRO is an affiliate of the San Francisco Early Music Society. Dec. 8, 2-3 p.m. Grace Lutheran Church, 3149 Waverly St., Palo Alto. Call 650-591-3648. mpro-online.org

Palo Alto Philharmonic Orchestra Concert The Palo Alto Philharmonic plays the music of Ives, Harris and Brahms : Decoration Day by Charles Ives, Roy Harris's Symphony #3 and Johannes Brahms' Violin Concerto with soloist Christina Mok. Pre-concert talk at 7:30 p.m. Dec. 8, 8 p.m. \$20/\$17/\$10. Cubberley Theatre, 4000 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. paphil.org

Peter Rowan Bluegrass Band Grammy-winning singer and musician Peter Rowan and his band will provide a concert for all ages in Mountain View on Saturday, Dec. 8, at 7:30 p.m. optional, free jamming starts at 5 p.m. \$22 in advance, \$25 Day of Show. First Presbyterian Church, 1667 Miramonte Ave., Mountain View. Call 650-691-9982. www.rba.org/

Trombone Choir Holiday Concert The Gordon Stewart Peninsula Trombone Choir comprised only of trombones, will play a variety of holiday-related music, including traditional, jazz, and classical. Dec. 9, 2-3:30 p.m. St. Andrews United Methodist Church, 4111 Alma St., Palo Alto. Call 650-493-4257.

FAMILY AND KIDS

'We Wish You Christmas' Songs for chorus and harp by John Rutter, Brian Holmes, Jackson Berkey, and Dale Wood. Plus a sing-along of favorite carols and a visit from Old St. Nick with a special goody for every child. Dec. 9, 3-4 p.m. \$25 per adult; \$10 per child. First Congregational Church of Palo Ato, 1985 Louis Road, Palo Alto. Call 650-254-1700. www.scholacantorum.org

Autism Spectrum Disorders Parent Education Program The Stanford Autism Center at Packard Children's Hospital Parent Education is offering a half-day conference designed to provide parents with information about autism, Asperger's, PDD-NOS as well as a discussion on when and how to talk to your child and others about these conditions. Dec. 8, 9 a.m.-12:30 p.m. \$30 per person. Stanford University, 401 Quarry Road, Stanford. Call 650-721-6327. childpsychiatry.stanford.edu

Storytime Attendees bring can bring their teddy bears and listen to bear stories. Children under 12 must also bring an adult. Light refreshments will be served. Dec. 8, 10:30 a.m.-12 p.m. Los Altos History Museum, 51 South San Antonio Road, Los Altos. www.losaltoshistory.org

The Wind in the Willows Kids can go for a wild ride with Mr. Toad as he is reunited with his beloved friends Mole, Ratty, and Mr. Badger. In an adventure with chases, jail breaks and bandits, Mr. Toad learns the true meaning of friendship. Dec. 6-8, 14-15, 21-22 at 7 p.m., Dec 8-9, 15 at 2 p.m. and Dec. 12-13 at 4:30 \$10.00 children; \$12.00 adults Palo Alto Children's Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Call 650-463-4970. www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/csd/theatre/default.asp

FILM

Strains of Odyssey Former First Lady of Japan, Madame Kayoko Hosokaw, will introduce Strains of Odyssey, a film which tells the story of Japanese Maestro Kobayashi Ken-ichiro who invited 31 musicians with a range of disabilities

to stage a concert together. Dec. 8, 4 p.m. \$30. CSMA, 230 San Antonio Circle, Mountain View. Call 650-917-6800, ext. 314. www.arts4all.org

LIVE MUSIC

Live Gypsy Acoustic Guitar Dani will play Flamenco guitar and latin love classics. Dec. 20, 5-9:30 p.m. Morocco's Restaurant, 873 Castro St., Mountain View. Call 650-968-1502. www.moroccosrestaurant.com

Peter Rowan Bluegrass Band Grammy-award winner and six-time Grammy nominee, Peter Rowan is a bluegrass singer-songwriter with a career spanning over five decades. His band remains Keith Little, Mike Witcher, and Paul Knight. Back by popular demand. There will also be a 5 p.m. jam. Dec. 8, 7-10 p.m. \$20 advance, \$22 door, half-price for teens, free for under-13 and music students. First Presbyterian Church, 1667 Miramonte Ave. at Cuesta Drive, Mountain View. Call 650-691-9982. rba.org

ON STAGE

It's a Wonderful Life It's a Wonderful Life: A Live Radio Play re-imagines the beloved movie directed by Frank Capra as a 1940s radio production. Five talented actors play every single part, as well as provide all the sound-effects with an ingenious bag of tricks. Through Dec. 22, 8-9:45 p.m. \$18-\$30. Bus Barn Theater, 97 Hillview Ave., Los Altos. Call 650-941-5070. busbarn.org

RELIGION/SPIRITUALITY

Choral Evensong for Advent The All Saints' Choir directed by Rodney Gehrke offers Evening Prayer in the Anglican tradition. Magnificat and Nunc dimittis settings by George Dyson (1883-1964) along with Preces and Responses by William Smith (1603-1645) will be offered along with other music of the season. English Tea to follow. Dec. 9, 4-5:30 p.m. All Saints' Episcopal Church, 555 Waverley St., Palo Alto. Call 650-322-4528. www.asaints.org

SENIORS

Holiday Gala Attendees can dance to Jerry Jay's Quartet and eat refreshments. Registration is not required, just show up, show off your fancy frocks and enjoy some dancing. Dec. 12, 4-6 p.m. Mountain View Senior Center, 266 Escuela Ave., Mountain View. Call 650-903-6330.†

Intro to Meditation for Relaxation Benefits of meditation, properly practiced, could include stress reduction, slowing of biological aging, improved concentration, and enhanced zest for living. Susie Lowe will give a bit of calmness at this busy time of year! Wear loose clothing. Dec. 13, 10:15-11:15 a.m. Mountain View Senior Center, 266 Escuela Ave., Mountain View. Call 650-903-6330.†

SPECIAL EVENTS

NABE SVRT luncheon: Mountain View or Googletown? The north bay shore located northeast of highway 101 in Mountain View has experienced tremendous economic growth since

the 1970s. Professor Tom Means, SJSU, will discuss the challenges public officials face to accommodate the changing technology & workforce. RSVP by 12/1 to NABESVRT<@>gmail.com. Dec. 12, 11:30 a.m.-2 p.m. Members \$30, guests \$40 (membership available at event). Stanford Faculty Club, 439 Lagunita Drive, Stanford. Call 650-233-9613. svrt.org

TALKS/AUTHORS

Luncheon on Water Issues Dr. Christiana Swanson, Director, Science Center, Natural Resources Defense Council, will speak on water issues at the Winter Luncheon of the League of Women Voters of Palo Alto, Tues., Dec. 11, 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. \$32. Garden Court Hotel, 520 Cowper St., Palo Alto.†

Managing Brands in an Uncontrollable Landscape Attendees listen in on a conversation between Eric Kuhn, Hollywood's first social media agent, and Larry Vincent, founder of The Brand Studio at United Talent Agency, as they discuss the unique challenges of cultivating and managing a brand's story in a social and digital media landscape. Dec. 13, 5-6:30 p.m. Pake Auditorium, PARC, a Xerox company, 3333 Coyote Hill Road, Palo Alto. www.parc.com/events/forum.html

Technology and Society Committee Luncheon Forum Andra Keay, founder of Robot Launchpad, describes her work to accelerate the development of robots and robotic technologies via robot tracks at hackathons and startup weekends, providing lean startup and customer development methods to robotics events, and supporting early stage startups. Dec. 11, 11:45 a.m.-1 p.m. Lunch is \$12. Hangen Szechuan Restaurant, 134 Castro St., Mountain View. Call 650-969-7215. tian.greens.org/TASC.shtml

What's Hot and What's Not in Consumer Tech The 9th annual gadgets program features Walt Mossberg, Kara Swisher, Greg Harper and a TBA tech industry celebrity guest as they reveal their favorite consumer tech products. Dec. 13, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Churchill Club Member \$64 | Nonmember \$89. Crowne Plaza Cabana, 4290 El Camino Real, Palo Alto. Call 408-265-0130. transition.churchillclub.org/eventDetail.jsp?EVT_ID=965

Why the World Will Still Be Here after Dec. 21 Responding to all the hoopla about the so-called "Doomsday 2012," a panel of three astronomers (David Morrison, Ed Krupp, and Andrew Fraknoi) will discuss the various suggested causes of apocalypse on Dec. 21, 2012 and the real science that governs the fate of the Earth. Dec. 11, 7-8:30 p.m. SETI Institute, 189 Bernardo Ave., Mountain View. www.seti.org/weekly-lecture/why-world-will-still-be-here-after-december-21st

TEEN ACTIVITIES

The Hip Hop Apocalypse Lion Eyes present The Hip Hop Apocalypse, a night of beats, rhymes, and breakdancing. Includes Lion Eyes (Underbelly, Soul Cousin, and the Dopest Gringo Alive), Killi Cal, Sean Lee, The New Crew and Eastwood Roc. Dec. 8, 7-9 p.m. \$1. The Media Center, 900 San Antonio Road, Palo Alto. Call 650-796-6099. www.facebook.com/events/216757501791254/?fref=ts

VOLUNTEERS

Museum of American Heritage Volunteers are welcome at the Museum of American Heritage in downtown Palo Alto. There are a wide range of opportunities. 11-4 p.m. free Museum of American Heritage, 351 Homer Ave., Palo Alto. Call 650-321-1004. www.moah.org

Now Recruiting Outdoor Education Leaders There are volunteer opportunities with the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District. It involves working as part of a team and leading third through fifth grade students on field trips at the David C. Daniels Nature Center. Those interested can submit an interest form now to be included in the upcoming training. Through Feb. 12. Free www.openspace.org/volunteer/volunteer.asp

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Enterprise Branch | **Sunnyvale**
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The weight is over

If you've struggled with diet and exercise and still have not achieved lasting weight loss, it may be time to consider weight loss surgery.

The experts at the Palo Alto Medical Foundation can help you reduce the serious health problems—both emotional and physical—that can result from obesity. Our surgeons are highly trained in the latest minimally-invasive weight loss surgery procedures, including gastric bypass, stomach band placement and vertical sleeve gastrectomy. Combined, they have performed more than 900 surgeries in the last five years, with an average weight loss of 78.5 pounds after one year.

We provide long-term comprehensive nutritional and metabolic medical care after surgery in locations throughout the Bay Area. Consultations and group sessions with doctors, behaviorists and registered dietitians also provide vital information before and after surgery to keep pounds off.

To find out if you're a candidate for surgery, schedule a free orientation session:

Fremont: 3200 Kearney Street, Bldg. 2, 3rd Floor
For questions, call Susan Nachshen at 650-404-8400

Mountain View: 701 E. El Camino Real, 3rd Floor
Tuesday, December 11, 4 – 6:30 p.m.
To register or for questions, call Susan Nachshen at 650-404-8400

Palo Alto: 795 El Camino Real, Jamplis Bldg., 3rd Floor
Tuesday, December 11, 4 – 6 p.m.
To register or for questions, call Jennifer Padilla at 650-853-2331

Santa Cruz: 2200 Soquel Avenue
For questions, call Susan Nachshen at 650-404-8400

Bariatric Surgeons

Mountain View
650-404-8400
Prithvi Legha, M.D.

Palo Alto
650-853-2331
John Feng, M.D.
Beemen Khalil, M.D.

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