

# Mountain View VOICE

MAY 6, 2016 VOLUME 24, NO. 15

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at Thyme**  
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NATALIA NAZAROVA

**Kevin Kreitman**, a Bernie Sanders supporter, volunteers at the California Democratic Party's caucus held in Mountain View on May 1.

## Presidential contest comes to Mountain View

DEMOCRATIC DELEGATE BATTLE A PRELUDE TO CALIFORNIA'S JUNE PRIMARY

By Mark Noack

In a prelude to the upcoming California primary, the state Democratic Party held its own mini-elections in Mountain View and Los Altos on Sunday to pick delegates to

go the party's national convention in Philadelphia.

The opportunity drew dozens of candidates from across the South Bay, who each made a case for representing the party. But for many, the choice came down to one big ques-

tion: Would they support Hillary Clinton or Bernie Sanders for president?

Such events were held May 1 at all of California's congressional districts. The Mountain View

► See **DELEGATES**, page 16

## Voice wins 'General Excellence' at statewide journalism competition

The *Mountain View Voice* won the top award for print journalism at the California Newspaper Publishers Association Better Newspapers Contest on Saturday, April 30, in San Francisco.

Along with receiving the General Excellence award for newspapers in its circulation category, the *Voice* took home a dozen first- and second-place awards for journalism at the event, including second place for Online General Excellence for its website, mv-voice.com.

Journalists from outside of California selected the winners of the annual competition from among daily, weekly and school newspapers out of thousands of entries. The *Voice* competed against other weekly newspapers with circulations between 11,001 and 25,000 for its work during a 13-month period beginning December 1, 2014.

The community media outlet and its news staff, led by Editor Andrea Gemmet, won first place for the following:

■ Coverage of local government for a series of stories on the housing crisis by staff writer Mark Noack and photographer Michelle Le

■ Best enterprise news and best online photo essay for the "Homeless in Mountain View" series by Le and staff writer Kevin Forestieri

■ Best feature photo Le's "An uncertain road ahead" of a Guatemalan family seeking to relocate to Mountain View.

► See **AWARDS**, page 20

## Google Fiber gets a green light

UPSTART INTERNET SERVICE TO SHAKE UP LOCAL MARKET

By Mark Noack

Over the next three years, Google will gradually bring online its ultra-high speed internet service throughout its hometown, part of an unanimously approved deal signed by the City Council on Tuesday.

Hotly anticipated for years, the company's Google Fiber service promises to bring bandwidth of 1-gigabit per second, as well as phone and cable television, to Mountain View in tandem with neighboring cities, putting pressure on competing providers to offer comparable rates or risk losing the South Bay market.

As part of the Mountain View's approval on Tuesday, May 3, Google received encroachment permits to install 178 miles of new fiber-optic cables throughout town, about 45 percent of which would go underground.

Once the core infrastructure is built, the company will gradually bring online neighborhoods in a "wave throughout the commu-

nity, one by one," said Google Fiber spokeswoman Jenna Wandres, who identified herself as a local resident.

"I'd love to have this service at my home — it's fast, affordable and has great customer service," she said. "In order to bring these speeds, we have to build a network from scratch."

Mountain View has a longer history than most when it comes to bringing Google Fiber to the city. Starting in 2010, the council began urging local citizens to write the company to show interest. But four years later, when the company came back with details, council members began to wonder just what they were signing up for. As part of Google Fiber service, the company said it would need expedited review and clearance to submit plans for citywide work. City officials pointed out the company was avoiding giving specifics that would be expected of any other applicants, while making no guarantees that Mountain View

► See **GOOGLE FIBER**, page 6



MICHELLE LE

"An uncertain road ahead" by Michelle Le, of a family desperate to leave the violence of their hometown in Guatemala for a safer life in Mountain View, won first place in the "best feature photo" category at the California Newspaper Publishers Association's Better Newspaper Contest on April 30.

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COURTESY OF SVOS

Rochelle Ford's metal sculptures will be on display in Palo Alto as part of Silicon Valley Open Studios.

### SILICON VALLEY OPEN STUDIOS

Local fine artists in a variety of media will present their studios to the public during the first three weekends of May as part of Silicon Valley Open Studios (SVOS), now in its 30th year. Hundreds of artists will showcase their works at studio spaces all over the Peninsula, including locations in Palo Alto, East Palo Alto, Mountain View, Stanford, Woodside, Portola Valley, Menlo Park, and Los Altos. For detailed information on artists, locations, and dates, go to svos.org.



COURTESY OF THE SHAMS

Punk band **The Shams** headline the Silicon Valley Irish Fleadh in downtown Mountain View.

### SILICON VALLEY IRISH FLEADH

Downtown Mountain View will transform into the Emerald Isle on Saturday, May 7, and Sunday, May 8, when it hosts the annual Silicon Valley Irish Fleadh (pronounced "fla," is Gaelic for "festival"). The event boasts Irish music and dance performances (punk band The Shams headline), arts and crafts, food (including corned beef and shepherd's pie), fun for kids, and plenty of Harp, Smithwick's, and Guinness beers. Admission is free and the action takes place from noon to 8 p.m. both days, along Hope Street between Dana and Villa. Go to svirishfleadh.com/.

### MORE JOY!

Who doesn't need a little more joy? More Joy!, a music group made up of locals Iris Harrell and Ann Benson, among oth-

ers, will perform a show in the style of NPR's "A Prairie Home Companion," mixing storytelling, humor and folksy songs, on Saturday, May 7, 7:30-9:30 p.m., at Ladera Community Church, 3300 Alpine Road, Portola Valley. The \$10 cover charge will go to benefit the YWCA's "Make A Room In Your Heart" project to provide a safe house for women and children fleeing domestic violence. Go to ladera.org/events/special.html.



COURTESY OF MORE JOY!

Paula Filseth, Ann Benson, Spike Connor, Iris Harrell and Ginger Walmsley perform as **More Joy!** in Portola Valley on May 7.

### 'SCREENAGERS: GROWING UP IN THE DIGITAL AGE'

Children's Health Council's (CHC) Auxiliary will present a showing of "SCREENAGERS: Growing up in the Digital Age," a documentary about the impact of "screen time" and technology on kids, on Monday, May 9, 6-8:30 p.m., at Mitchell Park Community Center, 3700 Middlefield Road, in Palo Alto. A Q&A session with CHC's Chief Psychiatrist and Medical Director Dr. Glen Elliott, will follow the screening. Admission is \$10. Go to goo.gl/4Q2L8i and screenagersmovie.com.

### 'ALMOST MOTHER'S DAY CONCERT'

Redwood City's Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department is sponsoring the annual "Almost Mother's Day Concert," featuring Andy Z & the Andyland Band. Families are invited to attend the kids' concert, where there will also be an inflatable playland and an arts-and-crafts area to make a Mother's Day card. The event will take place on Saturday, May 7, from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Courthouse Square, 2200 Broadway Street, in Downtown Redwood City. Admission is free. Go to goo.gl/7TdF7W.

—Karla Kane

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## Silicon Valley Open Studios May 14th & May 15th and May 21st & May 22nd - 11 am to 5 pm

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**This unique art event is FREE and Open to the Public!**

Artist Directories are available at most local libraries and community centers. Go to [svos.org](http://svos.org) for a complete list of artists, cities and maps to their studios.

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■ CRIME BRIEFS

**MAN STABBED IN OLD MOUNTAIN VIEW**

A 22-year-old Mountain View man has been arrested after he allegedly stabbed another man in the Old Mountain View neighborhood last week.

Police say the man, identified as Devin Swygert, had allegedly stabbed the victim with a knife shortly before 5:30 a.m. on Saturday, April 30 in the 200 block of Velarde Street. Witnesses say the two men knew each other and had been in an argument prior to the stabbing, according to police spokeswoman Katie Nelson.

Police transported the victim to a local hospital, where he was treated for his injuries. Police do not know the extent of the man's injuries, Nelson said.

Officers were able to locate Swygert in Los Altos on Sunday, and arrested him on suspicion of attempted homicide. He was booked into Santa Clara County Main Jail in San Jose on a \$250,000 bail.

**LOS ALTOS DRUG BUST**

Two people were arrested last week after a search warrant uncovered illicit drugs and a firearm inside a Los Altos home.

Several law enforcement agencies, including detectives from both Mountain View and Los Altos police departments, descended upon the home at the 700 block of Terrace Court at around 3:30 p.m. on April 28, following reports of possible drug activity occurring near the Mountain View and Los Altos border.

Inside the home, detectives found 2 pounds of marijuana, 4 ounces of methamphetamine, needles and a methamphetamine pipe. Also inside the home were about 100 empty cans of butane and a butane honey oil extraction lab, which is used to produce high-potency marijuana extract.

A Ruger Mini-14 assault rifle was also found inside the home.

Police say that when detectives approached the Los Altos residence, one of the people inside, 44-year-old Lawrence Ovadia, tried to flee from the house through the backyard and into a nearby creek. Ovadia was quickly detained by two officers.

The second suspect, 24-year-old Brandi Stroud, was also located inside the home during the search, and was also detained.

Ovadia was arrested on a myriad of charges including possession of an assault rifle, being a felon in possession of a firearm, manufacturing a controlled substance, possession of methamphetamine for sale, and being a felon in possession of ammunition and cultivation of marijuana. He was booked into Santa Clara County Main Jail without bail.

Stroud was arrested on methamphetamine possession charges, and was transported to Elmwood Correctional Facility in Milpitas where she is being held without bail.

► See CRIME BRIEFS, page 21

■ POLICE LOG

**ASSAULT WITH A DEADLY WEAPON**

2700 block Del Medio Ct., 4/27

**ATTEMPTED MURDER**

200 block Velarde St., 4/30

**AUTO BURGLARY**

200 block View St., 4/29  
2700 block Broderick Way, 5/1

**BATTERY**

1700 block Morgan St., 5/1  
500 block N. Shoreline Blvd., 5/2

**COMMERCIAL BURGLARY**

500 block W. El Camino Real, 4/29

**GRAND THEFT**

800 block Villa St., 4/27  
500 block Hans Av., 4/29

**RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY**

100 block Sleeper Av., 4/28  
100 block Fair Oaks St., 4/28  
500 block Walker Dr., 4/29  
1100 block Awalt Dr., 5/3

**POSSESSION OF BURGLARY TOOLS**

200 block View St., 5/2

**STOLEN VEHICLE**

100 block N. Whisman Rd., 4/28  
California St. & Hope St., 5/1  
400 block Spring St., 5/2

**TRESPASSING**

1300 block Crittenden Ln., 5/3

**VANDALISM**

1900 block Old Middlefield Way, 5/3

**VEHICLE EVADING ARREST**

Leghorn St. & N. Rengstorff Av., 4/30

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## 24th Assembly District Candidate's Forum

**Tuesday, May 10th  
7:00 PM – 8:30 PM**

**Mountain View Public Library, Community Room  
585 Franklin Street, Mountain View**

Marc Berman, Democrat, Councilmember/Education Advocate

Barry Chang, Democrat, Mayor of Cupertino

Jay Blas Jacob Cabrera, No Party Preference, Social Innovation Entrepreneur

John M. Inks, Libertarian, Mountain View Councilmember

Mike Kasperzak, Democrat, Mountain View Councilmember

Peter Ohtaki, Republican, Businessman/Menlo Park Councilmember

Sea Reddy, Democrat, Retired Program Manager

Vicki Veenker, Democrat, Technology Attorney/Mediator

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NATALIA NAZAROVA

Participants at the 2016 May Day March & Rally carry signs as they walk along El Camino Real on May 1.

## Annual May Day march rallies crowd for political action

A crowd of local immigration-rights activists held a May Day march through Mountain View on Sunday to underscore the oft-ignored problems impacting an estimated 11 million undocumented people living in the United States.

Waving placards and banners, a crowd that grew to about 150 people marched from Rengstorff Park out to busy El Camino Real on May 1. The parade circled back to the park by the late after-

noon for music and speeches.

This year's march had a sharper political edge, due to the upcoming November election. A theme among the speakers was to encourage the crowd to get out and vote. The executive actions taken by President Barack Obama to grant work permits and defer deportations for immigrant children and their parents are on the line in this election, said Jeremy Barousse, an organizer

with the Services, Immigrant Rights and Education Network.

"The fate of the (these executive actions) will be in the hands of the next president," he said.

Equal pressure was put on local political issues. Advocates with the Mountain View Tenants Coalition urged participants to collect signatures for a proposed November ballot measure that would impose restrictions on rent increases and evictions. ▣

## City sniffs out food-composting program

COUNCIL BACKS DROPPING GARBAGE PICK-UP TO ONCE EVERY TWO WEEKS

By Mark Noack

Mountain View homeowners could soon be prodded to compost more of their food scraps under a new waste-management program designed to shrink the trash pile sent to landfills.

The program, which was tested out in two neighborhoods as a pilot program, shows potential to reduce garbage waste by about 50 percent. But that reduction would come at a sacrifice — households would be asked to have their weekly

garbage pick-ups switched to every other week.

The city tested out the food-scrap program starting last July, trying out different schedules in two Old Mountain View neighborhoods to determine which system best encouraged people to separate their food waste. In that pilot run, residents were sent a 3-gallon kitchen pail, compostable bags and a 24-gallon waste-can for the food scraps. Pretty much any food waste is fair game to go in these receptacles, including food-soiled paper, pizza

boxes and compost-friendly packaging.

After a six-month trial, a subset of residents who saw their garbage services reduced to every other week ended up generating the least waste — about 8.6 pounds less per week than before, according to city staff. It seems that residents who didn't have garbage service as frequently tended to embrace the food-scrap program the most, said Lori Topley, Mountain View's solid waste program

► See **COMPOSTING**, page 21

## Big pay raises ahead for high school teachers

SCHOOL BOARD APPROVES 5 PERCENT SALARY BUMP FOR ALL EMPLOYEES

By Kevin Forestieri

For years, the Mountain View-Los Altos High School District has been home to some of the most well-compensated teachers in the entire state. And it looks like that trend is going to continue, after recent contract negotiations yielded a new contract with a sizable pay increase for all district staff.

pay of then-highest Los Gatos-Saratoga Union High School District.

Superintendent Jeff Harding said the negotiations, which started in November, have gone very well, and that there's a strong relationship between the administrative team and both the certified teachers and classified employees. That relationship, he said, along with the high compensation, has helped

*'It's a very stable workforce here.'*

SUPERINTENDENT JEFF HARDING, MOUNTAIN VIEW-LOS ALTOS HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

After little discussion, the school board unanimously approved the newly negotiated contract terms with both teaching staff and classified employees, giving both groups a 5 percent salary increase for 2015-16, as well as one-time pay increase of 1.75 percent. The pay raise is retroactive to July 1, 2015.

In an email to teachers, Associate Superintendent Eric Goddard said the contract shows that the district continues to be "forward thinking" in its effort to provide the best possible education to students, and acknowledges all the hard work that teachers put into the profession.

"As we inch toward the conclusion of the school year we would like to recognize your efforts in making MVLA the special place it is for all," Goddard wrote. "Please know that all of you are much appreciated."

The salary schedule now ranges from \$74,858 to a maximum of \$141,451 after 28 years of service, with additional stipends available for advanced college degrees. According to salary and benefit data collected by the California Department of Education, the district paid an average annual salary of nearly \$114,000 during the 2014-15 school year, the highest of any school district in the state. This has been a lasting trend going back about a decade, when the district eclipsed the average

to keep teacher turnover low. "We've had extremely low numbers of retirees as well," Harding said. "It's a very stable workforce here."

The pay increases will cost the district about \$2.2 million for the 2015-16 year, and just shy of \$1.7 million for every subsequent year. Despite the rising cost of teacher salaries and contributions to the state's pension fund, Harding said the district can handle the increased burden because of the recent double-digit growth in local property tax revenue.

District Teachers' Association President Michelle Bissonnette declined a request for comment.

Aside from the pay increase, Harding said the district will be setting up a committee of administrators and teachers to keep the district's teaching staff engaged as they go through their careers, and make sure they can continue to develop their "craft."

"We want these teachers to start their career here and end their career year, and keep developing as they progress," Harding said.

Both elementary school districts in Mountain View, the Los Altos School District and the Mountain View Whisman School District, are currently in closed session negotiations with their teachers union representatives to hash out contracts and pay increases. ▣

**GOOGLE FIBER**

► Continued from page 1

would even be selected.

Google had a “take-it or leave-it” approach, as then-Councilman Jac Siegel criticized it at the time. But it was abundantly clear that plenty of other cities were eager to solicit the service. Among the publicity stunts pulled to draw Google’s attention, the mayor of Duluth jumped into a freezing lake and Topeka renamed itself “Google, Kansas.” One Minnesota mayor promised to name the city’s first-born children after Google.

The Mountain View council voted unanimously to move the project forward.

At the Tuesday, May 3, meeting, city officials pointed out that some of their concerns from two years ago had been resolved. The company indicated it no longer needed clearance to install prefabricated network huts on leased city property throughout town, and they would instead use their own buildings. In addition, Google would need to install 4,200 underground utility “vaults” as well as up to 10 aboveground utility cabinets. That equipment would be located to minimize

visual impact, said members of the city’s Public Works staff. Council members were also assured that the agreement they were signing was similar to that of other South Bay cities.

Building out all this gear would still require excavation permits from the city. Wandres said Google already had agreements in place with AT&T and PG&E to use their utility poles. For the underground sections, the company will likely opt for a quicker “microtrenching” method of laying cables underground, said Public Works Director Mike Fuller. That would involve using

a saw to slice through the pavement just enough to drop the fiber cable down.

Among the public commenters, Mountain View resident Wayne Holcombe asked why Google Fiber was building out individual cables rather than trying to link homes through local wireless hubs. He pointed out Google executives had mentioned in recent news stories they were testing out improved wireless technology for areas where it wasn’t financially sensible to lay cables. It seemed like Google was pulling a similar trick to Comcast, he said, by charging individual homes for large data bandwidth that surpassed what they could reasonably consume.

“I’m for the Fiber backbone — that needs to be installed first — but maybe three years from now we’ll discover that Google wants to push a wireless system,” he said.

Asked by the council to address this, Wandres confirmed that Google was researching this technology but she indicated it would be a long way off.

“Our goal is to bring ultra-high speed internet to residents right now, and the best way to do that is through a wired connection,” she said.

In other cities already outfitted with Google Fiber, the cost to subscribe is \$100 per month for 1-gigabit service and \$130 per month for similar internet service with cable television. A cheaper \$50-per-month plan would deliver 100-megabits per second.

For low-income families, Wandres said the company would partner with government agencies and nonprofits to offer affordable Internet service.

For the most part, city officials described the expansion of Google Fiber to Mountain View as a net gain.

“It’s great to have our home company Google here, rolling out one of their public products,” said Councilman Chris Clark. “But the real element, if you look at the data, (is) the introduction of a little competition changes things; the prices for a gigabit of speed drops dramatically.”

Now with the city’s go-ahead, Google would begin a series of public outreach efforts, including a 24-hour, seven-day-a-week hotline for residents’ concerns. Residents would be notified when construction is set to occur nearby through social media and door hangers

Mountain View is not alone among South Bay cities signing up for the Google Fiber. San Jose, Santa Clara and Sunnyvale have signed similar encroachment permits while Palo Alto is still considering the project.

Full construction of the fiber-optic network is expected to take three years. ■

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**7/9** Paul McCandless and Charged Particles

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# High-speed rail team makes whistle stop in MV

AUTHORITY NO LONGER PLANS A LOCAL HIGH-SPEED RAIL STATION

By Mark Noack

With a fresh new business plan in hand, officials with the California High Speed Rail Authority updated Mountain View leaders on Tuesday about how the complicated statewide project would impact the Peninsula.

For Mountain View, perhaps the biggest news of the night is that the city won't be a local stop for high-speed trains — for the near future, at least. Originally, planners with the rail authority had suggested a Midpeninsula station should be located either in Mountain View, Palo Alto or Redwood City.

But on Tuesday, May 3, Ben Tripousis, the project's northern California regional director, said his latest projections didn't show enough ridership to justify an additional stop between San Jose and the San Francisco International Airport.

"For the time being, the stations we'll pursue are those that I've identified," Tripousis said. "But that doesn't preclude us from having a station (in Mountain View) sometime in the future."

Now scaled down to a \$64.2 billion price, high-speed rail is moving from a conceptual dream to a real project, Tripousis said. For the first time, he said, the project is grounded in a real budget, whereas earlier plans were largely "aspirational."

"This plan focuses on the system we can deliver with the funds we have available today," he said.

But plenty of money is still needed, he admitted. While construction is already commencing in the Central Valley, full completion of the project will require billions more in

investment, some of which will need to come from the private sector. Tripousis exuded confidence that lenders would help fund the high-speed line, so long as the government agencies demonstrated they were committed to moving it forward. The business plan noted that other money could be raised by borrowing against future cap-and-trade revenues, which are expected to generate \$500 million in the next fiscal year, as well as borrowing against future revenues.

Yet there is still plenty of uncertainty looming over the project, as noted in a March review by the Legislative Analyst's Office of the authority's business plan. That report noted the rail authority still hasn't fully identified how it would raise about \$33 billion needed complete the full San Francisco to Los Angeles line. The report urged elected leaders to keep vigilant oversight of the project's cost, scope and schedule.

Mountain View officials seized on these vague elements in a letter outlining their concerns. City Manager Dan Rich advised the rail authority to adopt a "detailed, comprehensive and less-speculative" financial plan. He also urged rail officials to provide better clarity on the scheduling of their future projects.

For now, Tripousis said his team's emphasis is on preparing the environmental-impact reports so that more stretches of the rail line could be built as soon as funding is available. For the 51-mile Peninsula corridor, those environmental reports will likely be complete by the end of 2017, he said.

The bullet trail project is also tied to several other upgrades

to local transit networks, he pointed out. Among those improvements, about \$600 million is slated to electrify the Caltrain tracks, allowing additional trains, longer platforms and possibly more rail-cars. That project is scheduled to be completed around 2020, and it is currently contingent on high-speed rail being built on the Peninsula, Tripousis added.

Mountain View City Council members pressed for details about how the bullet train — expected to zip by at 110 mph along the Peninsula — would interact with city streets at crossings. They wanted to know how and when the rail authority would consider grade separation projects to bring local streets either over or under the train tracks. Tripousis was supportive of the idea, but he said that grade separations could be 10 to 15 years away.

City officials noted that the rail authority's latest business plan included as much as \$500 million for grade separation, but they pointed out this was hardly enough. As one example, San Mateo County officials recently estimated it would cost \$134 million to elevate the Caltrain tracks for a single grade separation near Highway 92.

Saying he was echoing the concerns of other regional cities, Councilman Lenny Siegel said he was very worried that grade separation needed to be made a higher priority. Local policy makers were trying to establish a unified strategy to do this, he said, since it was being treated like an afterthought by transit agencies.

"There's no strategy for it," Siegel said. "There's a lot of concern about making sure we get grade separation sooner

## OBITUARY

### JAMES THOMAS CANFIELD

James Thomas Canfield, an attorney and a Mountain View resident, died May 2 from esophageal cancer. He was 60.

He was born in Staten Island, N.Y. on May 29, 1957, and graduated from Monsignor Farrell High School. He earned his undergraduate degree in philosophy and a law degree from the University of Notre Dame.

He moved to California in 1992, and earned a graduate degree in screen-writing from the University of Southern California. He moved to Mountain View and worked as a patent attorney and writer for the past 20 years. He practiced law with the



James Canfield

firms of Fish & Neave, Ropes & Gray, and Finnegan. He was an active supporter of the Mountain View Los Altos Soccer Club and an avid fan of college football and the American cinema. His family said he was as generous and kind-hearted a person as you will ever meet.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Catherine Gallagher Canfield.

He is survived by his father, Jim Canfield of Palm Coast, Fla.; his siblings Eileen Canfield of Baltimore, Kevin Canfield of Long Island N.Y., and Julie Canfield of Boston; and his aunt, Eileen Gallagher Keeshan of Montauk, N.Y.

There will be a Mass held in his name at 10 a.m. on Saturday, May 7, at St. Simon Catholic Church, 1860 Grant Road, Los Altos. A memorial service will be held in July at St. Teresa's Catholic Church in Montauk, N.Y. All are welcome to attend.

rather than later."

Some public speakers expressed disbelief that the lone stop at the San Jose Diridon Station would be adequate to serve the entire South Bay. Mountain View or Palo Alto may need to take initiative on building a local high-speed rail station, especially if riders expect to use high-speed trains for routine commuting, Siegel suggested.

Mayor Pat Showalter expressed support for the project's environmental benefits, especially its estimates that it would eventually reduce millions of metric tons of greenhouse gases.

Tripousis noted an upcoming scoping meeting for the Peninsula high speed rail is tentatively scheduled for May 25 in Mountain View, in a location

still to be determined.

"Whether it's commuter rail or high-speed rail, it's about moving as many people as possible and getting folks off Highway 101," Tripousis said. "Mountain View is not Palo Alto is not San Francisco. We're trying to ensure we're getting as broad of a cross-section of input from all the respective communities." ▽

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

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# Strong fundraising boosts Marc Berman, Vicki Veenker in state Assembly race

By Gennady Sheyner

Palo Alto Councilman Marc Berman raised \$104,481 in the latest reporting period for his bid to succeed Rich Gordon in the state Assembly, more than any of his seven competitors, campaign-finance documents show.

The disclosures, which cover the period between Jan. 1 and April 23, also show a strong fundraising drive by attorney Vicki Veenker, who received \$100,812 in contributions. The strong numbers coincide with recent endorsements she has received from California's teachers and nurses unions.

Cupertino Mayor Barry Chang, who held the fundraising lead earlier this year, received only \$32,638 in the latest period — much of it in large checks from outside the district. His campaign still has more than \$290,000 in cash on hand, according to his latest filing. Yet because he used some of his campaign funds to repay a loan, he actually ended the period \$7,362 in the hole.

Mountain View Councilman Mike Kasperzak, meanwhile,

raised \$34,219 in the last period but remains well behind the other three Democratic front-runners in total cash raised.

The other four candidates have far smaller campaign chests. Menlo Park Councilman Peter Ohtaki, the lone Republican in the race, raised \$22,495, while Mountain View Councilman John Inks, the lone Libertarian, \$14,670, respectively (this includes a \$10,000 loan Inks gave to his campaign). The two have only recently entered the race to replace Gordon.

Two other candidates — Seelam Reddy and Jay Cabrera — are running low-budget, grassroots campaigns and have not filed papers with the Secretary of State.

According to his finance statement, many of Berman's contributors have come from labor groups, developers, Realtors, attorneys, business professionals and public officials. This includes \$8,500 from the California Association of Realtors; \$7,500 from the Northern California Carpenters Regional Council SCC; \$4,200 from the Laborers Local Union 270; and

\$4,250 from the California State Council of Laborers PAC.

Berman also received \$4,200 from the San Francisco Laborer's Local 261; and \$4,200 from the Palo Alto Professional Firefighters.

Steven Westly, managing partner of the Westly Group, donated \$2,000 to Berman's campaign. Palo Alto developers John McNellis and Chop Keenan contributed \$2,100 and \$500, respectively, to Berman's campaign, which is also being supported by dozens of local environmentalists, commissioners and community volunteers, according to his campaign statement.

Veenker's campaign was bolstered by recent endorsements and contributions from California's teachers and nurses unions. This includes \$8,500 contributions from the California Teachers Association/Association for Better Citizenship and from the California Nurses Association Political Action Committee.

Veenker also received \$4,200 contributions from Castilleja teacher Julian Cortella and Palo Alto resident John Rohrer; \$2,000 checks from Stanford University

professor Leonore Herzenberg and from Menlo Park resident Karen Grove; and a \$1,000 contribution from the Teamsters union.

Chang, who led the field in cash raised in January, saw his overall balance wane in the latest reporting period. Most of his contributions came in the form of large checks from corporations based outside the assembly district, with Union City-based Marina Food LLC contributing \$8,400, with \$4,200 pegged for the primary campaign and another \$4,200 allocated for the general election, according to his campaign statement. Helix Electric, based in San Diego, similarly gave \$8,400, split between the two elections, as has Welkin International Industrial, Inc., which is based in Saratoga.

Kasperzak reported \$34,169 in contributions in the last period, much of it coming in smaller checks from individuals inside the district. Among his top contributors are Menlo Park resident Patricia Spieker Hopman, Atherton resident Catherine Spieker, and Portola Valley resident Margaret Thomas,

who each gave him \$4,200 for the primary challenge. Allison Aldrich, an executive at GoDaddy.com, contributed \$1,000 to his campaign. Mike Kroll, Andrew Hudacek and Todd Regonini, both of Sares Regis Group, contributed \$1,000 each to Kasperzak's campaign. Tod Spieker, president of Spieker Companies, contributed \$2,100.

Kasperzak's council colleague Inks reported raising \$14,670 in the period between Jan. 1 and April 23, including \$4,670 in contributions and a \$10,000 loan. His biggest contributors include Woodland resident Chrus Rufer, (who donated \$990), Mountain View resident Donald Bahl (\$900) and Palo Alto resident Tod Spieker (\$950).

Ohtaki did slightly better, reporting \$17,495 in contributions (along with a \$5,000 loan) in the latest period. About half of his cash raised came from two contributors: Charles Munger and William Regan, each of whom contributed \$4,200 to the race's lone Republican. He also received \$1,000 from Grace Todd of Montague, Michigan, for the primary battle, according to his campaign statement.

The eight candidates are competing in the June 7 primary, with the two top vote-getters moving on to the November ballot.

## Housing crisis forces CSA to shift gears

FOOD PANTRY TO FOCUS ON HELP WITH RENT HIKES, PREVENTING HOMELESSNESS

By Kevin Forestieri

For decades, the Community Services Agency of Mountain View and Los Altos has served as the safety net for residents in need. The nonprofit provides free groceries, senior services and aid to the homeless, as well as financial support to families struggling to pay rent.

But as the cost of rental housing in Mountain View continues to skyrocket, more families are turning to CSA for help finding affordable housing in a market where inexpensive options are few and far between. It's gotten to the point, CSA officials say, that the entire organization needs to reassess its role.

Last week, the agency released the details of its new strategic plan, which calls for a major overhaul in the way CSA provides services in order to meet the needs of lower-income residents in Mountain View, Los Altos and Los Altos Hills. While the agency will continue to provide short-term rental relief, pantry services and case management, the plan notes that CSA needs to play a central role in providing stabilization for the high number of residents facing

displacement from their homes.

From 2011 to 2015, average rents in Mountain View increased 52.7 percent, according to a RealFacts market report. Mountain View's rental prices have increased by about 17 percent since late 2013, according to the city. The most recent data from the city shows the average asking rent was \$2,808 in the fourth quarter of 2015. The costs range from \$1,896 for studio apartments to just shy of \$4,000 for a three-bedroom, two-bathroom apartment.

Despite the economic recovery following the 2008 recession, CSA has a stubbornly high case load of about 6,500 clients each year. A majority of those clients — averaging 4,688 each year — come to CSA in need of emergency financial assistance. Data from the strategic plan revealed that the demand for emergency rental assistance has typically stayed high, even though about 20 percent of those clients have moved out of the area over the same time period.

But that changed in 2015, when there was a sudden 18 percent drop in clients seeking emergency assistance, from 4,948 to 4,104 in a single year. According to CSA, that's likely because of a massive

jump in the number of people forced to leave their homes.

"The drop in the last year suggests we have reached the tipping point of more low-income individuals and families leaving the area or becoming homeless due to the high housing costs and low wages," according to the plan.

Santa Clara County reported last year that Mountain View's homeless population doubled from 139 in 2013 to 276 in 2015, tracking closely with the increase in clients seeking homeless services at CSA. Of those people who came to CSA, 68 were still employed, and 58 were living in their vehicle.

Tom Myers, who has led CSA as executive director for 16 years, said the housing crisis is unprecedented, and that the Mountain View and Los Altos community has never before been in a situation like this. He said the new strategic plan is really a way to come to terms with the fact that CSA needs to redouble its efforts to help clients handle explosive rental costs, prevent evictions and homelessness, and, if necessary, help them relocate.

"We've got to try and address the extreme rents and rent increases that are happening to



VOICE FILE PHOTO

Richard Torrez picks out produce at CSA in Mountain View in 2013. The nonprofit plans to expand beyond its better-known pantry service to help low-income residents struggling with high rents.

residents two, sometimes three times a year," Myers said.

So what needs to change? Expanding eligibility for services could be the first important step. As the cost of living increases in the Bay Area, CSA's financial criteria for who qualifies for services has remained roughly the same. Federal guidelines dictates that a family of four is considered low-income if they make less than \$75,500 a year, but with rental costs eating up as much as \$40,000 a year, the strategic plan notes that residents in Mountain View and Los Altos earning just above that threshold are barely scraping by. Over the next few

years, CSA could increase the eligibility threshold, but the specific details are still unknown.

Also on the table is extending services to low-income families who work in CSA's service area but live elsewhere. Myers said there needs to be a way to support people who commute into cities like Mountain View, work lower-wage service jobs — like waiters and cashiers — and then commute back home to an area that may not have the kind of social safety net that CSA provides.

"We know that there are people

► See **CSA**, page 20

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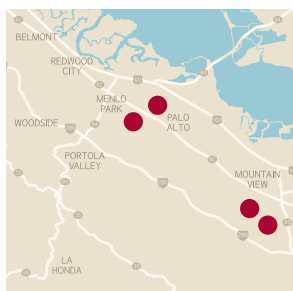


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# Developer fined for tearing down heritage trees

NEIGHBORS BALK AT SERIES OF MISTAKES

By Mark Noack

Just months away from completion, a new El Camino Real apartment project has already created bad blood with its neighbors after workers tore down a pair of heritage trees before they were supposed to. The turmoil over trees only got stormier last week after the developer sought permission to chop down a third heritage tree that may have suffered root damage from the construction work.

The project by Prometheus Real Estate Group is a 66-home apartment complex at 1616 W. El Camino Real, slated to be finished by this summer. As proposed about two years ago, sketches for the new building showed a canopy of trees along the street, including both older heritage trees and new ones planted as part of the project, neighbors say.

But the finished project apparently won't resemble that vision, said Kristina Pereyra, a nearby resident. She still remembers the day in late 2014 when she

witnessed workers throwing two heritage-sized eucalyptus trees into a wood chipper.

"We looked out our window to see their machinery crunching these trees up," she said. "For me, it's that these are 50-year-old trees, and it's going to take another 50 years to grow another one."

For their part, Prometheus representatives have formally apologized for the slip-up; however they also offer a different take on the story. The company told city officials that a demolition subcontractor was to blame for accidentally removing the trees prematurely.

But in the large scheme of things, those trees were going to be removed anyway, said Jon Moss, Prometheus vice president. Two years ago, city officials had agreed those two trees would be taken down during a later excavation phase, he said.

"It was done by the contractor a month or two earlier than when (the trees) would normally be down," Moss said. "It was a timing issue."



COURTESY OF KRISTINA PEREYRA

**A large heritage cedar tree** next to a new apartment development on Mariposa Street is slated to be cut down. Neighbors say the developer damaged the tree with its construction, and then argued for its removal due to safety concerns.

Prometheus will be required to pay a \$500 fine for the removal, along with the cost of planting two new trees as replacements,

said Lindsay Hagan, a Mountain View associate planner.

But trouble sprouted up again last week after Prometheus offi-

cial came back to Mountain View officials for permission to remove a third heritage tree. That tree — a cedar along Mariposa Street — has begun to tilt to one side, leading arborists to conclude it could someday topple into the street. The cause for this was likely trenches dug for the new apartment's storm drain, Hagan said. An arborist hired by Prometheus suggested the tree needed to be removed for safety reasons.

At an Administrative Zoning Administrator hearing last week, multiple neighbors reportedly complained about the developer's actions, and city officials decided to take further action. City staff granted approval to remove the cedar tree, but they imposed what they described as a much heavier fine on the company.

That exact penalty amount remains undetermined, but Mountain View will be consulting an arborist. The developer will need to pay a fine based off the tree's age, maturity, species and possibly other factors, Hagan said.

"In this case there was the feeling that our trust was broken," Hagan said. "They went beyond what they had said they would do." ▀

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# County officials eye housing tax measure

POLLS SHOW SANTA CLARA COUNTY RESIDENTS COULD FAVOR  
A PROPERTY TAX FOR AFFORDABLE HOUSING

By Kevin Forestieri

In an ongoing effort to shore up affordable housing throughout the South Bay, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors are considering a \$750 million bond for the November ballot that would help pay for new homes for veterans, seniors, low-income families and the homeless.

ber of affordable housing units in the county," according to a staff report.

Following arguments for and against the housing bond measure, and explaining that it would cost property owners \$14 per \$100,000 of assessed value, Bernstein said support drops to just below the two-thirds majority required to pass a measure. But with the right public mes-

election.

"Many of those voters will show up to vote in this presidential election because that's when they tend to vote, in these big turnout elections," Bernstein said. "They tend to be younger, maybe more progressive, and much more likely to be renters who are more concerned about housing issues."

Jennifer Loving, executive director of the supportive housing agency Destination Home, told the board that she was "thrilled" that there's an opportunity to build new housing for the most vulnerable residents in Santa Clara County.

"New money can go a long way to ending our homelessness crisis," Loving said.

Supervisor Ken Yeager said public support could waver depending on the specific details of the bond. The polling showed enough public support, he said, but it's not clear whether those polled were hoping for rental units or homes, and whether they would support high density developments.

"We're going to need a certain level of detail so people can understand what they're supporting," Yeager said.

Cortese said he wondered whether the scope of the housing bond could be extended to middle-income families as well, recalling recent data that found only 17 percent of the residents in Santa Clara County could actually afford to buy a home. He said a lot of people feel like they are caught up in the affordability crisis in the Bay Area, and it'd be hard to go wrong building housing for broad number of people.

"The need for housing is so severe across the board that it's pretty hard to make a mistake investing in housing," Cortese said. "It's not like you can invest in the wrong sector of housing and waste your money. There's just a tremendous need."

As the details of the ballot measure are fleshed out, Yeager suggested that the county ought to seek public input from city leaders across all 15 cities in Santa Clara County, and get a feel for what kind of development might be feasible in local communities. The worry is, Yeager said, that the bond might end up being used to bolster affordable housing in San Jose instead of the far-flung communities that haven't done enough to build more housing for low-income residents. ▀

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

**'The need for housing is so severe across the board that it's pretty hard to make a mistake investing in housing.'**

SUPERVISOR DAVE CORTESE

Earlier this year, the board of supervisors signed a resolution stating that homelessness in Santa Clara County constitutes a "crisis," with unacceptable costs in terms of both public resources and human suffering. What's more, the resolution called on individual cities to do their parts and increase the availability of below-market rate and affordable housing to stem the tide of residents falling into homelessness.

Similarly, the board of supervisors is trying to find ways to do the same. In February, the board voted unanimously to test the mood of Santa Clara County voters to see whether residents would support a county-wide affordable housing measure. And it turns out that the support could be there.

Last week, the firm EMC Research found that roughly two-thirds of likely voters in Santa Clara County would support a \$750 million general obligation bond to build low-income and supportive housing geared towards veterans, seniors, low-income families, the homeless and other "disadvantaged residents," including victims of human trafficking and domestic abuse.

Of the 805 residents polled, 31 percent believed housing was the most important issue facing Santa Clara County, beating out transportation, crime and public safety, jobs creation and education. It's also a big change from previous years, according to Ruth Bernstein of EMC Research. In 2005, just 11 percent of those polled said housing was the most important issue — specifically housing for low-income residents.

"There is significant support for a measure that would focus resources on increasing the num-

saging from a private, positive campaign, she said, the measure could succeed in November.

"We do think there is an opportunity, and it is worth considering, given these numbers," Bernstein said.

The board of supervisors agreed in a 4-0 vote, with Supervisor Joe Simitian absent, to have county staff flesh out exactly what the general obligation bond would look like and how the money would be spent. The board is expected to review a resolution by August, in time for the November ballot.

"Our polling results shows a very strong concern among voters about our lack of affordable housing as well as support for a measure to pay for it," Board President Dave Cortese said in a statement following the meeting. "Now we need to get down to the details so that our voters have a clear picture of what we are asking them to support."

Some of the greatest support for an affordable housing measure came from Santa Clara County's fifth district, which encompasses North County cities including Palo Alto, Mountain View, Los Altos and part of Sunnyvale. Of those polled in the region, 62 percent consistently supported a potential ballot measure, regardless of arguments for or against, and regardless of the cost — the most of any district.

Voter support for a ballot measure is expected to be highest among residents who do not typically vote in elections, but are expected to cast their ballot in the November presidential election, which Bernstein said indicates that the county has a rare opportunity now, but probably not if it's delayed to the 2018



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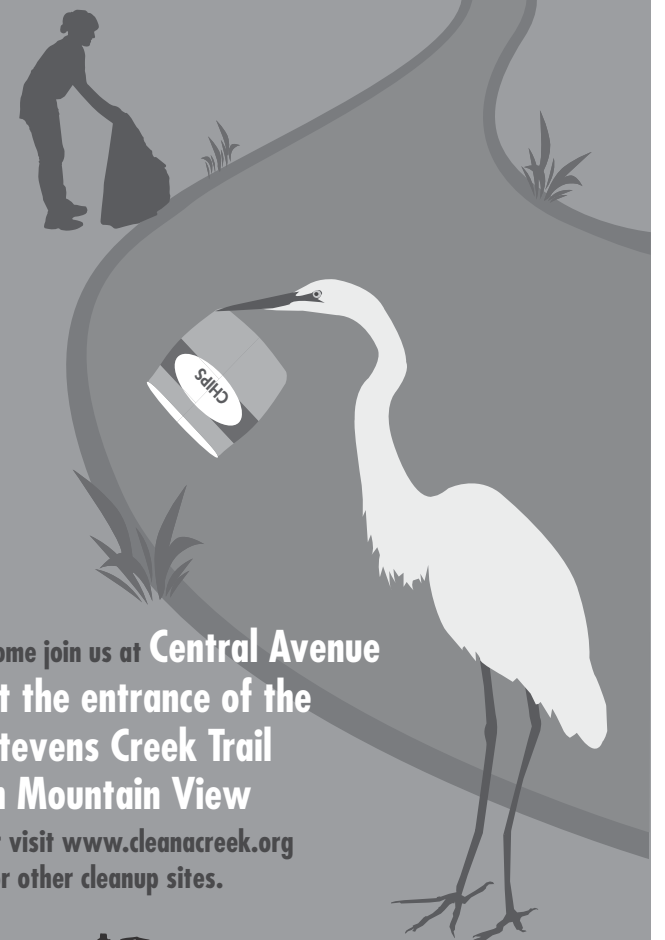


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# Foothill College names new president

By Elena Kadwany

Foothill College's new president, Thuy Thi Nguyen, is a practicing lawyer, general counsel for the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office and thought to be the first Vietnamese-American community college president in California.

Nguyen was recommended for the job by Judy Miner, the last president of Foothill who was recently named chancellor of the entire Foothill-De Anza Community College District. Miner's recommendation was made official with the approval of the district Board of Trustees on May 2. Her first day on the job is set for July 1.

Nguyen's appointment concludes a national search that began last fall to replace Miner, who had been president of the Los Altos Hills community college since 2007.

"Based on her record of innovation in promoting student access and diversity, I believe that Thuy will lead Foothill College in advancing a culture of student equity and in closing the achievement gap," Miner said in the announcement. "I am confident she will offer the kind of leadership and inspiration that will help the college achieve its most ambitious goals and further enhance the state and national leadership role for which our district is known."

Nguyen came from more humble beginnings: When she was 3 years old, she and her family fled Vietnam after the end of the war, drifting in the Pacific Ocean on a "rickety boat" for more than two weeks before a commercial ship rescued them and took them to a refugee camp in Japan, according to Foothill's announcement.

The family eventually relocated to Wichita, Kan., then settled in Oakland when Nguyen was 14 years old. The family lived in low-income housing, and Nguyen attended a predominantly African-American and Latino high school, where she "embarked on a path of community leadership and service," the announcement states.

At Castlemont, she served as a student representative on the Oakland Unified School District's Board of Directors, cadet colonel brigade commander in the Army Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps, and valedictorian of her class. Upon graduation, the mayor of

Oakland declared June 23, 1993, "Thuy Thi Nguyen Day" in recognition of her community service, according to Foothill.

She went on to obtain a bachelor's degree in philosophy at Yale University and attended law school at University of California, Los Angeles.

"Nguyen said she was inspired to pursue a legal career so that she could play a part in correcting social injustice, having seen firsthand the contrast between the 'haves' and 'have nots' in society," the announcement states.

While in law school, Nguyen was selected for a fellowship that provides opportunities for new immigrants to achieve leadership positions in their chosen field, according to Foothill. She was part of the inaugural class in the law school's public-interest law and policy program and earned a juris doctor degree.

efforts to create a pipeline program to help historically under-represented students get to law school.

As a volunteer on the State Bar of California's Council on Access and Fairness, Nguyen brought together law schools, universities and community colleges to develop the "2+2+3 Community Colleges Pathway to Law School" (which refers to two years in community college, two years in university and three years in law school). The initiative today includes six California law schools, six undergraduate universities, 29 community colleges and 16 high school law academies and "is viewed as a model," Foothill said.

Miner also pointed to Nguyen's leadership at the state Chancellor's Office in moving to an "innovative funding approach that encourages community colleges to assess and

***'I am confident she will offer the kind of leadership and inspiration that will help the college achieve its most ambitious goals'***

JUDY MINER,

CHANCELLOR OF THE FOOHILL-DE ANZA COMMUNITY COLLEGE DISTRICT

Nguyen started her legal career at a firm in Emeryville, providing legal assistance to school districts on issues such as desegregation, student discipline, bilingual education and employment. She later worked as a field representative for California Assembly Majority Leader Wilma Chan. In 2003, the Peralta Community College District appointed Nguyen as interim general counsel and soon made the appointment permanent. As general counsel, she represented the interests of the district and its four colleges, Laney College, Merritt College, College of Alameda and Berkeley City College. Over the years she served other roles, including acting vice chancellor for human resources and districtwide strategic planning manager.

Before her assignment in the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, Nguyen took a leave from Peralta to serve for six months as interim president and chief executive officer of the Community College League of California, heading the chief advocacy organization for California community colleges, according to Foothill.

Miner cited as an example of Nguyen's "ability to translate passion and vision into action"

strengthen their efforts in equal employment opportunity," the announcement states.

Nguyen has also organized regional training workshops on topics from why diversity in hiring matters to how to address unconscious bias, highlighting evidence that a diverse faculty helps close the student-achievement gap, Foothill said.

Nguyen, who lives in Castro Valley, also has "deep connections" in the East Bay and is well-known in the local Vietnamese community. She co-published a book called "25 Vietnamese Americans in 25 Years" that marked the anniversary of the fall of Saigon by highlighting the contributions 25 Vietnamese Americans made to American society.

Nguyen has also been an educator herself: She worked as an adjunct instructor teaching education law for several years at what is now California State University, East Bay. She also currently serves as board president of the Marcus Foster Education Institute, which promotes excellence and educational opportunity in Oakland public schools.

Her annual salary will start at \$188,878, according to Foothill.

Email Elena Kadwany at [ekadwany@paweekly.com](mailto:ekadwany@paweekly.com)

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**Bernie Sanders** supporters cast their votes for delegates to the national Democratic Convention at a caucus in Mountain View May 1.

### DELEGATES

► *Continued from page 1*

area took center stage for the eight delegate seats up for the 18th district, which ranges from Redwood City down to Santa Cruz County. The delegate caucus for the Sanders campaign was held at the Success Center in Mountain View's Whisman Station neighborhood. The Clinton camp held its event at the Hillview Community Center in Los Altos.

Among those vying for a convention seat were some familiar names. Mountain View Mayor Pat Showalter submitted herself as a Clinton delegate while Councilman Lenny Siegel was firmly on the Sanders side. For the two council colleagues, as well as countless others out that day, the debate over who would make the best president echoed the campaign themes playing out on the national stage.

For Showalter, who works as a water system engineer, the push-back against a Hillary Clinton presidency reminded her of the challenges she faced in a career path dominated by men.

"It's important to have a woman in the White House," Showalter said. "Clinton has a tremendous amount of experience and she's intelligent."

She certainly wasn't alone — of the hundreds who came out to the Clinton caucus, the crowd was predominantly female, with about three women to every man. Many in attendance said this was the first time they had ever participated in the delegate process.

People in the hundreds attended the Sanders event, as well. Working the room, Siegel made his case for why he thought the Vermont senator was best positioned to lead the nation. Sanders winning the party nomination was becoming a distant long-shot, he said, but at least showing support for Sanders would pressure Clinton to adopt more of his policies.

"Clinton has a solid lock on election officials in her camp," Siegel said. "This is a way to show voters there are some local officials who are supporting Sanders as well."

Like a microcosm of American politics, the would-be delegates passed out stacks of fliers touting their endorsements and positions, and some candidates added a cookie or other snack to sweeten the deal. Many can-

didates banded together in slates and made stump speeches.

In a somewhat arcane process, each Democratic candidate's caucus gets to choose its own delegate list for each congressional district. For the 18th district, that means Clinton and Sanders supporters each selected eight delegates, along with one alternate. Based on the results of the June 7 primary, the delegates will be divided up proportionally in each congressional district.

Things are very different on the Republican side. For that party, the winning presidential candidate gets to choose his own delegates. California is a winner-take-all state for each congressional district on the Republican side.

### The results

Per the rules of the California Democratic Party, each district selects a set number for male and female delegates for Sanders and Clinton. The results of the June 7 primary will determine how many of each candidate's delegates will go to the party's convention.

For the 18th district, the delegates for Sanders in order of votes are:

#### Female

Carole Dorshkind  
Maralina Milazzo  
Susan Wolfe  
Carolyn Templeton

#### Male

Rishi Kumar  
Kenneth Carpenter  
Leonard Siegel  
Farbod Moghadam

#### Alternate

Robin Bougeja

For Clinton, the delegates are:

#### Female

Amy Pearl  
Elspeth Farmer  
Barbara Windham  
Prameela Bartholomeusz

#### Male

Shaian Mohommadi  
Sergio Lopez  
Jay Jackman  
Zachary Ross

#### Alternate

Adrienne Grey



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**AWARDS**

► *Continued from page 1*

■ Best news photo for “No relief in sight” of protesters at the City Council meeting seeking relief from skyrocketing rents.

The *Voice’s* design department, led by Kristin Brown, won first place for best inside page layout.

Second-place awards were given for: the profile feature story on community activist and cancer survivor Elena Pacheco entitled “A friend in deed,” by Noack and Le; coverage of education for Forestieri’s “Trouble with special education facilities” series about the Mountain View Whisman School District; online photo essay for Le’s coverage of a former Mountain View resident’s return to his family in violence-plagued Guatemala, titled “An American dream deferred;” artistic photo for Le’s “Puppet masters of Mountain View;” and best editorial comment for Associate Editor Renee Batti’s “A superintendent’s resignation. Honestly?” about the circumstances surrounding the departure of Mountain View Whisman district’s Craig Goldman.

In addition, *Voice* staffers were named Blue Ribbon finalists, meaning they finished in third or fourth place, for eight entries.

Le was awarded two Blue

Ribbons in the artistic photo category, for her entries “A rough path” and “Chicken at the door;” for the photo essay that accompanied “A friend in deed;” and for the news photo “Housing crisis.”

Forestieri was named a Blue Ribbon finalist for his coverage of education for the series of articles “Controversy surrounds superintendent’s departure” and for best investigative reporting for “University withholds earthquake safety data.”

Noack and Le were honored with a Blue Ribbon in best enterprise news for “Makeshift RV camps spark concern.”

Gemmet received recognition in the category of best editorial comment for “A strange definition of transparency,” about the Mountain View Whisman district’s withholding of public documents during a special election for a new trustee.

“We so appreciate this recognition,” Gemmet said as she accepted the General Excellence award Saturday. “I have a small, hard-working staff and they’re out there every day, trying to give a voice to people in every corner of our community. I am so proud of them.”

The *Voice’s* sister paper, the Palo Alto Weekly, was awarded the top prize for Online General Excellence and 12 more first- and second-place awards. ■

—*Mountain View Voice staff*

**CSA**

► *Continued from page 8*

who are vital to this community, and when they go home at night they don’t have access to these services,” he said.

Because needy families are working longer hours and sometimes multiple jobs, CSA is going to experiment with more flexible hours of operation, giving clients a chance to pick up food and get access to social workers during evening hours and over the weekend. In order to meet the demand, Myers said CSA will need to hire more staff, and bolster the ranks of the roughly 650 volunteers who help the non-profit throughout the year.

New staffing could mean more senior case managers to handle the growing number of elderly North County residents who can’t afford the rising cost of living. The number of clients who receive senior services from CSA has remained level over the last five years, but only because it lacks the staff and funding to handle bigger caseloads, according to the strategic plan. CSA’s senior lunch program, which is not bound by the same cost constraints, has seen a big increase in the number of seniors coming in — from 879 in 2010 to 1,384 in 2015.

**Finding a new home**

Because so many residents are coming to CSA seeking refuge from big rent increases, the agency recently added a new position specifically to help families find an affordable place to live — even if that home ends up being pretty far away.

Housing Case Manager Nicole Nosich has spent the last month as CSA’s go-to person for helping clients find a new home, which includes an exhaustive search for available affordable housing units and apartments in Mountain View and in the surrounding region. While the position is still new, Nosich said the goal is to build relationships with local landlords to encourage them to take on new tenants through CSA at a “fair” rental rate.

While most residents who come to Nosich want to continue living in the area and do not want to relocate, many of the 11 clients she has worked with so far simply can’t afford the high cost of housing, prompting some tough conversations.

While CSA will spend the next few years finding new ways to keep residents housed and prevent them from falling into homelessness, the organization already has a few tools at its disposal. In December last year, the Mountain View City Council

awarded CSA \$150,000 to support residents who get hit with rent increases of 10 percent or higher. The money can be used to subsidize the rent hike for up to six months, Nosich said, giving clients time to figure out a way to pay the increased cost or find a new place to live. Nosich said she was not sure how long the \$150,000 would last.

The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors recently approved \$225,000 in additional funding to CSA over three years to pay for emergency rental assistance, specifically to help low-income residents pay for rent over a two-month period rather than long-term rental relief. The goal of the program is to prevent families from becoming homeless during an emergency situation, like a job loss or medical emergency.

Myers said the evolving role of CSA is going to require an ambitious fundraising plan, leveraging resources from individual donations and support from corporations and businesses. At the same time, he said, the organization needs to kick off a marketing campaign to let people know that CSA is out to help the community.

“We need more people to know that CSA exists,” Myers said. ■

*Email Kevin Forestieri at kforestieri@mv-voice.com*



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**# 2 Buyer Representation CB Los Altos, 2014, 2015**

**COMPOSTING**

► Continued from page 5

manager.

“The result seems to be that you get more food scraps if you reduce garbage service,” she said. “People are motivated then.”

But that doesn't necessarily mean they were happy with the new program. Surveys conducted following the pilots indicated fewer than half the respondents were satisfied with the program. While it felt like an upstanding thing to separate food scraps, in practice it was difficult for some households, said Ben Dodson, a resident who participated in the program.

“We felt good about it as citizens of the Earth, but having bi-weekly garbage was stressful for us,” he said. “We have an infant in diapers so our trash filled up quickly. By day six, you look in at your garbage and it's pretty full, and you have eight more days to go.”

At the April 26 meeting, the public speakers who shared their experiences mirrored the city's survey results — it was roughly a split between enthusiastic supporters and those worried about smelly garbage cans spilling into the street.

The test phase indicated that starting a biweekly pick-up schedule would be the cheapest food-scrap program (about \$80,000 annually) and would divert the most garbage (about 3,500 tons each year). But city staff noted other options were on the table. Keeping a weekly schedule would cost about \$435,000 each year, but it would generate about one-third more trash. Another pricier idea would be to equip all homes with new split garbage cans with separate sides for garbage and food waste.

City council members across the board voiced their support for waste reduction, but they were still divided on the decision. Councilman Lenny Siegel said he had heard concerns from too many constituents to believe that a biweekly schedule was a good idea. He backed the more expensive option to keep garbage service weekly.

“People feel like they're getting half the service for the same price,” he said. “Many find the garbage is seriously smelly after one week. That is a deterioration in service that I'm not willing to impose on myself or other residents.”

Yet a thin council majority backed the scaled-down trash-pickup. While the switch would be painful for some, the city's plan would still be flexible for special circumstances. Councilman Chris Clark pointed out

that families could pay extra for weekly service if they need it.

“(Biweekly) service increases our trash diversion, and that's what we're going for,” he said. “It makes you think twice before throwing something out, and that's where we ultimately want to get to.”

The food-scraps discussion was a study-session, meaning that no definitive vote was taken on a final program. Staff noted they would bring back details on a final food-scraps program later this year. ■

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

**CRIME BRIEFS**

► Continued from page 4

Police say the search warrant was a collaborative effort between multiple law enforcement partners that helped to diffuse a potentially dangerous situation.

—Kevin Forestieri

**MOLESTATION, CHILD PORN ARREST**

A 54-year-old man accused of molesting a boy for about eight years was arrested in Los Altos Hills last week, a Santa

Clara County sheriff's spokesman said.

Gregory Helfrich was arrested on suspicion of child molestation and possession of child pornography, sheriff's Sgt. James Jensen said Wednesday, May 4.

Helfrich is suspected of sexually assaulting and showing child pornography to the victim, who was between the ages 5 and 12 at the time, Jensen said. The victim is now a man in his late 20s, according to Jensen.

Detectives learned about the case and served a search warrant at Helfrich's home in the 2100 block of Old Page Mill Road on

April 27, Jensen said.

They found printed pictures of child pornography in Helfrich's bedroom. On his computer, detectives found additional child pornography through his Internet searches and websites saved under his “Favorites” folder, Jensen said.

Helfrich was arrested and booked into Santa Clara County Jail, where he is being held without bail.

Anyone with information on the case is asked to call the sheriff's office detective unit at (408) 808-4500.

—Bay City News Service



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