

Mountain View VOICE

APRIL 15, 2016 VOLUME 24, NO. 12

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MOVIES | 28



Bold and beautiful Italian

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MICHELLE LE

Mountain View firefighters on Wednesday morning survey the damage from a two-alarm blaze at a commercial building on E. Evelyn Avenue.

Businesses burned out by two-alarm fire

By Kevin Forestieri

A two-alarm fire broke out inside a commercial building in Mountain View Monday night, charring the inside of the building and rendering several local businesses uninhabitable.

The blaze was reported at 67

East Evelyn Ave. at 8:18 p.m. on April 11. Firefighters arrived on scene by 8:22 p.m., according to Mountain View Fire spokesman Lynn Brown.

Crews found heavy smoke coming from the single-story structure, which contains multiple businesses. They upgraded the incident to a second alarm,

and Palo Alto firefighters sent crews to assist, Brown said.

Fire crews were able to extinguish the blaze, including a number of lingering hot spots, sometime between 9:30 and 10 p.m., Brown said. The building, which he said appeared

▶ See **FIRE**, page 17

BookBuyers bids goodbye to Mountain View

CASTRO STREET BOOKSTORE CAN'T AFFORD CITY'S HIGH RENT, OWNER SAYS

By Mark Noack

Castro Street's plucky used bookstore, BookBuyers, may have a future — but it won't be in Mountain View. Unable to find a new space in the area, BookBuyers owner Hothranta Ajaya said he must begin closing down his downtown store this weekend, but is hopeful that he will be able to reopen in another city.

This Sunday, April 17, will be the last regular day of business for BookBuyers at its Castro Street location, Ajaya said. The following weekend, the bookstore will host a "warehouse sale" offering marked-down prices on books to pare down the store's 300,000-title inventory and raise as much money as possible for a future move.

Beyond that point, exactly what happens to BookBuyers is up in the air, Ajaya said. In recent weeks, Ajaya has searched for a new home for his business in Mountain View, but he couldn't find anything in his price range. He is now mulling options farther away, including Morgan Hill, Fremont and Hayward.

"We cannot afford anything in

Mountain View anymore," Ajaya said. "I just don't have the kind of money to pay what the rents are in the city. It's a sad thing."

A downtown mainstay for more than 25 years, BookBuyers has suffered in recent years from dwindling sales and mounting pressure from online competitors. Despite its shoestring budget, BookBuyers maintained a sterling reputation among bibliophiles and many considered it one of the Bay Area's finest second-hand bookstores.

Since last year, Ajaya has been upfront with customers that the bookstore was struggling to stay afloat. In a customer newsletter last April, he warned the shop would need to close unless it saw a turnaround. At the time, Ajaya promised to make a last stand to save the business, and he and his staff redoubled their efforts to transform the bookstore into a social fixture with events, visits from local authors and game nights. While the store saw more foot traffic, those visitors didn't generate enough sales to change the store's financial outlook, he said.

▶ See **BOOKBUYERS**, page 9

Popular schools could shrink as district struggles with enrollment

STUDENTS FLOCK TO HIGH-RANKED SCHOOLS LIKE HUFF, WHILE OTHERS HAVE DECLINING NUMBERS

By Kevin Forestieri

The Mountain View Whisman School District doubled down on efforts to balance enrollment across all the elementary schools last week, after board members agreed that each school campus in the district ought to be built to hold 450 students.

But the clear verdict on construction comes at a time when district officials are not sure how to get student enrollment equally distributed across seven neighborhood elementary schools. Some board members questioned how capable the district will be at getting parents to part with over-crowded, high performing schools without making hard

decisions on new boundaries and restrictions on intradistrict student transfers.

The crux of the problem is that enrollment in Mountain View schools is becoming increasingly bifurcated. Schools like Huff, Bubb and Landels Elementary are at capacity and busting at the seams, while enrollment other schools, like Theuerkauf

and Castro, has been shrinking over the last three years. While district officials plan to re-draw boundaries to better balance the number of students at each school, they are also taking a more direct approach to the problem next year by building 18 classrooms at each school with the Measure G school bond budget — enough to accommodate

about 450 students.

School size reductions of this magnitude would be a big deal for schools like Huff, which grew to 584 students this year. The tentative plan, according to the district's chief business officer, Robert Clark, would be to house the 134 surplus students

▶ See **ENROLLMENT**, page 7

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- Spacious kitchen includes abundant wood cabinets, like new side-by-side refrigerator, double ovens, 5-burner Wolf gas range with Thermador downdraft, wine refrigerator, Bosch dishwasher, pantry, and cozy breakfast nook with bay windows
- Downstairs master bedroom suite with fireplace, double sink vanity, jetted tub, separate oversized stall shower, large walk-in closet and second set of closets
- Additional bedroom downstairs with closet is ideal for home office or nursery
- Fully finished 3-car garage with freshly painted flooring and built-in cabinetry
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- Mountain View schools include: Sought-after Huff Elementary, Graham Middle School, and prestigious Mountain View High School (buyer to verify enrollment)

* Buyer to verify



1686 Miller Avenue, Los Altos

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Fully renovated in 2014, this striking contemporary home overlooks fairway views of Los Altos Golf & Country Club and the East Bay hills. The open concept great room features a towering cathedral ceiling, four skylights, floor to ceiling picture windows, and ledgestone fireplace. In this sought-after country club neighborhood the amenities abound including hardwood flooring in every room, sleek cabinetry, quartz countertops, and heated floors in the master bathroom. The outdoors is ideal for entertaining with wrap-around deck, Sundance spa with waterfall feature, and eco-friendly synthetic lawn.

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- Lot size of approximately 18,324* sf
- 2-car garage and lower-level fitness center/office
- Top-rated Los Altos schools: Loyola Elementary, Blach Intermediate, and Mountain View High (buyer to verify enrollment)

* Buyer to verify



COURTESY OF MARK BROWN

Mark Brown's "Dutch Oven Flat," one of his works on display at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts.

ART BY MARK BROWN

Since taking his first photo of an ostrich at the zoo at age 6, local artist Mark McAfee Brown has spent several decades combining traditional media, photography and digital imaging. A free exhibit, "LandScapes/Woodless Woodcuts," will be on display at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., through June 13. The works celebrate the natural world and are made to resemble woodcuts. Exhibition hours are Monday, Wednesday and Friday from noon to 1 p.m. and one hour prior to every public performance. Go to mbrownarts.com.

'A GIRL IN THE RIVER: THE PRICE OF FORGIVENESS'

The 2016 Oscar winner for Best Documentary Short, "A Girl in the River: The Price of Forgiveness," will be screened Sunday, April 17, at Geology Corner, 450 Serra Mall, Building 320, Stanford, at 6 p.m. The film deals with "honor killings" in Pakistan, where more than 1,000 women are killed each year. The film was made by Stanford International Policy Studies program alumna Sharmeen Obaid-Chinoy. A discussion with Jamie Meltzer, Associate Professor in Stanford's M.F.A. Program in Documentary Film and Video, will follow the free screening. Go to events.stanford.edu/events/583/58341/.



COURTESY OF HBO

Oscar-winning documentary short "A Girl in the River" screens at Stanford on April 17.

'EARTH DAY ON THE BAY'

Celebrate Mother Earth with a day on the bay. The Marine Science Institute will hold its annual Earth Day event, featuring live music from longtime eco-act the Banana Slug String Band, a performance by Rock Steady Juggling, and the opportunity to feed live sharks. The event is Saturday, April 16, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission is free; Ecovoyage boat cruise on the bay is \$20. Go to sfbaymsi.org/earthday.

WARRIOR CANINE CONNECTION EVENT

Puppy power! The VA Palo Alto Health Care System will celebrate the third anniversary of its service-dog training program, a branch of Warrior Canine Connection, with service dog meet-and-greets, training demonstrations, free lunch, music, games, prizes and more, on Saturday, April 16, noon-3 p.m. at Menlo Park Welcome Center, Building 400, 795 Willow Road, Menlo Park. Warrior Canine Connection matches specially trained therapy dogs with veterans suffering from psychological injuries. Go to warriorcanineconnection.org.

GRYPHONS WILD

Gryphons Wild, an early music ensemble headed by music educators Sally Terris and Anita Baldwin, presents "Stories in Song: Monsters, Maidens and Madrigals," an original blend of stories, music, costumes and props suitable for children and families. The show takes place Sunday, April 17, at 2 p.m. at Community School of Music & Arts, 230 San Antonio Circle, Mountain View. Admission is free. Go to gryphonswild.com.



COURTESY OF GRYPHONS WILD

Sally Terris and Anita Baldwin of *Gryphons Wild* play early music at CSMA on April 17.

HIRAM KAAILAU BELL

Say "aloha" to Oahu-raised ukulele master Hiram Kaailau Bell, who will bring his Polynesian vibe and four-string-strumming skills to the Menlo Park Library, 800 Alma St., for a free performance of Hawaiian classics and more on Wednesday, April 20, at 6:30 p.m. Bell, who now lives in the Bay Area and teaches uke classes and workshops, has also released two albums. Go to menlopark.org/library.

—Karla Kane

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COMMUNITY BRIEF



COURTESY OF FRIENDS OF DEER HOLLOW FARM

Ginny Kaminski, a Deer Hollow Farm docent, displays historical artifacts from the Grant Cabin.

DEER HOLLOW FARM TOURS

Spring is in the air, which means it's time for Deer Hollow Farm's annual tours. This year, there's only one day to take the spring tour: Saturday, April 16, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Deer Hollow is a throw-back to the region's era of homestead farming, offering visitors a chance to see what life was like 150 years ago. Visitors will be able to view a variety of farm animals in their pens, explore the garden, see the blooming orchard, and learn about the region's history of homestead farming. New this year, docents in 1800s dress will open the 163-year-old Grant Cabin and answer questions about the everyday artifacts on display, including a spinning wheel, iron stove and butter churn.

Of course, the highlight of spring on any working farm is the baby animals, which include lambs and kids, as well as its usual residents: cows, rabbits, chickens, geese and ducks. The Nature Center offers exhibits on local flora, fauna and wildlife.

The tours cost \$7 and are free for babies under 1 year old; cash or check is preferred. All proceeds go toward supporting Deer Hollow Farm, located in the Rancho San Antonio Open Space Preserve at 22500 Cristo Rey Drive in Los Altos. More information is online at deerhollowfarmfriends.org.

—Andrea Gemmet

POLICE LOG

- ASSAULT WITH A DEADLY WEAPON** 1300 block Grant Rd., 4/9
- 800 block San Veron Av., 4/9
- GRAND THEFT** 200 block Easy St., 4/9
- AUTO BURGLARY** 1100 block N. Rengstorff Av., 4/6
- Bryant St. & Mercy St., 4/6
- Bryant St. & Mercy St., 4/6
- 1600 block Villa St., 4/11
- RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY** 2700 block Doverton Sq., 4/8
- 1800 block Orangetree Ln., 4/10
- 1800 block Orangetree Ln., 4/10
- STOLEN VEHICLE** 200 block N. Rengstorff Av., 4/7
- 1300 block Montecito Av., 4/10
- BATTERY** 700 block San Lucas Av., 4/7
- 400 block N. Rengstorff Av., 4/8
- 700 block E. El Camino Real, 4/9
- 700 block Leong Dr., 4/9
- 300 block Castro St., 4/10
- 700 block San Lucas Av., 4/11
- VANDALISM** 1900 block Cambridge Dr., 4/7
- 400 block Tyrella Av., 4/9
- 1200 block Grant Rd., 4/11
- COMMERCIAL BURGLARY** 700 block E. Middlefield Rd., 4/10

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Seafood & Meat Special Striped Bass \$3.69/lb Swai Fillet \$2.49/lb Chicken Drummette \$3.19/lb Goat Meat (Skin-on & Bone-in) \$5.29/lb		\$1.69 ea Koriyama Cheese Cake 2.8 oz 4 for \$5 Daifuku Mochi (Selected Varieties) 3.88 oz \$3.29 ea Kikkoman Teriyaki Sauce (Selected Varieties) 20-20.5 oz \$5.99 ea Ninben Seasoning Soy Sauce (Selected Varieties) 33.8 fl.oz. \$3.69 ea SKK Funwariyaki (Selected Varieties) 5-6 pcs \$2.19 ea Kikkoman Sriracha Mayo/Hot Chili Sauce 8.5-10.6 oz	

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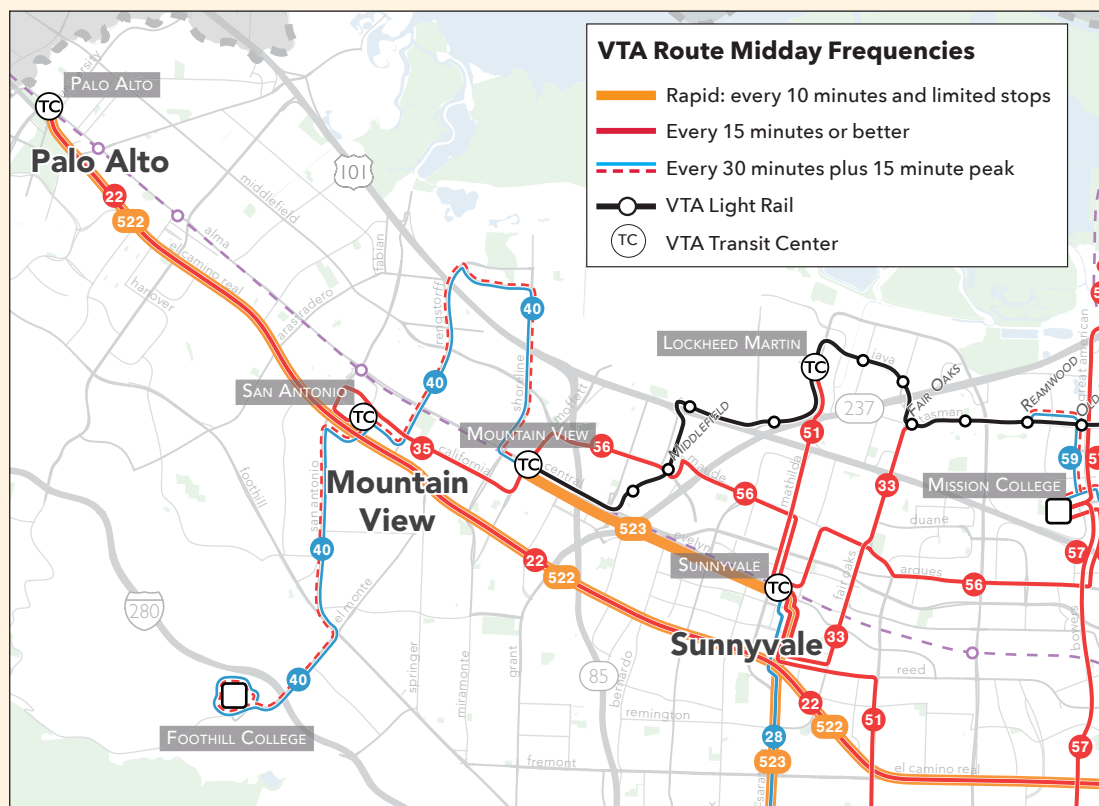


IMAGE COURTESY OF THE VALLEY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Redesigned bus routes to maximize ridership and frequency could come with some cuts to less popular routes in the North County.

VTA considering complete bus route overhaul

MV ROUTES COULD BE ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK AS VTA LOOKS TO BOOST EFFICIENCY, FREQUENCY

By Kevin Forestieri

In an effort to increase bus ridership and prepare for an onslaught of commuters from new BART stations in Milpitas and San Jose next year, VTA officials announced this week that they are considering major changes to bus routes that could cut service to large swaths of the county, including Mountain View.

Conceptual designs for a new bus network, which were presented to the VTA board of directors Thursday night, come from an extensive study of transportation demand by the firm Jarrett Walker and Associates. Assuming the VTA's bus budget remains the same, the study found that the best way to increase the number of riders overall would be to cut infrequent bus routes in many

neighborhoods in the North County in order to fund more frequent services throughout the rest of the county.

In a press conference Friday, April 8, Jarrett Walker told reporters that VTA is in a tough situation. The transit agency's budget has not increased along with rise in population in Santa Clara County, triggering a decrease in the quality of service and a plunge in the number of bus riders. In order to make the bus system a more palatable option for residents, there needs to be a renewed emphasis on frequent service to cut down on wait times.

But without expanding the

► See **VTA BUS ROUTE**, page 10

City Council hits impasse in rental resolution

VOTE SET FOR APRIL 26 ON COUNCIL-PREFERRED RENTER PROTECTIONS

By Mark Noack

The Mountain View City Council's preferred plan to ameliorate the city's rental crisis was delivered a setback after failing to secure enough votes in a second reading of a tentatively approved ordinance last month. While delayed for nearly a month, the rental ordinance is expected to pass with a majority at the end of April.

The proposed ordinance, dubbed the Rental-Housing Dispute Resolution Program, creates a mandatory mediation process, if requested, for renters and landlords for any rent increases beyond a certain threshold.

City staff's original proposal called for disputes that couldn't be settled through mediation to go into binding arbitration, which would empower independent officials to nullify rent increases deemed too high. But that proposal was rejected by the council majority, who said it would essentially be the same as rent control. The council majority had earlier indicated support for binding arbitration as a last measure.

At the council's March 15 meeting, the non-binding mediation program passed by a 4-3 vote despite losing support on both sides of the spectrum. Councilman Lenny Siegel, a rent-control

advocate, criticized the plan for being toothless and incapable of providing much relief. He was joined in voting against the plan by councilmen John Inks and Ken Rosenberg, who both oppose rent-control policies yet also disliked the details of the council's plan.

Rosenberg, who described himself as "51-49 percent" opposed, explained he lost confidence in the proposal as the council deliberated over setting a rent-increase threshold for mandatory mediation. After seven votes, the council agreed to go with Rosenberg's original threshold proposal — a 7.2 percent rent increase — but he said his mind was made up to oppose the plan.



Ken Rosenberg

"I was moaning internally, thinking this is a ridiculous process," Rosenberg told the Voice in an interview following the vote. "There was no number I could come up with that made any sort of sense and was defensible."

That opposition stayed intact at the council's March 22 meeting, when the rental ordinance was scheduled for a second reading. The item was originally on the consent agenda, but Siegel pulled it for a full discussion.

Councilman Mike Kasperzak was away on a trip to Washington, D.C., and absent for the second vote, ensuring an impasse with a 3-3 split. City staff explained that a split vote meant the ordinance would not be adopted, but it could be considered again.

The council agreed to con-

► See **RESOLUTION**, page 9

McAlister seeks another term on city council

By Mark Noack

John McAlister likes to harken back to how things were 50 years ago — a time when orchards still dotted the roadside, Highway 85 was just an engineer's pipe dream and Mountain View was very much a small town. That was when he first moved to the area, and the memory still influences his perspective.

Fast-forward to today and

little Mountain View is bursting at the seams with billion-dollar tech firms and construction cranes dominating the city's landscape. Despite how much has changed, McAlister firmly believes Mountain View at its core still remains a small



John McAlister

town. He considers it his chief mission as a member of the City Council to see that the city's growth doesn't come at a sacrifice to its character or quality-of-life.

"I still want people to have that sense that we're a small city with a big heart," he explained. "I still believe we can accomplish more housing and still have the heart and character of a small town in the community."

Coming up on the end of his first term on the council, McAlister, 63, says he is fully committed to giving it another go. Saying he hopes to highlight quality-of-life issues, he filed paperwork to run for reelection this November.

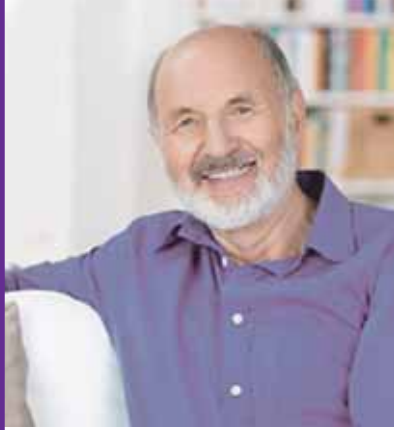
The only other incumbent eligible for reelection, Chris Clark, said he intends to run for a second term, but he was not available to be interviewed prior to the Voice's Wednesday

press deadline. Two newcomers, Thida Cornes and Lucas Ramirez, have also declared their intention to run for the City Council.

Mountain View will have seats on the council up for election in November, which are currently held by John Inks, McAlister, Clark and Mike Kasperzak. Inks and Kasperzak, who will be termed out of office and prohibited from running for another consecutive term, are running for a state

► See **MCALISTER**, page 20

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Teen psych facility could open at El Camino Hospital

LOCAL HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS PARTNERING TO PROVIDE
INPATIENT SERVICES IN MOUNTAIN VIEW

By Elena Kadvany

Palo Alto's Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, Mountain View's El Camino Hospital and Kaiser Permanente could partner to provide inpatient psychiatric services to teens within Santa Clara County's borders, something the area hasn't had for more than two decades.

The three healthcare organizations submitted a joint response to a Request for Information (RFI) Santa Clara County issued in February to solicit “suggestions, ideas, and/or potential approaches on a non-competitive and non-binding basis” for a child and adolescent inpatient hospital unit,” the RFI states.

The joint Lucile Packard-El Camino-Kaiser response proposes opening an 18-bed, “state-of-the-art” facility that would serve 12- to 17-year-olds with a range of psychiatric conditions at El Camino's Mountain View campus.

Three other Bay Area healthcare organizations also submitted responses to the county request: Fremont Hospital, which currently operates a youth inpatient facility but would open a new additional unit in Santa Clara County; EMQ Families First, a statewide nonprofit that offers mobile crisis services in Santa Clara County and also operates a small short-term crisis stabilization unit in Campbell for suicidal children and teens; and Bay Area Children's Association (BACA), a San Jose nonprofit that provides child and adolescent psychiatric services. BACA jointly responded to the RFI with PrairieCare Medical Group, a Minnesota-based psychiatric healthcare system.

Santa Clara County has not had an acute-care, inpatient psychiatric unit for youth for more than 20 years, so an average of 20 adolescents each day are receiving inpatient psychiatric care outside of the county, from San Mateo to Sacramento, according to Supervisor Joe Simitian. Simitian called the local lack of beds a “real and significant need” when he first brought the issue to the board last May.

Teens in psychiatric crisis who seek emergency care at local hospitals are sent outside of the county to be hospitalized, with the closest available beds to Palo Alto at Mills-Peninsula Health

Services in San Mateo. Teens from all over the county can be sent to farther-flung hospitals in San Francisco, Berkeley, Fremont, Vallejo, Concord and even Sacramento. Adolescent inpatient psychiatric units in the Bay Area run as large as 34 beds (Alta Bates Summit Medical Center in Berkeley) and as small as 17 at Mills-Peninsula.

Parents with such teens have spoken publicly about the toll that this takes on their children and families, and, frequently, the shock they felt when they discovered one of the largest counties in the country, home to renowned facilities like Stanford Hospital and El Camino, does not offer these services to adolescents.

“I've been at many of these meetings over the past few months with parents of commercially insured children who have serious mental-health issues and our message has been clear: ‘When our children are in crisis and most in need of medical care, we have nowhere to go,’” Sarah Gentile, a Los Altos resident whose son was hospitalized in 2014 at Mills-Peninsula, told the Board of Supervisors at a December meeting.

Mental-health professionals and hospital officials say that operating an adolescent inpatient facility is challenging and costly; demand ebbs and flows with the school year, decreasing in some cases to zero over the summer. The number of inpatient beds for teens as well as child and adolescent psychiatrists have also declined throughout the state in recent years.

After several months of conducting research and gathering community input on the issue, the county Board of Supervisors in December directed staff to issue the RFI. Staff eyed an ambitious goal of having beds available in Santa Clara County by this June.

Forming a partnership is key to providing a “world-class level of treatment” to teens in Silicon Valley, the Lucile Packard, El Camino and Kaiser response reads.

“The organizations are in the process of defining a partnership which, if successful, would provide a unified approach to an inpatient and partial hospitalization facilities to treat, at least initially, youth ages 12-17, and locate the facility on the campus of El Camino Hospital,” the

response states.

The proposed facility would serve youth diagnosed with mood disorders, thought disorders, adjustment disorders and anxiety conditions including post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and substance abuse. Youth would be served regardless of their ability to pay.

The facility would offer partial hospitalization, inpatient hospitalization and outpatient services. El Camino already offers an in-demand intensive outpatient program, After School Program Interventions and Resiliency Education (ASPIRE), that is intended to help teens who are struggling with depression and anxiety, and are showing significant behavioral and emotional symptoms.

The proposed inpatient program would include psychiatric assessments; individual, group and family therapy; expressive arts, recreational and leisure activities; educational services; full access to any needed medical services at El Camino; and strong connections to community and school providers to plan for discharge and follow-up care, among other services.

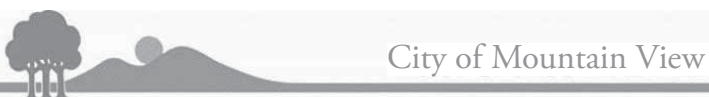
The program's design and services will “minimize stigmatization and support wellness, and include outpatient services so that youth can integrate quickly into the necessary levels of care with no risk of fragmentation,” the response states.

While the goal is to open the facility in 2020, nine beds could be placed in a “special section” of a new mental-health building set to open at El Camino in January 2018, according to the response.

Michael Fitzgerald, executive director of mental health services for El Camino, told the Palo Alto Weekly that the RFI is “early stage” and “there have been no agreements or decisions made.”

“Because a range of services across the continuum of care is needed, we believe a collaborative approach with key stakeholders would be most effective in meeting the needs of this vulnerable population,” he wrote in an email Monday. “Adolescent inpatient mental health is a complex service to provide, and would require significant investment and collaboration between major health care providers.”

► See **PSYCH FACILITY**, page 14



City of Mountain View

Council Neighborhoods Committee GRANT ROAD/SYLVAN PARK AREA Neighborhood Meeting

HUFF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
253 Martens Avenue
April 21, 2016
7:00 p.m.–9:00 p.m.

The City of Mountain View Council Neighborhoods Committee will be meeting with residents in the Grant Road/Sylvan Park area (see map below) on April 21, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. Residents are encouraged to participate in a forum to discuss the following:

- What would you like to see changed in your neighborhood?
- How can the city work with your neighborhood to make it a better place to live?

This is an opportunity to make a difference in the future of your neighborhood and express your thoughts about ways to improve city services.

For further information, please call the city's Neighborhood Preservation Division at (650) 903-6379.



Grant Road/
Sylvan Park

EIR meeting on North Bayshore metamorphosis

The long-term goal to transform the North Bayshore office hub into a dense residential neighborhood was put under the proverbial magnifying glass this week. On Monday, April 11, city officials held their first public meeting to consider the long list of impacts that would come with adding thousands of new residents to a business park already overrun with traffic and development plans.

The meeting was held to discuss an environmental-impact report for a revised precise

plan that could allow more than 10,000 new homes to be built. Principal planner Martin Alkire explained how the city would have to consider nearly two dozen types of potential impacts, including aesthetics, traffic, wildlife, water and public services. To the greatest degree possible, Mountain View staff would recycle portions of a previous environmental report used for the last precise plan, he said.

Described as a “high-level” discussion, the meeting essen-

tially set the stage for many more meetings in the coming months. Alkire said the city would be considering standards for below-market housing next month, and a team of consultants would begin conducting a technical analysis over the summer. He expected a draft report to be ready by autumn, and the final copy to be finished by early next year, he said.

While this report is being drafted, Alkire said the city would begin analyzing an initial 800-home development

being pitched by the Sobrato Organization.

“The expectation is that the Sobrato project will conform to the precise plan,” Alkire said. The two projects are on separate tracks, but will influence each other, he said.

About a dozen people showed up at the meeting, and speakers asked many questions about the city’s vision for North Bayshore that will likely be brought up again in the coming months. Among the issues raised, they asked about how the new hous-

ing would impact schools and other services. One person asked if the city would allow dormitory-style housing, with several homes sharing facilities like a kitchen or bathroom.

That was something city officials hadn’t considered, Alkire said, but they would take a look at it if a developer proposed it.

A Google representative present at the meeting said the company would be submitting comments in the coming days. For more information or to make comments, contact Martin Alkire at martin.alkire@mountainview.gov or 650-903-6306. ▀

—Mark Noack

ENROLLMENT

► Continued from page 1

in portables during construction of the new classrooms and multipurpose room next year. The expectation is that as the district takes action to reduce enrollment at the school, the portables can be removed, one by one, from the campus.

Board members at the April 7 board meeting generally agreed with the premise, but with some reservations. Board member Ellen Wheeler said she wanted some assurance that students in the Huff neighborhood would be able to attend the school regardless of any imposed enrollment requirement. It would be a surprise if Huff ever made it all the way down to 450 students, she said, but it is a good goal.

“Bubb and Huff parents who live a couple blocks from their school would be very upset if they heard that their child was not going to be able to attend their neighborhood school,” Wheeler said.

The district’s two choice programs, Stevenson and Mistral Elementary, will be getting 18 classrooms as well. Neither school is expected to fill up all the rooms with 450 students. The additional rooms could be used for academic intervention

and resource teachers, after-school programs and science labs, according to Superintendent Ayinde Rudolph.

There was little in the way of opposition to the plans to build for 450 students per school, but anxiety still remains as to how shifts in enrollment are going to pan out in the coming years. The school board agreed in November to commit to opening a new school at Slater Elementary, meaning roughly 3,600 elementary school-aged students would need to be divided among nine schools instead of eight.

The district’s Boundary Advisory Task Force concluded last year that an additional school would spread enrollment too thinly, particularly at the schools that have traditionally struggled to maintain enough students to run an effective academic program. Teachers have maintained that three classes at each grade level, which adds up to about 450 kids, is an ideal environment.

Theuerkauf would be in danger of dropping to about 330 students, according to the task force report. And because of the school’s low test scores, Theuerkauf is subject to the state’s Open Enrollment Act, which allows families to transfer their children to another district school with space available.

Board member Bill Lambert said the specter of dwindling enrollment at schools like Monta Loma caused a lot of anxiety among parents last year, and the school district has been forced to close down failing schools in the past. If the district wants to have viable neighborhood schools, Lambert said it’s going to take a strong commitment to targeting 450 for students for each school, and using new boundaries and limits on transfers to make sure families don’t flock to a handful of the most successful schools.

“When you think about enrolling your child in a kindergarten program, you want some stability,” Lambert said. “When you’re talking about 300 students (at a school), and you lose 50 students for some reason, the school really no longer becomes viable.”

Based on the last two demographic studies of the Mountain View Whisman School District, Lambert said it was clear that the student population was not going to change significantly, and certainly wasn’t going to yield enough new students to fill nine schools with 450 students. To Lambert, it didn’t seem like a good use of funds to invest in 18 classrooms at choice programs that already sap a significant number of students away from neighborhood schools.

“It would not be a wise use of funds if we are supporting neighborhood schools,” he said. “We just don’t have enough kids for nine 450-kid schools, and we don’t have the resources for it.”

Wheeler, noticing that the entire room had filled up with parents, reasserted the board’s commitment to opening Slater Elementary. What the school will look like and what enrollment it will have remains an open question, she said, but decisions will be made under the assumption that a ninth school will be built at the Slater site.

“I think some people are here because they’re worried that we’re really not going to open up a school, and I’d like to assure everybody here that everything that I’ve heard since we had that vote is we are proceeding with opening a school,” Wheeler said.

Board member Steve Nelson questioned the use of portables to house well over 450 students at Huff following construction at the school next year. He accused Rudolph of overriding the board’s interest in maintaining 450-student schools, and urged district staff to find ways to build some type of school at Slater Elementary — even if it means renting portables — within the next two years.

Nelson also grilled staff on

the assumption that choice programs ought to be built out to 18 classrooms, which he said is a separate issue from neighborhood school size and was never agreed to by the board. He said the number of students don’t add up, and requiring that all campuses fit 450 students is unnecessary.

“The numbers don’t make any sense,” Nelson told Rudolph. “You can’t even do simple multiplication and arithmetic? We’re sort of a joke if that’s the way we’re trying to do things. Please don’t make this whole process into a joke.”

The 450-student goal for each school will help the district’s Student Attendance Area Advisory Task Force figure out how to re-draw boundaries later this year, which is the key strategy for balancing enrollment. Despite the looming concerns, Lambert said he believes the district can find a way to get all the schools up to the right size.

“I realize this is a process,” he said. “As long as we have a goal of targeting 450 kids per school and a mechanism to get there, I’m happy with starting with smaller schools. But I want a path, and a fairly rapid path, to get to the right size.” ▀

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RESOLUTION

► Continued from page 5

continue the discussion to the April 26 meeting, when all seven council members are expected to be there.

In an interview, Kasperzak said he fully intends to vote for the ordinance, meaning it is likely to receive final approval.

Speaking as a member of the public, local attorney Gary Wesley warned the council that the language in the ordinance could spur evictions. Landlords could evict current residents and charge new tenants far higher rents rather than deal with mediation hearings, he said.

“The only way that a landlord would get in trouble is if he demands a higher rent and then moves to evict,” Wesley said. “Any tenant could be evicted now in anticipation of this ordinance.”

Wesley proposed tightening the ordinance’s language that would prevent landlords from evicting tenants before they have a chance to seek mediation and other rights. His proposed language would bar evictions that are motivated by retaliation against tenant’s exercising their rights or to evade the city’s mediation

rules. He has brought this suggestion repeatedly during council meetings, but city leaders have declined to consider it.

City Attorney Jannie Quinn reportedly told council members she thought the policy was broad enough to cover these types of cases. When asked about Wesley’s proposal, Quinn told the *Voice* she didn’t believe it would make any significant difference.

“(I) do not believe it is appropriate to place in the retaliation provision, nor is it practical in terms of its effect.”

Asked about the suggestions, Rosenberg said Wesley’s concerns were “precise” but it would be a difficult matter to prove when landlords were acting in a retaliatory manner.

“I don’t think he’s wrong, but I’m not convinced his language would change any future outcomes,” Rosenberg said. “Even if that language was there, you’d still have to prove it.”

Councilman John McAlister said the suggested ordinance changes could still be brought up in a future discussion, but he said he still needed to learn more. But he echoed that proving a landlord’s motive for an eviction would be difficult and that the city attorney indicated

the policy as written would provide adequate coverage.

“I understand the thought process here and what (Wesley) is trying to accomplish,” McAlister said. “I’m still looking into it to get a better understanding. I’m not done with it.”

As the council delays action on the rental crisis, more ideas for tackling the problem are emerging. Tenant advocates last week announced they are putting a ballot measure before local voters containing much of what city leaders refused to consider, including caps on rent increases and just-cause eviction protection.

Rosenberg said he intends to investigate an alternative plan to strengthen the city’s tenant relocation program. That system forces property owners looking to redevelop to pay tenants a sum to move elsewhere, and Rosenberg said it could be used to impose a fee on landlords who are essentially pricing their tenants out of the market.

“I want the landlords to say, ‘This is going to cost me to get them out,’” he said. “In this case, the tenant would have a bargaining position they didn’t have before.”

Email Mark Noack at mnoack@mv-voice.com

BOOKBUYERS

► Continued from page 1

The store also hit other setbacks. For years, BookBuyers operated a side business selling books online from a San Jose space previously used as a mattress factory. The building had a string of leaks and flooding problems last year that ruined thousands of dollars worth of books, Ajaya said. Facing a rent increase, Ajaya decided to move out of the warehouse and sell off a large inventory of books to a Reno bookseller. But the buyer never showed up to pick up the books, and Ajaya ended up having to pay \$10,000 to transport and dispose of hundreds of shelves and books.

Since closing the San Jose operation, Ajaya explained that it was extremely difficult to fold the online business into the Mountain View store. In recent months, the business began falling behind on rent, and Ajaya decided he needed to find a new location. Saying he is already working essentially as a volunteer, Ajaya says he would like to turn BookBuyers into some kind of educational nonprofit if he could find the right space for it.

“I really want a big place because I want to do so much more,” the 73-year-old said.

“If I can’t find something soon I’ll have to retire, and I’m too young to retire.”

Earlier this week, Ajaya had hoped to sign a lease for a corner location in Morgan Hill. Unfortunately, he learned on Wednesday that the landlord declined his offer. He and his staff are now mulling options

‘We cannot afford anything in Mountain View anymore.’

HOTHANATA AJAYA, BOOKBUYERS OWNER

for what to do. The lease for the bookstore’s location expires at the end of May, but Ajaya says it will likely take a full month to move out all the store’s inventory.

“They’re good books, but what am we going to do with all of them?” he said. “We’ve got plenty of stock for a new store ... but if I’m not able to find another place I’ll have to look at selling everything.”

On Sunday, BookBuyers started a GoFundMe campaign with a goal to raise \$35,000 for a potential move. As of

Wednesday, the effort had generated \$4,300 from about 70 donations. If the store cannot reopen, Ajaya promised he would give all the money raised to a charity, perhaps one associated with the local library, he said.

Despite the succession of bad news, Ajaya remains hopeful there is still some way to keep BookBuyers alive. It comes down to a matter of personal morals, he said. He can justify closing down the business only if every possible effort has been made to save it, he said. If necessary, he says he will take a part-time job in order to pay his staff for their accrued paid time off.

“If this business goes bankrupt, then I will too. I want to be able to say that I’ve done everything I can,” he said. “Until I get stopped and can’t go forward, I’m going to satisfy my moral requirement to do everything I can and not give up.”

Sunday, April 17, will be BookBuyers’ last regular day of business before closing up for the week. The store will reopen starting for a warehouse sale from 5 p.m. to 9 p.m. on Friday, April 22, and from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, April 23-24.

Email Mark Noack at mnoack@mv-voice.com

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CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW



MOUNTAIN VIEW LOS ALTOS HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND OF PROPOSAL FOR INCREASING SCHOOL FACILITIES FEES AS AUTHORIZED BY EDUCATION CODE SECTION 17620 AND GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 65995

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that immediately following a public hearing on the matter, a resolution will be considered by the Board of Trustees of the Mountain View Los Altos High School District at its regular meeting on April 18, 2016 at 7:00 p.m., which, if adopted by the Board, will increase development fees established by the District against residential construction and reconstruction to \$1.16 per square foot and against new commercial or industrial construction to \$0.19 per square foot. The proposed fees are authorized by Education Code Section 17620 and Government Code Section 65995. Data pertaining to the cost of school facilities is available for inspection during regular business hours at the District’s administrative offices at 1299 Bryant Avenue in Mountain View. The increased fees, if approved by the Board of Trustees, will become effective on June 17, 2016 which is 60 days after the proposed adoption by the Board of the resolution levying such fee.

VTA BUS ROUTE

► Continued from page 5

budget, Walker says there needs to be a trade-off. If VTA officials want to increase ridership, it would require re-drawing bus routes in favor of densely populated areas in the county at the cost of losing less-traveled, infrequent routes to far-flung communities.

“All of the things being equal, if you have twice the density, you have twice the ridership potential. There’s no way of getting around that fact,” Walker said.

Shifting resources in favor of more popular bus routes isn’t the only way to increase ridership, but it’s certainly the primary option. VTA’s buses already operate efficiently at a cost of about \$185 an hour, which is on par with Samtrans and other Bay Area bus systems, Walker said. And because ridership tends to remain high throughout the day, he said, it wouldn’t be cost-efficient to beef up service during peak commute hours.

Walker’s firm put together three maps illustrating what a VTA bus network might look like in order to maximize ridership, which include frequent, 15-minute bus service along most major thoroughfares in the county and far fewer routes to outlying neighborhoods.

VTA could move forward with what Walker called the “90 percent” concept — where 90 percent of the service is maximized for ridership, and 10 percent is focused on connecting less-dense communities. While it could increase ridership by about 10 percent over the coming years, about 15 percent of the county’s population would no longer be within half a mile of a bus station.

Some routes would be maintained in the North County. A network focused on ridership would preserve bus service along El Camino Real through Mountain View and Palo Alto, as well as a bus route that travels from Foothill College, past the San Antonio shopping center through Highway 101 along Rengstorff Avenue. Also included would be more frequent bus service between the Mountain View and Sunnyvale Caltrain stations, since train service between those two adjacent stations is not very frequent.

“It is actually just about impossible to get between downtown Sunnyvale and downtown Mountain View, which is more and more of a problem as you build up both of those downtowns,” Walker told the VTA board.

Board members generally agreed with the results of the study and the premise that there

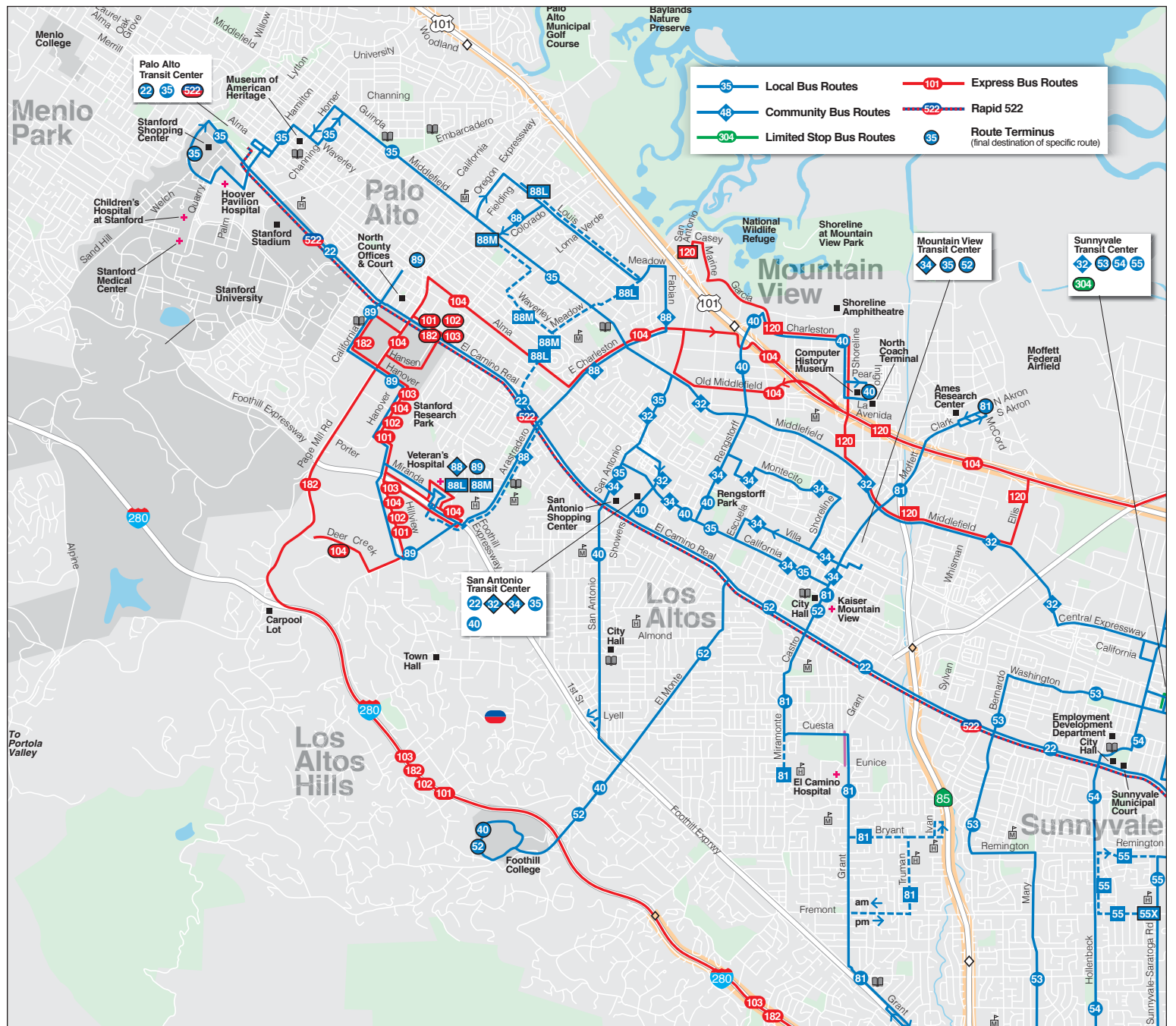


IMAGE COURTESY OF THE VALLEY TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

Several bus routes currently running in Mountain View and Palo Alto may be lost if VTA opts to provide more frequent service on major thoroughfares.

has to be a balance between bus frequency and its accessibility to residents throughout the county. But some members said it’s going to be hard selling their respective communities on a new plan that would slash bus routes.

“You can imagine us going back to our community delivering that rosy message,” said Santa Clara County Supervisor Ken Yeager. “I think all of us totally agree with the (analysis) — it’s hard not to agree with — but implementing it is going to be very hard. It’s going to affect lots of people.”

In order to support such a plan, Yeager said he would need some assurance from the rest of the board and VTA staff that they would stick with it and see it through to implementation. He cited the Bus Rapid Transit project along El Camino Real as a prime example of what can go wrong, and how VTA has spent millions of dollars on a project that’s gone nowhere because of a lack of political will.

“If we are going to spend two years on this and untold staff hours, community meetings and heartaches trying to explain to our community what is best ... you really need to have the confidence of the board that we are going to proceed with this, and take the political hit that is going to be involved,” Yeager said.

Walker stressed that the route maps drawn up by his firm should be seen as a starting point, and a catalyst for residents and city leaders to talk about what changes would be best for the bus network in Santa Clara County. He told the *Voice* it would be false to say that VTA’s resources would be shifted away from some communities if the board adopts the ridership-centric maps.

Los Altos Mayor Jeannie Bruins said she wants feedback from individual cities to play a big role in the bus route overhaul, and said the decision shouldn’t be made at the VTA board level, isolated from public feedback.

“We shouldn’t underestimate

the effort we need to put into bringing councils along with us,” Bruins said. “We need our colleagues back at home in all the cities that we represent to have that same political will.”

Going forward, Bruins said the biggest challenge will be providing some level of transit connectivity back to areas left out of a leaner bus network. The solution could come from individual cities, Walker said, which can play a huge role in meeting the demand for public transportation on a smaller scale. He pointed to Mountain View’s community shuttle service, which makes stops at several busy locations as an example of one solution to the connectivity problem.

By the same token, Walker said cities shoulder a great deal of responsibility for creating the current traffic conditions, and ought to be mindful of new developments relative to transit routes. He said it’s typical for the regional transportation agency — in this case VTA — to take all

the flak for poor service, when city planning could be focused more on high density developers along popular corridors.

“(VTA) controls the service, but equally important, if not more so, is the land-use pattern which determines whether anyone is near the service,” Walker said.

So far, eight public meetings have been scheduled throughout the county to discuss the potential changes to VTA’s bus network, including one in Mountain View on May 17 and in Palo Alto on June 16.

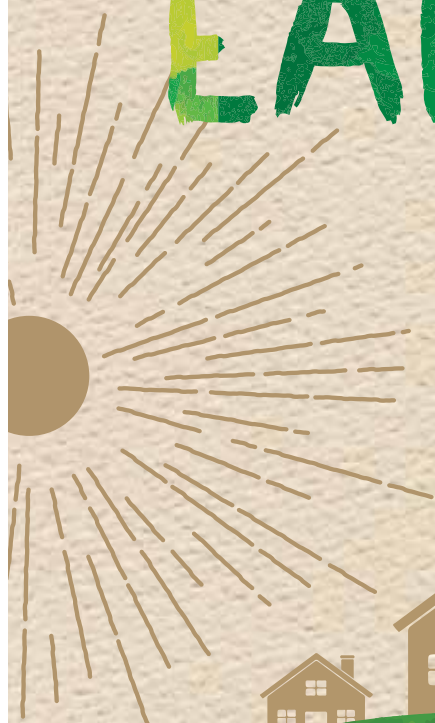
VTA staff will also be hosting a round of upcoming workshops where city council members throughout the county will be asked to participate and give input on Walker’s presentation and options for bus route changes. The tentative timeline is for the VTA board to make a final decision by next April, prior to BART service opening in fall of 2017. ■

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City of Mountain View

The Mountain View City Council has scheduled a **Budget Study Session for Tuesday, April 26, 2016** to consider the Fiscal Year 2016-17 recommended budgets for the General Operating Fund, Development Services, Shoreline Golf Links, Shoreline Regional Park Community, Water, Wastewater and Solid Waste Management Funds, including recommended utility rate adjustments, City Reserves and related fee recommendations. The study session is scheduled to begin at 6:30 p.m. or as soon thereafter as the matter can be heard, in the Council Chambers of City Hall, 500 Castro Street, Mountain View.

If you are unable to attend the meeting but would like the City Council and staff to know your views, please send a letter to the City Council at P.O. Box 7540, Mountain View, CA 94039 or an e-mail to city.clerk@mountainview.gov by 4:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 26, 2016.

The report will be available on Monday, April 18, 2016 on the City's website at <http://www.mountainview.gov/depts/fasd/budget/current.asp>. Copies of the report will be available for review by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, April 18, 2016 at City Hall in the City Clerk's Office, 500 Castro Street, 3rd floor, Mountain View during normal business hours, and during public hours at the Mountain View Public Library, 585 Franklin Street, Mountain View.

City of Mountain View Fiscal Year 2016-17 Budget Schedule remaining (tentative):

- April 26 Study Session: Fiscal Year 2016-17 Narrative Budget Report – General Operating Fund, Other General, Special and Utility Enterprise Funds, Reserves, and General Operating Fund Forecast
- June 14 Public Hearing: Proposed Budget
- June 21 Public Hearings: Proposition 218 rate hearing, CIP Adoption and Budget Adoption

LAHS wrestling coach dies at age 43

Mountain View Voice Staff

Long-time Mountain View resident and youth coach Randolph George-Angel Jimenez died unexpectedly on April 5 at age 43, prompting an outpouring of support from local community members to help his family pay for the funeral service.

Jimenez spent the last 11 years as head of the wrestling team at Los Altos High School, and had a brief stint as assistant coach for the school's football team. He also spent decades working with local youth football and softball leagues including the Mountain View Marauders.

Sports, and particularly wrestling, played a big role in Jimenez's life, according to his son, Randy. Jimenez played semi-professionally for a football team in San Jose, and took his wrestling skills to the test by



Randolph Jimenez

competing in a national professional sumo wrestling competition in Las Vegas, Randy said. Jimenez won third place.

As the wrestling coach, Randy said his father brought an attitude of tough love, but always maintained some light-hearted levity and always tried to bring the team together.

"Always behind the scenes, in the locker room, he was always joking around and bringing people together as a family," Randy said.

Jimenez's family has put together a GoFundMe fundraising page dedicated to paying for the funeral expenses, and as of Wednesday, had raised nearly \$13,000 of the \$20,000 goal. Many of the donations include comments on his coaching role in the community. Randy said it's been a pleasant surprise seeing the outpouring of support since the fundraiser began on April 7.

"I didn't expect that kind of support," he said. "I was just overwhelmed and speechless from all the support we've received."

Born on March 29, 1973,

in Mountain View to Ruth Corrales and Miguel Jimenez, Jimenez graduated from Los Altos High School in June of 1992. He joined the U.S. Army in August of 1992 and served for eight years, assisting in the Persian Gulf war and Operation Uphold Democracy in Haiti.

He is survived by his high school sweetheart and wife of 23 years, Marylou Jimenez; children Randy Donovan, Christopher Ryan, Kaiana Ariel, and Kieli Rae; and his siblings Miguel Jimenez, Connie Silva, Melina Corrales, Michael Corrales and Ashley Rapanut.

A funeral Mass is set for 10:30 a.m. on Friday, April 15, at St. Anthenasius Church, 160 N. Rengstorff Ave. in Mountain View, with burial to follow at Alta Mesa Cemetery at noon. Viewings and a Rosary service were set for Wednesday evening and Thursday afternoon at Cusimano Family Colonial Mortuary, 96 W. El Camino Real, Mountain View.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial donations be made to gofundme.com/CoachJimenez. ❖

PSYCH FACILITY

► Continued from page 6

Fremont Hospital, for its part, is proposing to open a "hospital within a hospital" inpatient facility for children and adolescents at Santa Clara Valley Medical Center in San Jose.

At Fremont's existing inpatient acute psychiatric hospital, there are 40 beds available for children and adolescents. Youth patients there present a range of conditions, from schizophrenia and PTSD to major depressive disorders, according to the hospital's RFI response.

In exchange for a long-term lease at Santa Clara Valley Medical, Fremont would provide the funds necessary to build out the space for a treatment unit. Fremont would contract with Santa Clara Valley Medical Center to provide day-to-day staff and support services at the inpatient unit.

Fremont Hospital has both the experience and infrastructure in place to "achieve economies of scale" to run a unit throughout the year as demand increases and decreases," the response states.

Fremont Hospital would also find space near the proposed unit to operate a partial hospitalization program and intensive outpatient program, according to the response.

EMQ Families First, in partnership with Telecare Corporation, an Alameda-based mental-health organization, is proposing opening an inpatient as well as partial hospitalization program for children and teens at its Campbell campus.

The campus houses EMQ's short-term crisis stabilization unit, which was opened in September 2014 with the goal of preventing unnecessary hospitalizations. After a patient arrives at the seven-bed unit, a team of nurses, psychiatrists and family specialists work with a timeline of 23 hours and 59 minutes to evaluate and release the patient with a plan for further care.

EMQ also operates a 24-7 mobile crisis unit in Santa Clara County for children and adolescents experiencing an acute psychological crisis. The unit's staff perform "5150" hold assessments (a 72-hour involuntary psychiatric hold for individuals believed to be a danger either to themselves or to others), often at the request of school staff or families; take patients to emergency rooms and link families to agencies that offer longer-term mental-health services in the community.

The new, proposed facility would serve youth 4 to 17 years old. The partial hospitalization program would provide intensive day treatment services

and supervision from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, and family therapy during evening and weekend hours, according to EMQ's response.

Services would include individual, group, and family therapy; medication evaluation and management; psycho-educational groups; wellness and recreation groups and educational support. "Careful attention" will be paid to cultural and language needs as well as the needs of particular populations in Santa Clara County, including LGBTQ youth; Latino, African-American and Asian youth; and children on the autism spectrum, the response states.

Bay Area Children's Association and PrairieCare's preliminary proposal, BACA Executive Director Tom Tershis wrote in an email to the Weekly, is to open an inpatient facility "somewhere between San Jose and Palo Alto."

"For over twenty years, Santa Clara County has done without a children's psychiatric hospital," the BACA-PrairieCare RFI response states. "This has posed serious problems for families but has also presented opportunities for innovation."

The next step in the process will be for the county to issue a Request for Proposal; staff said it will be released this month. ❖

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Driver arrested in fatal El Monte crash

FIRE

► Continued from page 1

ATTORNEY SAYS SUSPECT WAS DRIVING SAFELY BEFORE CRASH

By Mark Noack

The driver involved in a Mountain View crash that killed a pedestrian will be facing criminal charges, according to the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office. The driver, identified as Los Altos resident Glenn Tad Kawaguchi, 61, was arrested April 6, on one count of misdemeanor vehicular manslaughter.

Kawaguchi was released the same night after posting \$25,000 bail, and his attorney says he intends to plead not guilty.

The accident occurred on the morning of Oct. 22 at El Monte Road near the intersection of Marich Way. The victim, 54-year-old Michelle Montalvo of Los Altos, was hit by Kawaguchi's SUV while crossing the street in a marked crosswalk. At the time, Montalvo was just a few steps behind her sister.

In his testimony at the scene, Kawaguchi said he couldn't see Montalvo until it was too late. The accident occurred before the sun had risen and Montalvo was wearing dark clothing, said

Steven Nakano, an attorney representing Kawaguchi. While drivers must yield to people crossing the street, pedestrians are still legally responsible for exercising caution when using a crosswalk, he said.

"The real question here is whether my client could have seen them in order to give them the right of way," Nakano said. "This was before sunrise, the driver was going the speed limit, and his lights were on. The pedestrians could see the cars long before (the drivers) could see them."

In fact, a Toyota Prius driver who was traveling in front of Kawaguchi's SUV told police officers that she didn't notice Montalvo or her sister until her car had entered the crosswalk.

Kawaguchi consented to a blood test, and police officials took a sample about 90 minutes after the accident, which showed no traces of drugs or alcohol. Kawaguchi assured officers he wasn't distracted at the time, and he handed over his iPhone to show that he wasn't texting or chatting while driving.

Officers tracked down a video

of the crash taken from the camera of a nearby gas station, and they reported that Kawaguchi did not seem to be driving at an unreasonable speed at the time.

Nevertheless, officers concluded that Kawaguchi could bear responsibility for the crash, and they recommended he be charged with failing to yield to a pedestrian. Their reports were forwarded to the district attorney's office for review. After reviewing the case for months, prosecutors announced last month they would pursue one charge of vehicular manslaughter.

If found at fault for the Montalvo's death, Kawaguchi could face up to a year in jail as well as fines. Any potential sentencing would depend on a variety of factors, said Clarissa Hamilton, supervising deputy district attorney.

"It's really too early to speculate on what he would get," she said. "It would depend on the person's circumstances, any criminal record and how (his) driving records is."

Kawaguchi is scheduled to appear in court on May 11, Hamilton said.

Following the crash, city offi-

cialists singled out El Monte Road as a location in need of safety improvements, saying that it presented a dangerous combination of poor visibility and a tendency for drivers to speed over the 35 mph limit.

In a review of capital improvement projects last month, Mountain View officials singled out the El Monte/Marich intersection for safety upgrades. Workers in recent weeks repainted nearby crosswalks and improved streetlights along the stretch to improve visibility.

Despite calls from the public for a traffic signal, Public Works Director Mike Fuller said a road analysis indicated that wouldn't work well at that location. Other infrastructure to create a safe intersection would be more appropriate, he said, such as lighted crosswalks, median "refuge" islands, and curb bulb-outs.

The city budgeted \$250,000 for improvements to El Monte Road. The capital improvement budget will be reviewed again by city officials in the coming weeks. ▽

Email Mark Noack at mnoack@mv-voice.com

to be of tilt-up concrete construction, contains several businesses, including SmugMug and research and development firms, made it difficult to put out all the fires that had ignited in several different offices.

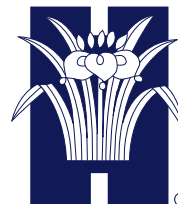
No injuries were reported, and nobody appears to have been evacuated, Brown said.

Much of the interior of the building, as well as the computers and electronics inside, were charred during the blaze, and the building has been deemed totally uninhabitable, Brown said Tuesday. There was no power to the building, and oxygen levels inside were insufficient, he said.

Fire investigators began investigating the building Wednesday morning to determine the cause of the fire, which appeared to be accidental, Brown said. The building took a significant amount of time to ventilate, and a significant number of electronics and other materials continued to off-gas after the fire had been put out.

Multiple fire vehicles and crews from the Palo Alto Fire Department assisted in the effort to put out the fire, Brown said. ▽

Bay City News contributed to this report.



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MVPD launches cybercrime unit

IN-HOUSE TEAM WILL BE ABLE TO EXPEDITE SEARCH WARRANTS ON PHONES AND COMPUTERS

By Kevin Forestieri

Cybercrime has become an increasing problem in Mountain View. More and more, criminals are turning to digital devices and the Internet to conduct illicit activities, and police evidence is starting to look less like dusted fingerprints and more like a hard drive or a smartphone.

In an effort to better handle reports of online fraud and tackle a growing backlog of digital evidence in criminal cases, the Mountain View Police Department announced the launch of a new cybercrime unit last month.

It was really born out of necessity, according to Sgt. Tim Dahl, a member of the unit. He said the police department has been handling increasing numbers of high-tech evidence suspected of containing important information, whether it be GPS locations, text messages or contact information. But processing that kind of information along the intricate requirements of a digital search warrant can be tricky and time consuming, and

up until now the department has been outsourcing the work to regional agencies.

But in the last 10 or so years, the prevalence of smart phones and other digital devices have turned technology into an integral part of most Mountain View crimes. Typical street crimes like drug deals and prostitution used to be an offline illicit activity, Dahl said, but now these crimes almost assuredly leave some kind of digital trace.

"Back then you wouldn't see technology touching those kinds of crimes," he said.

On top of that, Dahl said the department has seen plenty of cases related to network intrusion, where a person gains unauthorized access to a server, email spoofing and fraud. Often, scammers will attempt to deceive unsuspecting victims by pretending to represent federal agencies in an attempt to get money. All of these cases couldn't be handled in-house at the Mountain View Police Department until now.

The practice had been to send

digital evidence to an outside forensic examiner, according to Det. Britton Moore, a cybercrime unit member and a computer forensic examiner himself. Sending off evidence to the Silicon Valley Regional Computer Forensics Laboratory (RCFL) or to a crime lab are perfectly viable options, Moore said, but getting anything back can take upwards of a year.

The way these regional forensic analysts prioritize cases is totally out of the control of the police department, Moore said, meaning a significant case in Mountain View may not get seen for a very long time. Anything short of a homicide investigation will likely get bumped to the end of the queue.

"It's much more efficient to do it in-house," Moore said.

The impetus for the new unit comes from the top. Police Chief Max Bosel put a higher priority on addressing cybercrime as tech devices continue to be more frequently used to assist in committing theft, intimidating people or even facilitating violent crime.

"Having dedicated capacity and resources to lead the effort in tackling cybercrime allows us to stay at the forefront of emerging trends, speeds our ability to obtain evidence, and ultimately makes the community a safer place to enjoy a quality life," Bosel said in an email to the *Voice*.

Members of the cybercrime unit play an active role at the Mountain View Police Department, getting involved early on in cases where digital devices may need to be searched for evidence. Rather than off-load a hard drive or cellphone to the unit, Dahl said an officer might come to them after an arrest the night before, and mention that there may be evidence on the suspect's cellphone. The unit can help to execute an appropriate search warrant and get started on mounting a case for the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office.

The forensic work itself is also pretty nuanced, warranting a unit that can work full-time on identifying evidence on a computer. There's a particular set standards and procedures for how to extract the appropriate data outlined in the search warrant, Dahl said, and state laws are constantly changing how police are supposed to search digital devices. Botching the search means the evidence may be thrown out by a court.

"You need to know how to extract that digital evidence that's relevant to the case," Dahl said. "The evidence has to be handled both efficiently and effectively."

Beyond handling evidence, the unit is the first stop for Mountain View residents who receive fraudulent, deceptive emails designed to scam people. Without the unit, it was standard procedure for the depart-

ment to file these kinds of scam emails to a federal agency, Dahl said, and it was unlikely to yield any kind of follow-up. Even less likely, he said, was any chance of a prosecution.

With a local, in-house group of police staff now handling these cases, he said, there's going to be a whole lot more outreach to victims, and a greater effort to follow up with residents on cybercrime cases.

Moore said a big component of the new unit comes down to outreach as well, teaching the public about best practices when using social media and online resources. Using passwords that can't be cracked with brute force, and being mindful of what personal information is posted on social media, are just some of the strategies the cybercrime unit is advising residents to use to avoid becoming a victim of online criminal activity.

But good communication with the public needs to go both ways. The new unit can provide support and education to residents who fall victim to things like network intrusion or cyberbullying, Dahl said, but only if the victims come forward. They can't provide services for cases they don't know about, he said, and the unit is encouraging anyone who feels they may have been victim to some kind of cybercrime to contact the police department.

"No crime is too small," Dahl said. "If someone feels victimized, they should bring it to us."

Moore agreed, and said anyone in the community who had a case they thought wasn't worth reporting really ought to reconsider, because it helps give the Mountain View Police Department a better idea of how prevalent these cybercrimes really are.

"It really helps for us to know," Moore said. "We're not going to know what's happening in the community unless it's reported." ■

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NASA Ames news

Space station's strange delivery

Cracking open a delivery of resupply cargo on Sunday, the astronauts orbiting Earth at the International Space Station discovered a new batch of oddities from the NASA Ames Research Center — live mice, fungus spores and a pile of yeast.

Those items weren't some prank — in fact, they are part of a fresh round of life-science experiments being spearheaded out of Mountain View to further explore the effects of low-gravity on organisms.

Among the projects, researchers are conducting a third round of testing on live mice in outer space to better determine how to prevent muscle atrophy in astronauts. The strain of fungi sent to space — *Aspergillus nidulans* — is particularly good at creating complex bioactive molecules when exposed to stress, and scientists want to see if a micro-gravity environment will open up a new range of biochemical processes, perhaps with pharmaceutical potential. Meanwhile, researchers say the yeast samples could demonstrate how cell-to-cell communication is impacted by low gravity.

The samples were among more than 7,000 pounds of food, hardware and scientific gear delivered in the eighth SpaceX resupply mission. The shuttle arrived at the International Space Station on April 10.

Kepler gives a scare

The Kepler spacecraft, NASA Ames' hugely successful planet-finder, experienced a minor catastrophe last week when engineers learned that the probe, located 75 million miles away from Earth, had switched to emergency mode. In that status, the spacecraft was running inefficiently, draining its battery while performing the least number of operations.

By Monday, NASA engineers announced they had solved the main problem and transferred Kepler back to a low-fuel state, but plenty of questions remain unanswered. Officials are still trying to figure out exactly how the emergency started, and they announced that engineers will be assessing all of Kepler's systems before it resumes any scientific work.

Kepler's role in recent astronomy developments is monumental. Originally launched in 2009, the low-cost spacecraft

designed by NASA Ames' scientists has detected more than 5,000 potential planets outside of Earth's solar system, about 1,000 of which have been confirmed. The discoveries kindled a surge of new interest in finding habitable distant planets as well as the search for signs of extraterrestrial life.

Initially, Kepler's mission was expected to last three and a half years, but NASA engineers continued to extend its operations based on the huge amount of data it was producing. But in recent years, the spacecraft's equipment began showing its age. By 2013, two of the four reaction wheels used to position the spacecraft failed, forcing NASA to modify its mission goals.

The recent emergency-mode incident came just hours before NASA researchers were preparing to orient Kepler toward the center of the Milky Way. Officials say they are investigating what caused the event with the goal to return the spacecraft to scientific operations.

"Everyone was working over the weekend on this," explained NASA Ames spokeswoman Michele Johnson. "Everyone was focused on finding a solution and generally optimistic — but it wasn't without solid foundation of stress." ▣

—Mark Noack

MCALISTER

► Continued from page 5

Assembly seat representing District 24.

McAlister said he wants smart growth throughout the city. Saying he wants to take a "holistic" approach, he favors the city's recent efforts to boost housing, especially subsidized homes for those struggling to remain in Mountain View. As the owner of a Baskin-Robbins branch, McAlister says he knows some of his own employees are struggling to find adequate housing in the area. Any proposal for new housing, he said, must also take into account its impacts on local streets, schools, recreation and other public services.

Yet McAlister says he is also cautious about going too far. He worries that a fervent push for new housing could create new troubles. He points to proposals he opposed that would have built residences on property zoned for light-industrial uses along Middlefield and Evelyn roads. Converting that space would have meant Mountain View would lose a strip of small businesses, he said.

"We're slowly pricing out the small businesses and the services that people need to make a balanced community," he said. "Small businesses are important to the community. That's why we need to make sure we're balanced in how we do this."

'We're slowly pricing out the small businesses and the services that people need to make a balanced community.'

JOHN MCALISTER

His top accomplishments while on the council, McAlister said, include his efforts last year as mayor to coordinate with other cities to press the Valley Transportation Authority to prioritize the north county's traffic problems. He also touts his work getting the VTA and

Google to discuss a possible light-rail extension into the Moffett Federal Airfield area.

Prior to entering city politics, McAlister said he was just another dad taking an active interest in his children's schools. One thing led to another — he volunteered as treasurer for the Huff Elementary PTA, later joined the school's site council and start hosting regular fundraisers at his ice-cream shop. From there, he said he began to take an interest in local government.

"I'd always have the chance to bend the ear of an elected official, and sooner or later they'd say, 'John, shut up or do something about it!'" he said. "I've always believed in being part of the solution, not part of the problem. And if you're going to be part of the solution, then go straight to the top."

His first run for City Council was in 2008, but he was barely edged out in the final tally. He then spent several years serving on the city's Environmental Planning Commission. In 2012, his second run for a council seat was successful. ▣

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www.Stanfordbaseballcamp.com **650.723.4528**

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Ages 7 and up. New to sport or have experience, we have a camp for you. Half day or fully day option for boys and girls. All the camps offer fundamental skill work, scrimmages and games.
www.stanfordwaterpolocamps.com **650.725.9016**

University Club of Palo Alto Tennis Program
We offer a comprehensive year round junior tennis program for all levels from novice to ranked players. This includes summer camps and clinics for ages 5 and up. After care options are also available from 8am to 5pm in the summer. First trial clinic is free until May 31st, 2016.
mbentley@ucpaloalto.com **650.494.8279**
ucpaloalto.com

Academics

Alexa Café **Palo Alto High School**
Girls ages 10-15 discover technology in a unique environment that celebrates creativity, philanthropy, and entrepreneurship. Girls learn engineering principles, code games, design websites, model and print 3D objects, and much more.
www.iDTech.com **1.844.788.1858**

Bay Area Pathways Academy (BAPA) **College of San Mateo**
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www.BayAreaPathwaysAcademy.org **650.574.6149**

Castilleja Summer Camp for Girls **Palo Alto**
Casti Camp offers girls a range of age-appropriate activities including athletics, art, science, computers, writing, crafts, cooking, drama and music classes each day along with weekly field trips.
www.castilleja.org/summercamp **650.328.3160**

Academics

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www.galileo-camps.com **1.800.854.3684**

Harker Summer Programs **San Jose**
Harker summer programs for preschool–grade 12 children include opportunities for academics, arts, athletics and activities. Taught by exceptional, experienced faculty and staff, our programs offer something for everyone in a safe and supportive environment.
www.summer.harker.org **408.553.5737**

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Students ages 7–17 can learn to code, design video games, mod Minecraft, engineer robots, model 3D characters, build websites, print 3D models, and more. Campers meet new friends, learn awesome STEM skills, and gain self-confidence.
www.iDTech.com **1.844.788.1858**

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Mid-Pen's Summer Session provides innovative, one-week courses that go beyond traditional high school curriculum. Our program offers students courses for summer enrichment and make up high school credits. We have designed creative courses in math, science, English, and Spanish, with options including Physics of Flight and Rocketry, History of the Reagan Years, College Essay Workshop, Creative Writing, Introduction to the Digital Arts, and Drama. Basketball and volleyball clinics suitable for beginning to advanced players. All high school students are welcome to attend. Dates are June 20th to July 21st. Classes are held from 9:30am–2:30pm. Visit our website for full class listings.
www.mid-pen.org **650.321.1991**

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Improve your student's writing skills this summer at Emerson School of Palo Alto and Hacienda School of Pleasanton. Courses this year are Expository Writing, Creative Writing, and Presentation Techniques. Visit our website for more information.
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■ EDITORIAL THE OPINION OF THE VOICE

Council's failure in leadership results in voter initiative

In an editorial written late last month, the Voice asked what it would take for City Council members to acknowledge the severity of the city's rental housing crisis that's driving so many of our neighbors out of their homes and the community. The question was raised after the council jettisoned binding arbitration from a proposed new ordinance, with some members declaring they had a fundamental disagreement with anything resembling rent control.

Perhaps the latest development on the renter-crisis front might rope some council members back into the reality corral. Reality, as in: Far too many residents in our community are losing the roofs over their heads because of astronomical rent increases, and many more live in fear of another double-digit rent hike, or being served with an eviction notice.

After the council, under intense pressure by landlord and real estate interests, on March 15 dropped the ball by dropping the binding arbitration provision in an already-timid proposed ordinance, what many more reality-based observers predicted would happen happened: The Mountain View Tenants' Coalition on April 1 filed papers for a rent-stabilization and just-cause eviction voter initiative that is likely to end up on the November ballot.

In a strange statement that revealed the extent of council members' remove from the reality of renters' distress, Councilman Chris Clark said at that March meeting: "The art of policy-making is disappointing everyone in the room at a rate they can accept." The failure of the majority of council members (only Councilman Lenny Siegel outright opposed an ordinance without binding arbitration) in aiming for artful renter-protection policy is that, for some baffling reason, they couldn't grasp that the ordinance they were prepared to finalize late last month was one that tenants could not accept. The ordinance the council majority supports in reality has the strong potential

to leave renters even more vulnerable to eviction at the hands of landlords who don't want to be caught up in the mandatory-upon-request mediation process included in its provisions.

The council's squandered opportunity to enact an ordinance that really might have left all parties disappointed to a degree they could accept has resulted in a tenant-driven voter initiative drive that has a high probability of passing in a city where about 60 percent of residents are renters and average rents between 2011 and 2015 have soared 52.7 percent.

And what would that mean? It would mean rent stabilization, which the council majority insists is the wrong path, will be the rule of law in Mountain View. It would mean that rent increases would be limited to 2 to 5 percent annually, as opposed to what some council members seem to think is more reasonable: 7.2 percent. It would mean that the leadership and vision required to protect a significant number of the city's vulnerable residents — tenants in a city of skyrocketing rental costs — was lacking in our elected leaders, and taken up by those determined to put the brakes on a destructive force in the community.

The council can still act if it wants to try to prevent measures most members insist are too extreme. First, the council should pass an urgency ordinance as soon as possible putting in place a moratorium of 60 days or more on rent increases higher than the CPI rate, and on evictions without cause. Other cities are passing such moratoriums, giving city officials time to craft an ordinance that would balance legitimate landlord concerns with needed tenant protections. Those protections in Mountain View should include a cap on annual rent increases, and a ban on evictions without just cause.

If the council doesn't act, voters who want to see reasonable and effective measures in place to protect renters will have only one choice at the ballot box in November. ■

■ LETTERS VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

PROTECT TENANTS FROM PRE-EMPTIVE EVICTIONS

The Voice reported on April 8 that the City Council on March 22 had delayed adoption of a landlord-tenant mediation ordinance (approved 4-3 on "first reading" March 15) because one of the four, Councilman Michael Kasperzak, was in Washington, D.C., on a city junket. Potential adoption is now set for April 26.

As the Voice expressed in an editorial, the ordinance should be amended to assuredly protect tenants from pre-emptive eviction. As currently written, the ordinance would permit

and thereby encourage apartment landlords who wish to raise a tenant's rent more than the 7.2 percent per year and not be subject to the tenant's demand for mediation to simply serve eviction notices on existing tenants and get new ones (at sky-high market rates).

I have repeatedly proposed changes to the portion of the ordinance (Section 43.30) which, as written, would only prohibit adverse action by a landlord "because of the Tenant's exercise of the Tenant's rights under" the ordinance. I proposed, for example, that landlords be barred from evicting tenants to forestall the exer-

cise of any of the Tenant's rights under the ordinance. In speaking with me, the city attorney (Jannie Quinn) did not deny that her ordinance language did not fully protect tenants.

Unfortunately, the four council members pushing the ordinance (Kasperzak, Chris Clark, John McAlister and Pat Showalter) were all endorsed as candidates by fictitiously named landlord groups (i.e., Mountain View Housing Council or Tri-County Apartment Association) and appear to have no real interest in protecting tenants from rent gouging or mass eviction.

Last week, after a rent control and just-cause eviction initiative had been presented to the city, I suggested before and at the April 5 council meeting

that Section 43.30 might even be amended to forbid eviction if motivated by the desire to oust existing tenants in light of the pending initiative. At the meeting, I asked that the council at least place on a future agenda (not later than April 26) the mere consideration of amendments. No council member said a word.

Two of the four landlord-advocates behind the mediation ordinance, Clark and McAlister, have announced they intend to run for re-election. While one can debate whether any new restrictions on rent or evictions are justified or wise, we need to elect council members who are at least honest about what is being proposed for adoption.

Gary Wesley
Continental Circle

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