

# Mountain View VOICE

OCTOBER 30, 2015 VOLUME 23, NO. 40

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MOVIES | 28



MAGALI GAUTHIER

## SEW VERY SCARY

Both creepy and educational, the steampunk-themed haunted house at Mountain View's historic Rengstorff House offers Halloween chills. See page 20 for more photos.

## Lease mandate rejected by council

WATERED-DOWN ORDINANCE LOSES SUPPORT AFTER CITY STAFF FINDS LEGAL PITFALL

By Mark Noack

On Tuesday, City Council members voted down their own urgency ordinance, saying it was insufficient to address Mountain View's rental crisis.

The urgency ordinance being considered would have mandated that landlords offer tenants six-month or yearlong leases, which some saw as a quick fix that could have prevented frequent rent increases. In a 4-3 vote, the council fell short of the five votes needed to take immediate action under the city's stipulations for emergency measures.

Council members complained that the urgency ordinance staff drafted was a far cry from what they requested last week at the

end of exhaustive six-hour study session. At that Oct. 19 meeting, council members wanted a pol-

**'One thing that's shaping up in this discussion is rent control is coming to Mountain View.'**

COUNCILMAN JOHN INKS

icy prohibiting landlords from offering long-term leases only if tenants accepted a rent hike. In addition, the council wanted to mandate that landlords give

90 days' notice before any rent increases or evictions.

But explaining she had only a few days to put together the ordinance, City Attorney Jannie Quinn said she had to limit the scope of the ordinance and cull elements that could expose the city to legal action. Some aspects of the council's request at that meeting simply weren't clear, she said.

"I drafted this very simply and borrowed very heavily," Quinn said, explaining that she modeled the ordinance off a decades-old program in Palo Alto. "We haven't had ample time to get guidance from the council."

Already criticized by tenants' advocates as too weak to provide

► See **LEASE MANDATE**, page 18

## Mountain View to boost minimum wage to \$15

SPLIT COUNCIL COMMITS TO PHASING IN PAY HIKE BY 2018

By Mark Noack

It's official: Mountain View will boost its minimum wage to \$15 an hour by the start of 2018 — regardless of whether other regional cities decide to follow its lead.

In a packed meeting Tuesday, City Council members in a 5-2 vote gave their third and final approval to a staggered plan to eventually raise the base wage by nearly 50 percent. By doing so, Mountain View thrust itself in the vanguard — it's the first South Bay city to fully commit to better align low-end pay with the ever-rising cost of living in Silicon Valley.

According to the plan, the city's

minimum hourly wage — currently \$10.30 — would increase to \$11 on Jan. 1, 2016. That rate would notch up by \$2 at the start of each following year, to \$13 an hour in 2017 and \$15 in 2018. From that point on, the city pledged the base wage could continue to rise, depending on the performance of a Bay Area-focused Consumer Price Index.

The decision came after the council heard tales from Mountain View workers who described holding down multiple service jobs as the only way to eke out a living in the area.

Conversely, a smaller group of restaurant owners said they

► See **MINIMUM WAGE**, page 10

## Los Altos pedestrian in fatal accident

By Kevin Forestieri and Andrea Gemmet

A pedestrian who died after being struck by an SUV in Mountain View last week has been identified.

The woman, who was struck by a vehicle going northbound on El Monte Road near Marich Way, was 54-year-old Michelle Montalvo of Los Altos, according to the Santa Clara County Medical Examiner-Coroner's Office.

The vehicle hit Montalvo at about 6:38 a.m. on Oct. 22 near the El Monte and Marich intersection, according to Mountain View police. She was taken to a local hospital. "We regret to inform you that the pedestrian succumbed to her injuries," police said in an update issued later that day.

The driver of the vehicle

cooperated with police, and it does not appear that drugs or alcohol was a factor, police said.

Nearby resident Paul Lesti came upon the accident scene after 8 a.m. and said he saw a green SUV that appeared to have been involved, and a pair of tennis shoes in the road a few yards away.

"It's distressing to see pair of Nike shoes sitting in middle of street," he told the *Voice*. "This intersection has been an issue for a number of years. It's sad to see an accident."

While there are marked crosswalks, there is no traffic signal or stop sign on El Monte Road for pedestrians crossing from Marich, Lesti said.

► See **CRASH**, page 9

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# Voices

A R O U N D T O W N

Asked in downtown Mountain View. Photos and interviews by Carl Sibley.

## What's the best Halloween costume you've ever seen?



"I once saw a dozen college students all dressed up as characters from the movie '300.' And this was in Madison, Wisconsin, so it was like 20 degrees outside."

**Benjamin Wood,**  
**Madison, Wisconsin**



"Wonder Woman. She did the whole outfit, it was beautiful."

**Esenia Petrova,**  
**St. Petersburg, Russia**



"A Halloween costume made for a boy in a wheelchair; his father had made him a train out of the wheelchair. So the boy was the conductor driving his train around town."

**Simon Foster,**  
**San Mateo**



"Someone dressed up as Michael Jackson from 'Thriller,' makeup and all."

**Richie Valle,**  
**San Francisco**



"A 'one-night stand.' It was somebody who was wearing a cardboard box and a lamp over it. So they were one nightstand."

**Michael Kahl,**  
**Mountain View**

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### ■ CRIME BRIEFS

#### PEDESTRIAN STRUCK AT GAS STATION

A 60-year-old Mountain View woman was hospitalized for minor injuries Tuesday after she was struck by a vehicle exiting a gas station.

The woman was walking on the sidewalk along Central Expressway near Rengstorff Avenue at around 4:30 p.m. when the vehicle struck the woman, according to Sgt. Saul Jaeger of the Mountain View Police Department.

The driver, a 24-year-old Mountain View man, was pulling out of the Shell gas station in the plaza at the intersection of Rengstorff and Central when he struck the woman, Jaeger said. The woman was transported to a local hospital with minor injuries.

The driver was cooperative, and drugs and alcohol did not appear to be a factor, Jaeger said.

#### FIGHT OUTSIDE 7-ELEVEN

Police arrested a Mountain View man on Sunday after he allegedly struck another man outside of the 7-Eleven on California Street.

Officers found the suspect, 49-year-old Paul Loren Dong, outside the convenience store along with the victim, a 62-year-old San Jose man, after a report of two men fighting. A verbal argument between the two men caused Dong to attack the victim, according to police spokeswoman Leslie Hardie, but it was unclear whether Dong had attacked him with his hand or an object.

The victim suffered minor injuries to the face but declined medical attention, Hardie said.

Officers arrested Dong on a battery charge, and he was booked into Santa Clara County Main Jail.

#### INDECENT EXPOSURE AT FRESH & EASY

Police arrested a man last week after he reportedly exposed himself directly outside of the Fresh & Easy grocery store in Mountain View.

A Sunnyvale man at the store, located at 580 N. Rengstorff Ave., told officers that the suspect was walking around in front of the Fresh & Easy exposing his buttocks, according to police spokeswoman Leslie Hardie. The incident occurred around 8:45 a.m. on Thursday, Oct. 22.

Officers found the suspect, identified as 55-year-old Salvador Reyes Hernandez, a transient, inside the store, Hardie said. Hernandez was arrested and booked into Santa Clara County Main Jail on charges of committing a lewd act in public.

—Kevin Forestieri

### ■ POLICE LOG

#### ASSAULT WITH DEADLY WEAPON

1000 block Grant Rd., 10/24

#### AUTO BURGLARY

400 block Ellis St., 10/20  
400 block Hope St., 10/20  
1000 block N. Rengstorff Av., 10/20  
400 block Hope St., 10/22  
2100 block Woodleaf Way, 10/22  
100 block Moffett Blvd., 10/25  
2400 block Charleston Rd., 10/25  
2100 block Crittenden Ln., 10/26

#### BATTERY

2000 block California St., 10/21  
2500 block California St., 10/25  
2500 block California St., 10/25

#### GRAND THEFT

2600 block Fayette Dr., 10/20  
200 block E. Middlefield Rd., 10/25  
900 block Linda Vista Av., 10/26

#### RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

1100 block Fairbrook Dr., 10/20  
700 block Continental Cir., 10/20  
200 block Calderon Av., 10/22  
1500 block Spring St., 10/25

#### VANDALISM

200 block Bush St., 10/20  
300 block N. Whisman Rd., 10/21  
1600 block Amphitheatre Pkwy., 10/22  
500 block Escuela Av., 10/23  
500 block Chiquita Av., 10/26

**The Mountain View Voice** (USPS 2560) is published every Friday by Embarcadero Media, 450 Cambridge Ave, Palo Alto CA 94306 (650) 964-6300. Periodicals Postage Paid at Palo Alto CA and additional mailing offices. The Mountain View Voice is mailed free upon request to homes and apartments in Mountain View. Subscription rate of \$60 per year. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Mountain View Voice, 450 Cambridge Ave, Palo Alto, CA 94306.





**Allen Diehl**, a regular on Mountain View's free community shuttle, says farewell to driver Khamal Mohamed on Oct. 26.

MICHELLE LE

## Take a free ride

CITY CONSIDERS ADDING STOPS TO GOOGLE-FUNDED PUBLIC SHUTTLE SERVICE

By Mark Noack

For the first time, Mountain View council members reviewed the numbers for the city's fledgling community shuttle system, a nearly year-old service that is fast and free, yet still relatively unknown in town.

The four community shuttles, which make a daily 13.5-mile loop through the city, are entirely funded from a donation by Google.

The shuttles were launched at the start of this year as a pilot program, and while ridership has gradually grown, it

still remains relatively small. City staff noted that just over 300 people on average rode

**'It goes basically everywhere and it's free.'**

CHRISTIANNA INIGUEZ,  
SHUTTLE RIDER

the shuttle each day in August, or about 10 riders per hour. In comparison, the Valley

Transit Authority bus routes 34 and 35, which travel from downtown Mountain View to San Antonio and Stanford shopping centers, respectively, average about 27 riders per hour, according to VTA officials.

That might seem modest, but the nascent shuttle service has some big fans in town, with many urging the city to expand the program with new stops. Chatting with the *Voice*, the scant passengers on a mid-day ride on Monday extolled the shuttles as a convenient

► See **SHUTTLE**, page 11

## School district faces harsh budget realities

CUTS LIKELY AS SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION COSTS SOAR

By Kevin Forestieri

Mountain View Whisman School District officials are past the point of cutting whistles and bells to stay within budget for school improvement projects. Now they are talking about eliminating entire schools from Measure G bond construction plans to cut spiraling costs.

The district's chief business officer, Robert Clark, has been the bearer of bad news this month. At the Oct. 8 board meeting, he told the board that expected construction costs for school improvements in the district exceeded the entire

bond fund by \$14 million, going well over the \$10 million contingency fund built into the budget.

And at the Oct. 22 board meeting, things looked even bleaker. Clark

said construction cost for the shared Castro and Mistral elementary campus came in \$6 million over the budget anticipated in June, bumping the district's total shortfall to \$20 million. If board members decide to stay the course, Clark warned, the district would run out of money and some schools would lose out on facility upgrades.

The \$20 million shortfall assumes that the district will not build a new campus at Slater Elementary, which some residents had hoped would be included in the bond construction plan. It also assumes that Stevenson and Theuerkauf elementary schools will share facilities.

In an effort to get back on track, district staff proposed a handful of cost-cutting "scenarios" that the board could choose from. They could, for example, cut the multipurpose rooms out of construction plans at Bubbs, Huff and

Landels elementary schools in order to save \$13 million. The elementary school projects could also take an across-the-board cut of 10 percent, which would save \$15 million. Both plans would still leave the budget in the red.

Clark said the board could look at the scenarios as a smorgasbord, and combine different cuts to get within the budget.

The only scenario that would put the district within the construction budget included cutting Stevenson, Theuerkauf and the district office from the construction plans altogether. Doing so would put the district under budget by \$6.9 million.

**'I would like to make a commitment to Stevenson PACT by keeping it on the (current) site.'**

BOARD MEMBER STEVE NELSON

Stevenson, which is almost entirely housed in portables, was shifted to the end of the construction schedule because it was more prudent to do construction work on the larger campuses first, according to district staff.

Not all of the scenarios presented saved money. Opening Slater Elementary would bring cost overruns up to \$50 million, and could conceivably end the lease with Google, which uses the campus for its daycare center. As a cheap alternative, the board could decide to open Slater Elementary and move the Stevenson PACT program to the new campus, and move Google's daycare program to Stevenson Elementary. The total cost of the swap would put the district \$37 million over budget.

Board members at the Oct. 22 meeting were hesitant to throw their support behind any proposal, but they were certainly vocal about which options they didn't like. Board member Steve Nelson insisted that the parent-participating PACT program

► See **BUDGET**, page 15

## Fresh & Easy calls it quits

MONTA LOMA LOSES NEIGHBORHOOD GROCERY STORE AS CHAIN CLOSES DOWN

By Kevin Forestieri

The shelves are half-empty at Mountain View's Fresh & Easy grocery store on Rengstorff Avenue, after it was announced last week that the grocery store chain would close all of its locations.

Fresh & Easy, known for its cellophane-wrapped produce, prepared foods and self-check-

out model, has been struggling to stay afloat financially since its inception. Residents in the Monta Loma neighborhood say the closure is a real loss for them, and marks the end of the only convenient nearby grocery store.

The Oct. 21 announcement is the latest and final round of store closures since the chain launched eight years ago. Fresh & Easy began in 2007 as an ambitious

venture by the major British-based company Tesco to start a grocery store chain in the United States. The company began its operations by opening hundreds of stores in California, Nevada and Arizona.

The idea was compete with stores like Trader Joe's and Whole Foods, but the chain never really took off. After run-

► See **FRESH & EASY**, page 6



## FRESH & EASY

► Continued from page 5

ning losses for several years, Tesco filed for bankruptcy for 2013 and sold the Fresh & Easy grocery stores to Los Angeles-based Yucaipa Companies, LLC.

The move was Tesco's way of offloading the 150 remaining stores and exiting the U.S. market, according to a statement from the company.

Fresh & Easy announced the closure of 50 stores in March this year, despite attempts to turn things around, and announced last week that it would shutter all of the remaining 97 locations.

"Over the last two years, we have been working hard to build a new Fresh & Easy," according to a company statement. "While we made progress on stemming our losses and moving the business closer to break-even, unfortunately we have been unable to obtain financing and the liquidity necessary to continue to fund the business going forward."

"As we start the process for an organized wind-down of the business, we continue to work to sell all or part of the business."

All stores are expected to close in the coming weeks, and some 3,000 employees will be laid off.

Frances Laursen, who lives

near the store, said Fresh & Easy became her go-to grocery store for all her food, even though there's a perception that the store is too small to hold everything a family might need. And indeed, many

***'I hope that a new grocer will take up residence there.'***

GERI WEITZMAN,  
MONTA LOMA RESIDENT

of the stores were designed to be small, unlike a major grocery store like Safeway, which might encompass 10,000 square feet.

While Laursen said she was disappointed that the company as a whole couldn't make it, she believes the location is a valuable place for a grocery store, and the location should be profitable enough.

Ruth Rabin, another local resident, said she started using Fresh & Easy as an alternative to the larger grocery store chains in the San Antonio Shopping Center.

"As fighting traffic on San Antonio to get to Safeway or Trader Joe's became more and more ridiculous, we stopped



KEVIN FORESTIERI

**Fresh & Easy** grocery store on Rengstorff Avenue is selling off its inventory as the chain shuts down.

shopping at those stores altogether," Rabin said.

Geri Weitzman, who lives two blocks away, said she was sad to see the store close, and that the

neighborhood definitely needs a replacement once Fresh & Easy shuts its doors.

"I hope that a new grocer will take up residence there. Our

whole neighborhood was so glad to have a supermarket open up that was in walking distance instead of driving distance," Weitzman said. ■



**EXTRAORDINARY  
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COURTESY OF PAUL LESTI

**An impromptu memorial** grew near the area where Los Altos resident Michelle Montalvo was struck by a car on Oct. 22.

## CRASH

► Continued from page 1

"It's not the easiest intersection to navigate. People are coming down El Monte at a pretty good clip, (as are) people coming from El Camino toward Foothill College," he said. "For pedestrians crossing from the CVS parking lot, there are a bunch of trees there, and frankly, they're not easy to see."

Lesti, who has served on Mountain View's planning and parks and recreation commissions in the past, said it's time for the city to see if improved signs or traffic-calming measures could help make a dangerous situation safer.

Montalvo served as an executive administrative assistant at Stanford's SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory for more than 12 years, and is survived by her daughter, Camille Buri, according to an

obituary information from Cusimano Family Colonial Mortuary. She was a graduate of Los Altos High School and was a member of Club Estrella for 23 years, having served as secretary.

The accident marks the seventh traffic fatality in Mountain View this year, and the third pedestrian fatality. In February, a 68-year-old Los Altos man was struck and killed by a car in the intersection of Charleston Road and Independence Avenue. In August, a man was hit by a vehicle in the Trader Joe's parking lot and later died of his injuries.

There were no traffic fatalities in 2014, and department reports show an average of two traffic fatalities per year going back to 2008.

Anyone who was in the area and witnessed the accident is urged to contact Officer Greg Ienni at 650-903-6344. ■



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# Peninsula cities call for new Bus Rapid Transit options

UNSWAYED BY PROPOSAL FOR BUS-ONLY LANES, COUNCIL MEMBERS URGE VTA TO STUDY MORE ALTERNATIVES

By Gennady Sheyner

A proposal to create bus-only lanes on El Camino Real between Palo Alto and San Jose has hit a political speed bump, with a committee of elected officials from cities along the corridor coming out against the controversial reconfiguration and requesting an analysis of new alternatives.

The committee of elected officials, known as the El Camino Rapid Transit Policy Advisory Board, includes council members from all the Santa Clara County cities along the route, including Lenny Siegel from Mountain View and Cory Wolbach from Palo Alto. Chaired by Los Altos Mayor Pro Tem Jeannie Bruins,

the group has been meeting monthly with staff from the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) to offer feedback about Bus Rapid Transit, the VTA's proposal to greatly improve bus ridership along the busy artery.

Of the seven options that the VTA has analyzed in its draft Environmental Impact Report, none has faced more scrutiny, criticism and opposition from the committee than the proposal to transform the left lanes of El Camino into bus-only lanes. This alternative, according to the draft EIR, would drop the time it takes to ride the bus from Palo Alto to San Jose from the current 85 minutes to 48 minutes.

Staff from the VTA and sup-

porters of the dedicated-lanes proposal see this configuration as the most promising vehicle for enhancing the transit sys-

***'The idea is to not have a virtually empty lane reserved for one or two buses.'***

COUNCILMAN LENNY SIEGEL

tem and encouraging people to switch from cars to buses. Other alternatives on the table include "mixed-flow" lanes, in which Bus Rapid Transit shares the

right lane with cars, and different combination of mixed-use and dedicated lanes. The VTA's board of directors is scheduled to make a decision about alternatives in December or January.

Yet council members from cities along the proposed route remain skeptical about dedicating two of El Camino's six lanes to the VTA buses. On Sept. 30, the advisory committee agreed that the transit agency should slow down and take a fresh look at other, less dramatic, alternatives. The advisory was scheduled to hear the VTA's response to its request during its monthly meeting Wednesday afternoon, Oct. 28, after the *Voice's* press deadline.

According to meeting minutes, the committee made its formal request for a fresh analysis of options on Sept. 30, after numerous council members raised concerns about dedicating El Camino lanes for buses. Chair Jeannie Bruins, noted at the meeting that "a dedicated lane for BRT-only is not supported by the Committee," according to the minutes. She also said the committee would like the VTA to look at the benefits "of a shared-use lane at the right curb with the appropriate environmental review."

The committee also reached consensus in other areas, according to the minutes. This includes supporting dedicated lanes "with some shared use" — beyond Bus Rapid Transit. The shared use could include emergency vehicles, private buses, local buses and high-occupancy vehicles, according to the minutes.

In an interview Wednesday, Siegel said that the committee hasn't made any final decision about whether to support dedicated lanes. Committee members, he said, still "reserve our opportunity to favor mixed-flow." But the big concern about dedicated lanes, he said, is that under the VTA proposal they would be dedicated solely for BRT. Siegel said the system would make more sense if the new BRT station were integrated with the local bus system so that commuters wouldn't have to run across the street from the standard bus stations (which remain near the curb) and the new BRT stations, which would be built in islands near the left lane.

Another option that Siegel said should be considered is having the lane dedicated to buses only during certain times of the day.

"The idea is to not have a virtually empty lane reserved for one

or two buses," Siegel said.

Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian, a former Palo Alto mayor who sits on the advisory committee, offered his own concerns about the dedicated-lanes proposal at the Sept. 30 meeting. Simitian said he was concerned about the lack of "political will" for the project, according to the minutes. Simitian also said he is "not persuaded that the public benefit derived from a dedicated lane is worth the financial cost and the adverse impact on other commuters and other users of the corridor."

Simitian made a similar point last month, during his annual joint meeting with the Palo Alto City Council. At that time, Simitian advocated for having the VTA complete its initial BRT project, in San Jose. That project, which runs along Santa Clara Street, Alum Rock Avenue, Capitol Avenue and Capitol Expressway, is now facing significant delays after construction was halted in July for a "safety shutdown" relating to utilities, according to the VTA. The transit agency also abruptly nixed its agreement with its primary contractor, Goodfellow Top Grade Construction, and is now exploring "alternative delivery methods for bringing BRT to this corridor," according to a VTA announcement. It is now slated to be completed in 2017.

At that joint meeting, Simitian noted that just about every city in the north county has expressed concerns about the dedicated-lanes design. In Palo Alto, Los Altos, Mountain View and Sunnyvale, not a single City Council has a majority that supports the project (though the Mountain View council, which once opposed the project, voted 3-2 in April to support it, with two members recusing themselves). Simitian said that the public is unprepared at this time to understand the VTA's modeling and data.

"I think it would be unwise to push ahead," Simitian said.

At the Sept. 30 meeting, the advisory committee specifically requested that the VTA explore in its environmental analysis two new alternatives, each with four variations. One alternative would involve a right-lane transit lane; another would focus on curbside transit lanes. The analysis would involve looking at each alternative with just buses; with buses and private shuttles; with buses and high-occupancy (carpool)

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## NOTICE TO PREQUALIFY AND INVITATION TO BID

1. Notice is hereby given that the governing board ("Board") of the Mt. View Whisman School District ("District") will receive sealed bids for the following project, ("Project" or "Contract"): **Crittenden Middle School New Library, Auditorium and Site Improvements.** The Project consists of the construction of a new auditorium.
2. To bid on this Project, the Bidder is required to have been prequalified by the District. In addition, all subcontractors with the following license classifications that intend to bid as a first-tier subcontractor to a general contractor (prime contractor) that is bidding directly to the District are required to have been prequalified by the District: A, B, C-4, C-7, C-10, C-16, C-20, C-34, C-36, C-38, C-42, C-43, and/or C-46. All prequalification questionnaires will be received until **2:00 p.m., November 5, 2015**, at the District Office, located at 750-A San Pierre Way, Mountain View, California, 94043.
3. Sealed Bids will be received until **1:00 p.m., December 1, 2015**, at the District Office, located at 750-A San Pierre Way, Mountain View, California, 94043, at or after which time the bids will be opened and publicly read aloud. Any claim by a bidder of error in its bid must be made in compliance with section 5100 et seq. of the Public Contract Code. Any bid that is submitted after this time shall be non-responsive and returned to the bidder.
4. All bids shall be on the form provided by the District. Each bid must conform and be responsive to all pertinent Contract Documents, including, but not limited to, the Instructions to Bidders.
5. To bid on this Project, the Bidder is required to possess one or more of the following State of California Contractor Licenses: **B.** The Bidder's license(s) must be active and in good standing at the time of the bid opening and must remain so throughout the term of the Contract.
6. As security for its Bid, each bidder shall provide with its Bid form a bid bond issued by an admitted surety insurer on the form provided by the District, cash, or a cashier's check or a certified check, drawn to the order of the District, in the amount of ten percent (10%) of the total bid price. This bid security shall be a guarantee that the Bidder shall, within seven (7) calendar days after the date of the Notice of Award, enter into a contract with the District for the performance of the services as stipulated in the bid.
7. The successful Bidder shall be required to furnish a 100 % Performance Bond and a 100% Payment Bond if it is awarded the contract for the Project.
8. The successful Bidder may substitute securities for any monies withheld by the District to ensure performance under the Contract, in accordance with the provisions of section 22300 of the Public Contract Code.
9. The successful Bidder and its subcontractors shall pay all workers on the Project not less than the general prevailing rate of per diem wages and the general prevailing rate for holiday and overtime work as determined by the Director of the Department of Industrial Relations, State of California, for the type of work performed and the locality in which the work is to be performed within the boundaries of the District, pursuant to sections 1770 et seq. of the California Labor Code. Prevailing wage rates are available from the District or on the Internet at: <<http://www.dir.ca.gov>>. Bidders and Bidders' subcontractors shall comply with the registration and qualification requirements pursuant to sections 1725.5 and 1771.1 of the California Labor Code.
10. A **mandatory** pre-bid conference and site visit will be held at **3:00 p.m., November 18, 2015** at Graham Middle School, 1175 Castro St., Mountain View, CA 94040. All participants are required to sign in at the Administration Building. The Site Visit is expected to take approximately 3 hours. Failure to attend or tardiness will render bid ineligible.
11. Prequalification questionnaires and Contract Documents are available on **October 23, 2015**, for review at the District Facilities Office, or from the District's Construction Managers, Greystone West Co., 621 W Spain Street, Sonoma CA 95476, 707-933-0624. Contract Documents are also available for purchase for two hundred dollars (\$200.00) at the District's Construction Managers Office, Greystone West Company. You can contact them by phone at (707) 933-0624 or by email at [courtney@greystonewest.com](mailto:courtney@greystonewest.com). This fee is refundable if the Contract Documents are returned in clean condition to Greystone West Company no later than ten (10) calendar days after the date of the bid opening. A list of builders' exchanges who have the project documents is available at Greystone West Company.
12. The District's Board reserves the right to reject any and all bids and/or waive any irregularity in any bid received. If the District awards the Contract, the security of unsuccessful bidder(s) shall be returned within sixty (60) days from the time the award is made. Unless otherwise required by law, no bidder may withdraw its bid for ninety (90) days after the date of the bid opening.
13. The District shall award the Contract, if it awards it at all, to the lowest responsive responsible bidder based on the base bid amount only.

MOUNTAIN VIEW WHISMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

By: Robert Clark  
Chief Business Officer

DATED:

Publication Dates: (1) October 23, 2015 (2) October 30, 2015

### MINIMUM WAGE

► Continued from page 1

weren't much better off than their employees, trying to survive amid tight margins, fierce competition and rising expenses all around.

With the first wage increase coming in about two months, Tied House marketing director Carolyn Hopkins-Vasquez worried the blow would be too much, too soon. As proposed, the wage increase would force the business to cut its 70-person workforce in half, she warned.

"If you raise the minimum wage as quickly as you are, our business will be closed," she said. "I'm struggling just as much as everyone else."

Despite those pleas, it came as no big surprise that the Mountain View council went forward with the minimum-wage increase — council members had already come out in support of the idea in two earlier votes. The real question of the night was whether elected leaders would delay the roll-out or dilute the wage hike with exceptions and contingencies.

With so-called "carve-outs," the city pondered allowing exceptions for businesses to pay less than minimum wage for certain employee groups, such as those earning tips, trainees or those who are receiving employer-paid benefits such as healthcare. The legality of adding those exceptions was thrown into question, and the council decided to take the matter up as a separate vote.

With a potential conflict of interest as the owner of a Baskin Robbins store, Mayor John McAlister recused himself from the vote on carve-outs, although the city attorney said he was within his rights to vote on the full minimum-wage increase. In the end, the carve-outs were rejected by the council in a 5-1 vote, with Councilman John Inks casting the lone vote in opposition.

Council members explained they wanted to ensure Mountain View didn't become a higher wage "island", putting local businesses at a disadvantage. Up until this point, the recent push in the Bay Area to raise minimum wage has largely been spearheaded by voter-approved ballot initiatives in large cities, such as San Francisco and Oakland.

To varying degrees, several other South Bay cities have expressed support for raising the base wage. As Mountain View's closest ally in the effort, Sunnyvale is expected to soon follow with its own

minimum-wage hike. But many other cities are looking to follow the lead of San Jose, which is currently waiting for the results of an independent economic study of raising minimum wage to \$15 by 2018. That study isn't expected to be complete until early next year.

Mountain View leaders made clear they didn't want to wait that long, saying the income disparity in the area required quicker action.

"For me, this is a piece of a puzzle where we're trying to solve a lot of socioeconomic issues," said Councilman Chris Clark said. "We're trying to address housing, wages, the whole gamut as best we can."

But a debate broke on whether the council was really unloading its trickiest problems onto small businesses. More than one person pointed out the council seemed inconsistent by using the minimum wage as a tool to lift low-earning workers, yet refusing one week earlier to put the onus on residential landlords by studying limits on rent increases or protections against evictions.

The two issues were fundamentally different, said Councilman Ken Rosenberg.

"They're different in their implication and in their academic studies that support or refute them," he said. "There's too many policy flaws with rent control, but a minimum wage increase, as long as it's not prohibitive, has an economic benefit."

In response, Councilman Lenny Seigel said he would entertain controls on commercial

rents as well as residential.

As the council moved to a vote, Mayor McAlister pitched a plan B, urging his colleagues to consider a more gradual wage increase to lessen the impact on businesses. Instead of \$15 an hour by 2018, he proposed delaying it to 2020.

"I'm concerned about the economic swing of things and I'd rather have (wages) phased along and not shot up," he said.

But other council members declined to take up that alternative. Making a motion, Councilwoman Pat Showalter pushed ahead with the 2018 schedule. McAlister asked for a contingency that Mountain View would revise its minimum wage schedule if a regional plan emerged among South Bay cities. His motion ended up dying without a second.

In the final vote, the council approved the minimum wage increase in a 5-2 vote, with McAlister and Inks opposed. ■

**'A minimum wage increase, as long as it's not prohibitive, has an economic benefit.'**

COUNCILMAN KEN ROSENBERG





MICHELLE LE

**Left:** Mountain View's free shuttle rolls up to the stop by Graham Middle School on Oct. 26. **Right:** A passenger asks for information from the shuttle driver.

## SHUTTLE

► Continued from page 5

service that has become a part of their daily routines.

Hopping on the shuttle at the downtown Transit Center on Monday, 22-year-old Christiana Iniguez said that the free service has become her primary way to get to work and around town since she first learned about it around May. Not having a car, she used to take public buses costing \$2 per trip. Needless to say, now she opts for the free ride.

"It goes basically everywhere and it's free," she said. "Sometimes it comes too early, before it's scheduled to, and when that happens I have to hurry over to one of the bus stops."

Taking a short jaunt to the bank on Monday, Mountain View resident Allen Diehl stepped onto the shuttle. Like many of his neighbors at the Paulson Park senior home, he signed a petition asking the city to consider opening a new stop near Montebello Avenue so residents didn't have to make a 15-minute walk to the pick-up spot.

"It's not that bad," he said, smiling. "I'm 80 years old, and I can still walk to get around."

Shuttle drivers said that some passengers hop on for a ride

simply to enjoy the vehicle's free public wi-fi and cushy seats.

Mountain View staff members reported they had received about 40 requests from the public and city advisory committees to add new shuttle stops and make other changes to the system. City staff recommended not implementing most of those requests because many proved unfeasible or would have resulted in considerable delays along the route.

Other tweaks were proposed by staff, such as limiting how frequently the shuttles would travel out to the lone stop in the North Bayshore area at Shoreline Boulevard and Pear Avenue. Rush-hour traffic or events at the Shoreline Amphitheater can cause delays as long as 30 minutes for shuttles traversing the area. Council members supported a staff recommendation to limit service to the North Bayshore stop to weekends.

Hanging over the shuttle discussion was the issue of how long the program could continue. Google officials have pledged to continue funding the shuttles through the end of 2016, but after that, the service's future is up in the air.

"I'm worried that because this is a gift we haven't made it very efficient," said Councilman

***'I'm worried that because this is a gift we haven't made it very efficient.'***

COUNCILMAN LENNY SIEGEL

Lenny Siegel, "I'm worried that at the end of the gift, we'll have to abandon it."

Much of the council's discussion centered on how to best expand the number of riders using the shuttle program. Council members urged the staff to survey communities, particularly those that rely on public transit, to research adding stops or changing the route for their benefit. Council members urged staff to investigate adding new stops at the Shorebreeze Apartments off Shoreline Boulevard, Paulson Park off Montebello Avenue and the Costco store off Rengstorff Avenue.

City Manager Dan Rich warned that the council couldn't do everything with its shuttle system and still keep it speedy and punctual.

"There's going to be trade-offs and we've tried to balance those

trade-offs," he said. "At the end of the day, there's only so many places we can reach if we want a shuttle with 30 minutes or less of headway."

Councilwoman Pat Showalter wanted to make sure it didn't seem like the city was looking a

gift horse in the mouth.

"I want to make sure we thank Google for this service," she said. "It's a real service to the community." ▀

Email Mark Noack at [mnoack@mv-voice.com](mailto:mnoack@mv-voice.com)



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# Going to high school? There's an app for that

## COMPUTER SCIENCE STUDENTS CREATE COMPREHENSIVE APP FOR MVHS

By Kevin Forestieri

Last week Mountain View High School celebrated its fourth annual STEM Week, giving students a closer look at what it might be like to pursue a career in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The week also includes an “hour of code” where students get exposed to the basics of computer programming.

But for some students at the school, that amounts to amateur hour. Earlier this year, a group of students in the school's growing computer science program spent their after-school hours putting together the new MVHS App, a tool designed to help their peers get around the school, plan for daily events and look through grades and class activities.

The app, which debuted in August on the Google app store and has picked up hundreds of downloads, is in many ways a culmination of separate student efforts. Each year, students from the high school's computer science classes and computer science club compete with one another in an app-making competition, which last year brought about apps for navigation around the campus and creating a class calendar.

Ly Nguyen, the school's AP Computer Science teacher, said he and the students decided it would be a good idea to take these individual endeavors and bring them together, creating one application to serve the community.

One of the app's features, which was a crowd-pleaser at the Oct. 12 school board meeting, is the high school map. Daniel Ciao, a sophomore student who acted as a lead developer, said they created an overlay of all the rooms on the campus on top of a satellite image of the school, turning each room into a possible destination. Then, with some help from Google's own code, they created a small-scale version of Google maps for Mountain View High School.

The students created their own algorithm for finding the shortest possible paths around the campus along the main routes throughout the school, rather than sending app-users through buildings on direct routes. Nguyen told the board that the map is especially useful for students who are new



A new app created by Mountain View High School students has a built-in campus navigator and a daily calendar to help students get through the day.

to campus, or volunteers or personnel trying to locate a building or a room.

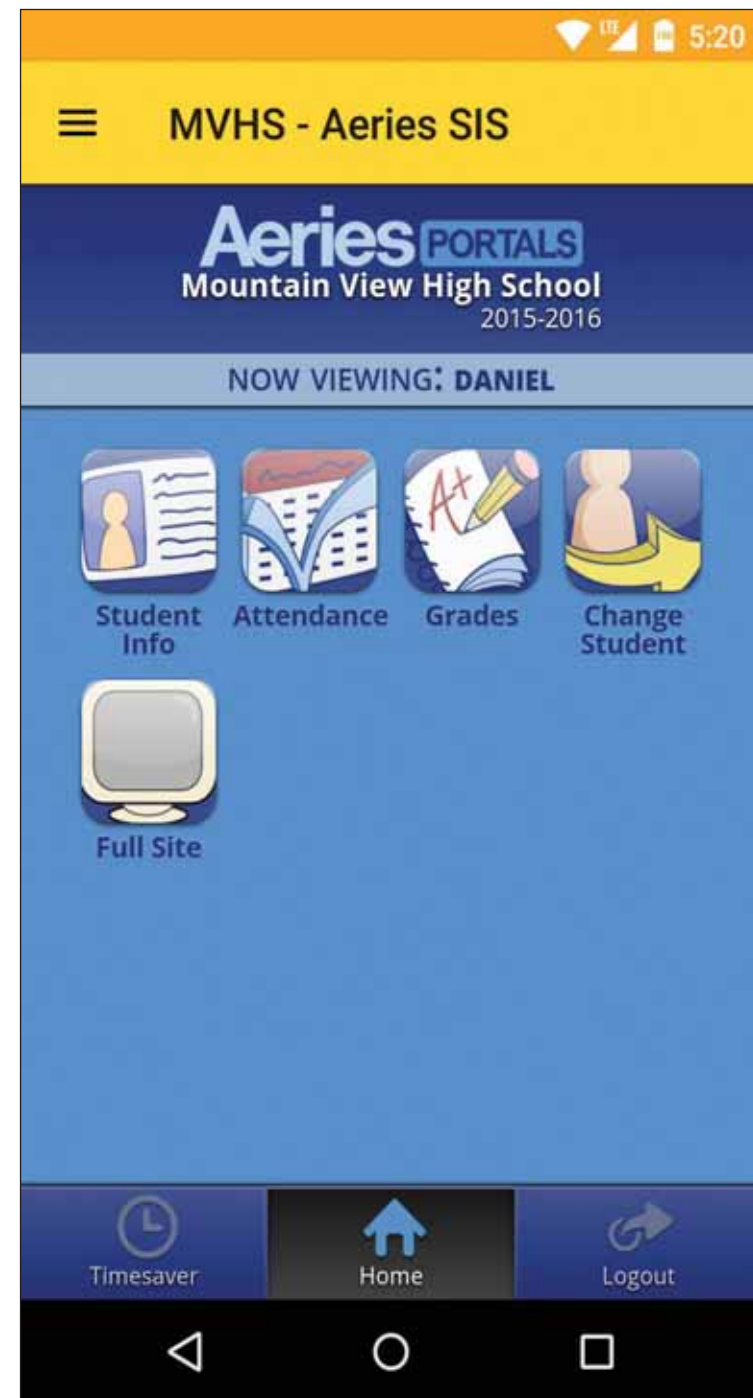
Other app features include a student calendar that automatically syncs up with Mountain View High School's online calendar to show events on any given day. The calendar also has a daily schedule showing where students need to be from one hour to the next.

Nguyen later told the *Voice* that the app is hardly a rookie project used to teach students the basics, and is the same level of quality seen in other apps on the market.

"I'm very impressed. The work they do here is professional quality work," he said.

On top of contributing some of the code for the app, Google also pitched in by providing development tablets and Android devices to help the students as they worked on the app last year. And as you might expect, the app is only available on Android devices. Nguyen said students would have to learn a whole different programming language to make their app compatible with Apple products.

Because of the extra-curricular nature of the project, students had to spend a lot of time outside of class, even over the summer, to get the app up and running by August. But that didn't bother Ciao, one of



Nguyen's more advanced computer science students, who said he looks at it as a hobby.

"It's not so much of a chore or a job for me," Ciao said.

App development hasn't stagnated over the first few months. The district recently gave all students a Google account, including Gmail and the rest of the Google apps, as well as an online interface for class activities and assignments. Since then, the development team for the app has rolled the new Google apps, dubbed "Google Classroom," into the MVHS App.

In an effort to keep updates and bug fixes going in the future, Nguyen said the com-

puter science students are trying to figure out a system where graduating students don't abandon the app. He said they plan to build a "sustainable group" of computer science students from year-to-year to keep working on it. ■

Email Kevin Forestieri at [kforestieri@mv-voice.com](mailto:kforestieri@mv-voice.com)

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## BUDGET

► Continued from page 5

needs a permanent home, and didn't like the idea of moving one of the district's choice programs away from a central location in the city.

"I would like to make a commitment to Stevenson PACT by keeping it on the (current) site," Nelson said.

Board president Ellen Wheeler said she was firmly against cutting multipurpose rooms and cutting overall construction costs by 10 percent, saying it would be a bad idea to prematurely trigger cuts based on today's budget. Wheeler, along with board members Bill Lambert and José Gutiérrez, said they wanted to forgo any decision until they knew if it was plausible to pass another bond to finish construction. That way, she said, the district can avoid short-changing students if they can help it.

"The idea of cutting 10 percent or cutting (multipurpose rooms) or things like that, I think, does a disservice to the school children in our community," Wheeler said.

## Data for new school decision

The board still has not made a final decision on whether to open a new school at Slater Elementary. While the new school would certainly exacerbate the already-high costs of construction in the district, there are lingering questions about whether the district even has the enrollment to fill a new school with students.

The board is expected on Nov. 5 to review a new demographic study showing enrollment projections for the next several years. The uncertainty over how many students to expect made board members even more reluctant to choose one budget option over another.

Residents in the Whisman and Slater neighborhood area urged board members to seriously consider opening a school at Slater. District parent Christine Case-Lo told the board she understands that money is tight, and that she would be willing to settle for something less than a full-sized campus. A smaller school with portables would be preferable to nothing at all, she said. As it stands, she has to travel across two major roads to go to Theuerkauf Elementary.

Veronica Reginaldo, a resident in the Whisman and Slater area, said the district has suffered a mass exodus of families with school-aged

children in the area because of the absence of a neighborhood school. She said it had "systematically destroyed" the neighborhood, and she has doubts the new demographic study will change anything.

"I am afraid that the re-start of the demographic study will never give justice to the residents of the Slater-Whisman area," Reginaldo said.

## Castro plans cuts

The surprise \$6 million increase in construction costs for the Castro campus could lead to some serious cutbacks in the school's design. Todd Lee, the district's construction manager, said it is possible the district will have to defer construction of six classrooms at the new Castro Elementary.

While some board members were fine with that loss, others felt it represented a significant social justice issue for the district's lowest performing school.

By removing six classrooms from the project, Castro Elementary would have only two classrooms per grade. Castro staff members have consistently lobbied for three classrooms per grade, which they said would allow them to better group students according to their academic needs.

Board member Greg Coladonato said he didn't believe the district should try to do everything at once on the Castro campus if the money isn't there, and he didn't think it was a "terrible outcome" to have to defer the construction. Nelson insisted that school

facilities don't actually have much bearing on student performance.

"The idea that you have a fancy room that makes your kids better-taught is not true," Nelson said. "West Contra Costa County spent hundreds of millions on their facilities (and) they still have a lousy school system."

Nelson also doubted the school would be able to fill the new classrooms.

"The Bubb kids that live near there and their families,

***'Everyone knows that if we don't act on this issue, soon and smartly, we're going to bungle this.'***

JOSÉ GUTIÉRREZ

they do not want to be shifted over to Castro. I don't ever see anyone come here and say, 'I want to get into Castro, and I can't get in,' Nelson said.

Grace Chavez, a third-grade teacher at Castro, said the school's design plans have already been cut several times, and that they aren't asking for anything fancy or expensive. She said for many students at the school, Castro is the only place they have access to things like technology, books, sports, and art, and that they deserve to have the facilities that were promised to them.

"If we cut what they deserve,

there's going to be hidden costs down the road," Chavez said.

Gutiérrez said the board needs to avoid any delays on the construction at Castro and Mistral, and pointed out that students are currently being bused from Castro to other schools because of lack of space. Some extra classrooms might be able to help with that, Gutiérrez said.

"Everyone knows that if we don't act on this issue, soon and smartly, we're going to bungle this," Gutiérrez said. "As far as I'm concerned, we've already bungled it (in) the way it was approached, the way it was modified, the way it was cut, the way it was chopped."

Wheeler pointed out that board members want to do something about the poor test scores of the low-income

and minority students in the school district, many of whom attend Castro Elementary. The construction plans, she said, are an opportunity to take action and help the students at the campus. If the principals at Castro and Mistral believe having the extra six classrooms will help, she said, then that's what the school district should do.

"We all expressed dismay at the test score results of our low-income English language learners, and I thought at that time we made serious statements about wanting to do what we can moving forward to help those students," Wheeler said.

The board is scheduled to make a final decision on Castro's budget at the Nov. 5 board meeting. ■

Email Kevin Forestieri at [kforestieri@mv-voice.com](mailto:kforestieri@mv-voice.com)



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## ■ A + E BRIEFS



FOX STAR INDIA

Among the films playing at the San Francisco South Asian Film Festival in Palo Alto are “The Crow’s Egg,” a Tamil feature film by M. Manikandan (top left) and “Om Dar-B-Dar” (top right).



NFDC

## SOUTH ASIAN FILM FEST

From India to Pakistan to Sri Lanka, the San Francisco South Asian Film Festival presented by 3rd i brings movies from South Asia and the diaspora to Palo Alto’s CineArts Theatre, 3000 El Camino Real, on Sunday, Nov. 1. Don’t just think Bollywood; the festival incorporates everything from cult classics and independent art-house films to documentaries and features. Among the selections playing in Palo Alto this year are “A Thin Wall,” a documentary about the 1947 partition of India and subsequent violence and displacement, and “Jai Ho,” which takes a look at the musician A.R.Rahman, the so-called “Mozart of Madras” who composed the soundtrack to “Slumdog Millionaire.” Film screenings begin at noon. Tickets are \$10 per film, or \$38 for all four films (available online only). For tickets go to [goo.gl/oL16bX](http://goo.gl/oL16bX). For more information, go to [thirdi.org](http://thirdi.org).



COURTESY RACE AGAINST PH

This Sunday, Nov. 1, Stanford University hosts the annual Race against PH, a 5K fun run to raise awareness of pulmonary hypertension.

## RACE AGAINST PH

Pulmonary hypertension — a rare lung disorder — affects people of all ages and ethnic backgrounds. This Sunday, Nov. 1, Stanford University hosts the annual Race against PH, a 5K fun

run and walk to raise awareness of the disease and funding for medical research. The race starts at 9 a.m. at Pac 12 Plaza, Galvez St. and Nelson Road. Registration is \$15-\$35. Go to [goo.gl/BcZYaR](http://goo.gl/BcZYaR) or call 800-640-9255.

## ‘THE SECRET CHORD’

It’s no secret: On Monday, Nov. 2, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Geraldine Brooks will appear at Kepler’s Books, 1010 El Camino Real Menlo Park, to discuss her new novel, “The Secret Chord,” which centers on the life of King David. Her talk begins at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are



GAIL STUCKY

On Sunday, Nov. 1, the United Nations Association Gift Shop in Palo Alto will hold a basket sale with a wide selection of handmade, fair-trade baskets.

\$10-\$40. Go to [goo.gl/FYuqQv](http://goo.gl/FYuqQv) or call 650-324-4321.

## PERCOLATE

What’s better than stimulating art and conversation? Art, conversation and caffeine, of course. On Thursday, Nov. 5, at 11 a.m., environmentalist and educator Will Travis will give a free talk at the Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road, about climate change and sea-level rise in the Bay Area. Peet’s Coffee & Tea will be served. Go to [goo.gl/If4RHE](http://goo.gl/If4RHE) or call 650-329-2366.

## BASKET SALE

This Sunday, Nov. 1, head to Palo Alto’s United Nations Gift Shop at 552 Emerson St. for one of the best selections of handmade baskets you’re likely to find this holiday season. Among the handmade, fair-trade baskets for sale are Namibian palm, Zulu wire and Swazi sisal baskets as

well as those made by the Wounaan tribe in Panama. The sale runs from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Go to [unamidpen.org](http://unamidpen.org) or call 650-326-3170.

## BIKE RACK DESIGN COMPETITION

Love bicycles? Got a flair for design? The city of Los Altos is seeking imaginative entries for its bike rack design competition. The deadline is Monday, Nov. 23, and racks will be installed by mid-May 2016, in time for National Bike to Work Week. Go to [goo.gl/mxx2lO](http://goo.gl/mxx2lO) or call 650-947-2720.

— Elizabeth Schwyzer

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Watch videos of the 3rd i Film Festival and Geraldine Brooks in the online version of this story at [mv-voice.com](http://mv-voice.com).



# Battling an overlooked killer

## EL CAMINO HEALTHCARE DISTRICT TEAMS UP TO FIGHT HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

By Kevin Forestieri

**H**igh blood pressure is a serious issue in the Bay Area, and local health officials have vowed to do something about it. The El Camino Healthcare District, along with the American Heart Association, agreed to a partnership last week intended to bring down the number of people suffering from heart disease and stroke in Santa Clara County.

High blood pressure, or hypertension, accounts for 400,000 deaths in the U.S. each year and affects roughly 1 in 3 adults, according to the U.S. Center for Disease Control. Obesity, alcohol consumption and diets high in sodium are some of the primary culprits for the disease. Roughly one in three Americans also have pre-hypertension, adding to the prevalence of the disease.

Despite the far-reaching effects of hypertension, there aren't a lot of programs to get people screened and educated on its

causes and symptoms. El Camino Healthcare District board member Peter Fung said it's hard to find major organizations like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation or the World Bank willing to step up to the plate and address the widespread health concern.

To fill the gaps, at least on a local level, the district board agreed at the Oct. 20 board meeting to team up with the American Heart Association on a new partnership to get people screened for the disease on a large scale, and start educating the public on how to control blood pressure with dietary and lifestyle changes.

Fung, the former director of the stroke program at El Camino Hospital, said he approached the American Heart Association with the intent of creating a large-scale partnership with other hospitals and health organizations, envisioning that the Palo Alto Medical Foundation and the MayView Community

Health Center network will join in.

"Let's start this as a pilot program. Let it be the first of its kind," Fung said.

Sang-Mi Oh, vice president of Multicultural Initiatives at the American Heart Association, explained that there's a lot of work to do. In Santa Clara County, over 40 percent of the residents have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, diabetes or a combination of the three — all of them risk factors for heart disease and stroke.

But of those people, only about 45 percent have it under control with diet, exercise and medication. If left uncontrolled, hypertension can cause hardening of blood vessels in the brain, weakening of the heart muscles and can increase the risk of congestive heart failure.

Oh said the goal of the partnership is to get 70 percent of the hypertensive residents to control their blood pressure. In order to reach their goal, she

said, they need to have partners like El Camino Healthcare District that are willing to help reach hundreds of thousands of people in the community.

"We want to change the way we address high blood pressure in this health care district," Oh said.

District board members crafted the motion to be purposefully vague, as it's still pending how involved El Camino Hospital will be in the partnership and what kind of funding commitments it might make.

### Mass screening on the way

The effects of hypertension can be fatal, but it's easy to remedy, as far as chronic diseases go, Fung said. The initial stages of hypertension can be handled without drugs, and the later stages can be handled with a single medication or a pharmaceutical cocktail.

The problem is that the symptoms of the disease are hard to

notice, and many people are unaware they have high blood pressure, Fung said. Young people and women before and after pregnancy can become hypertensive. What's more, he said, it doesn't register with a lot of people that hypertension is a lifelong ailment that needs to be dealt with on a daily basis.

"A lot of patients of mine will take a bottle of blood pressure medicine and come back with good results, and then they stop taking it," Fung said.

Getting hundreds of thousands of county residents to put on that blood pressure cuff and hand over the results is going to be a challenging task, Fung conceded. The plan is to work with local pharmacies like Walgreens and CVS to collect patient health data including blood pressure, age, weight, gender and body mass index, an indicator of obesity. If the results come in a little high, the

► See **BLOOD PRESSURE**, page 18



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## LEASE MANDATE

► Continued from page 1

much relief, those emergency measures appeared even weaker when they came back to the council on Tuesday. In the ordinance presented to the council, Quinn removed any mention of the requirement for 90 days' notice or a prohibition on charging a premium for longer lease renewals.

After researching the ideas, she explained that in her legal

opinion, the city was in danger of overstepping its authority by pushing those measures forward. The length of a tenant's notice was controlled by state law, she said. Meanwhile, the desire for all lease renewals — whether month-to-month or longer — to be offered at the same price, would have been tantamount to imposing rent control and would have needed to be publicly noticed as such, she said.

In addition, the city would need some means to enforce the

rules as well as hear potential appeals from landlords.

"In saying these (rents) all have to equal, that's a form of rent regulation," she said. "I'd like a little more time to look into this."

The changes clearly sapped the enthusiasm of council members. Blasting the proposed urgency ordinance as a "disgrace," Councilman Ken Rosenberg faulted the council for giving vague directions at the Oct. 19 study session. He wasn't the only one who was frustrated, and other council members bemoaned the fact that their speedy solutions now seemed feckless.

City Manager Dan Rich defended the staff.

"We're doing exactly what you asked of us," he insisted, reminding the council members that staff was also simultaneously working to prepare several other long-term housing plans they had wanted.

Among those ideas pitched at the study session were extra relief funding for displaced ten-

ants through the Community Services Agency; a mandatory mediation program for tenants' grievances and a data collection program to provide better information on the local rental market.

But support seemed to be waning on Tuesday. Rosenberg warned he wouldn't vote for the urgency ordinance as a matter of protest. Councilman Lenny Siegel cautioned that approving the ordinance could have unintended consequences by forcing a lot of new leases to be locked into higher rents. Councilman John Inks joined in opposition, saying he didn't like where the political winds were blowing.

"One thing that's shaping up in this discussion is rent control is coming to Mountain View," he said. "This is going to change the rental market for the worse."

The three councilmen voted against the urgency ordinance, causing it to fall short of the super-majority it needed to pass.

What ensued seemed like

replay of the Oct. 19 study session with city leaders brainstorming new ways to combat the rental crisis.

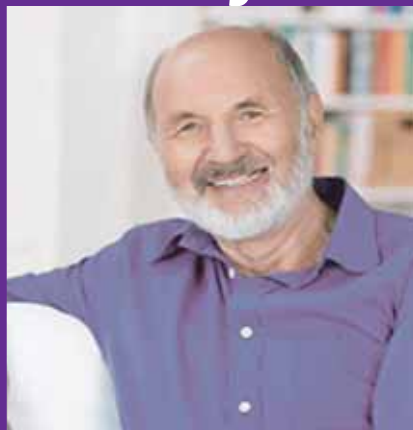
A few council members signaled they still wanted to see some kind of stronger ordinance to help tenants have the option longer-term leases, rather than going month-to-month at the end of the initial lease period. Rosenberg cast his support behind collecting data, suggesting a new system in which landlords would be required to report any rent increases or evictions to the city.

Siegel, who backed two failed rent-control ballot measures in the past, said he was crafting something he dubbed "soft rent control" that he hoped to bring back to the city.

Rich said the city would next address the rental situation on Dec. 1, when staff would bring back proposals and seek clearer direction from the council. ▀

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## BLOOD PRESSURE

► Continued from page 17

patient would be referred to a physician.

In the tech-centric Silicon Valley where there's an app for just about everything, Fung said he's confident there will be some way for residents to track their own blood pressure, through either a website or an app sponsored by a local tech company. That information should be easy to collect, provided people take hypertension seriously.

"We are here in Silicon Valley. There are apps out there that people can use to follow their own health care," Fung said. "When people are aware this is an important thing in their lives, it is something they will be able to control."

## More than your daily dose of salt

There's a cultural aspect to the fight against hypertension. El Camino Hospital's Chinese Health Initiative has been getting the word out to the Chinese community in the Bay Area about the dangers of hepatitis and hypertension, and the need to go see a doctor every once in a while.

One of the main culprits is salt. There's a strong relationship between too much salt in the diet and increased levels of blood pressure, according to the Center for Disease Control, and the average daily salt intake for Americans is estimated to be more than 3,400 milligrams. That's well above twice the suggested daily amount of 1,500 milligrams, which adds up to roughly a tablespoon of salt, per day. This creates a serious cultural health issue, Fung said.

"Chinese people eat a ton of salt," he said.

While it may be hard to part ways with sodium-rich foods, Fung said it can be reduced in steps so the body hardly notices it. As part of the Chinese Health Initiative, the hospital has put out roughly 240 articles in a local Chinese newspaper informing people about the risks of eating too much salt. Fung said the initiative also hosted a "healthy soup program" where Chef Chu in Los Altos came up with two soup recipes with little or no salt, which was a big hit among the hundreds of participants, he said.

Hospital CEO Tomi Ryba and members of the El Camino Healthcare District will be hammering out the specific details of the agreement with the American Heart Association in the coming months. ▀

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MAGALI GAUTHIER

## TRANSIT

► Continued from page 8

lanes; and with buses, private shuttles and high-occupancy lanes, according to a report from John Ristow, the VTA's director of planning and program development.

This request, however, could spell more delays and cost increases for the El Camino project. According to the report from Ristow, which the committee is scheduled to consider at its Oct. 28 meeting, such an analysis would take between one and two years to complete and cost between \$1 million and \$2 million. Under the current schedule, construction would begin in 2018 and be completed by 2010.

If the committee wants to move ahead with the request for new analysis, it would have to draft a letter to the VTA board of directors, advising them to increase the scope of the proj-

***'I think it would be unwise to push ahead.'***

COUNTY SUPERVISOR JOE SIMITIAN

ect and its budget. This action could be considered on Nov. 18, according to Ristow. The board of directors would then consider the request in December. If it

approves the contract amendment, VTA would then spend three to four months to conduct a "preliminary analysis" that would determine which alternatives merit a more thorough environmental analysis.

Siegel said that even with the additional costs and delays, he believes the study would be "definitely worthwhile." If the study shows that having transit in the right-lane makes sense, this alternative would prompt significant savings over the dedicated-lane proposal.

"We'd end up saving a lot of money over the rather expensive proposal for changing the medians all the way up and down El Camino," Siegel said. "If we're right, it would save money." ▀





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**Palo Alto, CA 94306**

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The Voice is published weekly by Embarcadero Media Co. and distributed free to residences and businesses in Mountain View. If you are not currently receiving the paper, you may request free delivery by calling 964-6300. Subscriptions for \$60 per year, \$100 per 2 years are welcome.

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## EDITORIAL THE OPINION OF THE VOICE

# 'RV camps' need North County safe zones

The plight of the Reyes family and others now living in their vehicles after losing their rental housing adds one more dimension to the dismal story of Mountain View residents whose lives are being turned upside down because of the city's housing crisis. The *Voice* featured a story last week about the rise in the number of people living in RVs on Mountain View streets — a population that includes the four-member Reyes family, who lost the Mountain View apartment they lived in for 10 years because of a spike in their rent.

Jose Reyes, who works in a local restaurant and whose daughter attends Castro Elementary School, told the *Voice* that in order to stay in the area where he's employed, the family bought the cheapest RV they could find, but RV parks in the area are full, with waiting lists. So the family has joined the burgeoning community whose "homes" are parked throughout the city, including near the back lot of a Target store, and on Crisanto Avenue near Rengstorff Park, and on Latham Street near Showers Drive — an encampment fronting apartments where residents pay \$3,000 monthly for a single-bedroom unit.

To their credit, Santa Clara County supervisors last month voted to invest \$17 million "for shelter and services that can be delivered in the short-term" for homeless people as the county continues efforts to develop long-term solutions, according to Board of Supervisors President Dave Cortese. Among the measures being explored is a "safe parking" program that would designate areas where people living in their vehicles can legally park overnight. This is an important step toward addressing a problem that will only worsen as housing costs soar,

economic disparity grows, and local leaders resist putting measures in place to help stabilize rents.

Safe-parking programs — which minimize disruptions to vehicle residents from police making routine visits and address concerns of residents on streets where RVs park — have been put into place in a number of areas in the state, including the counties of Sonoma, Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo. In Sonoma County, residents of vehicles were allowed use of the county fairgrounds in the winter under a county-sponsored program operated by Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Santa Rosa, according to a March 2014 article in the Los Angeles Times.

A safe-parking program may be launched soon in San Jose; officials of that city have identified a public parking lot that could be used by vehicle dwellers, with financial support by the county, according to Ky Le, the county's director of the Office of Supportive Housing. In what could be a temporary solution locally, Mountain View City Councilman Lenny Siegel suggested that the city could establish a safe-parking area in vacant lots near the Shoreline Amphitheatre during winter months.

That temporary solution should be rigorously explored and, if feasible, put into place as soon as possible. But as the county looks for at least one North County location for a safe-parking area, Mountain View officials should work with neighboring cities to identify vacant lots that can provide ample space for residents forced to live in vehicles. Then, with the county's help, the local leaders should work together to ensure that resources are found to provide a safe environment for these members of the community to live with dignity until they are able to get back on their feet and into homes. ▣

## LETTERS VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

### WHAT'S THE MATTER WITH MOUNTAIN VIEW?

In Thomas Frank's seminal book, "What's the Matter with Kansas?", the author explores why his home state consistently votes against its own blue-collar economic interests. After reading the Mountain View *Voice* for the last few years, I'm left to wonder: What's the matter with us?

As a town where the majority of residents are renters and where many are struggling to keep up with rising rents, we've somehow elected a City Council with not a single renter on it. Is it any wonder

then that the current council consistently ratifies new office developments while even the mere whiff of renters' rights leads to total paralysis?

But you can hardly blame the council members; they're just doing what anyone would do in their positions. Instead, we've got to take a hard look in the mirror at the people who put them there. Because, as with Frank's analysis of Kansas, I'm forced to conclude: We didn't get the leadership we needed — we got the one we deserved.

Jeremy Schifeling  
Calderon Avenue

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## STOP THE MADNESS IN MOUNTAIN VIEW

Moving here I have seen more change than most, but what is going on now is heinous.

Due to Google and an irresponsible and corrupt City Council, Mountain View is going to be a place that people move away from. Several dear friends of mine have had to move due to the insane rents.

Why did people love it here so? It was due to the small town feel and quaintness. That ship has sailed and we are left holding the anchor.

It is immoral to behave this way due to global warming in addition to having no respect for the quality of life for residents. The loss of grass and trees and addition of more cars and traffic are doing more harm than good.

And what are they building? It is bar none some of the most boring, cheap and ugly architecture to date. It all looks the same and is too close to the sidewalks, creating caverns. If there is a future no one is going to admire this trend.

I guess the City Council will not rest until we become another Los Angeles.

Do you have any idea what the traffic on El Camino Real is going to be like when all these projects are done?

Stop the madness! Stop any more losses of mom and pop businesses and local color. We need to save Mountain View now.

Josephine Manoli  
Bonita Avenue

## PEDESTRIAN/BICYCLIST DEATHS UNACCEPTABLE

Thank you for keeping the community aware of the *fourth* pedestrian/bicyclist death in Mountain View this year.

When driving, we must be aware that there are other vulnerable road users out there. Our kids, our parents, us.

It is also important that we call the latest crash what it is: a *crash*, not an accident. An accident is a random, unpreventable happenstance.

Airline fatalities have dropped to practically zero because the NTSB has investigated every airline crash and found how to stop repeat crashes.

If the NTSB can prevent repeat crashes with complex machines shuttling millions of people across oceans and mountain ranges, Mountain View city, police and residents can do the same and reduce deaths on our streets.

Mountain View needs to follow the footsteps of other cities like San Francisco and adopt Vision Zero—zero fatalities on our streets. This can be achieved with road diets, as currently proposed on California Avenue. The city should move forward quickly and with resolve on this project and others as well. The singular responsibility of government is keeping its residents safe from preventable harm. Road diets are good for the city and save lives.

We would never accept four murders in Mountain View. Why should we accept four preventable deaths either?

This latest death was preventable; let's prevent the next death.

Patrick Moore  
Wright Avenue

## What's on your mind?

From City Hall politics and the schools to transportation and other pressing issues, the *Voice* aims to keep readers informed about their community. But we also want to hear from you.

Tell us what's on your mind by sending your letters to [letters@MV-Voice.com](mailto:letters@MV-Voice.com). Or snail-mail them to: Mountain View Voice, P.O. Box 405, Mountain View, CA 94042.



## NOTICE TO PREQUALIFY AND INVITATION TO BID

1. Notice is hereby given that the governing board ("Board") of the Mt. View Whisman School District ("District") will receive sealed bids for the following project, ("Project" or "Contract"): **Graham Middle School Auditorium and Site Improvements.** The Project consists of the construction of a new auditorium.
2. To bid on this Project, the Bidder is required to have been prequalified by the District. In addition, all subcontractors with the following license classifications that intend to bid as a first-tier subcontractor to a general contractor (prime contractor) that is bidding directly to the District are required to have been prequalified by the District: A, B, C-4, C-7, C-10, C-16, C-20, C-34, C-36, C-38, C-42, C-43, and/or C-46. All prequalification questionnaires will be received until **2:00 p.m., November 5, 2015**, at the District Office, located at 750-A San Pierre Way, Mountain View, California, 94043.
3. Sealed Bids will be received until **2:00 p.m., December 1, 2015**, at the District Office, located at 750-A San Pierre Way, Mountain View, California, 94043, at or after which time the bids will be opened and publicly read aloud. Any claim by a bidder of error in its bid must be made in compliance with section 5100 et seq. of the Public Contract Code. Any bid that is submitted after this time shall be non-responsive and returned to the bidder.
4. All bids shall be on the form provided by the District. Each bid must conform and be responsive to all pertinent Contract Documents, including, but not limited to, the Instructions to Bidders.
5. To bid on this Project, the Bidder is required to possess one or more of the following State of California Contractor Licenses: **B.** The Bidder's license(s) must be active and in good standing at the time of the bid opening and must remain so throughout the term of the Contract.
6. As security for its Bid, each bidder shall provide with its Bid form a bid bond issued by an admitted surety insurer on the form provided by the District, cash, or a cashier's check or a certified check, drawn to the order of the District, in the amount of ten percent (10%) of the total bid price. This bid security shall be a guarantee that the Bidder shall, within seven (7) calendar days after the date of the Notice of Award, enter into a contract with the District for the performance of the services as stipulated in the bid.
7. The successful Bidder shall be required to furnish a 100 % Performance Bond and a 100% Payment Bond if it is awarded the contract for the Project.
8. The successful Bidder may substitute securities for any monies withheld by the District to ensure performance under the Contract, in accordance with the provisions of section 22300 of the Public Contract Code.
9. The successful Bidder and its subcontractors shall pay all workers on the Project not less than the general prevailing rate of per diem wages and the general prevailing rate for holiday and overtime work as determined by the Director of the Department of Industrial Relations, State of California, for the type of work performed and the locality in which the work is to be performed within the boundaries of the District, pursuant to sections 1770 et seq. of the California Labor Code. Prevailing wage rates are available from the District or on the Internet at: <http://www.dir.ca.gov>. Bidders and Bidders' subcontractors shall comply with the registration and qualification requirements pursuant to sections 1725.5 and 1771.1 of the California Labor Code.
10. A **mandatory** pre-bid conference and site visit will be held at **2:00 p.m., November 18, 2015** at Graham Middle School, 1175 Castro St., Mountain View, CA 94040. All participants are required to sign in at the Administration Building. The Site Visit is expected to take approximately 3 hours. Failure to attend or tardiness will render bid ineligible.
11. Prequalification questionnaires and Contract Documents are available on **October 23, 2015**, for review at the District Facilities Office, or from the District's Construction Managers, Greystone West Co., 621 W Spain Street, Sonoma CA 95476, 707-933-0624. Contract Documents are also available for purchase for two hundred dollars (\$200.00) at the District's Construction Managers Office, Greystone West Company. You can contact them by phone at (707) 933-0624 or by email at [courtney@greystonewest.com](mailto:courtney@greystonewest.com). This fee is refundable if the Contract Documents are returned in clean condition to Greystone West Company no later than ten (10) calendar days after the date of the bid opening. A list of builders' exchanges who have the project documents is available at Greystone West Company.
12. The District's Board reserves the right to reject any and all bids and/or waive any irregularity in any bid received. If the District awards the Contract, the security of unsuccessful bidder(s) shall be returned within sixty (60) days from the time the award is made. Unless otherwise required by law, no bidder may withdraw its bid for ninety (90) days after the date of the bid opening.
13. The District shall award the Contract, if it awards it at all, to the lowest responsive responsible bidder based on the base bid amount only.

MOUNTAIN VIEW WHISMAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

By: Robert Clark  
Chief Business Officer

DATED:

Publication Dates: (1) October 23, 2015 (2) October 30, 2015

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### before December 15, 2015 for the Spring 2016 market and you will receive:

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#### **This is in addition to the complimentary services we provide to all our sellers, including:**

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- free staging\*\*.

\*Pre-marketing for Spring Showcase will roll out the first week of January 2016.

\*\*Includes all fees associated with design, delivery, set-up, de-staging, and the first month of furniture rental.

Disclaimer: This offer applies to listings with a signed listing agreement between Nov. 1, 2015 through Dec. 15, 2015. This is a limited-time offer for homes which will be listed to the MLS by May 1, 2016. Past listings and transactions are excluded from this offer.

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