

Mountain View VOICE

MAY 23, 2014 VOLUME 22, NO. 16

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MOVIES | 24



**Better
than pub
grub**
WEEKEND | 21



MICHELLE LE

Big trees toppled at the former Mayfield Mall site this week, where new tenant Google plans to move in.

Mayfield trees axed for Google's new digs

By Daniel DeBolt

Residents of the Monta Loma neighborhood said they were surprised this week to see the number of trees chopped down around the former Mayfield Mall at Google's request.

With no new buildings planned for the site, the number of trees being cut for the renovation of the Mayfield property caught Monta

Lomans by surprise, said former Monta Loma Neighborhood Association president Elna Tymes in an email.

"We thought the development agreement was that diseased trees would be cut down, along with a few required to accommodate the new development, but certainly not as many as have now been cut," she told the *Voice*. "We had assumed that most of the trees would remain."

Birds had been nesting in the removed trees, she said.

A Google spokesperson did not provide an explanation for why the trees were removed. "Since we know how important the trees are to the community, our team worked with an arborist and the city to establish which trees were to be removed and which should be protected. The protected trees remain

► See **MAYFIELD TREES**, page 9

Group shifts referendum effort to San Antonio center

LOCAL HOUSING ADVOCATES WILL ATTEMPT TO HALT MERLONE GEIER REDEVELOPMENT

By Daniel DeBolt

Community organizers say they will gather signatures for a referendum to stop Merlone Geier's redevelopment of San Antonio Shopping Center this summer.

The Campaign for a Balanced

Mountain View has taken issue with developer Merlone Geier's proposal to build large office buildings without adding any housing in its second phase of the major redevelopment of the shopping center. The group has also taken issue with the developer's treatment of the Milk Pail

Market, which may be forced out without an agreement with Merlone Geier for parking for the store.

The group unanimously voted Monday evening to collect the required 3,240 signatures from

► See **REFERENDUM**, page 9

Map of toxic sites causes alarm in MV

CHEMICALS SPREAD UNDER GOOGLEPLEX IS MUCH SMALLER THAN THOUGHT

By Daniel DeBolt and Gennady Sheyner

Palo Alto resident Bob Wenzlau has taken on the task of mapping the various toxic plumes in Mountain View and surrounding cities, which has caused some alarm among Mountain View residents and employees.

The murky and complex topic of groundwater contamination has been a hot one in cities like Palo Alto and Mountain View, where contamination has been found under former computer chip manufacturer sites around North Whisman Road and a few other sites. The typical pollutant is trichloroethylene (TCE), a once-popular industrial solvent that has been deemed a carcinogen by the Environmental Protection Agency. The vapors are known to rise from the ground and become trapped in buildings, causing a risk for birth defects from short term exposures and numerous health problems from long-term exposures.

Information about specific Silicon Valley toxic sites isn't easy

for a layman to find. Data about these underground contaminants are dispersed throughout many different databases, making it difficult for city officials and residents to access and understand the information. This, in turn, makes it hard for cleanup efforts to generate momentum. In Mountain View, toxic site cleanup oversight is divided among the EPA, the state's Water Board and Department of Toxic Substances Control. The latter two have engaged the public very little in their cleanups.

Wenzlau is known as the pioneer of Palo Alto's curbside recycling program and is a leading advocate for a new compost facility, but in recent months he and his company, Terradex created a web application that consolidates all the information for each Superfund site in the Silicon Valley, as well as for dozens of other contaminated areas.

In the first days of its existence, some who saw Wenzlau's map

► See **PLUME**, page 15



COURTESY CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW

Merlone Geier's rendering shows two planned office buildings as seen from San Antonio Road.

INSIDE

VIEWPOINT 18 | GOINGS ON 27 | MARKETPLACE 29 | REAL ESTATE 31



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Sellers: John and Beth

Voices

A R O U N D T O W N

Asked in downtown Mountain View. Photos and interviews by Kayla Layaoen.

What are your plans for Memorial Day weekend?



"(I'll be) thanking all the soldiers who have fallen for my liberty and freedom."

Felicie Bajet, Paris, France



"I'm going to go to Disneyland and party in L.A."

Isra Siddiqui, Mountain View



"I'm planning to finish up my computer science project."

Ronen Burd, Kfar Saba, Israel



"I'll probably be sleeping in."

Jaybee De Dios, Sunnyvale



"Catch up on my sleep and my favorite TV shows."

Robert Howey, Los Altos

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- Mountain View residents may also purchase discounted lawn and upper reserve tickets for \$13.50 (4 tickets per family limit). Discounted tickets are also courtesy of Shoreline Amphitheatre and the City of Mountain View.
- * To obtain your free or discounted tickets: **BRING THIS COUPON**, proof of residency (a driver's license AND current utility bill with a Mountain View address) or a 2014 Shoreline Resident Ticket ID card with valid ID to the Amphitheatre Box Office.
- Shoreline Amphitheatre Box Office Hours: Monday - Friday 12noon to 5:00p.m., Saturdays 10:00a.m. to 2:00p.m. Box office can be reached at (650) 967-4040.
- Doors open at 5:00p.m. with Radio Disney Family Festival.
- Get your free tickets by 2:00p.m. on Monday, June 23 unless sold out prior to this date.
- Discounted tickets can be purchased up to and including the day of the event.
- An additional \$10.00 parking fee will be collected the night of the event.

Helpful Tips!

- Easy access to the Amphitheatre is available from the Stevens Creek Trail and Permanente Creek Trails.
- Shoreline Amphitheatre will provide supervised bike parking for this event.
- Trail hours will be extended to allow public access after the event to walk or ride home.



LocalNews

■ CRIME BRIEFS

MV MAN ARRESTED AFTER STRING OF BURGLARIES

Two men, including one Mountain View resident, were arrested in connection to at least five burglaries from homes and vehicles in Los Altos.

Police received a report that suspicious people were in the 200 block of Hawthorne Avenue in Los Altos at 5:20 a.m. on May 15. When police arrived they found two men, 20-year-old Nathan Hubbard of Mountain View and 20-year-old Isaiah Magee of San Jose, hiding on residential property and who were allegedly in possession of property from a nearby house.

Officers reported they later found the suspects' vehicle nearby, which had stolen property from at least five other home and vehicle burglaries inside.

Both Hubbard and Magee were booked into Santa Clara County Jail on charges of burglary, possession, stolen property and conspiracy. The bail for both suspects is set at \$150,000.

MAN WITH FRACTURED SKULL FOUND IN PARKING LOT

Police found a man lying on the ground with head injuries in the parking lot of 2211 Latham St. on Thursday, May 15, at around 6:20 p.m.

When police arrived at the scene, the victim was accompanied by two people who were not cooperative, according to police. The victim, a 21-year-old Mountain View resident, was also not being cooperative and was transported to a local hospital, according to Sgt. Saul Jaeger of the Mountain View Police Department.

The victim suffered from a skull fracture and bleeding in the skull, as well as several cuts about his head, according to police.

A separate witness told police a Hispanic man in his mid-20s punched the victim and fled in a black, four-door vehicle.

NO CONTEST PLEA IN ROBBERY CASES

A man who admitted to eight robberies across Mountain View and other Bay Area cities plead no contest to three counts of felony robbery in a San Mateo County court.

On June 25, 2005, 32-year-old Amenaten Shilo Salem robbed a Starbucks on 264 Redwood Shores Parkway in Redwood Shores at 7:45 p.m. He held three victims at gunpoint and ordered an employee to open the safe, and escaped with approximately \$3,000, according to the county report.

Shilo Salem was on the run for months until Mountain View police arrested him as a suspect in a different crime in January 2006. He confessed to the Starbucks robbery as well as a string of other robberies in eight cities, including Mountain View, Santa Clara, San Leandro and San Jose. He was later transferred back to San Mateo County for trial, and was in custody on \$1,000,000 bail.

At the county court in Redwood City, Shilo Salem admitted his guilt, apologized to the victims and plead no contest to felony robbery. The court sentenced him to three years in prison on top of his 17-year state prison sentence by Santa Clara County courts.

Kevin Forestieri

■ POLICE LOG

AUTO BURGLARY

1500 block N. Shoreline Blvd., 5/17
 100 block Del Medio Av., 5/19

BATTERY

2200 block Latham St., 5/15
 2400 block W. El Camino Real, 5/17

GRAND THEFT

600 block Escuela Av., 5/16
 600 block Showers Dr., 5/20

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

200 block Palmita Pl., 5/18

STOLEN VEHICLE

1300 block Montecito Av., 5/15
 200 block N. Whisman Rd., 5/15

VANDALISM

2200 block California St., 5/15
 500 block Showers Dr., 5/20
 1300 block Pear Av., 5/20

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COURTESY OF FREESTYLE ACADEMY

Senior Collin Frieztzsche's surrealist art project is part of the Freestyle Academy Art Exhibition on May 27.

Art school shows off multimedia projects

FREESTYLE ACADEMY ART EXHIBITION FEATURES STUDENT WORK

By Kevin Forestieri

Whether it's expressing yourself through music and poetry or telling a story through photos, students at Freestyle Academy are always looking at ways to communicate through new and interesting artistic mediums. On May 27, students will get to show off their artistic chops at the Freestyle Academy Art Exhibition.

Freestyle Academy is an art and technology school within the Mountain View Los Altos school district that serves as an

alternative classroom environment for students who want experience in photography, film, website production and graphic design. Students spend half their school day at the two-year program for English, fine arts and elective classes, and the other half at either Mountain View or Los Altos high schools.

The art exhibition will be held at Freestyle Academy, 1299 Bryant Avenue, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m. It will also include a presentation in the Spartan Theater at 6:30, located on the Mountain View

High School campus at 3535 Truman Avenue.

The exhibition includes documentary projects that tell a story about a place in the community, according to Leo Florendo, program coordinator at Freestyle Academy. Students go out and find a place they find interesting, and develop a narrative for a photographic book and either a film or website — all different mediums for telling the same story. That place can be something like the Rengstorff

► See **FREESTYLE**, page 8

Bullis signs deal, avoids lockout

CHARTER SCHOOL ACCEPTS FACILITIES USE AGREEMENT
'UNDER PROTEST AND DURESS'

By Kevin Forestieri

Teachers from Bullis Charter School won't be locked out of their classrooms this year, thanks to BCS officials who signed a facilities use agreement early this month. But tension between Bullis and Los Altos School District remains high, and the looming threat of litigation may still be on the horizon.

In a strongly worded letter,

Bullis Superintendent Wanny Hersey criticized the Los Altos School District for unlawfully tripling use fees and charging Bullis for space students aren't allowed to use. She also wrote that the facilities use agreement forces Bullis to sign a document that acts as a "condition" for students to enjoy the facilities to which they are entitled.

The issues in the facilities use agreement revolve around space shared between the char-

ter school and LASD's Blach Intermediate School. Hersey said Bullis is being charged 100 percent of the use fees for space they have limited or no access to during the school year.

"I'm continually dismayed that they refuse to provide equitable use of the facilities," Hersey said.

Hersey said the school received the final facilities use agreement

► See **BCS LETTER**, page 14

A smaller carbon footprint? There's an app for that

COMPANY OFFERS CASH, 'SMART' THERMOSTATS
IN EXCHANGE FOR SHUTTING OFF AC AT PEAK TIMES

By Daniel DeBolt

It might be hard to wrap your head around, but a Bay Area company is aiming to turn your home into a "virtual powerplant" — no solar panels required.

San Francisco-based Ohmconnect has created an app to help people cash in on a fairly new federal law that allows energy savings to be sold on the same market as energy itself.

"That policy (FERC order 745) essentially said if you are a deregulated energy market in the U.S., you have to compensate these reductions the same as (energy) generation," said Ohmconnect co-founder Curtis Tongue. "We're the first company that wrapped our heads around that policy change."

The system works when dirty power plants come online and participants receive an alert text message. They can then turn off the air conditioner, for example, to get paid for saving energy. "We tell you to reduce energy use if there's a local power plant turning on that is inefficient and it drives up costs in the area," Tongue said. In effect, the energy savings of users is "replacing that power plant."

You can even allow Ohmconnect to turn off your devices for you over the Internet, including Tesla electric car chargers, thermostats

made by Nest and any device that can plug into a regular outlet through a Belkin WeMo switch. Users who usually pay about \$100 a month for gas and electricity can generally be paid back about \$5-\$10 a month through the service, Tongue said.

The three-person San Francisco start-up now has about 2,000 people using the service, and Tongue predicts that "within the next couple of years, the vast majority of the U.S. is going to be moving this direction."

**'I don't know
if it saves me
money but I do
like knowing
(how energy is
being used).'**

JOHN OVERSTREET

To promote Ohmconnect to Mountain View residents, the company is giving away thermostats made by Nest. To qualify, you must have central air conditioning and be willing to let Ohmconnect access the thermostat via the Internet to turn off the air condition

when electricity demand peaks, for about 15 minutes.

"The user will receive a notification when we do this and they can override it if they'd like. If they decide to keep the AC down, they get paid for doing so, since Ohmconnect sells their energy reduction into the grid as generation," Curtis said in an email.

Ohmconnect's website also provides various charts and graphs to allows users to become easily acquainted with the reality of their own energy use, teased

► See **OHMCONNECT**, page 17



COURTESY OF OHMCONNECT

Details of home energy use are part of the Ohmconnect app to sell reduced electricity use back to the energy market.

Public input sought on VTA's light rail project

By Kayla Layaoen

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority will begin the second phase of a project to add a second set of light rail tracks in Mountain View in early 2015.

This new set of tracks would allow VTA to expand transit options between the Mountain View and Whisman Light Rail stations and better accommodate visitors to the new Levi's Stadium, which will open in August.

The first phase of the project is set to begin this summer and be completed by next fall. It involves extending the track by about 1,400 feet and connecting the track with a single track west of the Highway 85 overpass, among other minor changes.

The second phase will add the second set of tracks between the Mountain View and Whisman

Light Rail Stations and remove the existing Evelyn station. Construction is set to be completed in late 2015.

The project also requires the removal of seven to 10 trees, both heritage and ornamental. Because the VTA is recognized as a special district, it is not required to comply with Mountain View's heritage tree ordinance, which states that any removed heritage trees must be replaced. However, it will still comply with the ordinance's intent and coordinate with the city arborist in order to replace the trees.

A study on the environmental effects of the project can be viewed on the VTA's website. Hard copies of the 184-page document are available at the Mountain View Public Library.

VTA will implement a storm-



COURTESY OF THE SANTA CLARA VALLEY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Public input is sought on plans for work on light rail lines in Mountain View, including the removal of the Evelyn station.

water pollution prevention plan before undergoing any ground-disturbing activities. Erosion and sediment control barriers will be set up between the work area and Stevens Creek. Catchment tarps, otherwise known as ibridge diapers, will be installed prior to bridge work activity in order to catch and remove construction debris.

No large nests were noticed in any neighboring trees or bushes while the area was surveyed. However, as birds and raptors could potentially nest in such areas, VTA has scheduled construction work to begin after nesting season, according to the study.

Comments on the project can be emailed to ire.initialstudy@vta.org

or sent by mail to 3331 N. First Street, Building B2, San Jose, CA 95134. ▀

MountainView ONLINE

LET'S DISCUSS:
Read the latest local news headlines and talk about the issues at Town Square at MountainViewOnline.com



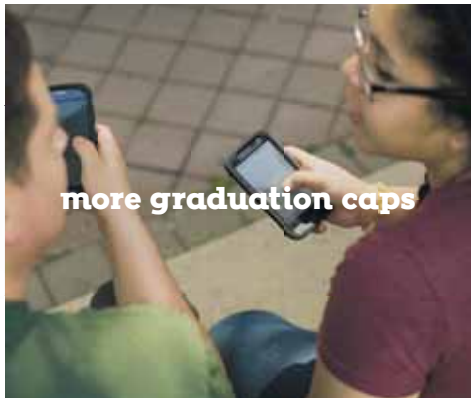
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City eyes new technology for downtown parking

SYSTEM WOULD AID SEARCH FOR PARKING, UPGRADE ENFORCEMENT

By Daniel DeBolt

As the number of cars being parked downtown reaches unprecedented levels, on Tuesday, City Council members considered the use of electronic signs to alleviate traffic caused by drivers hunting for parking.

Downtown garages may soon get electronic signs so drivers can see whether parking is available in either of the downtown's garages, saving drivers the hassles of driving into the garages to find a spot during busy lunch and dinner hours, and coming up short.

Environmental Planning Commission chair Robert Cox said he had studied the issue and found that such a system was "one of the most significant public benefits we could provide to people" as it could reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reduce downtown traffic.

City Council members voted 6-1 at the May 20 meeting, with member John Inks opposed, to

request bids for such a system. The city would also create an online service for people to buy and keep track of parking permits and develop a plan to use sensors to help enforce time limits, which police began to do for the first time earlier this year.

The signs would be placed near the main entrance to each garage and use sensors to track space availability. The sign would also show parking availability at the other downtown garage, as well as directions to it. The data would also be available on a city web page.

An engineer at Google, Evan Krosky, urged the council ensure that parking space data is made available to the public so it can be integrated into various parking apps for smart phone users.

"If someone is trying to sell you a website or app for helping residents or visitors find parking, you need to make sure they have a mechanism for others to access that data," he said. "Make this data available to

apps your residents and visitors are already using."

As for enforcing time limits with the new sensors, city officials say they hope it will equal higher turnover in city parking lots, allowing more people to visit downtown.

Enforcement efforts "can cover so much more ground with vehicle detection" than the old tire chalk method, said council member Mike Kasperzak. "We are still getting complaints from people, despite enhanced enforcement. Too many people are staying."

Funding for the system would come from \$185,000 the city has already budgeted towards parking technologies. According to a city report, costs for the wayfinding signs "can range from \$75,000 per occupancy sign showing total spaces available at the entrance of a parking facility with the vehicle detection technology, to over \$200,000 for a more integrated

► See **PARKING**, page 17

Alta Vista teens net \$25K in scholarships

By Kevin Forestieri

Students may enter Alta Vista High School as at-risk youth in danger of dropping out, but that doesn't mean they'll leave that way. Eight seniors at Alta Vista High School received a total of \$25,000 in scholarships — a huge jump over last year — and will leave for college with a head start and a boost of confidence.

Every February, Alta Vista runs a workshop for students to develop scholarship application and personal statement drafts, according to Marciano Gutierrez, scholarship coordinator at Alta Vista High School. Gutierrez said students spend at least one to three hours every week to refine their applications, and probably end up working on it for at least 20 hours.

This year the workshop started with 30 seniors and dropped down to about 20 by the end of the application process. Of those 20 students, eight received scholarships for a total of \$24,750.

One student, Jasmine Jara, received three scholarships for a total of \$5,500. Gutierrez said Jara started at Alta Vista as a sophomore and didn't have a lot of self-control. He said she was able to grow and be successful at the continuation school, and that she now has plans to continue at a

local community college. Gutierrez said after college, Jara wants to become a police officer.

The 50 percent drop in scholarship workshop students may come down to the rigorous application process, but the workshop has to be intense in order for Alta Vista students to compete. Gutierrez said his students are applying for the same scholarships as students in traditional schools, like Mountain View and Los Altos, rather than need-based scholarships.

"There is in fact 'need' for the students, but for the most part they're competing for the same scholarships," Gutierrez said.

Gutierrez said he can't say for sure why students were so successful this year, but he has a few ideas. He said a combination of good instruction and effort by the students helped, but it might be because this is the first class to graduate from Alta Vista High School that attended as early as sophomore year.

Previously, Alta Vista High School was exclusively for junior and senior students. In the 2011-12 school year, it started to offer instruction for sophomore students. Gutierrez said the extra year at Alta Vista might be a reason for the sudden spike in scholarship awards.

Gutierrez said this is the first year he's been the scholarship

coordinator for Alta Vista. He said he's happy with the results, but was a bit nervous up until the scholarship awards.

"I was confident in the kid's growth, but I was telling students, 'If you work hard on this, it's going to pay off,' and I wasn't sure it actually would," Gutierrez said.

In addition to running the workshop, Gutierrez said he hunts down the scholarships relevant to the students. This can be a bit tricky. He said some scholarships require a high grade point average that many students coming into Alta Vista have already damaged.

Alta Vista High School is the Mountain View-Los Altos High School District's continuation school, an alternative for students who may be struggling with behavior or attendance issues. Despite those struggles, the school boasts a graduation rate of over 94 percent, and administrators encourage students to take part in a rigorous scholarship application process on campus.

Students at Alta Vista received community scholarships from organizations including the Rotary Club, the Kiwanis Club and the Mountain View Odd Fellows Lodge No. 244.

Email Kevin Forestieri at kforestieri@mv-voice.com

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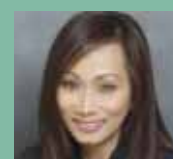


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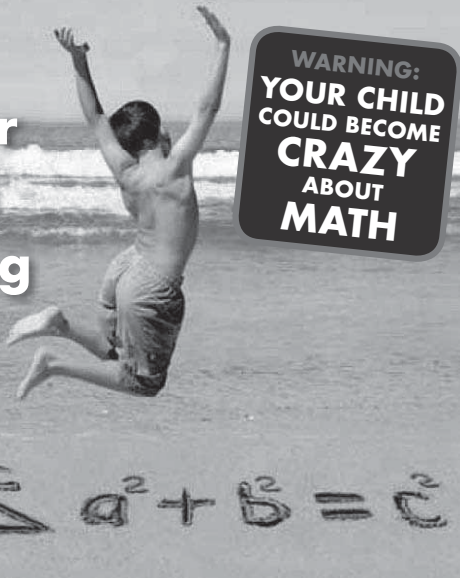
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FREESTYLE

► Continued from page 5

House, New Hope International Church, or even a farm.

Parker Malachowsky, a senior at Freestyle, did his documentary on Veggielution, a community farm in San Jose that focuses on organic food and sustainability. Malachowsky said the farm serves people in a region where many kids have no sense of where their food comes from, and his project covers issues looking at the benefits and costs of buying organic.

Beyond storytelling projects, the exhibition will have surrealist artwork, illustrations and photos. All the projects are digitally designed, with some fine arts components integrated into the process, according to Leslie Parkinson, the digital photography and graphic design teacher at Freestyle.

For example, in the “experimental” art project, juniors come up with an idea and find ways to represent that concept through metaphors and visual representation. Parkinson said students can incorporate typical fine art tools like pastels, pen, ink and watercolor, but it still gets scanned and put into a digital format for production.

As with most big projects, Par-



COURTESY OF FREESTYLE ACADEMY

Freestyle Academy senior Fiona Stolorz's take on the sight of old shoes dangling from power lines.

kinson said this week is crunch time for students trying to finish their work in time for the exhibition next week.

This will be the fifth end-of-year exhibition to be held at the school. Florendo said it used to be held off-campus at places like Nvidia and Microsoft, but in 2009 the students decided it would be better to host it right at the Freestyle campus.

“Students wanted to have it here,” Florendo said. “To show people, ‘Here’s what we do, and here’s where we do it.’”

Florendo said the exhibition will be presented in as an open house, with display panels for the art both inside and outside the campus buildings, and computers will be available to view websites, audio, video and film projects.

There will also be a “best in show” presentation at the Mountain View High School Spartan Theater. Florendo said the presentation will show the best of the films and videos, including experimental and documentary film projects. ▀

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REFERENDUM

► Continued from page 1

registered Mountain View voters in July to put the project up for a city-wide vote — if the City Council approves the project before summer break. Voters would be asked to simply reject the project as it has been proposed, potentially putting the project in the hands of a newly elected City Council next year.

“We don’t really want to do a referendum in July, but we will if we have to,” said campaign founder Lenny Siegel, a Mountain View resident since the 1970s and director of the Center for Public Environmental Oversight.

To members of the group, the major planning issue of the day is a growing imbalance of housing in the face of skyrocketing job growth and office development, which has driven up rents and worsened commuter traffic. The campaign’s membership includes everyone from younger residents facing the possibility of being pushed out by high rents to longtime residents like Betsy Collard, a resident of Mountain View for 45 years and former board member of the old Mountain View School District.

“I see so many people who grew up in Mountain View who have lived here all their lives being forced out because of the rising rent,” Collard said. “We may not be able to do as much as we’d like about that, but we certainly don’t need to make the problem worse by building more office space before we build housing.”

City Attorney Jannie Quinn said in an email that “under state law, a petition can be circulated to refer any legislative act passed by the City Council to the voters” including Merlone Geier’s project.

A successful petition could mean significant delays for Merlone Geier. Quinn said signature gatherers have 30 days to collect signatures, followed by 30 days for officials to verify the signatures. Then the petition must be presented at the City Council at a regular meeting, after which, finally, “an elec-

tion cannot occur for at least 88 days,” Quinn said.

“Given this timeline and the current tentative schedule for the Council’s consideration of the Merlone Geier Phase II project, it is unlikely that a referendum could qualify for the November general election,” Quinn said.

After founding the group earlier this year, Siegel had been pushing for housing in North Bayshore, but “people at the meeting were pretty excited about this, I was surprised,” Siegel said of the new focus on the San Antonio center. “This has not been on my personal radar screen.”

Members of the group say they would like to see homes built instead of the pair of six-story office buildings totaling 397,000

A lot of people want to see a lot of housing built there.

LENNY SIEGEL

square feet that Merlone Geier has proposed. Merlone Geier’s proposed offices would make room for 2,000 to 4,000 jobs when calculated at 100 to 200 square feet per employee. The first phase of the project included about 330 apartment units.

Siegel added that many people are upset that Merlone Geier appears to be pushing out the Milk Pail Market, which owns its building but doesn’t own the required amount of parking to go with it.

But simply replacing the offices with homes won’t be enough to please the group, which is insisting that the city follow a “precise plan” being drafted for the San Antonio Area. It is intended to be a larger plan that addresses various community needs in and around the large shopping center. It is scheduled to be complete near the end of the year.

“A lot of people want to see a lot of housing built there and for

whatever is developed there to be more oriented to Caltrain,” Siegel said. “But one of the key issues here is the fact there’s no precise plan. Where would kids go to school? Because there’s no school in that part of town. That’s an issue that should be addressed in the precise plan. Mountain View has this bad habit of telling developers, ‘Oh yeah, go ahead, we’ll start discussing what kind of brick you are going to use,’ before they’ve dealt with the major planning issues.”

“The city appears to be rushing through final approval despite many unanswered questions on parking, circulation, transit access, and design, including shared parking for the Milk Pail Market,” Siegel wrote in a letter to the City Council. “We urge you to put off consideration of this proposal until the Precise Plan is completed, and to include in Precise Plan discussions consideration of an alternative that provides a significant number of new housing units, including a substantial fraction of below-market homes, as part of a transit-oriented development.”

Member Lucas Ramirez said the group may still do a referendum on the city’s North Bayshore precise plan as well. “We focused on (Merlone Geier’s project) because that is likely to be approved by the council before the summer recess, and we would need to act quickly,” he said.

The North Bayshore precise plan may allow office growth for as many as 20,000 new jobs for Google and LinkedIn, among others, with no new housing in that area. That was despite a North Bayshore housing proposal supported by Google that was rejected by the City Council in 2012.

All told, the city could see up to 6.4 million square feet of office growth in the near future, estimated as enough space for over 36,000 jobs. The city’s zoning allows for an estimated 7,000 new homes by 2030, according to the city’s general plan adopted in 2012.

Email Daniel DeBolt at ddebolt@mv-voice.com

MAYFIELD TREES

► Continued from page 1

fenced off on the job site,” the spokesperson said.

The site has two streets that connect to the neighborhood, and the removed trees were once prominent along one of them, Nita Avenue. Monta Loma residents spent years fighting off a housing development on the site that would have brought several

hundred homes, citing a loss of site’s many trees as a main reason for their opposition.

As the housing was never built, Hewlett Packard sold the 1960s indoor mall-turned-office building to a firm now leasing the site to Google.

It is unclear how many trees were removed, but plans from 2012 had the number slated for the chopping block at 120 large heritage trees, 92 of which were deemed to be in poor condition.

The city’s new zoning administrator, Gerry Beaudin, said he was still coming up to speed on the situation but said that the city has been processing applications for tree removals at the site since 2012 and “each of these applications involved review of arborist reports, and other site considerations. Our goals include preserving trees where feasible and based on sound technical and practical evaluations,” Beaudin said. ▀

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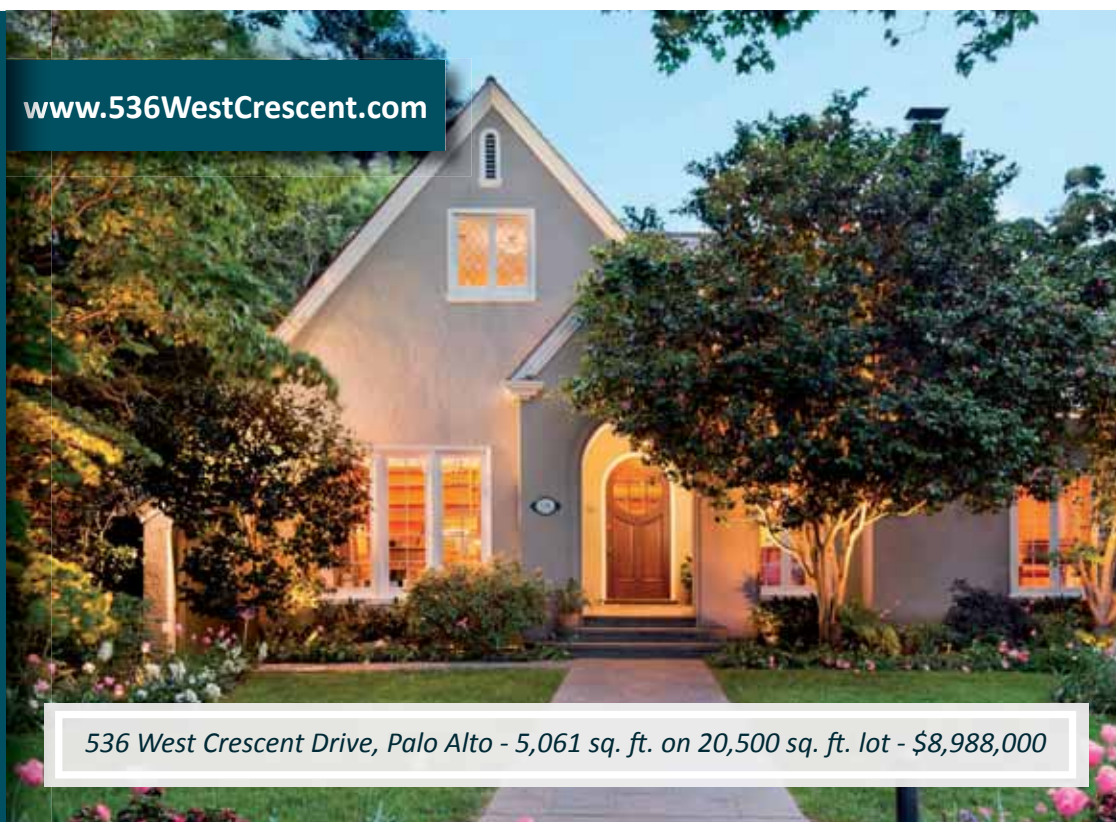
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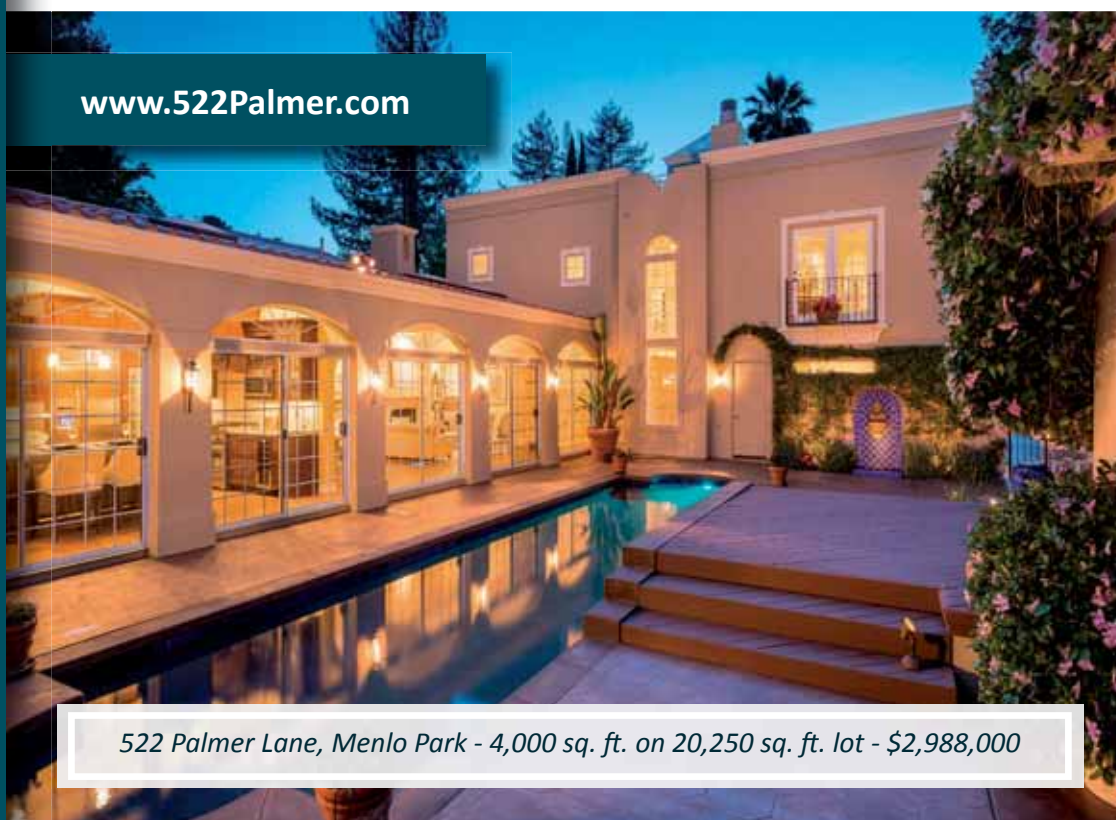


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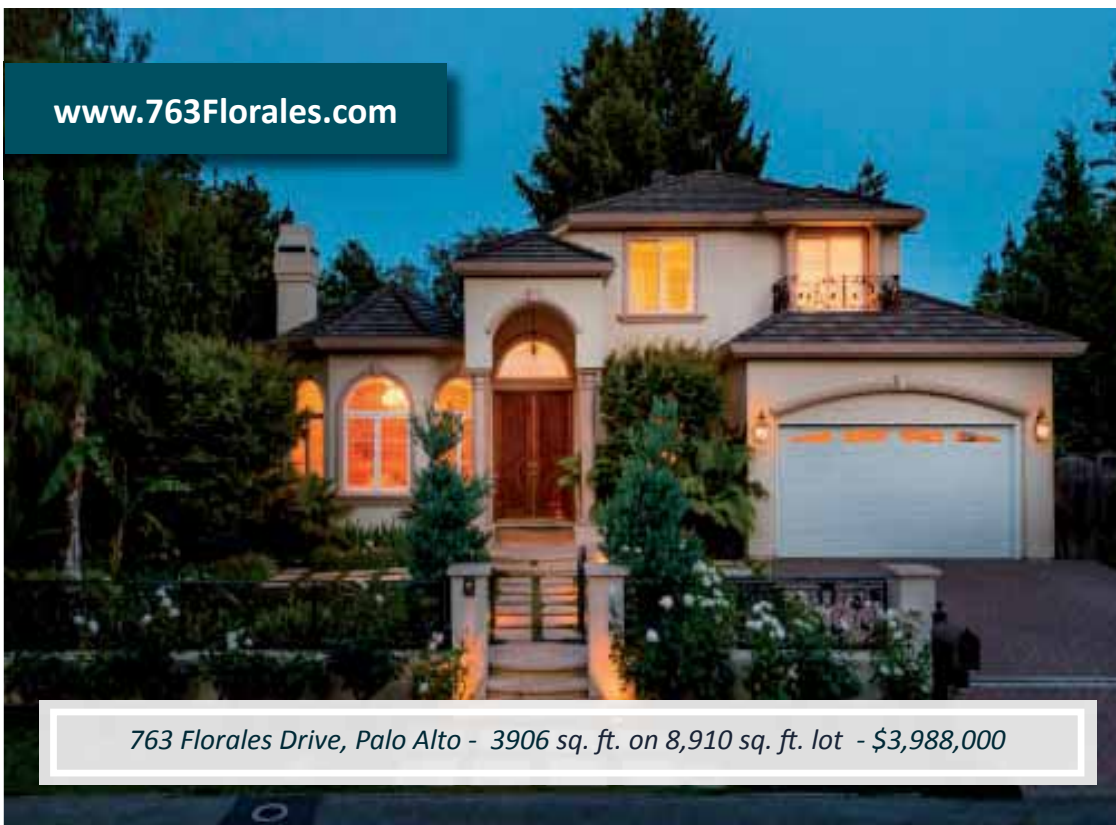
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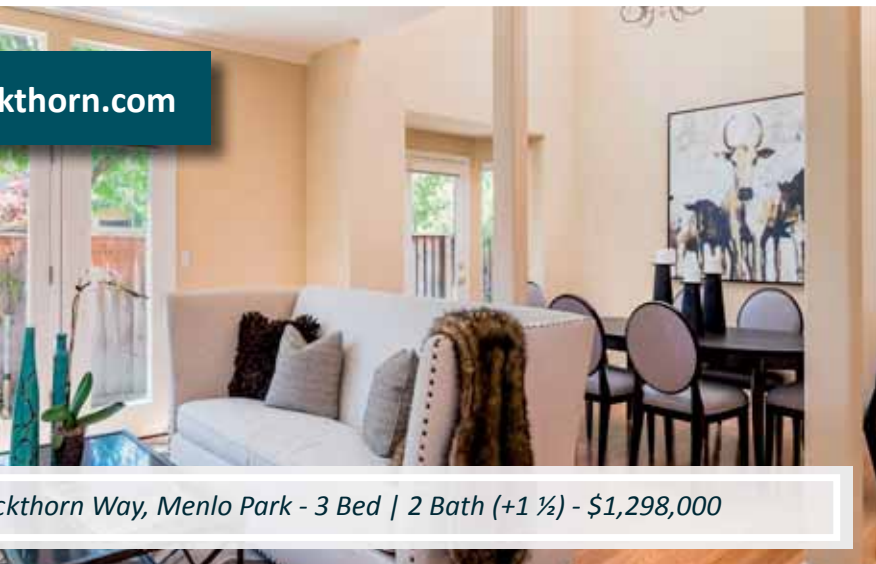
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EARLY VOTING AT THE LIBRARY

The Santa Clara County Library District is offering early voting opportunities for the June 3 primary elections at four libraries, including the Los Altos Public Library.

Early voting is open to all registered voters in the Santa Clara County. It is also available at the Registrar of Voters Office during normal business hours, starting 29 days prior to the election.

The four libraries — including Campbell, Gilroy and Milpitas — will serve as early voting sites this weekend and next weekend from 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. All libraries will remain open for library services on those days, including the Gilroy and Campbell libraries which are usually closed on Sundays. Books and stickers will be provided to children as librarians educate them on the importance of voting.

The Los Altos Public Library is located at 13 S. San Antonio Road in Los Altos. Contact the Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters office at 408-299.8683 for more information.

FREE PET ADOPTIONS

Ever wanted to adopt a pet? Now is your chance.

The Silicon Valley Animal Control Authority's shelter is participating in Maddie's Pet Adoption Days and waiving adoption fees for one weekend, May 31 and June 1, from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m.

The SVACA is located at 3370 Thomas Road in Santa Clara.

For each dog and cat adoption, Maddie's Fund will provide the County of Santa Clara with a stipend between \$500 and \$2,000.

The community can help us meet our adoption goal of placing more than 70 pets with new families. With support from foundations such as Maddie's Fund, we can continue meeting our goal of finding homes for 100 percent of all healthy shelter dogs and cats, and no euthanizing of healthy animals, said Albert Escobar, the Animal Care and Control Manager, who oversees the San Martin Animal Shelter.

Adoptions usually cost between \$90-\$120 for dogs and cats. Along with the waived fee, those who adopt pets will receive \$500 worth of services, including surgery to spay or neuter, microchip IDs, and registration and vaccinations, among other services.

SVACA and the other five member shelters of the WeCARE Alliance, report that they successfully placed 100 percent of the healthy animals that entered its care from 2011-12 and did not

euthanize any healthy shelter animals. They have implemented an adoption guarantee for all healthy and treatable shelter pets in the county.

More than 200 shelters and rescue groups in nine states will be participating in this event, including all other shelters in the Santa Clara County. For more information, including a list of participating shelters, go to adopt.maddiesfund.org. For more information about SVACA, visit SVACA.com or call 408-764-0344.

—Kayla Layaoen

HUFF, MONTA LOMA ARE DISTINGUISHED SCHOOLS

Two Mountain View elementary schools received the 2014 California Distinguished School Award this year. Monta Loma Elementary and Frank L. Huff Elementary Schools both received the award for demonstrating academic excellence and narrowing the education gap in their schools.

One way California measures this is through the Academic Performance Index, or API. Both schools saw an increase in API for the whole student body last year, but made significant increases for socio-economically disadvantaged students, Latinos and English language learners. The biggest jumps were at Huff, where Latino student API increased from 815 to 885, and socio-economically disadvantaged student API scores increased from 805 to 869.

In a district-wide press release, Superintendent Craig Goldman said he is extremely proud of students, teachers, staff and the community at Huff and Monta Loma for what they have accomplished.

All 424 public elementary schools who received the California Distinguished School award this year will be recognized at a state-wide regional awards ceremony on June 13 in Concord.

The Mountain View Whisman School District now has three distinguished schools in the district. Last year, Graham Middle School was also selected for the California Distinguished School award.

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM AWARDS 24 STUDENTS

The MVLA Community Scholars awarded 24 students with scholarships this year, the highest number of students yet. All the recipients are the first generation in their family to go to college, and will have access to renewable scholarship funds and

► Continued on next page

► Continued from previous page

trained mentors in the program.

Many of the students are recent immigrants from places like Mexico, China, India and the Philippines, representatives said. At an average GPA of 3.43, the students participate in after-school activities like basketball, gymnastics, football and the robotics club, according to a press release by the Community Scholars program.

The students plan to attend colleges including San Francisco, San Jose and Humboldt state

universities, as well as University of California at Merced and at Berkeley, Santa Clara University and Foothill College. Many of them are pursuing degrees in engineering, computer science and law.

The scholarship money provides "gap funding," or the difference between the cost of education and what the students receive in other grant and loan money. According to the Community Scholars website, recipient awards range anywhere from \$1,000 to \$6,000 per year.

—Kevin Forestieri

Holly Crain

May 6, 1960-May 19, 2014

Holly passed away peacefully at home in the loving presence of her family on Monday, May 19. Beloved wife of Stephen Crain for 25 years, loving mother of Connor and Madalaine, cherished daughter of Audrey and Kenneth Burn, dear sister of the late Janet Burn. Fondly remembered by Ollie Crain Finnie and James Finnie (Ottawa) Michael Crain and Linda Crain (Vancouver) Edwin Crain (Toronto), Viveca Crain (Toronto) and brother in law Chris Dunham (Ottawa). Loving aunt of Geoffrey and Nicholas Crain (Toronto) and loved deeply by many cousins and relatives around the world.



Dancing since they age of 5, Holly graduated from the University of Western Ontario in London, Ontario with a double major in dance and psychology and then received a MA in Dance Therapy from Goucher College in Baltimore. After college Holly began building her Dance Therapy practice in Ottawa, Canada and also became the President of the Canadian Dance Therapy Association. For the last 14 years Holly has lived in the Mountain View area and has continued to work as a Dance Movement Therapist as well as teaching and working at the Waldorf School of the Peninsula where she had many beautiful friends and is fondly remembered.

A renaissance woman of many talents, Holly was also Sacred Circle Dance teacher. To Holly, Sacred Circle Dance perfectly integrated the mind-body-spirit triad and expressed her belief that by dancing in a circle we share and weave intentions, heighten our awareness of our interconnectedness as a community, and connect with the cycles of the earth. Holly also studied at the Sophia Foundation of North America and at the Pacific Mystery School in Pacifica, CA and had many years of personal study in Celtic Spirituality and Shamanism. Holly was also deeply involved with CISV, an international all-volunteer organization whose mission is peace through global friendship. As a child, Holly attended CISV peace camps in Italy and Romania. Holly brought her great passion for CISV with her from Ottawa to California and infused her energy into the San Francisco Chapter, including creating the annual "Walk/Run for Peace" and spearheading the chapter's 30th Anniversary and Reunion. Earlier this year, Holly received the SF CISV founder's award for her many contributions and for embodying the principles of CISV in all that she did.

Visitation hours will be from 4:00 to 8:00 p.m. on Thursday, May 22 at the Spangler Mortuary Chapel at 799 Castro Street in Mountain View. A Celebration honoring Holly's life will be held at Unity Church at 3391 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto at 4:00 on Friday, May 23. A service is also being planned in Ottawa, Canada for June 7.

One of Holly's greatest desires was that more children, regardless of economic status, could participate in CISV's travel programs. A memorial "Holly Burn Crain Peace through Global Friendship Fund" has been set up as a donor-advised fund through the Silicon Valley Community Foundation to honor this wish.

Tax-deductible donations can be made to:
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City of Mountain View Council Neighborhoods Committee

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The Council Neighborhoods Committee would like to encourage your neighborhood group to apply. Applications and grant guidelines may be picked-up in the Community Development Department, City Hall, 500 Castro Street, and are available on the City's web page at www.mountainview.gov. Please call (650) 903-6379 if you would like an application mailed to you or have questions. The application deadline is June 4, 2014.

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BCS LETTER

► Continued from page 5

on April 25 and were asked to sign it within three days — not enough time to go over the 400-page document — and were forced to sign it without an opportunity to negotiate any of the terms. Hersey said she intended to address some of the problems they had with the language in her letter to the school district.

What's more, Hersey said the school should not be forced to sign a facilities use agreement every year. She said charter schools in other districts do not have to sign a similar agreement, and Bullis itself has not been subject to a facilities use agreement in the past.

Because of the circumstances, Hersey stated in the letter that the school signed the agreement under protest and duress.

But LASD board member Doug Smith disagreed with the accusations in the letter and said the facilities use agreement is consistent with the school district's "final offer" for use of shared facilities. And while the use fees did increase quite a bit this year, he said the price is fair and only jumped because the school was paying so little in the first place.

"We used to grossly undercharge (Bullis) for use fees, and we've increased it for the 2014-15 school year," Smith said.

Smith said he's glad the school signed the facilities use agreement this year, which means fewer problems down the road. But he never really saw it as an option for the school.

"It's a no-brainer, you have to

sign it," Smith said.

Smith said in the past, Bullis Charter School refused to sign the facilities use agreement and litigated over whether or not LASD could enforce the rules laid out in the agreement. The tension peaked last year when the school district changed the locks on charter school classrooms at the Blach for 10 days, causing parent and teacher protests.

Bullis later signed facilities use agreement in August, and teachers received keys to their classrooms a week before the first day of class.

While there's no threat of a lockout this year, either party could bring their facility use grievances to court in the future. In her letter, Hersey said the school reserves the right to challenge the final offer and the facilities use agreement. Smith said that, given the relationship the school district has with Bullis, that "challenge" means they may take the issue back to court.

But threats of litigation go both ways. In a letter from Smith to Bullis Charter School late last year, Smith said the district is considering monetary and injunctive lawsuits over violations of the final offer and facilities use agreement.

Smith said some letters the district receives from Bullis Charter School are constructive and helpful, but pages of accusatory language don't really help. He said both parties should focus their energy on passing a bond measure to open more campuses to accommodate the school as well as growing enrollment.

Email Kevin Forestieri
 at mv-voice.com

GraphicDesigner

Embarcadero Media, producers of the Palo Alto Weekly, The Almanac, Mountain View Voice, Pleasanton Weekly, PaloAltoOnline.com and several other community websites, is looking for a graphic designer to join its award-winning design team.

Design opportunities include online and print ad design and editorial page layout. Applicant must be fluent in InDesign, Photoshop and Illustrator. Flash knowledge is a plus. Newspaper or previous publication experience is preferred, but we will consider qualified — including entry level — candidates. Most importantly, designer must be a team player and demonstrate speed, accuracy and thrive under deadline pressure. The position will be approximately 32 - 40 hours per week.

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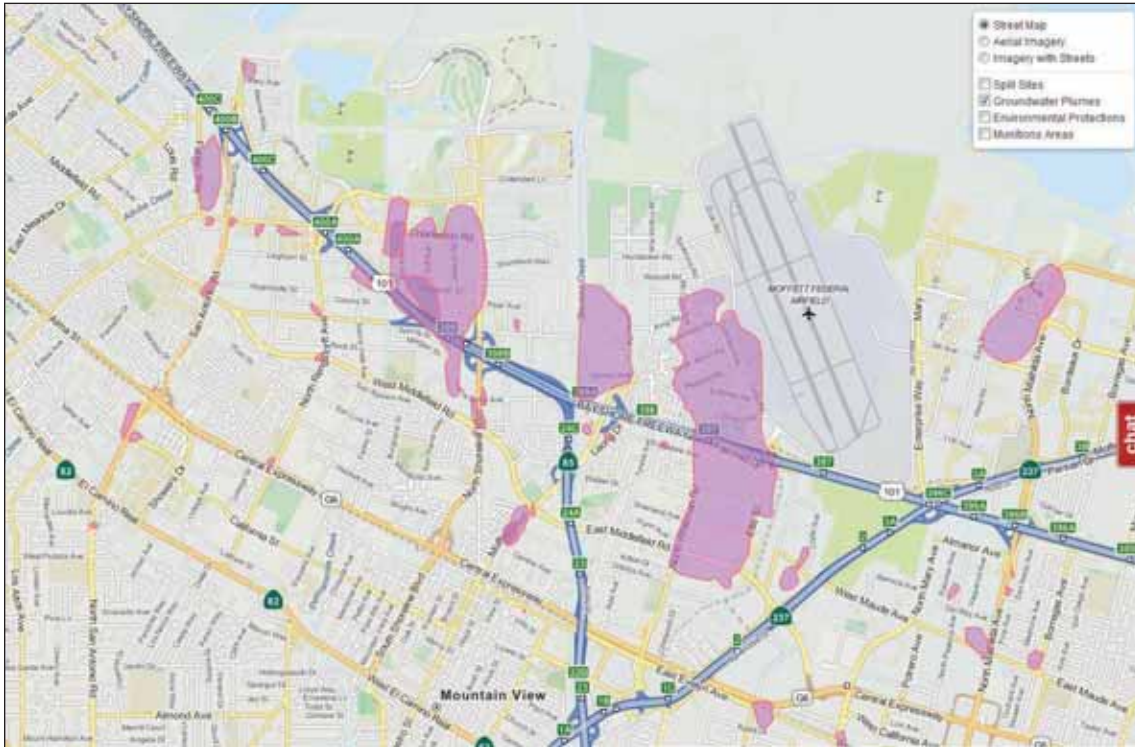
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Unlike EPA plume maps, Terradex has chosen to outline plumes even when contamination levels are below drinking water limits, as is the case for the long plume shown stretching under Google headquarters.

PLUME

► Continued from page 1

were surprised. In particular, a large toxic TCE plume is shown under Google headquarters at and around 1600 Amphitheatre Parkway, but no contamination levels are shown to help assess possible vapor intrusion dangers. After clicking on links to government PDF records for the Tedyne Semiconductor toxic site, some prodigious digging found that only trace amounts of TCE groundwater contamination is now found north of Highway 101 under the Googleplex.

Mountain View residents have become accustomed to the EPA practice of marking toxic plumes only when the contamination exceeds the five-parts-per-billion drinking water limit. The amounts found under the Googleplex fall well short of that. After his method for outlining plumes was questioned by the *Voice*, Wenzlau said he was looking at a possible correction. He also suggested that indoor air testing was the only way for people to be sure about health risks, and recommends a DIY air test kit he sells on his site.

The application, known as CleanDeck 2.0, maps out each toxic plume, provides information about the chemicals and links to pertinent reports from government agencies. Also, rather than illustrating the contamination sites' single points, the company's map stretches them into polygons to give viewers a better idea of each plume's reach. It also provides information about status of the cleanup at each area; maps out areas where environmental protections have been implemented; and illustrates where land-use

restrictions exist because of the contamination. It also maps out "sensitive uses" such as schools and day care centers so that users can see the proximity of these amenities to the toxic plumes.

In a January blog post announcing the new application, Wenzlau noted that hundreds of groundwater plumes exist across Silicon Valley, and "many contain volatile chemicals that could migrate upwards to occupied structures and then be inhaled by occupants."

"Over the past 30 years, industry has transformed to new office parks hosting businesses like Google and Facebook," the post stated. "The workforce is smart, growing and young—but also vulnerable to carcinogenic vapors from shallow contaminated groundwater plumes from legacy businesses."

Wenzlau said he was partially inspired to pursue this project by the fact that his daughter works around Santana Row in San Jose, near another contaminated site. Also, he has friends who work at Google who may benefit from knowing about harmful contaminants buried underneath the company's campus. The goal, he said, is to make the information clear and easily available.

"I think that too much of the environmental data is designed for environment scientists, not for the public," Wenzlau told the *Voice's* sister paper, the Palo Alto Weekly. "I also believe that once people know more about these hidden toxics, the cleanup process and the oversight process would be strengthened and speeded up. These plumes have been here for 35 years and at the pace they're going, they'll be here for another 50 years."

The new application is a start-

ing point for what Wenzlau hopes will evolve into a broader effort to bring residents, employers, workers and environmental experts together in a network focused on cleaning up the contamination. Each site on Cleanup Deck 2.0 includes links to Facebook, Google+, Twitter and LinkedIn, and the goal is to create a system through which residents can comment on the sites and offer input on ongoing cleanup efforts.

The hope is that the software will create a Yelp of sorts for contaminated sites, with people observing, commenting and updating each other. At the same time, Wenzlau hopes city planners in places like Mountain View, and Palo Alto, where his company is based, will use the application. The maps, he said, help illustrate the magnitude of the challenge faced by local, state and federal officials charged with cleaning up the toxins.

"It reveals how unprotected we are because the environmental protections are so much proportionally smaller than the area of impact," Wenzlau said.

Ultimately, the goal is to expand the program from merely illustrating the problem to providing solutions for individuals in impacted areas. As the application evolves, Wenzlau said the company plans to add features that would connect residents and companies with laboratories that can test homes for vapors or help install controls above the plumes to limit exposure.

"By putting together this concept, we're hoping we'll be part of the value circle that offers some testing or helps offer controls through partners that we're working with," Wenzlau said.

Wenzlau's map can be found at whatsdown.terradex.com. ▀

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OHMCONNECT

► Continued from page 5

out of data from PG&E Smart-Meters, including the “vampire load” of devices that are always on, or how much energy a refrigerator is using versus your heater or air conditioner.

Saving energy earns users points and Tongue said 50,000 points is roughly equal to about \$5.

John Overstreet, an executive at Palo Alto’s Communications and Power Industries, said he had accumulated 155,000 points in three months.

“I don’t know if it saves me money but I do like knowing” how energy is being used, he said. “I’m pretty cheap.”

While other car chargers might work with Ohmconnect, he says there isn’t a way for Ohmconnect to turn off his Nissan Leaf’s charger. He does have a Nest, which he likes because it can tell when you’ve left the house and it will turn off your heating and air conditioning for you.

Overstreet said he is part of a “team” of users who are competing on the Ohmconnect site against other users to reduce their energy use. “There’s a portal that shows you versus your neighborhood and a team page where you see your team versus other teams, and how much they’ve saved,” Overstreet said.

Tongue says all the competing and comparing is a big motivator.

“There’s a lot of research that has shown the best way to catalyze any kind of behavior change is not the money — it’s not the savings — it’s really showing your usage and how you’re compared to your social set,” Tongue said. ■

PARKING

► Continued from page 7

system consisting of a sign at the garage’s entrance, a sign at each level, and vehicle detection technology in each individual parking space.” The website for buying parking permits and tracking space availability could cost as much as \$36,000.

There are some privacy concerns, however, as the city decides between types of sensors for enforcing parking time limits and tracking space availability. There are cameras that record license plate numbers (a \$60,000 system) and sensors that simply record a car’s size and color (a \$100,000 system). License plate cameras, while perhaps raising privacy concerns, would save parking permit users from printing permits to place on their car’s dashboard, as the permit would simply be associated with their license plate number. ■

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Founding Editor, Kate Wakerly

STAFF

EDITOR & PUBLISHER

Tom Gibboney (223-6507)

EDITORIAL

Managing Editor

Andrea Gemmet (223-6537)

Staff Writers

Daniel DeBolt (223-6536)
Kevin Forestieri (223-6535)

Intern

Kayla Layaoen

Photographer

Michelle Le (223-6530)

Contributors Dale Bentson,
Angela Hey, Sheila Himmel,
Ruth Schecter

DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Design Director

Shannon Corey (223-6560)

Assistant Design Director

Lili Cao (223-6562)

Designers Linda Atilano, Rosanna Leung,
Paul Llewellyn, Kameron Sawyer

ADVERTISING

Vice President Sales and Marketing

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Adam Carter (223-6573)

Real Estate Account Executive

Rosemary Lewkowicz (223-6585)

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EDITORIAL THE OPINION OF THE VOICE

Referendum could trip up office project

A grass-roots plan to put pressure on the City Council to reduce office development plans in Phase II of the San Antonio Center project is another indicator that many city residents are not happy with the direction the City Council is taking to approve more and more office, rather than housing, projects.

Longtime resident Lenny Siegel, who founded the Campaign for a Balanced Mountain View earlier this year, said this week that the group now will aim for collecting 3,240 signatures, enough to put the remaining development of the San Antonio Project up to a vote if the City Council approves the project at the start of July. If enough signatures are collected, a decision on Phase II of the shopping center may be put in the hands of a council with three new members who will be elected in November. The move would effectively halt nearly 400,000 square feet of office space at the shopping center, along with a movie theater, hotel, numerous shops and a courtyard in the second phase of the center's redevelopment. Phase I of the project included 330 units of housing.

The group also objects to the possibility that the popular Milk Pail could be forced out of the center due to the failure to reach an agreement with developer Merlone Geier for access to parking. Its current parking arrangement will run out in about two years.

Members of the group told the *Voice* that their main objective is to address the city's jobs-housing imbalance, which they believe is caused by the approval of job-producing office projects without a commensurate amount of housing. The group hopes to stop construction of two, six-story office buildings in the project, which at 397,000 square feet could produce an estimated 2,000-plus jobs.

The referendum on office development would be the third in just over six months by Peninsula voters who have used the initiative/referendum process to contest council zoning decisions.

In Palo Alto, residents of Barron Park managed to stop a multi-story senior housing complex in their mostly single-family home neighborhood by using a petition drive to get the question on the ballot. Despite being outspent in the hotly-contested city-wide campaign, the neighbors won and the senior housing complex was scrapped.

In Menlo Park's Allied Arts neighborhood, residents recently turned in what they hope will be more than the 1,740 signatures required to force a vote on their plan to reduce the office space component of two large projects on El Camino Real. If the county clerk approves the petitions, voters will either vote on the measure or the Menlo Park City Council will accept the initiative's requirements, giving residents what they wanted.

Siegel has been outspoken recently in support of a referendum on the North Bayshore precise plan to halt office growth for Google, LinkedIn and others. A call to build a new residential neighborhood in North Bayshore has been a central theme for the group. But members said that effort has been set aside for a few months in favor of taking on the San Antonio shopping center development.

Whether the Campaign for a Balanced Mountain View succeeds or not, we believe the City Council should heed Siegel's request to delay approving Phase II until a San Antonio precise plan for the area around the shopping center is completed, probably by the end of the year.

Siegel notes that there are many unanswered questions about how the proposed development would fit in the entire neighborhood. Among questions that planners need to address, he said, are parking, including shared parking for the Milk Pail Market, traffic circulation, transit access and design. In addition, Siegel said the city should consider replacing the office space with housing, including a good number of below-market-rate units, with many near transit.

These proposals make sense and would bring the volatile jobs-housing issue into play during the upcoming election. This way, a newly constituted council will have a chance to place its own imprint on the second phase of this highly visible and important project.

GUEST OPINION VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

Caltrain, bikes and 21st century choices

By Janet Laflaur

All it takes is a trip downtown at 6 p.m. on a weeknight to see the changes.

Bikes overflow the racks on Castro Street and are locked to every available tree and post. Crowds of people cross Central Expressway on foot and on bikes with each signal cycle. The Caltrain platform teems with riders pushing their way onto trains that are standing room-only by the time they reach Palo Alto.

This is not just casual observation either. Caltrain recently released the results of its passenger counts and triennial customer survey: ridership is at an all-time high with a 54 percent increase since 2010; ridership growth continues to strain capacity in peak periods; and all but one station saw growth. Caltrain sees this growth as a sign of continued economic recovery, as anyone who fights workday traffic on Highway 101 can attest.

Much of Caltrain's growth comes from bikes. The number of people bringing bikes aboard has grown a whopping 121 percent since 2010, more than double the overall ridership growth rate. While the growth is partly due to Caltrain adding a second bike car to every train in 2011, bike-aboard ridership has continued to increase, up 19.6 percent last year. This year bike-aboard riders make up over 11 percent of all riders, making Caltrain the nation's leader in bikes-on-transit. And yet, despite a capacity of 80 bikes on most

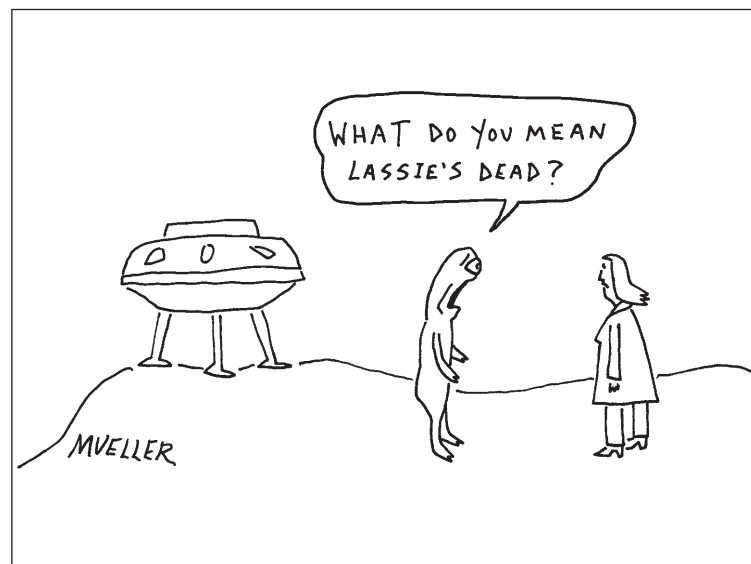
trains, people with bikes are still regularly denied boarding due to overcrowding, primarily in Peninsula cities from Millbrae to Mountain View. That's how popular the service is.

What's more, how people arrive and depart stations is rapidly changing. While walking to reach stations has increased modestly by 7 percent since 2010, taking transit (VTA, BART, Muni or shuttles) is flat at 4 to 7 percent. The most dramatic changes are that driving to and parking at stations has dropped by 24 percent and bicycling to the station is up 30 percent. And that's just the last three years.

So what does this mean? It means that some commonly-held assumptions that we're too suburban to rely on walking, biking and transit, and that people won't shift from solo driving, are wrong. People already are. In fact, 40 percent of Caltrain riders report they are car-free and that doesn't include "car-lite" riders like me who own a car they rarely use. Today's transit-dependent riders are not low-income either. The average Caltrain rider makes \$117,000 a year. Most riders are making a conscious choice to not drive that's not simply driven by economics. It's driven by a desire to escape wasting time driving in traffic.

For Caltrain, it means recognizing that for many riders, bikes are the most convenient first and last mile solution, faster than shuttles for trips up to 3

► Continued on next page



Longtime hiker will vote yes to protect open space legacy

By Norma Jean Galiher

I appreciated the *Voice's* endorsement of Proposition AA, the bond measure on the June 3 ballot about which I'm excited.

Personally, I nearly skipped to the polls to vote yes on Measure R back in 1972, since I delight in hiking weekly on trails that the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District (MROSD) has built, and am excited by what the proceeds of selling these bonds would make possible.

The open space district has done a superb job in protecting 62,000 acres so far, creating the beautiful greenbelt we enjoy seeing every day, building trails, and managing all these properties. Because of the district's

work, this area hasn't turned into another L.A. with its ugly urban sprawl, few places to go to get away, dirty air, and lack of flowing streams. What the district

Visitors marvel at the amount of open space that we voted to create.

has made available is literally the most important reason I choose to continue living here.

Visitors marvel at the amount of open space that we, through the district, voted to create and that we had the foresight to

protect the opportunities for recreation on these lands. The accomplishments of the district serves as a model that other regions, and other nations, are seeking to emulate.

But existing (Measure R) funding has not been sufficient to allow the district to open to public access 40 percent of the lands they have protected.

This is the first time in its 40-year history that the district has sought additional funding. Proceeds of the sale of these bonds would be used to: open more of the currently protected lands for public access; clean up streams to protect watersheds and provide us with safe water; and for strategic acquisition of properties that would be especially valuable to protect

redwoods, connect existing preserves and provide habitat and migration corridors for wildlife.

Specific projects these bonds would fund were defined based on input from the public as to what we would like to see our open space district accomplish on our behalf over the next four decades. Preventing more forests from being lost to continuing development, by acquiring and protecting them forested land is, quite literally, important for the ability of the earth to continue to support life as we know it, since trees absorb CO2 and release oxygen.

The cost to a homeowner would be very modest. For a \$1 million (assessed value) house, the increase in property tax would initially be \$10 a year,

gradually increasing over several decades to a maximum of \$30 a year. In the early years, that would mean that property taxes for the average homeowner would go up by about the cost of two or three cups of coffee per year.

By voting yes, for the cost of two to three cups of coffee per year, we can make a significant, lasting gift to our children, leaving them a beautiful place to live, with expanded recreational opportunities.

Because this measure requires a two-thirds vote, each vote is crucial. Once you've studied the measure, I hope you'll join me in voting yes on Proposition AA.

Norma Jean Galiher lives in Mountain View.

CALTRAIN

► Continued from previous page

miles when there's congestion, and cheaper than car parking at stations, both for the rider and for Caltrain. It means ensuring that bike capacity of new electrified trains is at least 10 percent of total capacity. It means expanding bike share into office areas like North Bayshore and into popular housing areas like the Mission in San Francisco.

For cities, it means not spending money on expensive parking garages that will bring more vehicles into congested areas, and instead improve walking and biking connections to existing and emerging office and housing areas like San Antonio Center and El Camino Real. It means implementing Transportation Demand Management programs (TDMs) like Stanford did, with incentives that go beyond shuttles to include benefits for people who take transit, bike, walk, carpool or drive at off-peak times. And consider charging for parking at office sites. It's hard to compete with free.

Times have changed and people are showing they want options other than driving. How will we invest to support them?

Janet LaFleur is a Mountain View resident who writes a Voice blog about about bicycling.



IT'S TIME. SAVE WATER.

Despite recent rains, we are facing a serious drought. Saving water is easier than you might think. Here are some easy water saving tips for both indoors and outdoors.

Indoor Tips

- Take shorter showers and save 2.5 gallons per minute.
- Wait for full loads to wash clothes and save 20 gallons per load.
- Fill your dishwasher instead of washing each dish by hand and save 2 to 4 gallons per load.

Outdoor Tips

- Landscape with water-wise plants and save 20 gallons or more a day.
- Water your lawn before 5 AM instead of midday and save 20 gallons a day.
- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean sidewalks and save 10 to 15 gallons a minute.

Small actions can add up to huge water savings. If everyone saved 20 gallons a day, we'd save over 13 billion gallons a year in Santa Clara County alone. For more water saving tips, go to save20gallons.org.




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