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MICHELLE LE

The Mountain View Whisman School District, which has come under fire for its fractious and unproductive board meetings, has two seats up for election on Nov. 8.

Candidates seek to turn a new leaf for Mountain View Whisman

THREE NEWCOMERS AND ONE APPOINTED INCUMBENT COMPETE TO LEAD
ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT OUT OF TUMULTUOUS PERIOD

By Kevin Forestieri

The Mountain View Whisman School District is at a critical juncture heading into the November election. Ambitious plans to build a new school, fix attendance boundaries and ease overcrowding all hang



in the balance, and myriad plans are in place to bridge the achievement gap in the city's most under-performing and

high-needs schools.

The district has been in a state of flux over the last two years, with changes in top leadership — a new superintendent, a new chief business officer and a new director of English-language learner

► See **SCHOOL BOARD**, page 8

Council OKs neighborhood parking permit program

RESIDENTS MAY PETITION TO RESTRICT PARKING, FOR A FEE

By Mark Noack

As Mountain View bursts at the seams with traffic, residents may want to rethink whether on-street parking should be taken for granted. In a new program approved by the City Council Tuesday, indi-

vidual neighborhoods can petition city officials for a local parking permit system, essentially excluding anyone who doesn't reside in the area.

The program comes as some residents complain that their neighborhoods are being used daily as parking lots. Downtown

residents say that their street parking is being occupied by office workers and Caltrain commuters. Meanwhile, other areas of town have become de-facto trailer camps with people living out of their vehicles.

The new Residential Parking Permit program allows a neighborhood of at least three contiguous blocks to request the city to restrict parking to permitted cars. To do this, those in the neighborhood would need to submit a petition signed by at

► See **PARKING**, page 17

Council approves \$200K for new homeless programs

MULTI-PRONGED EFFORT AIMS TO BRING SERVICES
AND HOUSING TO PEOPLE LIVING IN CARS

By Mark Noack

Following months of studying the growing number of people living in their cars, the Mountain View City Council on Tuesday approved a master strategy to provide homeless services and open more shelters.

The multifaceted plan calls for a variety of short-term services, including mobile showers, restrooms and laundry machines, as well as plans to help transition the homeless population into permanent homes. In total, city leaders approved spending just under \$200,000 to help fund the package, with additional money from a variety of other government partners.

"I think Mountain View deserves a great deal of credit for this," said Tom Myers, director of the Community Services Agency. "Very few cities in the county are taking this on."

The mounting number of vehicle-dwellers on Mountain View streets first emerged as a political issue late last year, as many low-income residents were urging the city to address rapidly rising apartment rents.

As housing grew ever more pricey, dozens of motorhomes, trailers and other vehicles began lining city roads where there are minimal parking restrictions, such as Latham Street, Space Park Way and Crisanto Avenue.

The population living out of their cars includes some who have been homeless for years but also a significant number of employed people who find it unaffordable to live in the area. Even some relatively well-paid employees at Google and NASA have related how it made more

sense to live in their cars than spend most of their salaries on housing.

The transformation of some streets into ad hoc trailer parks has infuriated many neighbors, who complain that the car-dwellers are a nuisance. Speaking to the council Tuesday, Chris Keller, a resident near Latham Street, described how the large motorhomes lining his street were creating traffic hazards and taking up all the street parking in the area. He urged the council to impose parking restrictions.

"I can put up with people sleeping in a station wagon, but these Winnebagos are a menace," he said. "It's nice that this is a homeless-oriented proposal, but for those of us who have invested our savings in this block, this has been going on for three years."

First addressing the vehicle-dwelling problem last November, city officials said that their goal was to avoid a lazy fix, such as using parking rules or code enforcement to essentially shoo the homeless into the next town. To that end, the city manager's office spent an enormous amount of time — about 960 staff hours — to collect data and meet with stakeholders to design what city staff members described as a solid set of 27 suggestions.

In a survey conducted by a contract firm in June, about 128 vehicles across Mountain View were counted as likely to be inhabited. The survey team interviewed 70 individuals living out of their cars, roughly half of whom were single men living alone. Just under half of the car-campers said they had

► See **HOMELESS**, page 7



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Voices

AROUND TOWN

Asked in downtown Mountain View. Photos and interviews by Sanjana Garg

If you had a blank check, what would you do with it?



"I would buy meals for kids at school so they don't have to worry about food. I would do it for the entire school district."

Linda Gross, Mountain View



"Nothing in specific, but probably something around disease research: fibrosis or cancer."

Nathanael Han, Morgan Hill



"Some kind of pet rescue center."

Tony Gross, Mountain View



"I would put it towards medical research, try to find the cure to cancer. It's becoming the No. 1 killer and the most devastating disease."

Joanna Sylman, Mountain View



"Crohn's (disease) and colitis research. I have a child with severe pancolitis refractive Crohn's, which means his immune system is trying to eat his digestive system, and most drugs don't help."

Matthew Kagle, Mountain View



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Water System Flushing

The City of Mountain View will begin flushing the water system north of Cuesta Drive on August 15, 2016. Flushing helps to maintain water quality by removing accumulated sand and sediment from water lines. Signs and barricades will be posted in neighborhoods the day before flushing begins. Flushing north of Cuesta Drive is anticipated to be complete by the end of November 2016.

If you would like more information about the City's water system flushing program or have questions or concerns while City personnel are in your neighborhood, please contact the Public Services Division at (650) 903-6329 or visit the City's website at www.mountainview.gov.

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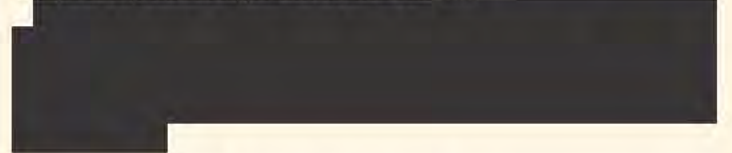
CRIME BRIEFS

THREE ARRESTED ON DRUG POSSESSION CHARGES

Two men and one teenager were arrested in Mountain View over the weekend after they were seen "acting suspiciously" and found to be in possession of several illicit drugs and hundreds of prescription pills, Mountain View police said.

Police say that officers spotted the three suspects walking along the 500 block of San Antonio Road a little after 4 a.m. on Saturday morning, and were concerned that they may have been under the influence of drugs or alcohol.

Officers stopped and searched the suspects and allegedly found ecstasy, marijuana and LSD, as well as hundreds of pills, including the prescription drugs Xanax and Valium.



TWO CONCERT-GOERS ARRESTED

Police arrested two people on battery charges after both allegedly attacked concert-goers and Shoreline Amphitheatre staff at the Florida Georgia Line country concert on Saturday.

The first of the two incidents occurred around 9 p.m. on Oct. 1, when officers patrolling Shoreline Amphitheatre received reports that a man was pushing people at one of the kiosks inside the venue. Witnesses told officers that the man, later identified by police as 38-year-old San Jose resident Damon Cox, pushed a woman to the ground and punched a man in the face, according to police spokeswoman Katie Nelson.

Both victims were attending the concert with Cox, and officers said he appeared to be under the influence of alcohol, Nelson said. Cox was arrested on charges of battery with serious injury.

About 45 minutes later, officers responded to reports that a woman attending the concert had bitten one of the security guards. The security staff at the concert told police that the woman, 23-year-old Pinole resident Viviana Morales, had punched one of the medical staff working at the amphitheater. When two security guards tried to detain Morales, she allegedly bit both of them. Officers later determined that Morales was intoxicated during the incident, Nelson said.

No one was seriously injured, though both guards had bite marks on their wrists and arms, Nelson said. Morales was later put under citizen's arrest for misdemeanor battery, Nelson said.

—Kevin Forestieri

POLICE LOG

AUTO BURGLARY

1500 block N. Shoreline Blvd., 9/28
2000 block W. El Camino Real, 9/28
2400 block Charleston Rd., 9/29
1000 block N. Rengstorff Av., 10/1
300 block Showers Dr., 10/2

BATTERY

1 block Sierra Vista Av., 9/28
1700 block Miramonte Av., 10/1
300 block Castro St., 10/1
1 block Amphitheatre Pkwy., 10/1
1 block Amphitheatre Pkwy., 10/1
1 block Amphitheatre Pkwy., 10/1
1 block Amphitheatre Pkwy., 10/1
600 block San Antonio Rd., 10/3

COMMERCIAL BURGLARY

900 block N. Shoreline Blvd., 9/28
2400 block Charleston Rd., 9/29

GRAND THEFT

200 block Escuela Av., 9/28

800 block Central Av., 10/1

POSSESSION OF STOLEN PROPERTY

500 block Ortega Av., 9/30

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

100 block Darya Ct., 9/30
1700 block Walnut Dr., 10/1
1400 block Brookdale Av., 10/1

STOLEN VEHICLE

1000 block Grant Rd., 9/28
100 block Escuela Av., 9/29
700 block Continental Cir., 9/29

VANDALISM

1400 block Plymouth St., 9/28
200 block Ada Av., 9/29
200 block Ada Av., 9/29
1200 block Grant Rd., 9/30
400 block Castro St., 10/3
200 block Hans Av., 10/3
2600 block Casey Av., 10/3

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MICHELLE LE

Boyan Slat, the 22-year-old CEO of the Ocean Cleanup, talks about his plans to tackle the huge oceanic garbage patches in front of the specially rigged C-130 Hercules plane at Moffett Federal Airfield on Oct. 3.

Ocean Cleanup targets garbage vortex

AERIAL TOUR PREPARES FOR YOUNG ENVIRONMENTALIST'S PLAN TO SWEEP UP VAST FLOATING PATCHES OF PLASTIC DETRITUS

By Mark Noack

In the ocean about a thousand miles off the coast of California is the edge of what is known as the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, a swirling trash dump that can be considered an environmental manifestation of modern civilization's sins.

The plastic bag that goes down the storm drain, the fishing net that goes adrift, the plastic straw that blows overboard a cruise ship — from California to Japan, that junk

could eventually join the growing garbage vortex. According to conservative estimates, the garbage patch has accumulated about 250,000 tons of debris, much of it consisting of plastics that don't break down easily and without posing harm to marine life.

What to do about the ocean garbage patch has become one of the most pressing environmental problems of the day. On Monday morning, Oct. 3, Moffett Federal Airfield played host to the Ocean Cleanup, an international nonprofit pursu-

ing an ambitious plan to use the very ocean flows that helped concentrate the garbage patch as a way to purge it.

In a press conference on the airfield tarmac, the Ocean Cleanup CEO Boyan Slat delivered an update on his brainchild to set up networks of V-shaped floating barriers throughout the ocean gyres as a means to passively collect marine debris. Within 10 years, Slat believes that about half the debris in the garbage patch could be swept

► See **OCEAN CLEANUP**, page 6

Council candidates near limit on political spending

LATEST REPORT SHOWS CANDIDATES RAISE FUNDS THAT EXCEED CITY'S VOLUNTARY LIMITS

By Mark Noack

As the final push begins for the Nov. 8 election, Mountain View's eight City Council candidates have amassed sizable war chests to spend in the remaining weeks of their campaigns.

In financial disclosure reports covering the period between July 1 and Sept. 24, former Councilwoman Margaret Abe-Koga led the pack with more than \$27,000 in collected donations. Following close behind are first-time council candidates Lucas Ramirez and Thida Cornes, who raised about \$26,000 and \$25,700, respectively.

But even though these candidates have collected the most money, they will be prohibited from spending it all in pursuit of a council seat. Under Mountain View's voluntary expenditure limit that all eight candidates signed onto, they are prohibited from spending more than \$24,073 each for this council race.

That spending limit spurred Abe-Koga in recent weeks to return \$1,500 to Prometheus Real Estate Group and \$1,000 to the Mountain View Professional Firefighters Local 1965, two of her largest donors.

In an email to the *Voice* Ramirez explained his excess donations apparently came from online contributions to his website. He pledged to keep his spending below the limit, and

perhaps roll any surplus money into a future campaign or use it for office expenses, depending on what the city code allows. His largest donations from the most recent reporting period include a \$300 contribution from school board member Bill Lambert and a \$250 check from Los Altos resident Susan Russell.

Cornes also pledged to stay below the voluntary spending limit. Any additional funds would be banked for a possible re-election run, she said via email. Her largest new donations include \$500 from GreyStar Development and \$250 from Mountain View resident Jennifer Urmson.

Staying just under the expenditure limit is Councilman Chris Clark, who has collected a little under \$24,000. Notable donations include \$1,500 from Mountain View Chamber of Commerce CEO Tony Siress and \$200 from Silicon Valley Leadership Group President Carl Guardino, but his greatest benefactor has been himself, with a \$10,000 loan made to his own campaign.

Just behind Clark is Environmental Planning Commissioner Lisa Matichak, who has collected more than \$19,000, much of it from a fundraising blitz in the last three months. Her biggest reported donations were \$1,203 from Curtis & Voytilla Properties and \$1,500 from the

► See **CAMPAIGN FINANCE**, page 17

Apartment group's mailer is foul play, Measure V backers charge

By Andrea Gemmet

A campaign mailer exonerating one of Mountain View's two rent control measures on the Nov. 8 ballot has Measure V backers crying foul. Put out by the California Apartment Association, the mailer appears to say that the nonpartisan California Legislative Analyst's Office has found that Measure V "hurts renters and Mountain View."

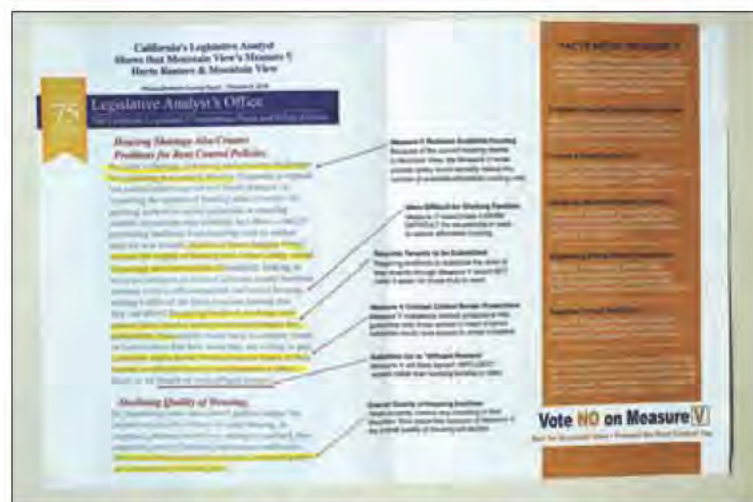
A closer read of the mailer shows that the Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) report cited dates back to early February, several months before the ballot initiative that would become Measure V was put forward.

"I just want to make clear that we do not take positions on state or local measures," said Mac Taylor, a legislative analyst with the LAO. "(The report) was written six months ago, before we'd even heard of it."

The LAO report cited in the mailer is "Perspectives on Helping Low-Income Californians Afford Housing." Taylor told the *Voice* that he was familiar with the Mountain View mailer because the LAO has been receiving calls about it.

"The report didn't focus on rent control; it had one additional paragraph (on) how expensive it would be if you wanted to help

► See **MAILER**, page 16



An anti-Measure V mailer landed in Mountain View mailboxes recently.

OCEAN CLEANUP

► Continued from page 5

by the currents into these barriers, like a broom with a dustpan. For this to be effective, each barrier would need to be built on a massive scale, stretching about 60 miles wide. Slat described his idea as letting “the ocean currents to do the hard work for us.”

The concept has attracted a huge outpouring of support as well as controversy. Slat, a precocious 22-year-old from the Netherlands, said he was inspired to take on marine trash after diving off the coast of Greece and seeing more garbage bags than fish. After promoting his idea for the Ocean Cleanup in a 2012 TED talk, he skyrocketed to fame as a young environmental champion who focused his ambition on solving a global problem. His nonprofit was subsequently showered with \$2.2 million in funding as well as top honors from the U.N. Environment Programme and various global innovation groups.

But the idea left plenty of room for skepticism. Critics have questioned whether Slat’s proposal could work since it would require anchoring dozens of vast structures to the ocean floor, thousands of feet deeper and more distant than anything previously attempted.

Many environmentalists who have worked for years on reducing marine pollution also found Slat’s idea troubling on a fundamental level. Even if the Ocean Cleanup was effective, they fear it would essentially enable the same wasteful practices that generated the garbage patch in the first



MICHELLE LE

The Ocean Cleanup crew members take their positions inside the modified C-130 Hercules during a press tour Oct. 3.

place. The solutions to marine garbage need to start on land by clamping down on plastics consumption, explained Stiv Wilson, a former spokesman for 5Gyres, a marine-pollution nonprofit.

“No one outside of the Ocean Cleanup thinks this is a good idea,” Wilson wrote in an email to the *Voice*. “It’s a media darling.”

Headquartered in the Netherlands, the Ocean Cleanup has recently expanded to the Mountain View area to perform a series of aerial surveys of the Pacific garbage patch. In fact, Slat’s reason for being at the Moffett Field tarmac was to showcase

his nonprofit’s survey expedition and to invite the media to tour his aircraft. The plane is a C-130 Hercules that had flown in the Vietnam War, and more recently was used in the film *Fast & Furious 7* to drop cars over the Arizona desert at 12,000 feet. For this new job, the plane was outfitted with a lidar scanner designed to track any floating ocean plastics.

Last year, the Ocean Cleanup organized a fleet of 30 sea vessels to cross the Pacific garbage patch in what they called the “Mega Expedition.” Slat explained that the new aerial survey would help determine the concentration and size of the plastic detritus, infor-

mation necessary for the Ocean Cleanup to properly design its barrier structures. In a press release prepared for the event, the nonprofit announced its first air survey performed on Sunday had discovered that plastic pollution was greater than expected. They noted an abundance of objects larger than a half-meter in size, including “ghost nets” — masses of tangled fishing gear.

“It’s safe to say it’s worse than we thought, and it underlines the need to take care of this now,” Slat said, pointing out that these plastics would eventually break down, get consumed by marine life and enter the food chain.

Results from the survey are to be published by the end of the year.

Reporters and an entourage of other visitors toured the inside of the Hercules airplane, which left barely enough room to maneuver. In order to make the lengthy flights, the plane is equipped with two extra fuel tanks that occupied most of the interior. The flight crew explained that when they approach the Pacific garbage patch, they would open the rear ramp to allow the lidar system mounted out of the back of the aircraft to begin scanning the ocean surface. Meanwhile, the 20 crew members — all harnessed securely — were split into three observation teams, one watching from the cockpit while the other two are spotting from sides. The total cost for the aerial operation was running about \$400,000, a price that was relatively low due to the discounted costs from sympathetic corporate partners, explained Julia Reisser, project manager and oceanographer for the Ocean Cleanup. The group is also considering someday using satellites to continuously track ocean pollution.

“It was very surprising to see so many big objects,” she explained. “When you’re out on a boat you get a very different perspective.”

The Ocean Cleanup is currently working to raise funds for its pilot project to test out the ocean barrier idea. The operation is expected to cost \$15 million and is expected to begin sometime next year. If all goes smoothly, a full deployment of the ocean cleanup barriers could begin by 2020. ▣

Email Mark Noack at mnoack@mv-voice.com



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HOMELESS

► *Continued from page 1*

previously lived in permanent housing in Mountain View, and the high cost of rent was the most frequent reason given for why they were now living on the street. More than half of the survey participants said they were employed.

While city officials didn't necessarily endorse people living in their cars, they recognized that many of these vehicle-dwellers didn't have many other options. Eventually city officials would look to restrict people living on the street, but for now the emphasis is on providing services and shelter, said City Manager Dan Rich.

"The philosophy to date has been, until there's alternatives and options for folks, we aren't going to go down that path," he said. "Ultimately, we do need to circle back and probably come up with other enforcement options."

In an idea endorsed by the council back in February, the city agreed to contract with Dignity on Wheels to bring a mobile shower and laundry truck on a weekly basis to the CSA parking lot. In addition, Mountain View will pay to equip CSA with an additional commercial washing machine and clothes dryer.

In a meeting earlier this year, people living out of their vehicles along Crisanto Street urged the City Council to consider keeping the public restrooms at nearby Rengstorff Park open overnight. The suggestion received support from council members as an easy action to take, but on Tuesday city staff said it would require having park ranger work through the night, at a cost of \$96,000 a year. They suggested a better plan would be to install a Port-A-Potti, at an annual cost of about \$10,000. Mountain View police Chief Max Bosel explained that leaving the restrooms open would be make it difficult for officers to ensure that people weren't loitering at the park when it was closed for the night. That scenario presents a crime risk, he warned.

"The parks are closed (at night) for a reason, that's to control an area that's not well-lit," he said. "It's a way to eliminate a location for a period of time in darkness when crimes could be committed."

Some City Council members said they found this argument hard to fathom. Mayor Pat Showalter pointed out that the restroom was at the edge of the park property, making it easy for people to access with-

out going through Rengstorff Park. For that matter, if the city brought in a Port-A-Potti, it would still be need to staged at the park, she said.

"I don't understand the staff position," said Councilman Lenny Siegel. "I'd prefer using real plumbing and having people able to wash their hands at Rengstorff Park. This is one area where I think we might be able to do more."

In the end, the council opted to go with the staff suggestion in a 4-3 vote with Siegel, Showalter and Councilman John Inks opposed.

'I can put up with people sleeping in a station wagon, but these Winnebagos are a menace.'

MOUNTAIN VIEW RESIDENT
CHRIS KELLER

Another point of contention emerged over a desire by council members to establish a local waste-disposal site where motorhome-dwellers could safely empty their septic tanks. Currently, the nearest facilities to handle that job are located in Morgan Hill or Redwood City, and officials expressed concerns that some people would be tempted to illegally dump their waste down the storm drains.

But installing a waste-disposal site would be expensive, about \$250,000 according to staff estimates, and it would also require ongoing maintenance costs. City Council members urged staff to investigate some cheaper way to make it work.

As long-term solutions, Mountain View will encourage people living out of their vehicles to relocate off the streets. Various churches throughout the area have expressed interest in helping out by hosting a few car-campers in their parking lots. Mountain View staff suggested the city could reimburse the churches for the cost of liability insurance, which would run up to \$1,000 per year. Pastor Brian Leong of the Lord's Grace Christian Church said about 10 congregations in the area could immediately take in car-campers as soon as the liability coverage issue is settled. He explained that churches would likely open their parking lots from the early evening to the

early morning in order to avoid disrupting other church programs.

The local faith community could also be tapped to help establish a new rotating shelter program. This system calls for churches or other organizations to trade off being a homeless shelter each month. This idea had been successful in the South Bay for about 20 years, but it was abandoned in 2010 due to a lack of funding.

Santa Clara County officials at the meeting signaled support and the promise of future funding to help establish more shelters in the area. If approved by voters next month, Measure A, the \$950-million affordable housing bond, would be instrumental in financing permanent homes across the area, said Ky Le, director of the county Office of Supportive Housing.

"We, as a community, need to find ways to meet the needs of homeless individuals and families and lessen the impact on residents," Le said. "If Measure A passes ... our goal would be to work with Mountain View staff to identify projects and help fund them."

The lone dissenter, Councilman Inks warned that the proposed services would turn Mountain View into a magnet for the homeless and said the city needed to do more to prepare for that outcome.

In a series of votes, the council approved the staff recommendations 6-1, with Inks opposed. ■

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Mountain View City Council



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SCHOOL BOARD

► Continued from page 1

programs — and a constant search for new faculty as the district hemorrhages teaching staff each year. Crushing cost-of-living increases in Mountain View and the Bay Area are partly to blame for the loss of about 20 percent of the district's teaching staff annually.

District parents, teachers and school officials often describe the last four years as rocky and tumultuous, caused in part by a divisive school board. A recent district-commissioned audit called the lengthy quarrels between board members at meetings ineffective and counterproductive. The dysfunction reached a tipping point last year, when board president Chris Chiang resigned and said he would pursue a recall election against trustee Steve Nelson.

This election could bring about some much-needed stability to a board that has been mired in one controversy after another. With two board members calling it quits this November — Bill Lambert and Nelson chose to step down at the end of their terms — one appointed incumbent and three other candidates are now vying for the three seats up for election. Regardless of who wins, the election will bring a big change of leadership for the district.

Laura Blakely, Peter Darrah and Tamara Wilson are seeking a seat on the board, each with the goal of turning over a new leaf for the district. The incumbent in the race, José Gutiérrez, was appointed to the board in August to replace Chiang.

Each candidate has called for rebuilding trust between the district and the school community, and vows to find ways for families across the district to feel represented and respected. The school board voted late last year to open a new school at Slater Elementary, and while the candidates' positions vary on whether it was a good idea at the time, they all agree that going forward, it's important to get the timing, the boundaries and the school design of Slater right the first time.

All four candidates agree that the new top staff has put the district on a better trajectory for improving student test scores, closing the achievement gap and wrapping up construction funded by the district's \$198 million Measure G bond. But each candidate brings his or her own perspective on how to raise performance among the district's low-income and minority students.



Tamara Wilson

Age: 43**Occupation:** Research geographer at the U.S. Geological Survey**Education:** M.A. in geography from the University of Arizona; B.A. in environmental studies from California State University East Bay**Website:** wilson4schools.org

Huff parent Tamara Wilson has been involved in Mountain View Whisman on a districtwide level for years; she is best known as an outspoken proponent for reopening a school in the northeast area of Mountain View. She joined a group of parents to form the "Reopen Slater" movement, which ultimately won the day when board members agreed last year to open a new elementary school on the existing campus.

While the Reopen Slater movement scored a big victory, Wilson said she would bring much more to the table if elected. A research geographer working with the U.S. Geological Survey, Wilson said she has a strong background in both science and education that would help her lead the district as a trustee. She has taught university-level classes, and tutored students with learning disabilities through a program called Strategic Alternative Learning Techniques. She earned a certificate in alternative and learner-centered teaching styles, and has volunteered at Castro through the Reading Partners program.

Wilson has a first-grader attending Huff. She said being a current district parent gives her a critically important perspective for helping to govern Mountain View schools.

Fighting and hostility have been a problem for the board, but Wilson believes she can reverse that trend if elected. As a board member, she said, she would put the "unity back in community," and she vows to avoid sinking the ship on one particular issue. Having the right temperament and listening to the community is key in representing district families, she said.

"It's hard to find the core reason for the dysfunction, but I think personalities matter," she said.

While teacher retention has posed a major problem for the district over the last four years, Wilson said the recent teacher contract — which includes an 8 percent raise and smaller class sizes at lower grade levels — is a big step in the right direction. She said property tax revenue continues to increase quickly in Mountain View, so the least the district can do is keep up with the salaries in comparable school districts. She said she plans to keep an open mind about the possibility of the district building teacher housing.

School construction and concerns about budget cuts and cost overruns remain a problem for the district, in part because planning has been sluggish since the passage of Measure G in 2012, Wilson said. Construction costs escalated year-to-year at a rapid rate, forcing up the cost of construction on projects beyond the original budget allocation. She pointed to the original budget allocation and cost changes at Mistral and Castro, which fluctuated between \$43 million and \$51 million. Other school community members felt they had a vested interest in cost overruns, out of fear that bond money would run out before their schools got their fair share.

"We needed to outline more clearly what was going to happen," she said.

Wilson said she agreed with the decision to open a new school at Slater Elementary, arguing that families in the area need a neighborhood school. In the near future, she said, demographic data shows there will be 720 students in the Whisman area who will need a nearby school. Residents in the northeast end of the city have had both of their local campuses — Slater and Whisman — leased out to private organizations for millions of dollars in annual revenue, and students in the area have been sent to Theuerkauf, Landels and Huff instead. She called for more collaborative planning between the city of Mountain View and the school district to make sure school facilities can meet the needs of new housing development in the city.

On the achievement gap, Wilson said she believes early intervention before students enter kindergarten is a must, and that boosting student achievement among low-income and minority students means working with trusted community leaders and institutions such as churches to promote education among the city's most needy kids.

Wilson's top priorities on the board would be to implement the district's new five-year strategic plan, including closing the

achievement gap, and fixing attendance boundaries. She said the district also needs to take steps to restore neighborhood schools, making sure children can attend their local school instead of traveling across town every day.



Peter Darrah

Age: 48**Occupation:** Computer engineering manager at AMD**Education:** B.S. in engineering from University of the Pacific, B.A. Latin American studies from Hampshire College**Website:** darrah.org

District resident and board candidate Peter Darrah has been steeped in some of the district's most challenging issues over the last 10 years, including recommending new boundaries, new schools and new construction projects. He is usually the first in line to join task forces and advisory boards, bringing his perspective as both a parent and as a husband of a first-grade teacher at Landels Elementary. He ran unsuccessfully for a board seat in 2012.

Darrah said there needs to be unity among school communities in Mountain View in order to take on big problems facing the district, and the first step is restoring faith in the school board. Dysfunction among the board members over the last four years has driven a wedge between the district's leadership and the rest of the community, which he said makes every important decision that much more difficult to make. The whole community needed to rally behind the renewal of the Measure C parcel tax earlier this year, he said, but plans to put the measure on the ballot in May fell through because two board members — trustees Greg Coladonato and Steve Nelson — voted against the measure.

"It should have been on the ballot this year," Darrah said. "Last fall it just went away with a whimper."

Darrah said he believes teachers must be paid enough to live in the area. Recruitment will

remain a tough problem every summer and fall, he said, if teachers are forced to live in Campbell or even farther away in order to pay for housing.

Darrah said he would do what it takes to avoid a top-down approach to teaching, and give plenty of latitude to individual teachers to come up with their own strategies in the classroom. But he was skeptical about district plans to explore a teacher-housing project, which he believes would only help a small subset of teachers instead of new staff coming in.

Regarding new school construction, Darrah said that it's easy, in hindsight, to criticize how the Measure G budget was handled over the last four years. Many of the problems related to over-budget construction were related to an "insurmountable" increase in construction costs in the area, he said.

"I think the district did as well as it could have," Darrah said.

One thing he would like to revisit is the idea that a new school will be opened at Slater Elementary alongside Google's preschool, which is now leasing the site. He said Slater may not be the best location for Google's preschool 30 or 40 years in the future, and that the district needs to take a long view regarding facilities.

Darrah was one of the Boundary Advisory Task Force members who voted last year against opening a new school at Slater, and said he still has some reservations about the board's decision to open a new school. He said he hasn't seen an end-to-end plan to open Slater without another school collapsing from declining enrollment, but he will nevertheless support the board's decision and acknowledge the growth in student population in the northeast end of the city.

"We should find a way to make it work," he said. "I think we owe it to the Whisman neighborhood."

Darrah said future policies on closing the achievement gap should focus on promoting early childhood reading and literacy, and that all students in the district should have strong literacy skills by the third grade. He said attendance boundaries and intra-district transfers have created segregated schools, with high concentrations of low-income and minority students on some campuses, which he believes is an obstacle to closing the achievement gap.

As a board member, Darrah's top three priorities would include restoring decorum to the board, strengthening the

► Continued on next page

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district office's bond with the school community to support major endeavors such as the parcel tax renewal, and finding ways to make sure all parents in the district are proud of their neighborhood school.



José Gutiérrez

Age: 46
Occupation: Patent litigation paralegal at Weil, Gotshal & Manges, LLP
Education: B.A. in religious studies, minor in ethnic studies at Santa Clara University
Website: joseforschoolboard2016.com
 Mistral parent José Gutiérrez

is the only incumbent in the race, but is still a newcomer to the board. He was appointed in August of last year to replace Chris Chiang. Eleven candidates vied for the seat, and the remaining four trustees chose Gutiérrez out of the crowded field. At the time, board members said Gutiérrez brought an important perspective from the Castro neighborhood, which has been underrepresented on the board.

As a board member, Gutiérrez said he draws on his experience as a student trustee at West Valley Community College, where his role was less about specific policy proposals and more about representing the will of his constituents. It was all about listening to the community about what programs and services needed to be preserved as the college district struggled its way through a recession, he said.

Gutiérrez said he plays much the same role in the Mountain View Whisman School District, cutting through drama and emotional baggage in order to get to the heart of each issue and focus on curriculum improvements. Camaraderie and teamwork are key to getting things done in the district, he said, and each discussion needs to come

back around to what's best for the students.

Over the last year, Gutiérrez has observed the hostility between board members up close, and he describes it as tough to sit through. His strategy over the last year has been to try to bring the discussion back to the topic at hand, and do what it takes to facilitate what he called a "desperately needed" dialogue between board members.

"When you're there and you know what has happened in the past, and it starts up again, it's shocking," he said. "The level of frustration is understandable, but we need to work together as a board."

At a time when Mountain View's middle- and working-class families are moving out because of the high cost of living, Gutiérrez said, he would support a teacher salary increase if the district can afford to pay for it. He said the district loses the time and energy each teacher invests in the community when that teacher leaves, which has a big effect on the schools. When there's no money in the district's coffers for pay increases, Gutiérrez said, he would offer teachers strong

instructional support and professional development opportunities. The idea of teacher housing is appealing, he said, but it remains very early in the discussion.

Gutiérrez said he is encouraged by the district's construction planning, which portions out a facilities budget for each school instead of determining costs in a piecemeal fashion. He said the district has made mistakes in the past by trying to alter plans at the last minute, including one instance where Mistral and Castro construction plans had been approved by the board, only for them to come back with new cost-saving cuts on the eve of the winter break. The move caused a lot of mistrust, Gutiérrez said, and prompted parents to come out in full force against the proposal. District officials ultimately went back to the original plan.

"Once you make a board decision, you stick with that decision," he said. "I don't want anyone to go through what they did at Castro and Mistral."

Gutiérrez was one of two trustees who voted late last year against opening Slater. He said he understood why the Boundary Advisory Task Force

recommended against opening a new school, and said there was no plan for how to pay \$30-plus million on a new school. But the board majority ruled in favor of the school, he said, and he is willing to follow through on that decision. Gutiérrez said that now there's a clear plan to finance the new school, which has changed his mind on opening Slater.

Gutiérrez said closing the achievement gap requires a multi-faceted approach including early childhood education, and intervention programs that will help students learning English so they don't lag behind in middle school. His goal is to make sure all students heading into either Mountain View or Los Altos High School are ready to succeed.

If elected, his top priorities include rebuilding trust with the community, closing the achievement gap and supporting teachers. He said he won't shy away from tough discussions related to race, class and gender when it comes to improving student achievement, and that he will keep an open mind in finding ways to improve teacher retention.

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- Santa Clara County League of Conservation Voters
- Silicon Valley Association of REALTORS® LC
- Mountain View Chamber of Commerce
- South Bay AFL-CIO Labor Council
- Planned Parenthood Advocates Mar Monte
- Mike Kasperzak**, Mountain View City Council member and former Mayor
- Tom Means**, Mountain View City Council member and Mayor (former)
- Jose Gutierrez**, Mountain View Whisman School District (MVWSD) Trustee
- Fiona Walter**, Mountain View Los Altos High School (MVLA) Trustee & former MVWSD Trustee
- Sanjay Dave**, MVLA Trustee
- Barbara Keegan**, Santa Clara Valley Water District Board of Directors

- Mountain View resident for 17 years.
- Parks and Recreation Commissioner since 2009 including two years as Chair.
- Co-founded Great Streets Mountain View, a non-profit that advocates for safe accessible streets for all.
- Measure G Oversight Committee (ensured \$198-million was invested in our schools)
- Earned MBA from UC Berkeley while working full-time in high-tech middle management.

www.thidacornes.com

Paid for by Thida Cornes for City Council 2016 FPPC#1378273

Lopsided campaign spending for LASD parcel tax

NO STRONG OPPOSITION CAMPAIGN AGAINST MEASURE GG

By Kevin Forestieri

Campaign spending on Measure GG, a \$223 parcel tax on property owners within the Los Altos School District, shows that proponents are raising plenty of money to

get the ballot measure passed this November. But district officials concede that they have a steep hill to climb this November to get the two-thirds vote required to pass the parcel tax, even if there isn't any money backing the opposition to the measure.

The "Yes on GG" committee has reported raising a total of \$51,220 from the beginning of the year through Sept. 24, a balance that is fueled by school PTAs across the district. So far, the PTAs at Covington, Springer, Loyola and Oak elementary schools have each contributed \$5,000, as has the PTA at Blach Intermediate School. The Los Altos Teachers Association pitched in \$5,500, according to the campaign finance report.

Big contributions from individuals include \$6,020 from Covington parent Jessica Speiser, who ran unopposed for the Los Altos School District board of trustees this year and will be appointed to the seat. Other notable contributions reported are \$2,500 from school board candidate Bryan Johnson and \$100 from school board candidate Tanya Raschke. Board member San-

geeth Peruri contributed \$1,000 to the campaign, and board member Tamara Logan, who plans to step down from the board this year, contributed \$500.

The parallels with the Measure N campaign in 2014 are striking. The committee for "Yes on N" raised just about the same amount of money over the same period in 2014, and the amount of money raised from each contributor — particularly the \$5,000 PTA contributions — are identical.

In the past, the Bullis Charter School community has mostly abstained from the Los Altos School District's parcel tax campaigns, but not this year. Because Measure GG is written to include Bullis as a beneficiary, parents and staff at the charter school have come out in support of Measure GG. This is reflected in the campaign contributions: The

Bullis-Purissima Elementary School Foundation contributed \$5,000, and Bullis board members John Phelps and Thomas Dennedy each contributed \$500.

Of the \$13,195 reported spent through Sept. 24, almost all of it went to pay consultant fees. The campaign paid San Francisco-based TBWB Strategies \$12,591 between July 1 and Sept. 24 this year. The campaign balance as of Sept. 24 was \$47,294, meaning there's plenty of money to spend through the final month of the campaign.

No campaign committee was created to raise money and oppose Measure GG, but polling data from the district suggests it will be a close election regardless. Similar to Measure N, which passed by a thin margin, many district residents are expected to oppose Measure GG because of a general anti-tax sentiment. ■

SCHOOL BOARD

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Laura Blakely

Age: 56
Occupation: Attorney with GCA Law Partners, LLP
Education: BA in Latin American studies from Yale University; JD from the University of California, Berkeley
Website: lauraforschoolboard.net

It seems that just about everyone in the Mountain View Whisman School District knows Laura Blakely, a resident of Old Mountain View who has stayed active in the district for 14 years straight. Some might remember her as a volunteer at Landels Elementary, where her kids went to school, but over the last decade she has shifted her focus toward districtwide initiatives and goals.

Those initiatives include securing millions of dollars in extra school funding each year, which bolsters school programs across all of the city's schools. Blakely chaired the campaign to pass the district's Measure C parcel tax in 2008, which passed with an overwhelming 79.8 percent of the vote. She was also part of a team of parents who started the

"Share Shoreline" movement, which helped to secure millions of dollars in property tax money that had been diverted to the Shoreline Regional Park Community district. Her involvement in these broad district initiatives, she said, has helped give her the perspective she needs for the school board.

If elected to the board, Blakely said, she would make it a priority to ensure that school board meetings run more smoothly, and avoid the chaos that erupts between trustees and staff. She believes some steps have already been taken to improve board meeting decorum, including using a timer to limit board members' comments to just one or two minutes. She hopes that a buzzer won't be needed next year to keep members of the new board in line, she said.

Although teacher attrition showed no sign of slowing down this year, Blakely said the district has made strides toward improving conditions for teachers in recent years, including a major pay increase for the 2016-17 school year. At the same time, she said, there are still plenty of ways to support teachers beyond compensation, including training and professional development to make it more appealing to work in the district. The salary bump helps, she said, but it's important to help teach the teachers with new programs that promote things such as differentiated instruction.

Blakely said school construction projects, which have been a touchy issue for years, could have been planned better to avoid the headaches and heartaches resulting from projects going over budget. Whether it be cost overruns or changes to the scope of the project, the district has regularly grappled with cost cuts

at nearly every school campus, forcing parents and teachers to show up at board meetings to pressure board members to follow through with planned improvements at their schools.

"I think there have been multiple junctures where they've had to go back on projects with revisions," Blakely said.

On opening Slater, Blakely said she believes that much of the back and forth centered on whether demographic studies projected an adequate number of students to warrant opening a ninth elementary school — an inexact science that she said is always questionable for elementary school districts. Ultimately, she said, it's important for families to have a school nearby that they can call their own, and the district ought to avoid forcing families to travel out of the Whisman area.

"If I lived there, I would want to have a school in my area," she said.

As a trustee, Blakely said, she would focus on differentiated instruction and one-on-one teaching as well as after-school enrichment and extended-day class time in order to narrow the achievement gap. Consistency in teaching quality across all schools, which was cited as a major problem in the district's audit report, would also be a goal, she said.

Blakely's top priorities as a trustee would be to focus on kids and teachers, not school facilities, and enrich education for the high number of kids "in the middle," rather than just high- and low-achieving students. Other priorities would be to re-establish trust between the district office and the community, and focus on listening and keeping an open mind. ■

Email Kevin Forestieri at kforestieri@mv-voice.com



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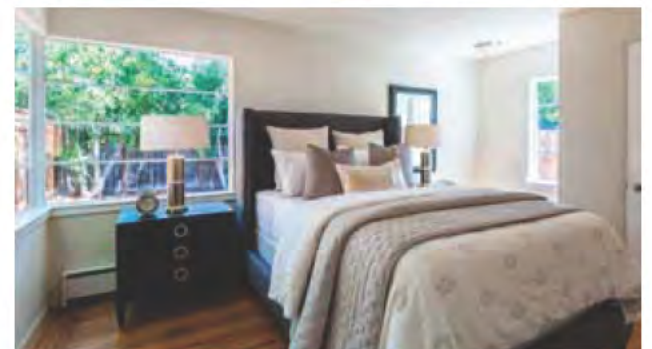
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LASD school board: two vie for one seat

TOP VOTE-GETTER WILL DETERMINE FUTURE SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION, BULLIS AGREEMENT AND BEYOND

By Kevin Forestieri

The Los Altos School District has been out of the spotlight in recent years, after signing a five-year agreement resolving major facilities issues with Bullis Charter School and securing \$150 million in bond money for campus construction projects through Measure N, which voters approved in Nov. 2014. But big decisions await the district's school board members, who will have to choose where to construct a new school, whether to buy expensive new land or redevelop an existing campus, and what to do when the cease-fire between Bullis and the district ends.

Who ultimately gets to make those decisions is up to the voters. This November, Mountain View residents living in the Los Altos School District will get to choose between two candidates running for a seat left vacant by board member Tamara Logan, who announced she will be resigning two years before her terms ends. Two district parents, Crossings resident Tanya Raschke and North Los Altos resident Bryan Johnson, are facing off this November for that open seat.

Two other board members, Pablo Luther and Steve Taglio, both had terms that expired in 2016, but the race for their seats is uncontested. Luther decided not to run for re-election, so incumbent Taglio and Covington parent Jessica Speiser will both be appointed to the board later this year.

The top issue facing board members is what to do with Measure N money, which has been a slow and arduous process for upwards of two years. District officials and board members say enrollment growth is squeezing all of the district's existing schools and threatening the "small school" model that they believe is the key to high student performance.

It still remains an open question, however, whether to buy land costing as much as \$15 million an acre for a new school, or use existing district land at sites like Covington and Egan to build a new school. The intent for the bond money was to build a new school, possibly for Bullis Charter School, but even that has yet to be determined by the board.

Both candidates have not been openly critical of the district's handling of Measure



N funds, and said they sympathize with the tough decision current board members face in figuring out what to do with the bond money. If an easy solution was out there, they agreed that the board probably would've done it by now.

The hope is that whatever decision the board arrives at, the new facilities will accommodate the as many as 900 students who expected to be enrolled in Bullis Charter School by the 2018-19 school year. Currently, charter school students are split between two campuses, including a cramped collection of portables housed on the edge of the Egan Junior High School campus.

Facilities decisions between the district and Bullis have been the source of controversy and lengthy legal battles for more than a decade, and the five-year facilities agreement hashed out between both parties in 2014 is temporary. Candidates say it will be important for the district to preserve the good will with the charter school and prevent another flare-up over facilities in the coming years.



Tanya Raschke

Age: 44

Occupation: Associate director at the Stanford Neuroscience Institute

Education: Ph.D in molecular and cell biology from the University of California, Berkeley; B.S. in biochemistry from Penn State University

Website: tanyaforlasd2016.com

Tanya Raschke has been a resident in the district for 11 years, and says she brings the kind of broad perspective needed

to represent school communities throughout the district. Raschke lives in Mountain View — and, if elected, would be the only board member from the city — and has two children who attended Bullis Charter School, Santa Rita and Loyola elementary schools.

Raschke has been active in her local schools, volunteering for things ranging from reading programs in the classroom to running the hot lunch program. She began to take a district-wide approach to volunteering when she served as a community organizer during the school boundary adjustments in 2007, and more recently when she served on the Facilities Master Plan Committee last year.

As a member of the committee, Raschke got to grapple with the premier question facing the district today: what to do with the Measure N money. She praised the committee for having diverse membership from all over the district, giving the school community a say on how the money ought to be spent on new schools and new facilities, and that it was unfortunate the district decided to mothball the committee in March last year.

If elected, Raschke said she would make sure the district fosters better relationships with the cities of Mountain View and Los Altos, which have been strained in recent years. District officials ran a joint committee with the city of Los Altos in hopes that some of its civic center land could be used for a new school site, but the partnership fell apart. The district office also sent several letters to the city of Mountain View urging city planners and council members to find "creative ways" to incorporate community benefits into residential programs in order to help the district build a new school.

"The school district has really stirred the pot in terms of public land use," Raschke said. "We need strong relationships with city agencies."

Though the school district is home to some of the top-performing schools in the state, Raschke said she would also do what it takes to close the achievement gap, and help students from low-income families, students with disabilities and English-language learners keep up with their peers. These students make up a small sliver of the district's population, but

they are just as important to focus on, Raschke said.

Raschke's endorsements include Mountain View City Council members Mayor Pat Showalter and councilmen John Inks, Mike Kasperzak and Lenny Siegel. Other city officials lending their support for Raschke include Los Altos City Council member Jean Mordo, and several Los Altos Hills council members John Radford, Gary Waldeck and Mayor John Harpoottlian.



Bryan Johnson

Age: 42

Occupation: Former software developer, stay-at-home dad

Education: M.S. in computer science from Stanford University

Website: bryanjohnsonforlasd.com

Santa Rita parent Bryan Johnson said he has been intensely involved in his local school for about a decade, opting to raise his kids at home and take a break from his career in enterprise software. The decision has allowed him to be an active PTA member at Santa Rita and chair school committees on earthquake preparedness, book fairs and read-a-thons. Johnson said his experience at the school has built a close connection between him and the district, as well as the teaching staff.

Johnson's work outside of Santa Rita includes joining the campaign committee to pass Measure N in 2014. If elected, Johnson said he would work post-haste to make sure all feasible options for how to spend the money are clearly presented to the community, changing the relatively slow tempo of facilities planning over the last two years. Earlier this year, the school board set a goal to figure out whether or not to purchase land by June, and decided to keep negotiating with private property owners on a price. Johnson

plans to take it a step further, and vows to have a solid plan on how to spend the money by the end of the 2016-17 school year.

Johnson's perspective is that the Measure N money ought to be spent in a way that affects day-to-day classroom activities to the "greatest extent possible," which includes the needs of existing schools as well. He said he is keeping an open mind, but would join the board skeptical of the plan to purchase land at such a high cost.

One of the big issues Johnson said he hopes to address on the board is teacher hiring and retention, which he said has been a big problem. The district has "lost a lot of good, young teachers," he said, because they can't afford to live within at least an hour from where they work, and there's simply not enough money in the annual district budget to pay salaries that keep up with the cost of living on in the Peninsula.

Johnson commended the district for finding creative ways "on the margin" for helping teachers, including a new program designed to help teachers get a low-cost loan for a down payment on a house, but said the discussion needs to continue. Cities and school districts in the area are dealing with the same problem, and Johnson said there's the potential for a strong partnership to find a broad solution for the housing crisis and public employee retention.

Santa Rita has the highest percentage of families who don't speak English, and many of the students in the higher grades are still classified as English-language learners, Johnson said. These students traditionally score lower than English-fluent students on standardized tests, and he said more needs to be done to make sure they thrive in Los Altos schools.

"We need to make sure every student has the support that they need, while also letting them find their passion," Johnson said.

Endorsements for Johnson include every current board member on the Los Altos School District Board of Trustees, as well as former board members Doug Smith and Mark Goines. Three former Los Altos mayors are also supporting Johnson's bid for the school board, as well as Jessica Speiser, who won her seat on the school board unopposed this year. ■

Email Kevin Forestieri at kforestieri@mv-voice.com

RON (rahn) n

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Local school board candidates keep spending low

By Kevin Forestieri

As candidates for public office reach the final month of campaign season, many of the Mountain View and Los Altos residents running for a seat on local school boards have kept spending to a minimum. Campaign finance documents show that most candidates kept spending below \$2,000 through Sept. 24,

with a few exceptions.

For the Mountain View Whisman School District, details on who contributed to the campaigns of Peter Darrah, Tamara Wilson and Laura Blakely were unavailable because none of the candidates spent or received money above the \$2,000 threshold for reporting. This isn't unusual for the district, which has put an emphasis on low-cost cam-

paigns in order to encourage more people to run. Over the last two months, Wilson and Blakely filed paperwork saying that they planned to stay below the \$2,000 threshold through the end of the election season.

The push for equal access, including prospective school board candidates who might not have deep pocketbooks, is baked into the school district's board bylaws, which states that the candidates only have to pay \$200 of the cost of printing, handling, translating and mailing candidate statements. The district will pick up the rest of the tab.

The appointed incumbent in the race, Jose Gutierrez, has raised \$2,960 from the beginning of the year through Sept. 24, which includes \$960 in loans to his own campaign. Notable contributions to his campaign include \$650 from Shannon Brown-Gutierrez, \$250 from former Mountain View councilwoman Margaret Abe-Koga and \$250 from Crossings resident Paul Simoes de Carvalho, according to the campaign finance report covering the period between July 1 and Sept. 24. He also received \$100 from former Mistral PTA president Sarah Livnat. Gutierrez is a parent at Mistral Elementary, where Carvalho's wife serves as principal. Other con-

tributions include \$500 from David Graham, a manager at PowerBeam Research, LLC, and \$150 from former Mountain View Whisman school board member Steve Olson.

Gutierrez's expenditures through Sept. 24 are a little over \$1,650. He reported spending about \$600 on campaign literature from Mountain View Printing, and \$500 on lawn signs.

In an email to the *Voice*, Wilson said that her campaign has seen a big outpouring of support for her candidacy, and that she has since filed amendment paperwork for receiving contributions beyond the \$2,000 threshold. The documents were not available as of the *Voice's* press deadline Wednesday.

Los Altos School District

Spending in the race for the open seat on the Los Altos School District Board of Trustees is noticeably higher. Crossing resident and district parent Tanya Raschke has raised a total of \$7,820 from the beginning of the year through Sept. 24, which includes \$1,940 in loans to her own campaign and a number of contributions amounting to less than \$100. Large contributions came from Fred Gallagher, who gave \$500 to Raschke's campaign, as well

as \$250 from Los Altos council member Jean Mordo, \$250 from Los Altos Hills council member Courtenay Corrigan and \$150 from Egan Junior High PTA committee chair Nancy Brebeau.

Raschke spent about \$2,500 of her campaign funds during the reporting period, of which \$1,924 was reported spent on campaign literature and lawn signs.

Santa Rita parent Bryan Johnson, who is also vying for a seat on the school board this November, has raised \$2,985 through Sept. 24 of this year, which includes \$500 in loans to his own campaign, as well as \$500 from current school board member Sangeeth Peruri and \$500 from Jessica Speiser, who will be appointed to a seat on the board this year. Johnson also received \$500 from Los Altos resident Sharon Clay, an engineer at Nvidia.

Smaller contributions include \$150 from El Camino Healthcare District board member John Zoglin, \$250 from Los Altos resident Claudia Coleman and \$200 from Los Altos resident Linda Orandi.

Johnson's campaign reported spending \$3,800 through the same period, which includes \$1,890 for the candidate statement, \$1,025 for yard signs, \$350 for photography services and \$300 for website services. ■

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MAILER

► Continued from page 5

low-income households directly through state or local subsidies," said Taylor. The report addresses why it's important for the private sector to be involved in building more housing, he said.

A spokesman for the Mountain View Tenants Coalition, which led the campaign to put Measure V on the ballot, offered a point-by-point rebuttal of nine items on the mailer that the group deemed to be misleading or false claims. Those include the assertion that Measure V creates a rent control tax, and that it expands beyond the restrictions on rent control laws imposed by the state's Costa-Hawkins Rental Housing Act.

Measure V abides by Costa-Hawkins' provisions, which exclude units built after 1995 from rent control, and impose a per-unit fee on landlords to fund the program, not a tax, said Daniel DeBolt, the YES on V communication coordinator.

"Voters need to consider the source of this mailer. The Cali-



75
YEARS

Legislative Analyst's Office
 The California Legislature's Nonpartisan Fiscal and Policy Advisor

California's Legislative Analyst Shows that Measure V Hurts Renters & Mountain View

The apartment association's mailer carries the logo of the state LAO.

fornia Apartment Association has been waging war against renter protections for decades, and their main weapon is misinformation," DeBolt said via email. "Voters should expect lots of inaccurate and deceptive mail from apartment owners until Election Day."

Joshua Howard, the apartment association's vice president,

defended the mailer and said that it printed verbatim the sections of the LAO report relative to rent control.

"What's clear is that the rent control scheme proposed in Measure V is a failed policy and will do nothing to address the real housing issues facing Mountain View families," Howard said via email. ■

PARKING

► Continued from page 1

least 51 percent of the residents living in the area. City officials say they would look to restrict parking only in neighborhoods where on-street parking is extremely limited, meaning it's at least three-quarters occupied during the busiest hours.

But setting up a parking-permit program will carry a cost for residents that may make some think twice. Residents living in area would have to pay an annual fee for every car they want to park on the street. For one permit, a household would have to pay about \$60 a year. That price would rise to about \$120 a year for the second or third permits per household. Each residence could also purchase up to two guest permits, each costing \$60 a year.

The city's rules for on-street parking have been tested in recent months as dozens of people lacking housing have begun living out of their cars. Over the last several months, many residents in these area have complained vehicle-dwellers were becoming a public nuisance, and they urged city officials to relocate them. At the Tuesday, Oct. 4 meeting, Councilman Mike Kasperzak wondered how the city could respond if residents in these neighborhoods pursued a parking-permit program intentionally to get rid of people living out of their cars. Nothing in the language of the city's residential parking permit program would explicitly prohibit this.

"Would the council be able to say the intent is being abused here?" Kasperzak asked.

City Attorney Jannie Quinn

declined to give a firm answer, but she said city officials would consider a neighborhood's proposal based on the criteria established by the council. The final decision on creating a parking-permit program would be made by the Council Transportation Committee, made up of councilmen John Inks, Lenny Siegel and Kasperzak.

Upon receiving a valid petition, Public Works staff would set the boundaries for a new parking zone and establish potential time restrictions. If approved by the transportation committee, staff would install new signs around the neighborhood explaining the permit system.

Councilman Siegel took issue with the added cost that would be put on residents to address

a parking situation caused by the city's rapid development.

"The city is getting revenues from all these new developments, and we're using it for our general fund, but the people absorbing

the physical costs aren't getting compensated," he said.

Siegel urged his colleagues to lower the costs for residential parking permits, but his suggestion was not included in the motion.

The first reading of the parking-permit ordinance was approved by the council in a 6-1 vote, with Siegel opposed. As part of the approval, the council agreed to allocate \$138,500 to the Public Works Department and \$193,600 to the Mountain View Police Department to administer the program. The council will need to approve the ordinance with a second vote at a future meeting. ▀

Email Mark Noack at mnoack@mv-voice.com

Residents would have to pay an annual fee for every car they park on the street.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE

► Continued from page 5

Mountain View Professional Firefighters. She also contributed \$5,000 to her own campaign.

Councilman John McAlister reported collecting about \$18,000. His notable recent donations include \$1,500 from Chamber CEO Siress, \$150 from Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian and \$250 from Mountain View Whisman School Board trustee Steve Nelson.

A late addition to the race, Mountain View Whisman School District trustee Greg

Coladonato has amassed just under \$5,000, including \$500 donations from Councilman John Inks and Chamber CEO Siress. Coladonato has loaned \$3,500 to his own campaign.

Trailing the race is another late entry, Cisco Systems manager Kacey Carpenter, who reported collecting less than \$1,900, which includes a \$500 loan to his own campaign. Santa Clara County Health Commissioner Michael Fishetti and former City Council candidate Greg Unangst both contributed \$127 to his campaign. ▀

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Breast Cancer: Advances in Diagnosis and Care

A COMMUNITY TALK

SPEAKERS

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Surgical Oncologist
- Kathleen Horst, MD
Radiation Oncologist
- Arash Momeni, MD
Reconstructive Plastic Surgeon
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- George Sledge Jr., MD
Medical Oncologist

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CITY OF MOUNTAIN VIEW NOMINEES FOR PUBLIC OFFICE AND MEASURES V AND W TO BE VOTED ON

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the following persons have been nominated for the offices mentioned below to be filled at the Municipal General Election to be held in the City of Mountain View on Tuesday, the 8th day of November 2016:

CITY COUNCIL (4 seats) (listed in the order as they will appear on the ballot as a result of the randomized alphabet drawing conducted by the Secretary of State):

Lucas Ramirez
Margaret Abe-Koga
Thida Cornes
Greg Coladonato
Ken "Kacey" Carpenter
Chris Clark
Lisa Matichak
John McAlister

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the following measures are to be voted on at the Municipal General Election to be held in the City of Mountain View on Tuesday, the 8th day of November 2016:

V Shall a Rent Stabilization CITY CHARTER AMENDMENT be adopted enacting rent regulation and prohibiting amendments except by Citywide election, with annual rent increases limited to the Consumer Price Index (minimum 2%, maximum 5%) for most multifamily rental units built before February 1, 1995; prohibiting evictions without just cause for rental units built before this measure becomes effective; creating a Rental Housing Committee authorized to enact regulations, hire staff, expend funds, and charge landlords fees to implement this amendment?

Impartial Analysis for Measure V

This measure is a charter amendment that would limit the amount that landlords could increase the rent, and prohibit landlords from evicting a tenant except for specified reasons.

The City of Mountain View does not currently regulate the amount of rent that a landlord may charge.

Under the measure, a landlord could not raise the rent in any year more than the percentage increase in the Consumer Price Index, and the annual increase could not be less than 2% or more than 5%. A landlord could "bank" rent increases. This means that if a landlord does not increase rent as much as legally permitted in a particular year, the landlord could accumulate and impose unimplemented rent increases, provided the rent increase in any 12-month period does not exceed 10%.

Single family homes, condominiums, companion units, duplexes, and certain other housing units would be exempt. Rental units with a certificate of occupancy after February 1, 1995, and certain affordable housing units, would be exempt from rent regulation but would be subject to just cause eviction provisions.

A landlord who failed to comply with the measure's provisions, maintain rental units or make repairs could not increase rents.

The City Council would appoint a five member rental housing committee ("Committee"). Only two members could own or manage rental property, or be a realtor or developer. The Committee would set the base rent; establish regulations; determine allowable annual rent adjustment; establish the amount of penalties and go to court to enforce the measure. The Committee would exercise its powers and duties independent from the City Council, City Manager and City Attorney, except by request.

Landlords and tenants could petition the Committee to adjust rent. For rent increases, a landlord would be required to show that increases are necessary to provide a fair rate of return on the landlord's investment. The Committee could not consider cost of debt service, penalties for violations, income taxes, or the cost of capital improvements unless they were necessary to bring the property into compliance with law. Rent could be decreased when a landlord fails to maintain units as liveable, decreases housing services or maintenance, or charges unlawful rents. Either party could sue to have a court review the Committee's decisions.

Landlords could only evict tenants for just cause, which would include failure to pay rent; breach of lease; nuisance; criminal activity; failure to grant a landlord reasonable access; necessary repairs; owner move-in; withdrawal of the unit from the rental market; and demolition. Landlords must pay relocation assistance in certain circumstances. Tenants have the first right of return in some circumstances.

Landlords could not retaliate against tenants for reporting violations, exercising tenant rights or participating in tenant organizations.

If the average annual vacancy rate of rental units covered by the measure exceeds 5%, the Committee could suspend the measure.

The measure was placed on the ballot by an initiative petition signed by the requisite number of voters.

The above statement is an impartial analysis of Measure V. If you desire a copy of the measure, please call the City Clerk's office at 650-903-6304 and a copy will be mailed at no cost to you. Copies are also available in the City Clerk's Office and on the City's website at: www.mountainview.gov.

W Shall a RENT STABILIZATION ORDINANCE be adopted requiring a tenant-landlord dispute resolution program and binding arbitration for rent increase disputes exceeding 5% of base rent per 12-month period and service reductions for most multifamily rental units with a certificate of occupancy before February 1, 1995; prohibiting eviction of tenants without just cause or relocation assistance; prohibiting substantive changes for two years, and requiring a super majority City Council vote for substantive changes thereafter?

Impartial Analysis for Measure W

This measure is an ordinance that would limit the amount a landlord could increase rent for certain residential units in the City of Mountain View, and enact related regulations.

The City does not currently regulate the amount of rent a landlord may charge. The City does have an ordinance requiring a landlord and tenant go to mediation and, in some cases; nonbinding arbitration when there are disputes ("Current Ordinance").

Under the Current Ordinance, rental disputes include rent increases in excess of 7.2% within a 12-month period, service reductions, notices to vacate, maintenance and repairs, security deposits and a tenant's early termination of a lease. Rental properties with three or more rental units in a single structure are subject to the Current Ordinance. All disputes are subject to conciliation and mandatory mediation. Disputes related to rent increases in excess of 7.2% and service reductions are also subject to mandatory but nonbinding arbitration. The arbitrator's decision is advisory.

This measure would amend the Current Ordinance to regulate rents for rental units with a certificate of occupancy prior to February 1, 1995. Under this measure, if a landlord wants to increase rents by more than 5% of the base rent in a 12-month period or reduce services, then the landlord and tenant could be required to go and the arbitrator's decision would be binding on the parties.

The Current Ordinance specifies the factors an arbitrator may consider when hearing a rent increase dispute. The proposed ordinance clarifies this provision by allowing an arbitrator to consider the landlord's debt service costs, but only to the extent those costs are related to capital improvements to the rental property.

A landlord may "bank" rent increases. This means that if a landlord does not raise the rent as much as legally permitted in a particular year, the landlord can accumulate the rent increase and impose it the next year, provided it does not exceed 8%.

In addition, in those rental units covered by the measure, a landlord could only terminate a tenancy for just cause, which would include failure to pay rent; breach of lease; nuisance; criminal activity; failure to grant reasonable access; necessary repairs; owner move-in; withdrawal of the unit from the rental market; and demolition. However, if a landlord complies with the City's Tenant Relocation Assistance Ordinance, just cause would not be required for a landlord to terminate a tenancy.

If adopted, the City Council could not change the substantive provisions of the ordinance for at least two years. Substantive provisions include those addressing the binding arbitration requirement, just cause for eviction protections, base rent and rent increase. After two years, the Council could make substantive changes to the ordinance if approved by at least five of the seven Council members.

This measure was placed on the ballot by the City Council.

The above statement is an impartial analysis of Measure W. If you desire a copy of the ordinance, please call the City Clerk's Office at 650-903-6304 and a copy will be mailed at no cost to you. Copies are also available in the City Clerk's Office and on the City's website at: www.mountainview.gov.

October 7, 2016

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■ EDITORIAL THE OPINION OF THE VOICE

Gutiérrez, Wilson and Blakely for school board

The Mountain View Whisman school community is fortunate to have four strong candidates for seats on the district's governing board. What might be considered unfortunate, though, is that there are only three open seats.

The school district appears to be on the right course with its relatively new but solid administrative leadership. Since Superintendent Ayindé Rudolph came aboard in July 2015, strides have been made in improving achievement among lower-wealth, minority and disabled students, and what had seemed a murky process for building and repairing the district's schools with Measure G bond revenue is now a clear way forward.

But progress has been difficult at times, thanks to a governing board whose frequent bickering and attempts by some members to micromanage the district have resulted in dysfunction and public disgust. Two of the five members have chosen not to run for re-election this year, including Steve Nelson, whose antics and counterproductive behavior have led to his censure by fellow board members.

Hopes for a new school board that will be effective in its governance of the district and supportive of the schools' administrative leaders are high with a slate of four candidates with much to offer: Tamara Wilson, Peter Darrah, José Gutiérrez and Laura Blakely. With only three open seats, the *Voice* endorses Wilson, Gutiérrez and Blakely.

JOSÉ GUTIÉRREZ

The school board appointed Gutiérrez last year to fill the unexpired term of Chris Chiang, who resigned in June 2015 citing as his reason the hostile behavior of trustee Steve Nelson. More than one year later, Gutiérrez has a record that demonstrates the board's choice was a good one, and he deserves a full, four-year term to continue his work on behalf of the district.

Gutiérrez says he's committed to doing his part to restore civility to the board, and the community's confidence in the board's elected members. His performance since August

2015 speaks to the integrity of that commitment.

Gutiérrez lives in the Castro neighborhood, and brings a valuable perspective from that underrepresented area of the district.

TAMARA WILSON

Wilson was a leader in the movement to reopen Slater Elementary in northeastern Mountain View, which has been closed as a public school since 2006. The board last year endorsed the plan to reopen the school. Wilson said she's a proponent of neighborhood schools in general.

Wilson is a research geographer with the U.S. Geological Survey, but her background isn't limited to the sciences: She's also been a university-level teacher and a volunteer tutor whose efforts include tutoring at Castro Elementary through the Reading Partners program.

Wilson has solid ideas on closing the achievement gap, and an open mind toward finding creative solutions to the troubling teacher-retention problem the district faces. She would bring to the governing board energy, analytical thinking and innovative ideas.

LAURA BLAKELY

Blakely's involvement in the district began some 14 years ago when she volunteered at her children's school, but it didn't end when the kids moved on to high school. She has been involved in leading parcel tax efforts and as a leader in the nonprofit Mountain View Educational Foundation, which raises money for the district's schools. An attorney, she's applied her legal expertise in district initiatives such as securing for the schools millions of dollars in property tax revenue that had been funneled into the Shoreline Regional Park Community district.

Why does she want to continue her work with the elementary school district even though her children no longer attend its schools? She has a deep-rooted "fondness for Mountain View Whisman," she says, but she also is committed to the mission of providing kids with high-quality early childhood education. "If you lose them in K-8," she says, "you've lost them." ■

CLARIFYING PROVISION IN MEASURE W

I wanted to set the record straight with respect to the City Council's actions regarding tenant relocation assistance and Measure W.

Measure W as written, provides for just-cause-eviction protections for tenants living in apartment units built before 1995. It also contains an alternative in which the landlord may avoid the just-cause-eviction process by complying with the city's Tenant Relocation Assistance Ordinance by

paying the tenant an amount set by the ordinance.

Currently, the Tenant Relocation Assistance Ordinance does not require relocation assistance in the event of an eviction, and as such this alternative is not currently available to the landlord, despite the language in Measure W. The relocation payment option would become available if Measure W passes and the ordinance is amended.

Contrary to the implications in the *Voice's* coverage of the council's actions this past week,

► Continued on next page

■ LETTERS VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

FLIER'S 'STUNNING' LIES ABOUT MEASURE V

We all know that election season means lies, but big lies are still stunning.

The recent California Apartment Association flier has lies not just on every page, but on every single line!

The LAO report quoted in the flier was referring to state law, and had nothing to do with Measure V. The flier says Mea-

sure V will suppress housing development, but doesn't say how. Measure V does not apply to new construction so will not affect new development.

When corporate apartment owners are willing to lie this big and this openly, it makes it clear that our community really is at risk. Don't be taken in by the lies. Trust your neighbors and vote yes on V.

Sally Ahnger
Homeowner, Varsity Park

Displacement of city's residents an epidemic in our midst

by Michael Fischetti
and Marilyn Winkleby

What do you call a mass displacement of longtime residents forced out of their community? An exodus? A social tragedy? An epidemic?

When we hear some candidates for City Council speak about the consequences of limiting rent increases as a potential disaster, we wonder. Are they unaware that the disaster is already here? Have they not spoken to those forced to leave, needing to double up, or having to deprive their children of our excellent schools? Have they not visited families living in cramped apartments or even in vehicles? Have they not listened to repeated testimonies before the City Council about the fear of getting "the letter" with the next unaffordable rent increase?

An epidemic refers to an increase, often sudden, in the number of cases of a "disease" above what is normally expected

in a population—it has causes and effects. Skyrocketing rents causing an exodus of our community members is upon us. As with an epidemic, one looks for solutions. Limiting rent increases in Mountain View, where rents have increased 56 percent in the last five years, seems like a logical solution.

But as with other critical social problems such as climate change, there are doubters of logical solutions. Some predict a housing disaster sometime in the future but ignore the disaster that is in our midst. This epidemic has spread rapidly and has a ripple effect. Few are immune. Businesses are already forced to curtail hours and service for lack of workers. Teachers, police officers and health professionals must travel long distances to

teach our children, keep us safe, and protect our health. Long-term homeowners must watch as their children and grandchildren move out of the area and out of their lives. And seniors on fixed incomes are frightened, and now constitute the majority of newly displaced in our county.

Some argue that limiting rent increases will make it impossible for landlords to maintain their rentals. Although there are many good landlords, a visit to some properties reveals that increases in rents have not gone to improving the properties but rather to improving the bottom line. Indeed, landlords, like homeowners, continue to benefit from unprecedented rises in their property values.

Measure V, the people's amendment, on the November ballot is a fair solution to the epidemic challenging our city. It calls for limiting rent increases to a maximum

of 5 percent per year, which is fair to renters and landlords. Importantly, it prevents evictions without just cause. And both landlords and renters can appeal to a board to address unanticipated problems, with little ongoing cost to the city.

It is important to note that Measure V applies only to older housing built before February 1995, and thus will not curtail the creation of new and needed affordable housing.

Those in our city who embrace Mountain View values, want to maintain its character and show concern for the many affected by unaffordable rents will vote yes for Measure V in November.

Dr. Michael Fischetti serves on the Santa Clara County Health Commission. Dr. Marilyn Winkleby is a professor of medicine, emerita, at Stanford University. They have been Mountain View residents and homeowners since 1988.

Guest Opinion

► Continued from previous page

as it now stands, Measure W, if passed, would not permit a landlord to pay relocation benefits to an evicted tenant until the relocation ordinance is amended. The mere fact that the council did not amend the Tenant Relocation Assistance Ordinance does *not* in any way alter the just-cause-eviction protections set forth in Measure W. In other words, the only way a tenant could be legally evicted would be through the just-cause-eviction process.

The decision to table amending the ordinance until the results of the election are known does not in any way diminish the the just-cause-eviction requirements of Measure W.

Measure W, for those wishing to enact some form of rent control in the city of Mountain View, is the best choice! Measure W provides real benefits to all renters, is flexible and will not entangle the city in endless litigation. Amending the City Charter, as proposed by Measure V, is in essence a constitutional amendment, with lengthy, complex and flawed language which can only be modified by placing changes on the ballot every other year; it is not in the best interests of the residents of Mountain View. It will subject the city to costly litigation, as well as create an entirely new rent-control bureaucracy.

Mike Kasperzak
Member, City Council

A BRIGHTER DAY FOR LOCAL KIDS

While volunteering at Castro Elementary School, I learned that Castro and Gabriela Mistral schools were chosen to take part in this year's Child Spree, an

amazing 20-year-old program sponsored by Kiwanis Club of Mountain View and Kohl's.

Thirty low-income children, who may have never worn new clothes or shoes, are selected by the schools to take part. The children, 30 Kiwanians, Key Clubbers, and Circle K volunteers, with the generous help from Kohl's and a half-dozen employees, assist these deserving youngsters (ages 7 to 12) to purchase back-to-school clothing. The Kohl's employees volunteer over two hours of their time for free, then work their regular shift—a long day.

This year the children were delivered to Kohl's at 7 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 17. They were paired with volunteers. Kiwanis provided a budget of \$6,200—or over \$200 each, after a 20 percent Kohl's discount. By 8 a.m. the children joyously began to fill their shopping carts with underwear, pants, shirts, jackets, and finally, a new pair of sneakers. Many items were carefully selected a little larger in size to fit through a year of growth. About 9 a.m., parents arrived to find their gleeful youngster carrying a huge bag of beautiful, new clothing.

Kohl's generously supports our schools through Child Spree and other programs. Kiwanis funds and sponsors not only Child Spree but college scholarships, provides visits to veterans, volunteers at Hope's Corner and the Wine and Arts festival, and more. Kudos to those who make the lives of others a bit brighter.

Carol Lewis
Oak Street

CITY WILL BENEFIT FROM MEASURE B

As the vice mayor for the city of Mountain View, I and

five of my council colleagues have worked closely with our Transportation and Public Works staff, our Mountain View Chamber of Commerce and others to help craft a comprehensive and cohesive solution to the traffic congestion challenges afflicting Mountain View and our surrounding communities in Santa Clara County.

In Mountain View alone, Measure B will provide billions in funding for traffic relief, transit options and road repair, including:

- Improvements to the Central Expressway and Thompson interchange.

- Improvements on Highway 101 at the Rengstorff, Charleston and Shoreline interchanges.

- Improvements to the Highway 85/237 connector, and 85/El Camino Real and 237/El Camino/Grant Road interchanges.

- Construction of a new transit only lane and transit service down the center median of Highway 85 (it will *not* replace existing lanes).

- Safety and capacity improvements for Caltrain service including grade separations at key interchanges in Mountain View, especially Rengstorff/Central Expressway.

- Annual funding to fix potholes and repair local roads.

In addition to these Mountain View-specific projects, Measure B will relieve congestion on all 10 county expressways, increase lifeline service and core bus service for seniors, students and the disabled, and improves bicycle and pedestrian safety, especially near our schools.

The VTA has a strong record of building traffic improvements on time and on budget. In addition, Mea-

sure B mandates strong taxpayer safeguards, including annual, independent financial audits by a citizens watchdog committee.

Join me, and five other council members, in voting yes on Measure B for better roads and better commutes.

Ken Rosenberg
Member, City Council

What's on your mind?

Tell us your thoughts on matters of interest to the community by sending your letters to letters@MV-Voice.com. Or snail-mail them to: Mountain View Voice, P.O. Box 405, Mountain View, CA 94042.



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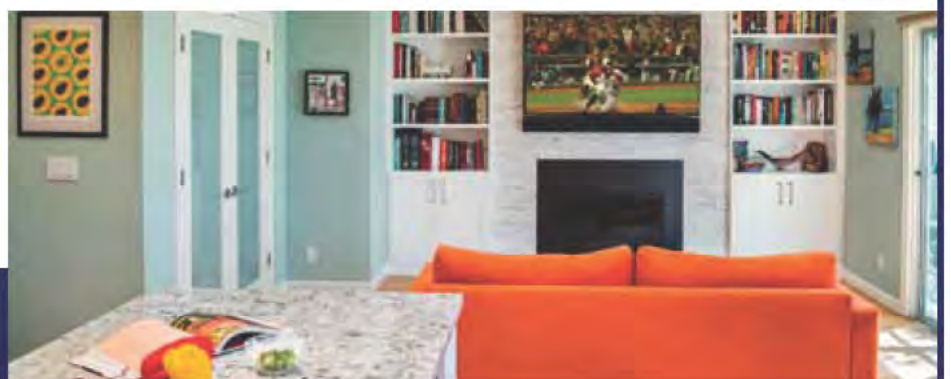
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