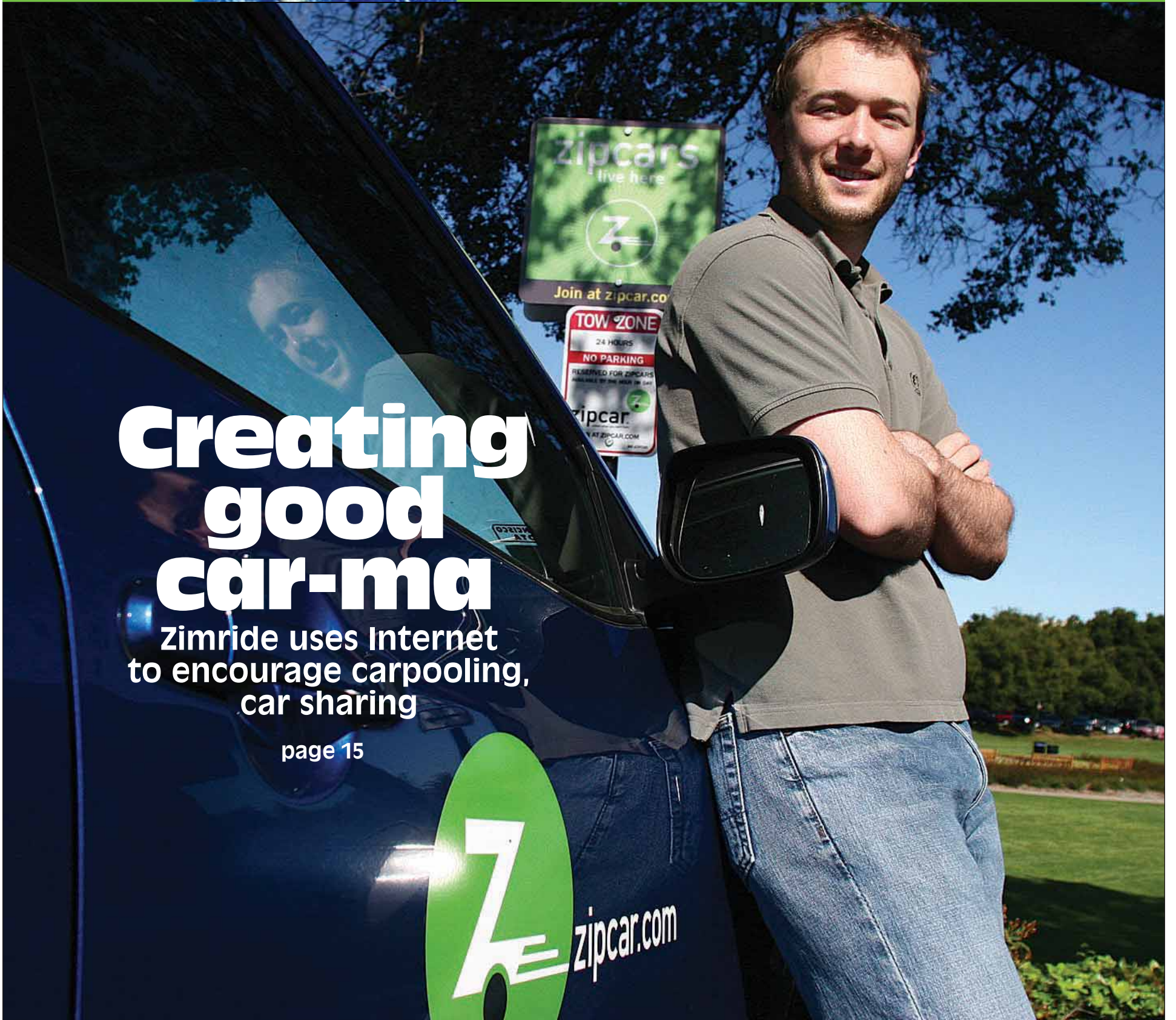


Weekly



Stanford drops mall expansion

Page 3



Creating good car-ma

Zimride uses Internet
to encourage carpooling,
car sharing

page 15

Spectrum 12 Earth Day Events 15 Movies 26 Eating Out 28 Crossword/Sudoku 62

- Arts & Entertainment Foot-stompin' good Page 21
- Sports Paly swimmer gets a fresh start Page 30
- Home & Real Estate Celebrating the Clark legacy Page 37



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Upfront

Local news, information and analysis

Stanford drops shopping mall expansion

University blames 'confusion' over city process but admits long-term Stanford expansion was key in withdrawing plan

by Gennady Sheyner, Sue Dremann, Jocelyn Dong and Jay Thorwaldson

Stanford University withdrew its application to the City of Palo Alto Tuesday to expand the Stanford Shopping Center by

240,000 square feet and add a 120-room hotel, saying the city has created "confusion and distraction" by lumping together the mall and the

Stanford University Medical Center expansions.

But Stanford officials Thursday indicated the university came to the decision after careful long-term evaluation of how the university overall will expand in the future.

Jean McCown, Stanford director of community relations, said the university faces limits in terms of traffic and other impacts of adding buildings under its county general-

use permit. Officials felt they needed to be sure that Stanford's academic priorities are put foremost, she said.

Its first priority, at this point, is the massive renovation of its medical center: the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital and Stanford Hospitals and Clinics.

McCown indicated the decision about the mall is final.

"It is unfortunate we have had to

take this step, especially given the effort, time and dollars invested by all parties," Stanford Vice President Robert Reidy said in a letter delivered Tuesday to Palo Alto officials.

Stanford Shopping Center's owner/manager, Simon Property Group of Indianapolis, Ind., said Thursday it is "very, very disappointed" but respects the decision of Stanford,

(continued on page 7)



Veronica Weber

Palo Alto — the windy city

Trees were downed by high winds on Tuesday, including one on Waverley Street near University Avenue, shown here being removed by Jose Carlos Martinez of Palo Alto Public Works. That tree scraped but didn't smash a parked Lexus. Downed trees and utility wires caused traffic problems in Palo Alto, while as many as 25,000 Pacific Gas & Electric customers were left in the dark in neighboring cities due to power outages caused by the winds.

CITY HALL

Budget crunch puts overtime in spotlight

City has spent 77 percent of overtime budget in first six months of the year; major fires, police investigation fuel higher expenses

by Gennady Sheyner

As Palo Alto's budget hole continues to swell — \$7.8 million for the current fiscal year — city officials are taking a closer look at the city's overtime

expenditures.

And some within the City Council don't like what they see.

In the first six months of fiscal year 2009 — a period that ended

Dec. 31, 2008 — the city has spent \$2.14 million on overtime, about 77 percent of its overtime budget for the year. Of that amount, 88 percent was spent in the fire and police departments.

But while the city's overtime expenditures are hovering above the budgeted amount, the expenditures remain comparable to, and even slightly below, those in recent years. In the calendar year 2008, the city spent about \$4.7 million on overtime. In 2007, meanwhile, the city's overtime spending was just below \$5 million.

Lalo Perez, director of the city's Administrative Services Department, said staff is currently breaking down the city's overtime expen-

ditures since Dec. 31, 2008, and will present the numbers to the City Council next month.

The subject of overtime — particularly as it pertains to the city's two emergency-response departments — stole the spotlight during a budget discussion last week, when Vice Mayor Jack Morton, and council members Larry Klein, Pat Burt and Yoriko Kishimoto all said (using widely varying tones and words) they would like to take a fresh look at the fire and police contracts. Both departments have what's called "minimum-staff requirements," which specify the minimum number of employees

(continued on page 6)

CITY HALL

Residents alarmed by burglar-system fine

\$250 late fee for residential-alarm permit called 'outrageous'

by Sue Dremann

A \$250 fine for not renewing their burglar-alarm permits on time has some Palo Alto residents feeling like criminals.

Homeowners who for years have faithfully paid the annual \$35 permit fee on time recently found themselves in receipt of the hefty penalty when the renewal notice they usually receive didn't arrive — and they forgot to pay.

Fifteen residents appealed the penalty during an administrative hearing on April 1, but to no avail. Residents received a five-page legal document informing them that the penalty would not be waived, they said.

What has some residents even angrier than the hole in their wallets is the attitude of officials, they said. They claim they've been treated rudely, that officials haven't been cooperative and that the outcome of the hearing was predetermined.


City officials maintain the penalty is just and in line with other \$100 and \$250 fees, since the permit-expiration date is listed on a sticker posted at the homes. But some conceded the fine may be excessive, or that at least a better method of notification could be devised.

Christy and William Neidig, who have had a home alarm for more than 20 years, are among those protesting the penalty.

The Neidig's permit expired in September 2008. Christy Neidig appealed the penalty at the April 1 hearing before Louis Amadeo,

(continued on page 5)

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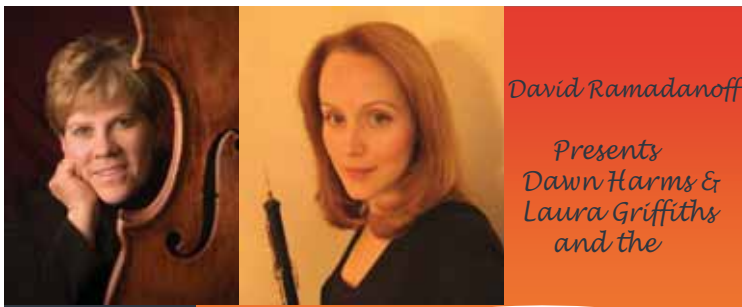


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Jocelyn Dong, Managing Editor
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Upfront

QUOTE OF THE WEEK



This is a real black eye for the city process.

—Bern Beecham, former Palo Alto mayor, regarding Stanford's announcement this week that it will not expand the shopping mall. See story on page 3.

Around Town

A SERVING OF FIBER ... It's not always easy for a relatively affluent city like Palo Alto to go to the federal government, hat in hand, and ask for money. Particularly when the money dispensed is being designated for broadband projects in "underserved" and "unserved" areas. But as Palo Alto continues to plod forth with its dream of blanketing the entire city with high-speed Internet access, city officials are laying out a case that the city is indeed "underserved." In a letter to the National Telecommunications and Information Administration, City Attorney **Gary Baum** and the city's legal counsel are asking the federal agency to define "underserved" on a sliding scale, based on available broadband speed. In areas where DSL is available, the memo argues, federal officials should use the available bandwidth as its barometer. "Unless Palo Alto and other critical high technology areas in the U.S. like it have genuine, next-generation, ultra high-speed broadband service available ubiquitously, they will truly be 'underserved' by any normal meaning of the term," the memo states. "Entrepreneurial activity in such areas is and will continue to be the key to creating new 21st century industries, and thus new jobs." The City Council unanimously agreed Monday to proceed with the stalled "**Fiber to the Premises**" effort, which aims to supply each home and business in the city with fiber-optic Internet service. The city is requesting \$65 million from the federal government for the project. ■

ment paramedics arrived, police Agent Dan Ryan said. The twins will have different birthdays: One was born before midnight and the other shortly after.

KEEPING YOU POSTED ... The Human Relations Commission is charged with looking out for the disadvantaged and for making sure city officials and residents get along swimmingly and play by the rules. This week, however, the commission cancelled what promised to be a busy meeting Tuesday night because of a minor rule violation of its own: Staff didn't fully inform the public that it would be meeting. A public notice was supposed to be posted at the downtown library, but city staff forgot to do so. Fearing a possible violation of the Brown Act — which governs public disclosure of government activities — the commission cancelled its meeting. The commission had fairly ambitious plans for this week. It was scheduled to elect a new vice chairman, an election made necessary after the City Council opted not to re-elect former Commissioner **Donald Mendoza** to another term. Interim Police Chief **Dennis Burns** was scheduled to discuss a new community advisory group to help the police department with its community outreach. Barring a special meeting later this month, these items will now have to wait until May 14.

PAPERFREE ... The good news is that Palo Alto's utility customers will soon be able to say farewell to their utility bills. The bad news? They'll still have to pay for their utilities. The city plans to unfurl a new online bill-paying system May 4, which city officials introduced at Monday's City Council meeting. Utility customers will be able to track their utility-usage history for up to 13 months; they could also opt to go paperless in all billing. City officials are warning customers there may be a glitch or two during the changeover process, but "once the new system is running ... I know they will appreciate the convenience," Assistant Director of Administrative Services **David Ramberg** stated in a news release. ■

DOUBLE THE SURPRISE ...

Moments before midnight on April 9, Palo Alto police officers and firefighters responded to a 911 call from a young girl: Her mother was in labor. Emergency personnel arrived at a house in the 2300 block of South Court to find a woman already giving birth. According to police, Agent Wayne Benitez was first on the scene, found a baby boy newly born and attended to him. But then came the surprise: another baby boy on the way. Benitez helped deliver the second, then had to "juggle the two in his hands" as five Fire Depart-

Sentencing put off for Walgreens arsonist

Donald Ray Williams, convicted Jan. 30 of torching Palo Alto building, to undergo psychiatric evaluation

by Sue Dremann and Jocelyn Dong

Despite Donald Ray Williams' conviction in January on charges of torching the downtown Palo Alto Walgreens building in 2007, his attorney today successfully postponed his sentencing, instead securing a competency evaluation for Williams, who has a history of mental illness.

Williams, of East Palo Alto, will undergo a psychiatric evaluation at the Federal Bureau of Prisons.

Both federal prosecutors and Williams' new defense attorney, Susan Dondershine, agreed to the competency referral. Dondershine, a private lawyer who works out of Palo Alto, replaces Manual Araujo, the federal public defender who had litigated the case that ended in Williams' conviction.

Araujo had filed papers Feb. 24 asking for a new trial, saying prosecutors prejudiced the jury in closing arguments. But Williams then fired Araujo in early March, according to court documents.

Williams, 46, faces a prison sentence of up to 20 years.

He had told Palo Alto police and a federal agent in 2007 that he had been diagnosed with bipolar disorder but didn't like to take his medica-

tion. However, according to federal prosecutors, Araujo had withdrawn a motion in July 2008 to have Williams evaluated for his psychological fitness to stand trial, saying he (Araujo) felt Williams was competent.

Dondershine noted in court papers that from her first contact with Williams and in the 15 hours she has spent with him, his communications have been "overly psychotic, stream of consciousness, delusional, paranoid, irrational" and unrelated to the legal matters she needed to confer with him on.

She further wrote that Williams has a 20-year psychiatric record. He suffered psychological breakdown, has heard voices, tried to commit suicide and had a depression "so severe, he huddled in his bed in a darkened room."

On March 29, Williams was evaluated by forensic psychiatrist J. Arturo Silva of San Jose, who concluded that Williams is not competent to currently assist in his own trial or understand who the court officials are.

He is "suffering from a major psychiatric disorder ... (It would have been) psychiatrically legally important, appropriate and realistic to

have inquired if his bipolar disorder or other mental difficulties affected his conduct during the crime and if his illness could have impacted other potential legal issues such as competency to stand trial."

Based on Silva's report, both the prosecution, led by Assistant U.S. Attorney Gary Fry, and Dondershine agreed Williams needs to be evaluated and could even be moved to a federal facility in Long Beach where he can receive treatment. Silva also wrote that Williams' needs for medication might not be met at the Santa Clara County jail.

The evaluation process is expected to occur within 90 days. Dondershine asked that a hearing be held on a new-trial motion Aug. 12. Prosecutors have argued in briefs, however, that there's no need for a new trial.

A sentencing hearing is set for mid-September.

Walgreens has stated it plans to return to University Avenue. A new building is currently under construction. ■

Staff Writer Sue Dremann can be e-mailed at sdremann@paweekly.com; Managing Editor Jocelyn Dong can be e-mailed at jdong@paweekly.com.

Late fee

(continued from page 3)

an attorney and the city's administrative-hearing officer, and Janice Hall, a community-service officer at the police department.

Fourteen other people who also were fined but who had not received renewal notices were also waiting for the one-on-one hearings, Neidig said.

On April 13, the Neidigs learned their appeal had been rejected and that the city is not legally required to send the renewal notice, but does so as a courtesy.

Amadeo informed Neidig that he denied every request for waiving the fee and has always denied such requests and would continue to do so, Neidig said.

William Neidig said it sounded like a kangaroo court: The two officials knew what the outcome would be.

"What I'm really objecting to is the concept of 15 people sitting in a room and to go through this charade 15 times," he said.

Amadeo said he's in a tough spot because he has to walk a fine line between being polite and also not advising appellants. His role is like a judge's, and he can't respond to or give legal advice related to a hearing — and that can be interpreted as being uncooperative, he said.

But ultimately, as with any license, the responsibility rests with the permit holder, he said.

"It's like a driver's license or car registration," he said. "The city permit on its face has an expiration

date. Whether the person has actual notice to respond to that (expiration) or if people claim they don't receive it is irrelevant. If it's expired, it's not allowed," he said.

Resident Vanessa Davies, who also appealed, said the fine is out of proportion to the offense.

"A 700-percent-plus fine is outrageous. Property taxes, car registration fees, etc., items are considerably more important than an alarm fee. All have fines in the 10- to 20-percent range," she said.

Davies also said that she and others at the hearing received a letter dated Jan. 7 stamped "payment was due within 10 days or there would be an additional penalty of 10 percent per month" in addition to the \$250 fine. But the letter was post-marked March 4.

But Charles Cullen, the alarm-program director for the Palo Alto Police Department, said the department is "very diligent about sending out the renewal notices one month in advance, and there is a grace period."

Cullen also said 1 to 2 percent of residents don't pay their renewals on time.

But he acknowledged the fine is "pretty significant. We need to look at it again."

Cullen also said that while he understands people's frustration, the penalty is not intended to generate revenue.

"I know people think we are gouging them. It was written before it was on my radar. In the next year, I hope to make some changes. We want to make it easy for people," he said.

The Palo Alto Police Department

responded to approximately 3,160 alarms during the fiscal year 2006-07. Ninety-eight percent were false alarms, according to the city website. Each alarm response requires a minimum of two patrol officers, and false alarms cost approximately 10,000 man-hours per year.

The alarm permit was added to help manage the number of alarms going off. It requires alarm users to provide the police department with the names, addresses and phone numbers of three persons who can respond within 30 minutes, helping to track and cut down on police time, according to the website.

But the language pertaining to the penalty could be confusing: On Nov. 21, 2001, the city council voted unanimously to amend the administrative penalty schedule to include a \$250 penalty for operating an alarm system without a permit. But the city's 2008-09 adopted municipal-fee schedule does not list a penalty for late renewal, only penalties for false alarms.

Davies said many people may be affected by the confusion.

"When I stood in line at the police department to speak with the alarm clerk about the fine, there was an elderly gentleman behind me with the exact same issue. He begrudgingly paid the fine and stated he didn't have the bandwidth to fight it. If 10 people bothered to go to the hearing ... I would bet a lot more people were like the guy behind me in line, threw up their hands in the air, and just paid it," she said. ■

Staff Writer Sue Dremann can be e-mailed at sdremann@paweekly.com.

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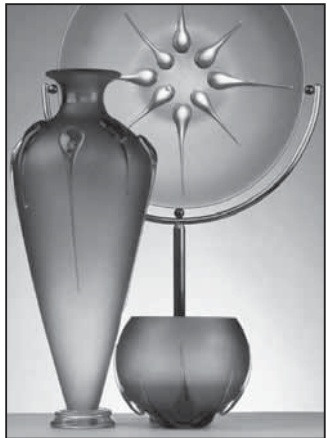
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Budget crunch

(continued from page 3)

who have to be on duty at any given time. Often, the requirement results in personnel working overtime so that the requisite number of staff is on duty.

The city has been trying to curb its overtime costs for years, but the expenditures have become particularly conspicuous over the past year, as plummeting revenues have led to a \$7.8 million budget gap this fiscal year.

To balance its books, the city asked each department to identify budget reductions and return some money to the general fund. At the April 6 meeting, Morton said he was offended when the fire department offered to return \$82,000 — far less than the other major departments — and blamed the department's expenditures on outdated contract clauses.

But contracts are only part of the story, department heads say. Unforeseen events, including last year's devastating wildfires throughout

Northern California and a rash of robberies on Palo Alto streets last summer and fall, prompted higher-than-expected staffing levels in the two departments.

Because of these contingencies — and the contract provisions Morton referred to — the fire department spent \$937,000 on overtime between July 1 and Dec. 31, 2008, the first half of the current fiscal year. The amount represents 69 percent of the fire department's overtime budget.

The police department, meanwhile, has spent \$942,000 on overtime — 93 percent of its overtime budget — during the same period.

The top overtime earner in 2008 was Police Agent Adrienne Moore, whose duties in the department include detective, patrol and dispatch work. Moore, who also topped the city's overtime list in 2007, earned \$97,089 in overtime in 2008. Dispatcher Steve Baca was a distant second, having earned \$57,837 in overtime pay in 2008. Fire Captain Jason Amdur was third, with \$54,988 in overtime earnings.

Of the top 20 overtime earners, 15

were members of either the police or the fire departments.

Fire Chief Nick Marinaro said the department's overtime expenditures can be largely attributed to two major factors: the department's medical-response service and staffing at Station 8 in the foothills. These two mandated programs have skimmed about \$650,000 of the department's roughly \$1 million overtime budget, leaving just \$350,000 to pay for staffing during vacations, sick leaves and worker's compensation leaves (the city recently added an extra \$335,000 to the department's overtime budget).

Marinaro also said the department has left several positions vacant, including one for a battalion chief and one for a fire marshal. The vacancies mean that other employees have to take over more duties, which has resulted in more overtime. But the city is saving money by having fewer workers who draw salaries and costly benefits.

"We've reduced a lot, especially at the management level," Marinaro said. "There's not much more the fire department can do."

As a result of the vacancies and the minimum-staffing requirements, the department is now at about 88 percent of its overtime budget for the fiscal year 2009, Marinaro said.

The fire department also sent crews out of the city last summer to help battle wildfires, excursions that incurred major overtime expenditures, Marinaro said. The city expects to receive more than \$430,000 in compensation from the state, he added.

The police department, meanwhile, faced its own unexpected challenges. The department spent about \$105,000 of its overtime budget to investigate a string of street robberies that shook up the city throughout summer and fall. Another \$75,000 was spent to investigate the killing of 27-year-old Phil Lacy near City Hall, which ultimately led to the arrest of Otto Koloto.

"We have spent a tremendous amount from the overtime budget on a variety of cases during the first half of the fiscal year," Interim Police Chief Dennis Burns said.

The police department also identified \$225,000 it could give back to the city and agreed to leave about 10 positions vacant, Burns said.

Both departments are operating under contracts that are set to expire in 2010. ■

Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner can be e-mailed at gsheyner@paweekly.com.

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Corrections

In the March 27 neighborhood profile of Esther Clark Park, the derivation of the name "Old Adobe Road" was misattributed. The road was named in honor of Juana Briones' 1844 adobe ranch house. In addition, Manuela Street was named for one of Briones' daughters. To request a correction, contact Managing Editor Jocelyn Dong at 650-326-8210, jdong@paweekly.com or P.O. Box 1610, Palo Alto, CA 94302.

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Shopping mall

(continued from page 3)

which owns the land under the mall.

"It's our feeling that it's important to expand the Stanford Shopping Center to be competitive with the expansion of other shopping centers in the area," Simon spokesperson Les Morris said.

Palo Alto City Manager James Keene also expressed disappointment at the application withdrawal and said city officials consider the success of the shopping center key to the health of the city.

"Protecting the center from any economic decline due to increased regional competition is vital to maintain the City's financial health and the city services our community expects," he stated in a press release Tuesday.

Keene had previously stressed the potential financial benefits of the shopping-center expansion and called the shopping center "a critical sales-tax generator for the city."

The withdrawal of expansion application means the city will not receive the millions in sales- and hotel-tax revenues it planned on reaping from the mall project. City

staff has estimated that the new retail space would have brought in about \$1.6 million in annual sales-tax revenues, while a hotel would have given the city \$1.1 million in revenues.

The city was also planning to collect about \$9 million in impact fees from Stanford for the shopping-center expansion, money that would be used to mitigate the project's impacts on local schools.

I'm sad, but I'm not surprised. From what I've heard in council chambers, many council members view the expansion as a burden to the city.

— Bern Beecham, former Palo Alto City Councilman

A recent city report stated that Palo Alto is expecting a 10.4 percent drop in sales taxes — or \$2.3 million out of a total estimated \$22.1 million — for the current fiscal

year, which ends June 30.

The mall application had been officially crawling through the city's approval process since August 2007. Throughout, discussion between the city and Stanford focused on the university's responsibility to help limit negative housing and traffic impacts from the two expansion projects. Stanford in particular expressed concern over the city's request that it provide 594 units of housing for the expanded workforce.

Former Palo Alto City Councilman Bern Beecham, a strong proponent of the mall-expansion project, said the city's expectations of Stanford — in helping offset increases in traffic and housing needs — were too high.

"I think it's nuts," said Beecham, who approached Simon Property Group in 2005 with then-councilmember Judy Kleinberg. Palo Alto has "driven this source of revenue out of the city. The city is now faced with having to increase the tax rate.

"To me, this is a real black eye for the city process," he said.

The council's goal when he and Kleinberg broached talks with Simon Property Group was to increase

(continued on page 9)

Public Agenda

PALO ALTO CITY COUNCIL ...

The City Council is not scheduled to meet this week.

PALO ALTO FINANCE COMMITTEE ...

The committee plans to discuss the proposed business license tax and to hear a quarterly report from the city auditor's office; the Human Services Resource Allocation Process and Community Development Block Grant funding allocations; and changes to utility-rate schedules and consider adopting a fiber-optics rate increase. The meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 21, in the Council Chambers at City Hall (250 Hamilton Ave.).

PALO ALTO PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION ...

The commission plans to hold a study session on the urban design elements and architecture for the Stanford University Medical Center expansion. The meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Wednesday, April 22, in the Council Chambers at City Hall (250 Hamilton Ave.).

PALO ALTO LIBRARY ADVISORY COMMISSION ...

The commission plans to discuss the updated schematic design for the downtown library and discuss commission priorities for 2009-10. The meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 23, in the Council Conference Room at City Hall (250 Hamilton Ave.).

CityView

A round-up of government action this week

Palo Alto City Council (April 13)

Broadband: The council voted to terminate the city's ultra-high-speed broadband request for proposal process due to lack of resources reported by a consortium led by Axia NetMedia Corp. The council directed staff to pursue partnerships with companies who are successfully providing fiber networks to Singapore and Australia and to apply for federal stimulus funds to pursue fiber to every home and business in Palo Alto. **Yes:** Drekmeier, Kishimoto, Espinosa, Yeh, Schmid, Barton, Burt, Klein **Recused:** Morton

Hotel zoning: The council also voted to amend the zoning ordinance governing floor-area-ratio preferences for extended-stay hotels. The Council previously created the preferences to generate Transient Occupancy Tax revenue but eliminated the extended-stay preference because state law prohibits charging Transient Occupancy Tax for stays longer than 30 days. **Yes:** Unanimous

School Board (April 14)

High-school construction: The board unanimously approved a master agreement with Deems Lewis McKinley Architecture to begin schematic design work on new classroom buildings, parking lot improvements and a new gym at Gunn; and a new classroom building, a media arts building, a science lab conversion, a theater and assessment of the Tower Building at Palo Alto High School. **Yes:** Unanimous

Historic Resources Board (April 15)

745 Waverley St.: The board voted to recommend designating the Spanish Ecclectic rectory, constructed in 1928, to the city's historic inventory in Category 2. **Yes:** Bernstein, Bunnenberg, Bower, Kohler, Loukianoff **Absent:** Di Cicco, Makinen

Planning and Transportation Commission (April 15)

Birch Plaza: The commission held a public hearing on 305 Grant Ave., 2640 and 2650 Birch St., and 306 and 320 Sheridan Ave., a proposed three-story building with eight two-story townhouses on the two top floors and office space on the ground floor. The commission voted to recommend changing the zoning at the property to create a Pedestrian and Transit-Oriented Development (PTOD) overlay district. **Yes:** Tuma, Garber, Holman, Rosati **No:** Keller, Fineberg **Absent:** Lippert

Architectural Review Board (April 16)

420 Cambridge Ave.: The board held an architectural review for a new four-story, mixed-use building containing four residential units and ground-floor commercial space. The board voted to support the project's proposed design. **Yes:** Lee, Lew, Malone Prichard, Wasserman **No:** Solnick

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Casa dei Bambini School
650-473-9401

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Edgewood House School
650-424-1315

Fio's Home Daycare
650-565-8853

First Congregational
Church Nursery School
650-493-1915

Grace Lutheran Preschool
650-493-8942

Growing Tree Preschool
650-857-0655

Leaping Lizards Nature
Awareness Preschool
650-858-0355

Palo Alto Community
Child Care
650-493-2361

Palo Alto Friends
Nursery School
650-856-6152

Parents' Nursery School
650-856-1440

Peninsula Day Care Center
650-494-1880

PreSchool Family
650-856-0833

T'enna Preschool-Oshman
Family
650-213-9316

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News Digest

Palo Alto presses on with citywide fiber network

Saying a citywide fiber-optics system will be critical to 21st-century competitiveness, Palo Alto City Council members unanimously decided Monday night to press on in their quest to deliver the ultra-high-speed broadband to every home and business in Palo Alto.

The council directed city staff to seek partnerships with firms selling fiber to Singapore and Australia and to apply for federal stimulus funds to advance fiber in Palo Alto, despite warnings from some residents that the city is too late in pursuing fiber and will never be able to provide perceptibly higher connection speed than companies such as Comcast already offer.

“Other places in the world are doing it, and some of those places really do compete with us. If we had (fiber) in place now we’d have a competitive advantage. If we have it in place three to four years from now, we’ll still have a competitive advantage,” councilman Larry Klein said.

Fiber optics will give Palo Alto homes and businesses superior speed and reliability over competing broadband products, at a lower cost, and also will generate revenue for the city, advocates say.

The council’s decision comes after a consortium led by Axia Net-Media of Canada withdrew from its attempt to build and operate a \$45 million fiber network for Palo Alto in March. Monday night’s decision also included a clause terminating the city’s relationship with Axia on the failed project.

The consortium had pulled out saying it had lost a financing partner and could proceed only if the city contributed \$4 million to \$5 million a year to help with the fiber project. ■

— Chris Kenrick

School stakeholders clash over math

Palo Alto school board members Tuesday struggled to find common ground between district staff’s enthusiastic support of a new K-5 math textbook and substantial parent opposition to the choice.

In a four-hour discussion that went until past midnight in a packed meeting room, teachers praised the text series, “Everyday Mathematics,” as offering challenging material, problem-solving skills and high levels of conceptual understanding.

Parents urged the board to consider other options, saying “Everyday Mathematics” would confuse students. They said it offers too many less-than-optimal problem-solving methods and flies in the face of advice from the National Mathematics Advisory Panel.

Board members are slated to vote April 28 on the adoption of “Everyday Mathematics” for use in all elementary schools this September.

From their comments Tuesday, it was not clear which way the vote will go, although most seemed reluctant to disrupt the tight timetable that would place new texts in classrooms this fall. Several noted that postponing the decision in order to pilot a new textbook was unlikely to bring about consensus. Some, though not all, of the board members seemed more inclined to try to remedy problems with “Everyday Mathematics.”

Some speakers referred to ongoing “math wars” between traditional and reform teaching approaches that have been evident in Palo Alto in earlier math textbook adoptions.

Board President Barb Mitchell said there is not much return in continuing to seek the “ideal math textbook.”

“There’s a common interest in outcomes, proficiency and mastery. I don’t think there’s a solution that will make everybody comfortable.” Palo Alto, she said, is not going to solve the ongoing national debate over math teaching. ■

— Chris Kenrick

Burglars continue to hit Oregon corridor homes

In a continuing trend, burglars hit two Palo Alto homes near Oregon Expressway Monday and Tuesday.

One of the homes was unlocked, police reported.

“Over 50 percent of residential burglaries seem to be happening with unsecured homes,” based on the last three months, police Agent Dan Ryan said. The citywide statistic is based on this year’s first quarter.

Ryan said residential burglaries are “a continuing trend there on the Oregon corridor,” but that fewer burglaries have occurred citywide compared to the first quarter of last year. People could combat the trend by locking doors and setting alarms if they have them, he said.

On Monday a midday burglar shattered a window to gain access to a home in the 900 block of Oregon Avenue, taking computers and an iPod valued at \$3,000.

The following day, burglars entered an unlocked house in the 800 block of East Greenwich Place, also midday to steal a big-screen TV, electronic devices and a safe containing valuable jewelry, Ryan said.

Police do not have any evidence that link the two incidents, he said.

Last Tuesday (April 7), police, with the aid of witness reports, nabbed two juveniles who burglarized homes in the same area. ■

— Kris Young



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

Shopping mall

(continued from page 7)

the city's sales-tax revenues by 20 percent. He and Kleinberg asked that a hotel be included at the mall, since it would generate revenue through the transient-occupancy tax, he said.

"I'm sad, but I'm not surprised. From what I've heard in council chambers, many council members view the expansion as a burden to the city. They demanded Stanford provide housing for shopping-center employees. There's not a city in the country besides Palo Alto that puts that kind of a burden on a shopping-center revenue producer," he said.

When talks first started, Stanford officials were concerned that expanding the shopping center would complicate the approval process for the hospital expansion, he added.

"Apparently, they came to the conclusion that the complications are simply too severe," he said.

Keene rebuffed the notion that the city has created confusion during the approval process for the two redevelopment projects.

"We should remember ... that it was Stanford that requested that the Environmental Impact Report for both the hospital and shopping center be processed together," Keene said.

"Changing course after the environmental document is nearly completed may have the unintended consequence of complicating the process. We hope not; the City is committed to assisting Stanford in meeting its State-imposed seismic deadlines (to retrofit the medical center)," Keene stated in a press release.

Mayor Peter Drekmeier argued that the additional sales tax may not have covered the long-term costs to the city, which might have needed to provide affordable housing for the shopping mall workforce and mitigate the traffic increases.

"Obviously, having a couple of million extra dollars in the general fund is a huge benefit to the city," Drekmeier said. "But some issues that did come up were that the shopping center would create almost 500 low-wage jobs and the question was: Where would those people be housed? And how would they be commuting to the shopping center?"

Stanford's withdrawal is bitter-sweet for downtown merchants, according to Paula Sandas, CEO of the Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce.

On the one hand, fear that an expanded shopping center could wick away business from downtown stores is now moot; but many are disappointed that the city is missing an opportunity to develop a connection between the shopping center, downtown and the transit hub, she said. ■

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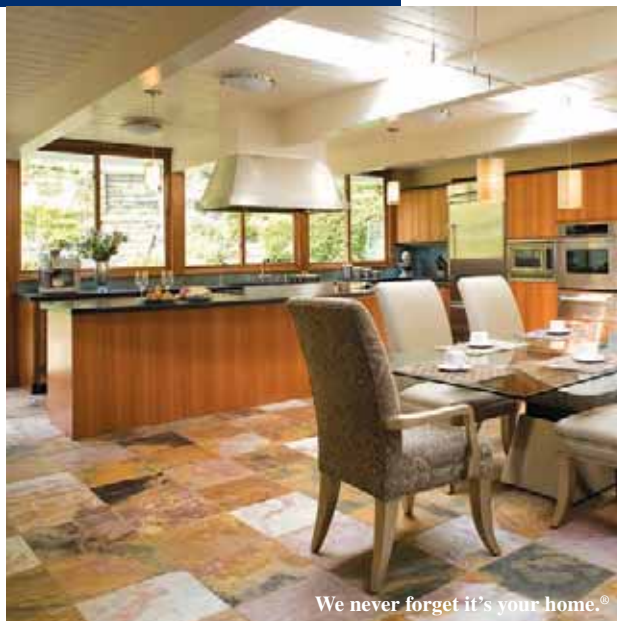
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Online This Week

These and other news stories were posted on Palo Alto Online throughout the week. For longer versions, go to www.PaloAltoOnline.com/news or click on “News” in the left, green column.

Ofek named principal at JLS Middle School

Palo Alto school superintendent Kevin Skelly will recommend to the school board that Sharon Ofek, a former math and science teacher with administrative experience, become principal at Jane Lathrop Stanford Middle School. (Posted April 16 at 11:19 a.m.)

Former editor arrested again on drug charges

Atherton resident Brian Bothun, a former reporter for the Daily Post and former editor of the Palo Alto Daily News, was arrested on drug-related charges in a parking lot along El Camino Real in Santa Clara on Sunday, April 5. (Posted April 16 at 9:24 a.m.)

Computers, cameras stolen from Gunn

Two Macintosh computers and 14 digital cameras — totaling between \$5,000 and \$10,000 — were stolen from Gunn High School the weekend of April 10, Palo Alto Police Agent Dan Ryan said. (Posted April 15 at 2:15 p.m.)

Earth Day founder shares recipe for change

Denis Hayes, who launched the modern environmental movement when he brought 20 million people into the streets on April 22, 1970, Tuesday spoke to a Stanford University audience about making change. (Posted April 14 at 9:54 p.m.)

Arson fires set in Palo Alto on Easter Sunday

A rash of dumpster fires reported in south Palo Alto early Sunday morning has sparked an investigation by the Palo Alto Police Department. (Posted April 14 at 9:48 a.m.)

Palo Alto, Oaxaca fete 45 years of sisterhood

Dressed in regional costume, 18 visitors from Oaxaca, Mexico, invited Palo Altans to visit their city. The City Council honored volunteers from Neighbors Abroad, which oversees six Sister City relationships. (Posted April 14 at 6:45 a.m.)

East Palo Alto woman killed in Sunday crash

Rhonda Hill, 47, of East Palo Alto was killed Sunday in a car crash in San Ramon, according to the Contra Costa County coroner's office. The driver, 52-year-old Palo Alto resident Alpha Anderson, sustained minor injuries, California Highway Patrol Officer Steve Creel said. (Posted April 13 at 2 p.m.)

East Palo Alto woman indicted by grand jury

A federal grand jury in San Francisco on Thursday indicted a woman who was arrested during multiple raids in the Bay Area in early February, the U.S. Attorney's office announced Friday. (Posted April 13 at 8:54 a.m.)

Award in communications attack jumps to \$250K

A reward has been increased to \$250,000 for information about fiber optic cables that were vandalized in San Jose and San Carlos early Thursday, leaving more than 50,000 South Bay residents without phone or Internet service, San Jose police Sgt. Ronnie Lopez said Friday. (Posted April 10 at 12:09 p.m.)

Woman killed in Edgewood Road crash identified

The San Mateo County coroner's office Thursday identified 38-year-old Gina Gould of Half Moon Bay as the woman killed in a two-vehicle crash on Edgewood Road in unincorporated San Mateo County on Wednesday morning. (Posted April 10 at 9:07 a.m.)

18th Annual Palo Alto Weekly Photo Contest

Look for the winners in the June 5th issue of the Palo Alto Weekly or online at PaloAltoOnline.com

Pulse

A weekly compendium of vital statistics

POLICE CALLS

Palo Alto

April 7-13

Violence related

Arson5
Battery3
Domestic violence2

Theft related

Checks forgery1
Commercial burglaries2
Grand theft1
Identity theft2
Petty theft6
Residential burglaries3
Shoplifting2

Vehicle related

Abandoned bicycle1
Auto recovery1
Auto theft1
Bicycle theft2
Driving with suspended license3
Hit and run2
Misc. traffic2
Theft from auto6
Vehicle accident/minor injury7
Vehicle accident/property damage6
Vehicle impound5

Alcohol or drug related

Drunk in public4
Drunken driving4
Possession of drugs2
Possession of paraphernalia1

Miscellaneous

Animal call1
Found property5
Lost property2
Man down1
Medical aid1
Noise ordinance violation6
Psychiatric hold1
Trespassing1
Vandalism3
Warrant/other agency11

Tree blocking roadway1
Warrant arrest1

VIOLENT CRIMES

Palo Alto

Fernando Avenue, 4/07, 8:16 a.m.; battery/simple.

University Avenue, 4/07, 7:55 p.m.; battery/simple.

El Camino Real, 4/09, 6:18 p.m.; domestic violence/battery.

Ramona Street, 4/09, 10:20 p.m.; domes-

tic violence/battery.

University Avenue, 4/10, 11:03 p.m.; battery/simple.

Pepper Avenue, 4/11, 2:03 a.m.; arson/auto.

East Meadow Drive, 4/12, 2:21 a.m.; arson/misc.

Middlefield Road, 4/12, 2:25 a.m.; arson/misc.

Middlefield Road, 4/12, 3:10 a.m.; arson/misc.

East Charleston Road/Nelson, 4/12, 3:13 a.m.; arson/misc.

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Palo Alto Weekly



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Menlo Park

April 9-13

Violence related

Battery2
Robbery2

Theft related

Fraud4
Petty theft1
Shoplifting1

Vehicle related

Vehicle accident/minor injury3

Alcohol or drug related

Drug activity1
Drunk in public2
Drunken driving1
Possession of drugs1

Miscellaneous

Disturbing/annoying phone calls1
Found property1
Information case1
Lost property2
Medical aid1
Missing person3
Pedestrian stop2
Probation violation1
Suspicious circumstances1
Threats1
Vandalism2
Violation of court orders1
Warrant arrest2

Atherton

April 9-14

Vehicle related

Hit and run2
Parking/driving violation1
Suspicious vehicle8
Vehicle accident/ no injury4
Vehicle code violation4

Miscellaneous

Animal call1
Be on the lookout1
Citizen assist.4
Civil matter1
Construction2
Coroner case1
Disturbance2
Disturbing/annoying phone calls1
Follow up1
Foot patrol2
Medical aid4
Meet citizen2
Missing person1
Outside assistance5
Pedestrian check1
Suspicious circumstances3
Suspicious person1
Town ordinance violation1

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Answers to this week's puzzles, which can be found on page 62

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C	A	R	E	W	I	T	O	O	H	I	O		
A	R	E	N	A	J	O	S	S	T	O	N	E	
B	I	L	L	A	I	M	B	E	E	R			
I	T	S	O	D	D	Y	E	A	P	G	S		
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2	6	8	1	3	9	4	7	5
4	3	7	6	5	2	8	1	9
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6	2	5	8	4	7	9	3	1
8	7	9	2	1	3	6	5	4

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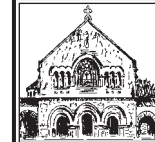
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Palo Alto Weekly

Editorial

Shopping center pullout a blow to Palo Alto

Stanford University's decision to kill Stanford Shopping Center expansion appears based on long-term thinking by university — hence is not a topic for blame

The abrupt aborting of a major expansion of the Stanford Shopping Center Tuesday morning is a serious blow to Palo Alto's hopes for a greater fiscal solvency in the face of a general decline in sales-tax and hotel-tax revenues.

But the withdrawal of the application — for 240,000 more square feet of retail space and a 120-room boutique hotel — is the result of high-level evaluations within Stanford of the university's overall, long-term expansion needs for its academic programs, Director of Community Relations Jean McCown says.

She said the withdrawal decision is final even though the owner/manager of the center, Simon Property Group, is as disappointed as city officials in the decision "very, very disappointed," a Simon spokesman said Thursday.

Under constraints of a county general use permit and tight restrictions on new traffic, the northern side of the Stanford campus lands along Sand Hill Road were getting overloaded when shopping-center plans were added to massive rebuilding proposals for the Stanford hospitals and medical center. The concern is that future potential academic buildings could be crowded out someday from one of the last remaining developable sites, along Sand Hill Road west of Pasteur Drive.

McCown's explanation of Stanford's motives for dropping the shopping center expansion make sense, belying the assumptions by some that it was because of the dread "Palo Alto Process" of delayed approvals and mitigation requirements.

The termination clears the decks for a clean consideration of the hospitals/medical center expansions, which comprise the single largest expansion/rebuilding project in Palo Alto's 115-year history. The \$3.5 billion project would rebuild Stanford Hospital, Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital, Stanford Medical Center and extensive ancillary facilities.

It is expected to add more than 2,200 jobs by 2025.

While Palo Alto city officials have come up with a 38-item list of potential mitigations for added impacts of the expansion, Stanford officials steadfastly maintain that the provision of health care services in itself should be the core public benefit of the expansion. They cite a "hospital exemption" to housing mitigations under city ordinances.

Stanford will need to pay about \$10 million in "facilities" fees for park-and-recreation and library impacts, and about \$2 million in housing-impact fees for parts of the expansion that fall outside the hospital exemption. In addition, Stanford has estimated it will pay about \$8 million in sales-tax for construction materials.

The university faces a state mandate to seismically upgrade its hospitals by 2013, with a possible extension until 2015.

So it makes sense to focus clearly on what's important.

At the same time, Stanford has a half-century-long tradition of feeling a sense of entitlement when it comes to getting what it feels it needs. There is a history of rallying supporters for testimonials in a full-court press in support of Stanford positions.

This trend on the medical-expansion project has already begun to show up in letters to the editor and some Town Square postings on the Weekly's community website, www.PaloAltoOnline.com. Stanford officials seem to feel they need to do this to counter harsh attacks from opponents, and there are definitely those.

But such a "polarize and pulverize" philosophy of oppositional debate on either side cheapens the process of serious dialogue and negotiations that this project in particular requires. It is simply too important, with too big an impact on the future of our communities and region, to trivialize into simplistic right-or-wrong tossing of brickbats.

The key debating point at present is whether Stanford should have a role in providing housing to offset at least some of the added jobs the expansion will produce. We believe this is a key topic for negotiation, not for rallying pro-and-con supporters.

Stanford officials have repeatedly said the university is not in the housing business. But it is, when it comes to providing housing for students, faculty and staff. Even more than that, it has long leased land to Oak Creek Apartments and more recently to the luxury Hyatt Classic development. And Stanford actually built Stanford West, where many non-Stanford people reside.

It seems a short stretch simply to define the medical complexes as an extension of the university's academic mission — as both hospitals clearly are — and get on with the projects.

Spectrum

Editorials, letters and opinions

Esther Clark error

Editor,

As dedicated newspaper readers, we acknowledge that reporters must occasionally sacrifice minute scientific accuracy to achieve timeliness, but blatant error like that in the article on March 27 about the Esther Clark Park neighborhood is unacceptable.

Old Adobe Road was named in honor of Juana Briones' 1844 adobe ranch house, not, as the article states, for the many Spanish-inspired houses that are there presently.

The journalist clearly neglected to read the state historic plaque in the park that explains this area's history.

Manuela Street, also mentioned, was named for one of Juana's daughters, and lies on land her mother deeded to her in the 1870s. Such information is readily available in the archives of the Palo Alto Historical Association in the Main Library, and on the Web at www.brioneshouse.org.

We represent the board of directors of our local preservation organization, Palo Alto-Stanford Heritage (PAST), in asking that the Weekly print a correction. The Juana Briones house, constructed in 1844, is among the oldest still standing in the region, and by far the oldest in Palo Alto.

Someone needs to be more watchful — whether reporter or editor, please take care to apply rudimentary standards of accuracy to history and reporting.

Grace Hinton, President, Palo Alto-Stanford Heritage
Jeanne Farr McDonnell, PAST board Member
Palo Alto

Fiber troubles

Editor,

Regards the continuing efforts by some in the town to get widespread fiber to the home not least through a federal grant but involving the town. Two things trouble me about such a program:

First is involvement of the already deficit-ridden town's staff — a staff which was utterly unable to handle the relatively simple technology and associated business requirements for providing high quality, efficient and reliable cable service. The other factor bothering me about the town meddling in such matters is the local availability now of this technology from a proven, albeit profit-making, organization with an incredible depth of technology and staff to support customers.

I recently had installed a fiber "close enough to the home" to provide us with digital phone service, TV services and Internet service.

Let's focus on getting in order the basic services and operations we expect of our town and do so on a more cost-effective basis.

I do not now nor never have

worked for AT&T but was involved in this business for several decades.

Dick Dworak
Seneca Street
Palo Alto

Police accomplishments

Editor,

Our police are not under-worked, contrary to what some believe.

The department has responded to more than 52,000 calls for service each year for the past five years.

This averages more than 140 calls per day and does not include answering requests for information or direction while on patrol.

The information can be found in the City Auditor's annual publication, Service Efforts and Accomplishments. It also gives information about Community Services, Fire, Library, Public Works, Utilities and other city services.

Residents can attend the Police Department Citizens Academy and learn how police cope with their dangerous and busy workload.

Contact Susie Ord at 650-329-2632 to register for the next class.

George Browning
Sutherland Drive
Palo Alto

Don't wait on gas leaks

Editor,

In a letter to the Weekly dated April 10, Dr. Marty Klein suggested that customers who smell gas should not call the city to report a gas leak and instead should call a plumber who will fix the leak at the customer's leisure. For the safety of each person in Palo Alto, we at the City of Palo Alto strongly encourage people to call us immediately if gas is smelled.

Gas leaks can be a significant safety hazard. Any gas leak must be stopped as soon as possible so as not to jeopardize the life and safety of all who are nearby.

Call the utility immediately at 650-329-2579 if you smell natural gas, hear a gas leak or suspect a carbon monoxide problem.

More information on natural gas safety is available on the city's website at www.cityofpaloalto.org/safety or by calling us at 650-496-6982 or 650-496-6907.

Valerie Fong
Utilities Director
City of Palo Alto

YOUR TURN

The Palo Alto Weekly encourages comments on our coverage or on issues of local interest.

What do you think? Should Palo Alto residents have to pay \$250 late fees to the city for burglar-alarm permits when no notices were sent out?

Submit letters to the editor of up to 250 words to letters@paweekly.com or shorter comments to readerwire@paweekly.com. Include your name, address and daytime phone number so we can reach you. We reserve the right to edit contributions for length, objectionable content, libel and factual errors known to us. Anonymous letters will generally not be accepted.

You can also participate in our popular interactive online forum, **Town Square**, at our community website at www.PaloAltoOnline.com. Read blogs, discuss issues, ask questions or express opinions with you neighbors any time, day or night.

Submitting a letter to the editor or guest opinion constitutes a granting of permission to the Palo Alto Weekly and Embarcadero Publishing Co. to also publish it online, including in our online archives and as a post on Town Square.

For more information contact Editor Jay Thorwaldson or Assistant to the Editor Tyler Hanley at editor@paweekly.com or 650-326-8210.



Check out Town Square!

Hundreds of local topics are being discussed by local residents on Town Square, a reader forum sponsored by the Weekly on our community website at www.PaloAltoOnline.com. Post your own comments, ask questions, read the Editor's blog or just stay up on what people are talking about around town!

Guest Opinion

Health care should be the No. 1 priority

by Christopher G. Dawes and Martha H. Marsh

The decision by Stanford University to withdraw its application to the City of Palo Alto to expand Stanford Shopping Center underscores the urgent message we have been trying to convey in dozens of public meetings over the past two years — the future of health care in our community is at stake and must be our number-one priority.

It is time to refocus the discussion on the critical issue of health care, without the distractions and complications of the proposed expansion of the shopping center.

Stanford Hospital & Clinics and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital have been working diligently with the city since 2006 to seek approval to meet state-mandated earthquake-safety standards, modernize and replace Eisenhower-era medical and laboratory facilities, and assure adequate capacity to meet the needs of our community. Throughout this process, we have taken every opportunity to inform and educate Palo Altans about the challenges we face in caring for you, your children and families, and your neighbors.

We need to focus on urgent health care needs. For example, the Emergency Department that serves both hospitals was built for less than half the patient volume it currently sees daily, and both hospitals are frequently full. This means that patients seen in the Emergency Department for life-threatening illnesses or injuries may need to wait many hours for admission to the hospitals because there are literally no beds available.

It sometimes means that ambulances must be re-directed to other hospitals that do not offer Stanford's level of care or which may take much longer to reach when even minutes



can make the difference between full recovery and permanent disability — even between life and death.

The city's evaluation of the proposed Renewal Project should be based on its most significant community benefit — the ongoing provision of superior health care services to Palo Alto and nearby communities. Two-thirds of Palo Alto adults and children who required hospitalization in 2007 turned to us for care. The hospitals provided more than \$220 million in uncompensated costs of medical services and charity care in 2007 alone.

Our ability to continue to provide these vital community benefits faces enormous challenges from the current economic environment and from the requirement to comply with state-mandated earthquake-safety requirements by 2013, even as we hope for an extension to 2015.

Before starting construction, we must also complete a lengthy and extensive review by the California Office of Statewide Health Planning and Development (OSHPD). Time is of the essence, yet today the project is fully a year behind in the release of a draft environmental impact report, which was originally expected in June 2008.

Potential significant environmental impacts of the project will be identified as required by the California Environmental Quality Act. We have always acknowledged the hospitals' responsibility to include all feasible and reasonable mitigation measures in our projects to address such impacts. However, above and beyond mitigation measures, the city has been generating an ever-expanding list of items it desires to be included as "community benefits" in a development agreement or as "requirements" to be put in a zoning change.

This expanding list would impose on the hospitals millions of dollars in costs for items that are not related to health care or the impacts of the projects themselves. It comes at a time of tremendous economic pressure, when the hospitals are facing higher financing costs, greater difficulty in raising private donations, and the need to increase care to those who cannot afford to pay for the medical services they need or may be uninsured due to having lost their jobs.

It is essential for all involved in these discussions and for our community to understand that the hospitals each have sole responsibility for the costs of their respective projects. It is not possible to add substantial costs for items not related to medical care or the impacts of the projects without placing the hospitals' future — and the future of services everyone in our communities relies upon — in significant financial jeopardy.

We intend to bring to the city a comprehensive proposal and engage in good faith negotiations in the near future. It is our belief that together we can make progress toward the goal of formal City Council action by early 2010.

Construction of the Renewal Project will

We intend to bring to the city a comprehensive proposal and engage in good faith negotiations in the near future.

bring a projected \$18 million in taxes and fees to the City of Palo Alto and will lead to creation of approximately 2,200 new jobs at a time when health care is the among the most stable and promising sectors in the economy. This is a stimulus package we are proud to be able to provide to Palo Alto in addition to high-quality medical care and one that others facing the closure of hospitals would certainly wish were available to their communities.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the move by the Stanford School of Medicine and the hospital from San Francisco to Palo Alto and 90 years since the Stanford Home for Convalescent Children was established. From the beginning and in each era, the city and the medical center together have met challenges in a manner that has provided generations of Palo Altans with the highest quality health care available anywhere.

We owe it to our community to work together to reach fair and reasonable solutions that will allow us to maintain the services we provide today and build on a legacy that will enhance life here and benefit people everywhere. ■

Christopher Dawes became CEO of Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital in 1997 and Martha Marsh became CEO of Stanford Hospital in 2002.

Streetwise

What will you do for Earth Day?

Asked on University Avenue. Interviews by Lillian Bixler. Photographs by Veronica Weber.



Eric Sorensen
Property Manager
University Avenue, Palo Alto

"My company will be a part of an event on Saturday with Congresswoman Eshoo where she'll help companies get green certified."



Lene Harbott
Research Scientist
Hawthorne Avenue, Palo Alto

"We've got a composter at home that needs care and attention after the winter, so I'll deal with the compost."



Lois Costes
Student
Beach Street, Redwood City

"I'll be picking up trash."



Sarah Stobie
Nanny
Devonshire Avenue, Palo Alto

"Maybe I'll recycle some plastic bottles!"



Jonathan Loeb
Intellectual Property Lawyer
College Avenue, Palo Alto

"I'll ride my bike to my Prius!"



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Transitions

Deaths

Pauline Ursu

Pauline (Polly) Ursu, 97, died at her home at Channing House in Palo Alto April 1.

Born in Salem, Ind., she attended DePauw University and graduated with a business degree from Miami University in Oxford, Ohio, where she met her future husband, Daniel Ursu. When her daughters were grown, she sold real estate in La Grange, Ill., and worked in the trust

dept. of the First National Bank of Chicago.

She moved to Palo Alto in 1977 with Dan to be close to family and to care for her grandchildren while her daughter Marilyn attended Santa Clara Law School. For 70 years she was dedicated to the support of women's higher education opportunities through the P.E.O. organization.

She was a life-long active member of the United Methodist Church. Her family remembers that in every community where she lived she was a devoted community volunteer and that she had a passion for gardening and music, set a beautiful table and entertained very graciously, and left her family many recipes for food and good living.

She is survived by her daughter and son-in-law Marilyn and William Bauriedel of Palo Alto; three grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

A "celebration of life" memorial will take place at 2 p.m. Friday, May 15, at Channing House, 850 Webster St., Palo Alto. Donations in memory of Polly Ursu may be made to the First United Methodist Church of Palo Alto, 625 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94301.

Dorothy M. Smith Thornton

Dorothy M. Smith Thornton, 60, a resident of East Palo Alto, died April 4.

She was born in Richmond, Va. She grew up in East Palo Alto and lived there most of her life.

She attended Garden Oaks Junior High School and was a graduate of Ravenswood High School's class of 1967.

She is survived by her husband, George Thornton; and daughters Janeen Woods and Tamara Brown.


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GREG ALBAUGH



Woodside, California — Greg Albaugh, beloved husband, father-figure, "midwife" and friend died peacefully and swiftly at Stanford University Medical Center on Thursday, April 9, 2009.

Born in Phoenix, Arizona, on November 15, 1951, Greg was the son of George Albaugh and Haroldine Carter Albaugh. He graduated from Palo Alto High School in 1969 and from Southeast Community College in 1984. In 1981 he married his longtime friend Chrystin Moore Albaugh.

Greg's career took a varied path. During the 1970s and 1980s, he worked for Burlington Northern Railroad as a federal inspector and "god" of Havelock shops. More recently,

he worked in the biotech industry for Syntex, Roche, Coulter, Corixa, Abgenix and finally as a senior associate scientist for Amgen.

Greg was a sports fanatic, wine enthusiast, animal lover, and sci-fi buff whose appreciation for music made him a walking encyclopedia of sorts, especially when it came to classic rock. Most of all, Greg will be remembered as a warm-hearted, generous soul who gave the world's best bear hugs.

He is survived by his wife, Chrystin; daughter, Cyndi Crawford of Lincoln, Nebraska; and grandson, Tanner Fox also of Lincoln, Nebraska.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made in Greg's name to the National Brain Tumor Society (www.braintumor.org) or through participation in the Brain Tumor Walk to be held May 2 in Golden Gate Park (www.bayareawalk.org).

PAID OBITUARY

JIM CIARDELLA

4/20/1924-4/8/2009



Jim Ciardella, 84, died Wednesday. An 82 year resident of Menlo Park, he owned Jim's Meat Market. He graduated from Sequoia High School and served in the Air Force. He was an active member in the Italian American Social Club and Italian Catholic Federation of Menlo Park.

He is survived by his wife, Helen, sons Jim, David (Jamie) and Ron (Lisa), grandchildren Lia, Gina, Kim, Caryn, Lauren, Joel, John and Jesse, and brother Pete Ciardella (Joan).

Rosary at 7 pm Monday, April 13 Spangler Mortuary in Menlo Park. Funeral mass at 10 am Tuesday, April 14 St. Denis Church in Menlo Park. A service immediately after mass at Alta Mesa Memorial Park in Palo Alto.

In lieu of flowers, please make donations to St. Jude's Children's Research Hospital, PO Box 50, Memphis, TN 38101 or Children's Skin Disease Foundation, 1501 N. Broadway, Walnut Creek, CA 94596.

PAID OBITUARY

NANCY LEE POWELSON DONHAM



Nancy Lee Powelson Donham, age 67, died on April 7, 2009, in Lake City, Florida.

Born December 28, 1941, in St. Cloud, Minnesota, she was the second daughter of Lee Powelson, a dairy farmer/historian, and Lenore Graves Powelson, school teacher.

Donham attended public schools and then Carleton College from which she graduated magna cum laude in 1963. As a Woodrow Wilson scholar, she did graduate work at the University of Toronto in English literature.

Donham taught literature at George Washington University and Virginia State College.

In 1971 she married Donald L. Donham, an anthropologist whom she accompanied on fieldwork trips to southwestern Ethiopia in 1974 and 1983. Their son, Benjamin Powelson Donham, was born

in 1977. Nancy Donham worked as an academic affairs writer at the Stanford University News Service under B. Robert Beyers. She then worked for 18 years as a production editor for the Annual Reviews of Immunology, Ecology and Sociology.

In 2002, having abruptly lost most of her vision, she retired to Lake City, Florida, where she completed a book, *Raising Ben*, and a personal memoir, *Thinking Woman*.

Donham is survived by her son, Ben P. Donham, M.D.; her sisters, Margaret Collins of Lake City, Florida, and Mary Faine of Mercer Island, Washington; and by many friends to whom she was deeply attached.

A memorial service will be held this summer at St. Andrews United Methodist Church in Palo Alto, California. Memorial gifts may be made to the Columbia County Public Library, 308 N. Columbia Street, Lake City, Florida 32055.

PAID OBITUARY



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2009

EARTH DAY



Earth Day and other eco-centric events

Locals celebrate green movement with movies, food and education

by Karla Kane

Friday, April 17

Gamble Garden is holding an Earth Day celebration for kids at 1431 Waverley St. in Palo Alto from 2 to 4 p.m. Families and children are invited to take part in activities — including a garden scavenger hunt — and then have juice and cookies on the Tea House Patio. Information: www.gamblegarden.org and click “Events.”

Saturday, April 18

The Palo Alto Library will be showing environmental films at 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. The Main branch (1213 Newell Road) will show Al Gore’s Oscar-winning “An Inconvenient Truth” and the Children’s branch (1276 Harriet St.) will show “The Great Kapok Tree,” a Palo Alto Children’s Theatre production. Information: www.pafd.org and click “Earth Day celebration 2009.”

The City of Palo Alto is holding a community Earth Day celebration at Lucie Stern Community Center, 1305 Middlefield Road, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. There will be live music by bluegrass band “The Mighty Crows,” local and organic food, on-site tree planting, a climbing wall, kids’ entertainment by Rainbow the Clown, interactive presentations by local eco-friendly vendors, nonprofits and city programs, e-waste recycling and document shredding.

(continued on page 18)



Logan Green, a co-founder and CEO of Zipcar, stands by one of the Zipcars stationed at Stanford University Wednesday.

Veronica Weber

Creating good car-ma

Entrepreneurs at Zipcar use Internet to encourage carpooling, car sharing

by Sue Dremann

Hitching a ride by extending a thumb by the roadside? That’s so 20th century. These days, young social-networking entrepreneurs are creating new forms of high-tech hitchhiking using iPhones, the Internet and car-sharing to help people who want to carpool find rides and give them.

The concept of carpooling isn’t new, of course, but where other business models failed to galvanize the masses to reduce their collective carbon footprint in the

1990s, many hope newer companies will succeed.

Palo Alto-based Zipcar, the brainchild of two 25-year-old entrepreneurs, is a website on which people seeking and offering rides can connect. Either through the Zipcar.com site itself, or by linking to a Zipcar-sponsored group on Facebook, would-be carpoolers can type their start and endpoints and find people going the same way.

(continued on next page)



Veronica Weber

Stanford University students Travis Kiefer (center) and (l to r) Jason Ford, Kersten Schnurle and Ana Miller-ter Kuile take advantage of the Zimride website to arrange carpool trips to the grocery store, restaurants and airports.

Zimride

(continued from previous page)

College campuses are the most obvious venue for staging rides, according to John Zimmer, cofounder and chief operations officer of Zimride. So in addition to individual carpoolers, Zimride has created college-based networks on such campuses as Stanford, Dartmouth College and UCLA.

Currently, there are 1,500 members on the Stanford campus, he said.

In a new development, the company formed a ride-sharing partnership April 8 with Zipcar, a company that stations vehicles that people can rent on an hourly basis. Now Stanford students and faculty can book one of the 20 Zipcars on campus and share the cost with others who need a ride.

Zimmer got the idea for a ride-sharing network while a student at Cornell University 1 1/2 years ago. He started a ridesharing company called Zimbabwe and 3,000 students used the service, he said.

Through a friend, he discovered that Logan Green, a member of the transportation-district board in Santa Barbara, Calif., had started a similar venture called Zimride.

"I quickly learned that we had routes that were so popular that buses were overflowing and people were being turned away. ... Neither increasing the bus fare or the public funding (for more buses) were politically

feasible, so our service was unable to grow in any meaningful way," Green said.

"I started to think of different models for transportation that would grow more organically; something with a positive feedback loop, where the more people used it, the stronger it would become," he said.

The two teamed up to form the current Zimride, with Zimmer taking a cross-country trip last July to meet up with Green. Zimmer carpooled across America, arranging for rides and picking up passengers along the way. Zipcar donated a car for the

for their trip, he said.

Riders and drivers post their likes and dislikes, such as the type of music they listen to on trips and whether they prefer high or low volume. They can also stipulate smoking or nonsmoking, conversation or peace-and-quiet and one's tolerance for body odor or fragrances. And if one wants to learn more about a person, many have links to Facebook pages, part of a partnership between Zimride and Facebook established in July 2008 with a \$250,000 grant from Facebook, Zimmer said.

"You can easily save \$200 on transportation over the course of a year and still travel the same amount."

—Travis Kiefer, Stanford sophomore

trial run, he said.

Twenty percent of undergraduates need rides, he said.

"Freshmen can't have a car on campus," he said, for example, of Stanford University. But students needing to go to San Francisco or Los Angeles can view routes for each potential ride, finding the best possible match

Corporations such as Facebook offer lucrative territory for Zimride, he said.

To make the Zimride succeed, the company is targeting large communities where there is an element of trust between people, Zimmer said. Most people might be leery about taking a ride from or picking up strangers, but everyone on the Stanford

campus has a Stanford e-mail address, for example, he said.

Zimride also has an anonymous feedback section similar to eBay's, where users can rate rides, he said.

Stanford freshman Gaalan Dafa started using Zimride recently.

"I've used it to do things like get food at In'N'Out Burger (in Mountain View). I've found it to be pretty easy and convenient," he said.

"On Facebook, you can check out the person's profile, which is kind of reassuring. I've been using Zipcar, too, and that is really cool. ... My friend and I just rented a car through Zipcar, and through Facebook put it on Zimride. A couple of people responded — and we were off," he said.

Travis Kiefer, a Stanford sophomore and major in urban studies, describes himself as a passionate social entrepreneur. Zimride appeals to him because of his own socially entrepreneurial work — a business providing micro-capital to alleviate poverty called Gumball Capital.

He first used Zimride when he planned to drive to the airport. He immediately received two responses, he said. One was from a woman he knew whose ride to the airport had bailed out.

"She saved \$60 on what she would have spent for a taxi. We had a fun trip catching up on what we had been up to since freshman year when we lived in the same dorm

(continued on page 19)

Life without a car

Palo Alto teachers discover public transit, 'stress-free' commutes

by Chris Kenrick

What are the pros and cons of getting rid of your car?

Fifteen months ago, Palo Alto teacher Christina Nosek sat down to create her list.

"The pros of selling my car outweighed the cons by far," Nosek said.

Last month marked Nosek's first anniversary of life without her Honda Civic. The results so far?

"I've eliminated a great deal of stress," she said in an interview in her bright third-grade classroom at El Carmelo School. "I absolutely love living without a car."

Nosek's 70-mile-a-day commute, from her apartment in San Francisco's Marina District to El Carmelo Elementary School and back, is now done by ride-sharing or on Caltrain.

If she feels like meeting her parents, who live in San Jose, for dinner, she connects at the Caltrain Castro Street station to Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority light rail, which takes her directly to her dad's office at Cisco Systems, Inc., in San Jose. The two then drive to the Nosek home.

"I never used public transportation before I sold my car," Nosek said. "Now I'm finding out it's the best thing in the world — and really easy. It's amazing what's out there. I'm so much happier, and not nearly as stressed out as I used to be."

She rattles off a list of "all the ridiculous, insane things" that no longer cause her stress: parking tickets; searching for parking in San Francisco; paying rent for a parking space; the inevitable fender benders because of close proximity of cars — and driving itself.

Then there's the financial stress of car ownership. Nosek figures she's saved about \$9,360 in car payments, insurance, gas, maintenance and parking. "Plus," she added, "all the extra walking has been good for my heart, my overall health and my general well-being both physically and mentally."

Most days, Nosek rides down and up the Peninsula with fellow Palo Alto teachers Jim Meininger and Matthew Lindner, both of whom teach at Palo Verde Elementary School. They collaborate on crossword puzzles or laugh about TV shows from the night before on the drive down.

"After two hours a day with someone you get really close," she said. "We've all become pretty good friends now."

Of the three teachers, Meininger is the only car owner. The other two cover gas money.

Lindner, who sold his Mazda last July, says car-free life gives him peace of mind. "Living in San Francisco, I don't have to worry about my car and all the little residual

costs that go along with it. I don't have to think about, 'Is my car going to be OK? Am I going to go out in the morning and find it all scraped up?'" the third-grade teacher said.

Meininger, the chauffeur for Nosek and Lindner on days they don't take Caltrain, said he wouldn't think of giving up his car, but enjoys telling his fifth-graders that he's greener than most commuters.

"I'm from Ohio, so I can't imagine not having a car," he said. "That would be really alien to me." ■

Staff Writer Chris Kenrick can be e-mailed at ckenrick@paweekly.com.



Veronica Weber

Chris Nosek, a third-grade teacher at El Carmelo Elementary School in Palo Alto, rides the northbound Caltrain back to San Francisco after work Wednesday. She's given up owning a car and uses public transportation and carpooling instead.

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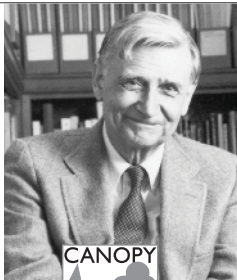
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E.O. Wilson

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Artists: Top: Emiko-o; Bottom: Ellen Hauptli

Earth Day events

(continued from page 15)

The featured speaker is chef Laura Stec on "Cooking a Cool Cuisine: The How-to-Fight-Global-Warming Diet." There will also be a tour of Congresswoman Anna Eshoo's newly renovated "green" office on Emerson Street from 2:15 to 4 p.m. Those who take alternative transportation to the event will be entered into a prize drawing. Information: www.paafd.org and click "Earth Day celebration 2009."

Foothill College will host "Focus the Nation," a half-day town hall conference from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Campus Center at Foothill College, 12345 El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills. Among the topics will be how Foothill College and the Foothill-De Anza Community College District are supporting the "green economy" and bringing about a more sustainable world. Information: www.foothill.fhda.edu and click on "News and Events."

PlanToys and Acterra are holding a kids' Earth Day event at the Oak Creek Club, 1600 Sand Hill Road, Palo Alto. Eco-friendly toy company PlanToys will provide toys and games and Whole Foods will supply snacks. Kids ages 3 to 8 can participate in a variety of activities, including building recycled cardboard dollhouses. Information: www.plantoy.com and click on "Events."

Sunday, April 19

There will be a free tour of **native gardens of the Peninsula** from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Each tour features about 45 gardens. The goals of the tour are to demonstrate reduced water use, reduced chemical and pesticide use, improved habitat and the aesthetics of gardens designed with California native plants. Registration is at www.goingnativegardentour.org.

John Jeavons of Common Ground and Ecology Action will speak on sustainable food practices in a two-part series of lectures Sundays, April 19 and 26, at 9:30 a.m. at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 330 Ravenswood Ave., Menlo Park. Information: www.growbiointensive.org/.

Tuesday, April 21

Acterra is sponsoring a day of habitat restoration and wildflower viewing at Pearson-Arastradero Preserve in the Palo Alto foothills from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Participants will plant and learn about California native plants while harvesting exotics for mulch and compost. They will also try to spot and identify spring wildflowers, birds and other wildlife. Acterra will provide all the tools, plants and snacks; participants should wear long sleeves, long pants, a hat and sturdy shoes. Information: <http://acterra.org>.

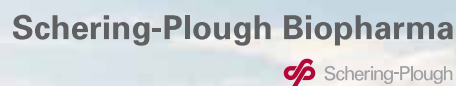
Wednesday, April 22

Kepler's is hosting an Earth Day story-time event at the Menlo Park

(continued on page 20)

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Zimride

(continued from page 16)

and I had become a firm believer in the value of Zimride. ... Owning a car at Stanford is expensive. A parking spot for the year can easily set you back \$150. You haven't even started to pay for registration, insurance, gas, maintenance, etc.

"You can easily save \$200 on transportation over the course of a year and still travel the same amount," he said.

By using Facebook, "you don't have to worry about sketchy people who you don't trust," he said.

More than that, he added, students want to help the environment and see carpooling as an easy way to reduce their carbon footprint.

As for the future of ridesharing, Zimmer predicted carpoolers will start using the iPhone to arrange their rides. A San Francisco company, Carticipate, is already experimenting with that technology.

But ridesharing depends on critical mass, according to Jim Morris, a computer scientist, dean of Carnegie Mellon Silicon Valley's campus and Zimride user. The number of carpoolers hasn't reached a viable mass yet to sustain rideshare organizations and that was the chief reason for their failure in the 1990s, he said. But that could change.

He is currently working with an Irish-based company called Avego Shared Transport that is working on a pilot program that would integrate

the iPhone with ridesharing.

"With a cell phone, you can dial in or call 511 or another ridesharing group and pick up a ride almost immediately. The fears of kidnapping disappear because the information (about the person) is in a database," he said.

The service could function much like airplane connections, with ride searches and pickups in five minutes — what he referred to as "high-tech hitchhiking." ■

Staff Writer Sue Dremann can be e-mailed at sdremann@paweekly.com.



City of Palo Alto NOTICE OF DIRECTOR'S HEARING

To be held at **3:00 p.m., Thursday, May 7, 2009** in the Palo Alto City Council Conference Room, 1st Floor, Civic Center, 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, California.

Documents related to these items may be inspected by the public at the Development Center, 285 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, California on:

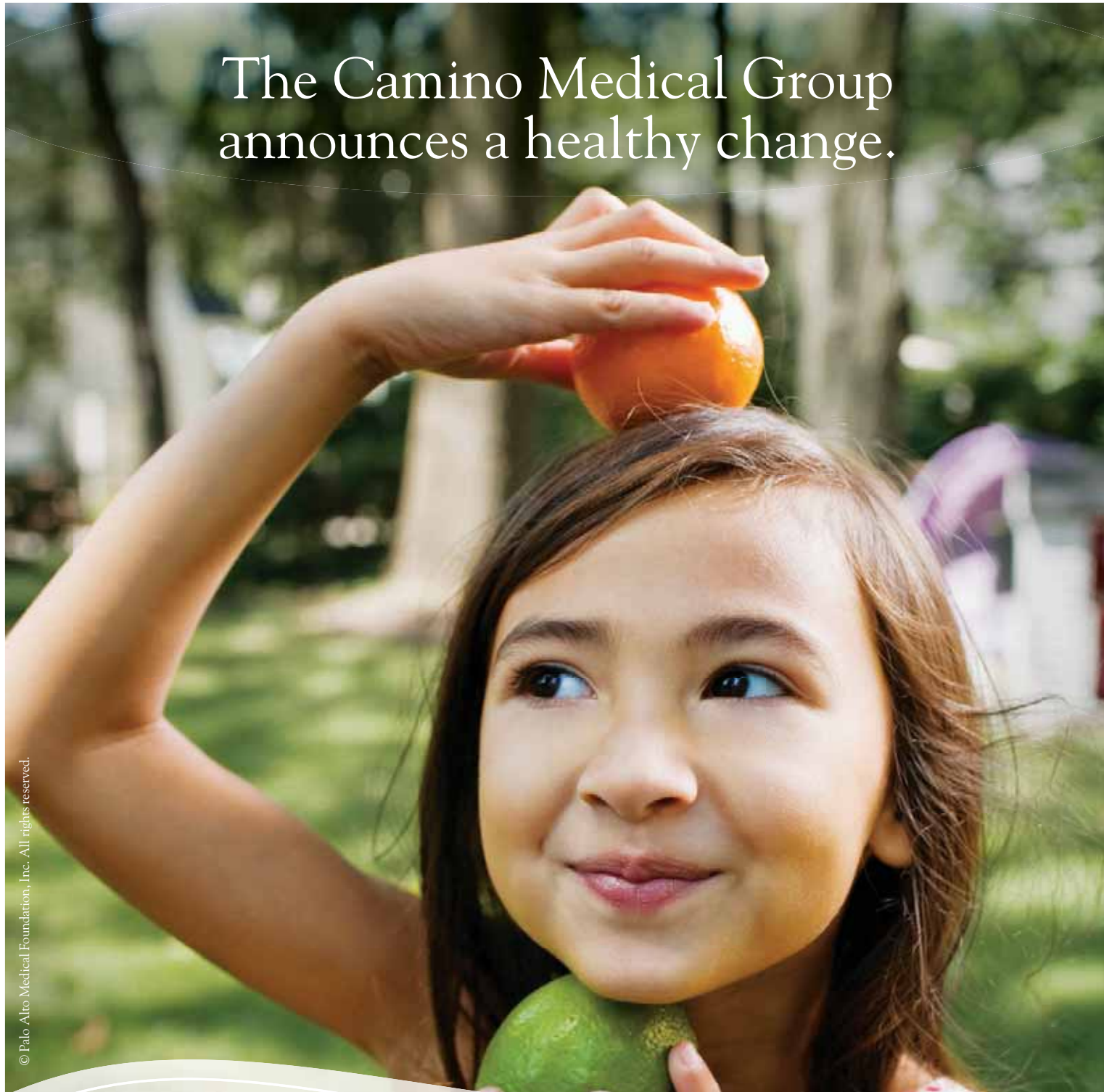
Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday 8:00 am - Noon, 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
Wednesday 9:00 am - Noon, 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm

2255 Tasso Street Request by Roger Kohler on behalf of Glenn and Brooke Kernrick for Individual Review of an addition to an existing two-story residence and a Home Improvement Exception for Floor Area, garage size, garage height, and garage daylight plane. Zoning: R-1.

Curtis Williams
Interim Director of Planning and Community Environment

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, listening assistive devices are available in the Council Chambers and Council Conference Room and Sign language interpreters will be provided upon request with 72 hours advance notice.

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Cover Story

Earth Day events

(continued from page 18)

Library, 800 Alma St., at 4 p.m. Author Peter Brown will present his new children's book, "The Curious Garden," about a little boy who helps a struggling garden survive and spread. Information: www.keplers.com and click "Upcoming events."

A farmers market will be held at King Plaza, 250 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto, from 4 to 6 p.m. starting April 22 and on Wednesdays through October. Information: <http://capayvalleyfarmshop.com/shop/>.

Thursday, April 23

Stanford University's "The Ethics Of Food & The Environment Series" will feature the film "Who Killed the Electric Car?" plus a post-film discussion with Deepak Ahuja of Tesla Motors at 7 p.m. in Cummings Art Building, Annenberg Auditorium, 435 Lasuen Mall, Stanford. Information: www.events.stanford.edu and search by date.

Saturday, April 25

Environmental Volunteers, which provides environmental education in Silicon Valley, is holding its "Wild Crush" benefit from 6:30 to 10 p.m. at the Quadrus Center, 2400 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park. Tickets are \$175 and the event

includes wine tasting, dinner, live jazz music, an auction and a raffle. Guests may register at <http://evols.org/events.htm>.

Monday, April 27

The Green Tech Expo and Forum will be held at City Council chambers and King Plaza, 250 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto, from 3 to 7 p.m. Mayor Peter Drekmeier, Colin Grant of Visible Strategies and representatives of Google PowerMeter, BetterPlace, KCPB Venture Partners and others will discuss the technology that can create net-zero carbon buildings, advanced water and energy efficiency, and renewable energy. Information: www.eventbrite.com/event/320699220.

The Palo Alto City Council is holding a special "green" meeting at 7 p.m. in the council chambers at 250 Hamilton Ave. The council plans to discuss sustainability efforts and Climate Protection Plan, polystyrene ban and the diversion of construction and demolition waste. Information: www.cityofpaloalto.org.

Sunday, May 10

Scientist and author **E.O. Wilson** will speak on "Biodiversity and Our Future: Healing Mother Earth" as a benefit lecture for Canopy at the Spangenberg Theatre (Gunn High School), 780 Arastradero Road, Palo Alto, at 4 p.m. Tickets are \$70 general admission. Information: www.canopy.org. ■



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Arts & Entertainment

A weekly guide to music, theater, art, movies

They've
got
rhythm

Flamenco dancers stomp to a controlled, complex beat

story by Rebecca Wallace photos by Whitney Dafoe

The flamenco dancer lifts one elegant arm, raising a scarlet fan like a bird's wing. Spanish guitar music swirls around her.

An observer could imagine her taking flight, except that this style of dance is so grounded. One minute she's light and fluid; the next, she connects with the floor in stomps. Her shoes, studded with nails on the bottoms of their heels and toes, ring out confidently.

"It's kind of the opposite of ballet, in which you want to be away from the floor," Koko de la Isla says of flamenco. "Here you are down to Earth. You're in control of the rhythm."

The dancer with the fan is one of de la Isla's advanced students, rehearsing in a Mountain View studio on a Wednesday afternoon. On the dance floor, she's joined by three others to work with a song on CD called "Granada." Their skirts swish as they turn, the long ruffled trains pooling on the floor and the hips fitted close in the current flamenco fashion.

Carrying a purple fan, de la Isla watches closely and claps the beat, fishnet stockings peeping out from under her black pants. She adjusts an arm here, the tilt of a head there. "Don't lean so much," she murmurs gently.

De la Isla, a Palo Alto resident, seems soft-spoken, but her love of flamenco is passionate. After study-

ing ballet, modern dance and other styles since childhood, she discovered flamenco when she was a graduate student at the University of California at Irvine. She went on to study and perform widely, seduced by the emotion and intimacy of the art. She still prefers connecting with small restaurant audiences to performing on a big stage.

For a decade now, she's been teaching through her Koko de la Isla Flamenco Studio, offering dance classes at Mountain View and Sunnyvale spaces and through the Flamenco Society of San Jose. On

Sunday, April 26, she'll celebrate the 10-year mark with a performance at Cubberley Theatre in Palo Alto, enlisting professional singers, guitarists, a percussionist and dancers to join her student dancers and herself in the program.

Newcomers may think of flamenco as a purely Spanish dance and musical art form; it's identified with the Andalusia region. But it also has roots in other cultures, including the Gypsy (Roma) and Arab worlds.

And it's big in Japan, where de

(continued on page 24)



Above: From front to back, advanced flamenco students Noriko Hamilton, Veronica Rodriguez and Johanna Friesen rehearse. Right: Teacher Koko de la Isla watches as Hamilton, Noriko Kamisaka and Rodriguez dance.



Flamenco's not just big in Spain; Koko de la Isla calls her native Japan "flamenco heaven."



What: The Koko de la Isla Flamenco Studio's 10th anniversary performance, featuring de la Isla and student dancers as well as professional performers: guitarist Bill Burgess, guitarist/singer Geoffrey Hawkins, singers Virginia Juan and Jose de la Isla, dancer Juan Moyoli and percussionist Mike Masuda.

Where: Cubberley Theatre, 400 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto

When: 4 p.m. Sunday, April 26

Cost: Tickets are \$20 general admission and \$15 for students and seniors.

Info: Go to www.kokodelaisla.com or call 650-922-1203.

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Worth a Look

Art Gift Gallery

Palo Alto's Pacific Art League has devoted part of its gallery space to a small area for finding artistic presents, calling it the Gift Gallery. Items by Bay Area artists that are for sale include jewelry, artists' books, glass pumpkins, ceramic vases and cards. They tend to be smaller items offered at lower prices. Gift-wrapping service is also offered.

This month, pieces in the new Gift Gallery have floral or other green themes, to coincide with the art league's main show, a juried exhibit called "In the Garden" that features watercolors, paintings on silk, gouaches and other works.

Located at 668 Ramona St., the Pacific Art League is open weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 to 4. Go to www.pacificartleague.org or call 650-321-3891.



"Ulysses Butterfly," by photographer D. Cichon, is among the offerings at the Pacific Art League's new Gift Gallery.

Music Marty Ehrlich



New York jazz musician Marty Ehrlich performs tonight with the Gunn High School Big Band jazz ensemble.

Tonight's a big night for the Big Band jazz ensemble at Gunn High School. Composer and multi-instrumentalist Marty Ehrlich will perform the new work, "Blues for Peace," that he wrote for the band, playing with the student musicians.

Ehrlich, best known for playing saxophone, clarinet and flute, is a New Yorker who has performed with and led many bands, and soloed with a variety of orchestras. One of his recent endeavors was a residency at

Harvard University, where he wrote a long-form jazz score for strings and horns inspired by abstract paintings by Oliver Jackson.

Ehrlich was commissioned to write the work for Gunn by the Montalvo Arts Center in Saratoga. The Gunn performance is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. tonight, April 17, at Spangenberg Theatre at the high school at 780 Arastradero Road in Palo Alto. Tickets for the jazz concert are \$10 for adults and \$5 for Palo Alto high school students and seniors. Call 650-354-8264 or go to www.martyehrich.com.

'Musical Diaries from the Ghetto'

A lecture series focusing on music written by Jews in the ghettos and concentration camps of World War II has a notably vibrant range. The talks delve into tango, cabaret and Yiddish music as well as partisan compositions and music composed after the war by such composers as John Cage and Dmitri Shostakovich.

Nurit Jugend, a composer with a Stanford doctorate of musical arts in composition, will give the lectures — collectively titled "Musical Diaries from the Ghetto" — at the Cubberley campus of the Jewish Community Center at 4000 Middlefield Road in Palo Alto.

The events will be held on four Tuesdays, April 21, May 5, May 12 and May 19, from 7:30 to 9 p.m. Jugend said the course will look at music through rare recordings, documentary films, and art and poetry about music. The series also includes a May 5 concert by pianist Edna Koren.

Tickets for a single lecture are \$18; the whole series

is \$50. Jugend's talks will be given in Studio D at the Cubberley campus. Koren's concert will be in classroom M-2.

For more information, go to www.paloaltojcc.org.

Earth Day 'Livin' Local'

What's your idea of an ideal Earth Day celebration? Eating organic food? Chatting up folks from environmental groups? Admiring a new solar-powered fountain? Dropping off electronic waste?

At the City of Palo Alto's Earth Day celebration, this year themed "Livin' Local," attendees can do all of those things. Festivities are scheduled from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. this Saturday, April 18, at the Lucie Stern Community Center at 1305 Middlefield Road (the fountain is at the city's Junior Museum and Zoo at 1451 Middlefield).

Also planned for the free event are: live music by the Mighty Crows band, cavorting by Rainbow the Clown, food and garden demonstrations, arts and crafts projects, a talk by green chef Laura Stec, and a climbing wall. For details, go to www.cityofpaloalto.org/earthday or call 650-464-0222.

Authors Laura Pritchett

Author Laura Pritchett is a woman interested in saving: usually environmental things, like rivers. When she comes to speak at Kepler's Books in Menlo Park this Saturday, April 18, she'll be talking about saving what other people throw away.

In her book "Going Green: True Tales from Gleaners, Scavengers, and Dumpster Divers," Pritchett gathers together 20 essay writers to share stories, tips and ideas on shopping at flea markets, salvaging plastic from the beach and even eating road kill. The idea is not just to find bargains but also to re-use in a throwaway culture.

Pritchett, also the author of the novels "Sky Bridge" and "Hell's Bottom, Colorado," is scheduled to speak at 3 p.m. at Kepler's, 1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. True to form, the event is free. Go to www.keplers.com or call 650-324-4321.

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By Lisa Loomer

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The Mercury News

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THE NATIONALLY-ACCLAIMED THEATRE OF SILICON VALLEY

From intense drama to campy comedy

Pear Theatre's annual collection of one-act plays runs the gamut

by Kevin Kirby

Last Friday saw the opening of Pear Avenue Theatre's sixth annual "Pear Slices": a collection of eight original one-act plays by members of the Pear Playwrights Guild. Directors Dean Burgi and Troy Johnson have staged four plays each, sharing an ensemble of nine actors and a more or less bare stage.

As always, The Pear is to be commended for its commitment to producing new works by local artists, and this year's collection of "slices" will surely appeal to patrons who enjoy the fresh experience of encountering an unknown work for the first time. Furthermore, The Pear's intimate performance space is perfect for small plays: None of these playlets has more than four characters.

One of the interesting things about "Pear Slices" (this year and in previous years) is watching each of the actors tackle a number of roles, sometimes requiring very different acting styles from one piece to the next.

This year's Protean Actor Award surely goes to Bill C. Jones. Over the course of the evening, Jones plays a rigid airport security officer, a venture capitalist who can be driven into a pseudosexual frenzy by the words "I.P.O.," an American military interrogator haunted by memories of Afghanistan, and — in Leah Halper's "Gametes, Unite!" — a limping, asthmatic, curly-tailed spermatozoa who wins the race up the fallopian tube because he's "not too proud to ask directions."

Jones is an expansive actor, most at home in roles and situations that are a bit larger than life. The same can be said for Helena G. Clarkson. In Margy Kahn's "Last Flight to Jackson Hole," Clarkson works harder than the implausible material requires. And in "A Covering," Leah Halper's story of a teenager from a fundamentalist Christian sect who seeks to get her hair cut against her father's wishes, Clarkson throws all her gravitas into her portrayal of a mall hair-salon owner. Based on lines like "This is my shop; your way don't work here," this seems to be what the playwright had in mind. Nonetheless, this air of supernatural authority just comes off as weird.

In Richard Medugno's "A True Apology," however, Clarkson shines. Her long-suffering character is called upon to mediate a dispute between her blind mother (played by feisty Lindi Press) and her deaf brother (believably portrayed by playwright Medugno), after the son runs over the mother's seeing-eye dog. Insisting that she is only a neutral interpreter between family members whose disabilities leave them unable to communicate with one another directly, she nonetheless gets caught up in both parties' frustration and anger, until she is seemingly locked in a half-spoken, half-signed argument with herself.

In contrast to Jones' and Clarkson's theatricality, there is the more naturalistic acting style of Maria Giere and Jake Vincent. With subtle flickers of emotion and a filmic attention to unconscious gestures, the pair lend authenticity to Megan Ma's two-person play, "The Last Open Door." Ma's script — a portrait of a fading relationship that then flashes back to the couple's first meeting — is in no way groundbreaking (though it does feature a lovely monologue in which Giere's character describes awakening to discover a Steinway grand piano being hoisted toward her apartment balcony on ropes). But the simple honesty of the performances makes it one of the evening's gems.

Vincent is also noteworthy in Ross Peter Nelson's "The Harrow," in which he plays the son of a former Afghan detainee, tormenting the U.S. interrogator (Jones) whom he blames for his father's death. Vincent's quiet moral outrage plays beautifully against Jones' full-out anguish, creating the night's most effective theatrical fireworks.

The rest of the acting ensemble is: Doug Thornberg, who plays the fundamentalist father in "A Covering"; Bobbi Fagone, a very choosy ovum in "Gametes, Unite!"; and Paul Braverman.

Braverman appears in his own play, "A Friend in

THEATER REVIEW

Need," which has a Twilight Zone-ish conceit in which two buddies find themselves at a roadhouse en route to the afterlife following a car crash, only to be told by the bartender (Press) that they must agree which one lives and which one dies. But he is more memorable as a slick, orally fixated psychiatrist/huckster in Nelson's "Shrink in a Box."

While the plays run the gamut from intense psychological drama to campy comedy, with "The Harrow" and "Gametes, Unite!" marking the two ends of that spectrum, the majority fall somewhere in the middle. If there is a problem with the collected plays as a whole, it is a certain sameness that inhabits many of the scripts: a uniformity of tempo, an earnestness of exposition, a rather plodding insistence on dotting i's and crossing t's.

Miniature one-acts have become a popular form in recent years, largely because they can be produced on the cheap, without the economic risks of mounting an untested full-length play. Yet here, on home turf, with an established audience base and a successful track record, the majority of this year's "slices" from the Pear Playwrights Guild feel decidedly safe.

That critique aside, "Pear Slices 2009" is still an enjoyable evening of theater, and certainly worthy of support. ■

What: "Pear Slices 2009," eight one-act plays presented by Pear Avenue Theatre

Where: Pear Avenue Theatre, 1220 Pear Ave., Unit K, Mountain View

When: Thursday, Friday and Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m., through April 26

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NOTICE OF A SPECIAL PUBLIC HEARING of the Palo Alto Planning & Transportation Commission

Please be advised the Planning and Transportation Commission shall conduct a **special meeting at 6:00 PM, Wednesday, April 29, 2009** in the Civic Center, Council Chambers, 1st Floor, 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, California. Any interested persons may appear and be heard on these items.

Staff reports for agenda items are available via the City's main website at www.cityofpaloalto.org and also at the Planning Division Front Desk, 5th Floor, City Hall, after 2:00 PM on the Friday preceding the meeting date. Copies will be made available at the Development Center should City Hall be closed on the 9/80 Friday.

NEW BUSINESS Public Hearing:

1. Recommendation to City Council for Adoption of the Santa Clara County Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Palo Alto Airport and Adoption of a Resolution to Amend the Comprehensive Plan to Establish an Airport Influence Area Overlay in the vicinity of the Palo Alto Airport.
2. **2180 El Camino Real (The New College Terrace Centre):** Initiation of (1) a Zone Change from Neighborhood Commercial (CN) District to Planned Community (PC) District for a mixed use project having 61,960 square feet of floor area including 8,000 square feet of grocery (intended for JJ&F Market), 5,580 square feet of other retail, 14 affordable one-bedroom residential units, 39,980 square feet of office use, for a total floor area ratio (FAR) of 1.23:1 inclusive of 1.06 non-residential FAR, and two levels of below-grade parking facilities and surface parking facilities providing 227 parking spaces on the property, and (2) a Comprehensive Plan Amendment to assign the Mixed Use land use designation, allowing for a 1.15:1 non-residential FAR, to a site currently designated as Neighborhood Commercial (which caps non-residential FAR at .4:1). Environmental Assessment: A draft initial study is being prepared.
3. **Zoning Ordinance Amendment:** Review and recommendation to City Council to: (1) adopt an ordinance amending Sections 18.10 (Low Density Residential Districts), 18.12 (R-1 Single Family Residential Districts), and 18.13 (Multiple Family Residential Districts) of Title 18 (Zoning) of the Municipal Code (PAMC) regarding subdivision incentives for historic preservation, and (2) adopt an ordinance amending PAMC Title 21 (Subdivisions and Other Divisions of Land), Chapter 21.20 (Design), Section 21.20.301 (Flag lots).

*Quasi-Judicial item subject to Council's disclosure policy

APPROVAL OF MINUTES: None.

NEXT MEETING: Special Meeting of May 6, 2009 at 6:00 PM

Questions. Any questions regarding the above applications, please contact the Planning Division at (650) 329-2441. The files relating to these items are available for inspection weekdays between the hours of 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM. This public meeting is televised live on Government Access Channel 26.

ADA. The City of Palo Alto does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities. To request accommodations to access City facilities, services or programs, to participate at public meetings, or to learn more about the City's compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), please contact the City's ADA Coordinator at 650.329.2550 (voice) or by e-mailing ada@cityofpaloalto.org.

Curtis Williams, Interim Planning Director

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Arts & Entertainment

Rhythm

(continued from page 21)

la Isla was born, and studied and performed for years. ("Koko de la Isla" is a stage name; her real name is Hiroko Shimakawa.) She calls her native land "flamenco heaven."

De la Isla comes from Arita, a small town in southern Japan famous for its porcelain. When traveling in Spain, she was overjoyed to see porcelain from her hometown in castles and museums, she says, beaming. It turns out Spanish royalty collected the pieces.

Here, she used to have mostly Japanese dance students; now she estimates about 20 percent of her students are from Japan, with many from South America.

Johanna Friesen, one of the advanced students rehearsing on this afternoon in Mountain View, has studied flamenco for six years and feels an emotional tie through her Spanish heritage on her mother's side. De la Isla, she says, is "the best technique teacher." She adds, "You learn how to do it right."

Friesen seems unfazed by a ruffle emergency during rehearsal — a fellow student tosses her a safety pin to fix her skirt. What really challenges her about flamenco, she says, is keeping the unusual rhythms

straight. It's a mental exercise.

"You have to get used to moving in sixes and 12s instead of fours and eights," she says. De la Isla helpfully claps out a common flamenco rhythm: one-two-three, one-two-three, one-two, one-two. Repeat.

The challenge is abundantly clear when three of the dancers rehearse a piece to a Cuban-flavored song called "Guajiras." Music and song are just as integral to flamenco as dance, and dancers and musicians must play off each other to know when to begin.

On this afternoon, there are no musicians, so de la Isla starts and stops the CD, silencing it to let her dancers go into an energetic, complex sequence of much stomping and stepping in which they control the rhythm. The women have changed into shorter skirts, and their feet fly freely, blurring and creating powerful peeling stomps that can be felt through the floor.

They're off like racers, and afterwards de la Isla says, surprised, "That was quite fast!"

The intense mood of the dance is broken. "Who's doing that?" one of the students cries. Everyone laughs breathlessly, and the scarlet fans change from poetic birds' wings back to something more prosaic: a tool to help tired dancers to cool off. ■

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Beach trash makes a surprisingly serene art exhibition in a Stanford lobby. Read more on Weekly arts editor Rebecca Wallace's blog, **Ad Libs**. Go to blog.paloaltoonline.com/adlibs/.

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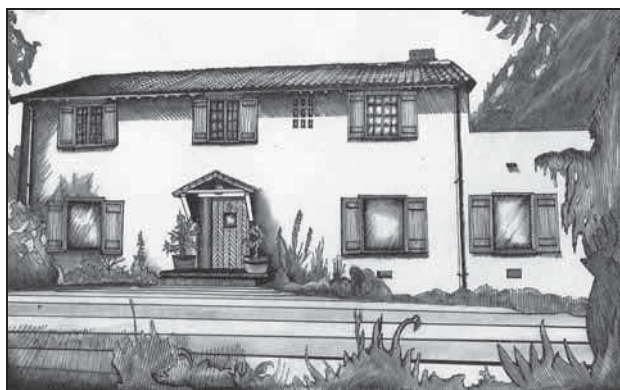
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Movies

Movie reviews by *Jeanne Aufmuth, Peter Canavese, Tyler Hanley and Susan Tavernetti*

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OPENINGS

State of Play ★★★

(Century 16, Century 20) Should a filmmaker want to woo journalists, there are a few sure-fire ways (such as depicting antisocial schlubs finding romance), but director Kevin Macdonald proves especially savvy with "State of Play."

The American remake of the acclaimed 2003 BBC miniseries retains writer Paul Abbott's theme about the tenuous relationship between the first and fourth estates, woven through a mystery-thriller press procedural, but Macdonald shifts the emphasis to highlight a moment when declining readership and corporate bottom lines threaten the tradition of print journalism. As Helen Mirren's editor-in-chief yells, "The real story is the sinking of this bloody newspaper!"

"State of Play" feels the burn of translating six hours of drama to two, but hot scribes Matthew Michael Carnahan, Tony Gilroy and Billy Ray (and an uncredited Peter Morgan) streamline the story without entirely sacrificing wit.

Washington Globe reporter Cal McCaffrey (Russell Crowe) links two seemingly unconnected violent incidents to each other and to his college roommate-turned-congressman Stephen Collins (Ben Affleck). The apparent suicide of Collins' young and pretty aide leads to the revelation that Collins has been cheating on his wife, Anne (Robin Wright Penn), a secret that proves intertwined with the shooting of a thief and a bystander. As a political firestorm blazes, McCaffrey and Collins prowl around each other with mixed feelings of friendship and professional self-preservation. The congressman's burning question: "Am I talking to my friend now, or am I talking to a reporter?"

The ghost of "All the President's Men" haunts the proceedings as much as the original miniseries, but the tainting of the public trust has crept its way outward from politicians to the news outlets investigating them. In both quarters, the phenomenon has much to do with the unchecked growth of corporations (for Collins, the dragon is private defense contractor PointCorp, while McCaffrey at the Globe lives under the newly posted sign "A MediaCorp Company"). "They're not accountable to anyone," one informer says of PointCorp. "It's the Muslim-terror Gold Rush ... the privatization of homeland security."

Meanwhile, the cautious corporate keepers of Mirren's Cameron Lynne won't allow her to print the dots that McCaffrey and his rookie shadow (Rachel McAdams) are connecting without an unequivocal statement on record. For all the criticism of greedy corporate intrusiveness, the devil remains within the protagonist and antagonist. McCaffrey denies what's clearly a conflict of interest (exacerbated by his having slept with Anne), while Collins is willing to pull strings until the fabric unravels entirely.

The new "State of Play" never feels lived-in (the secret of its patient predecessor), but Crowe has gotten a bit of his mojo back here, and he's well-supported by a cast that also includes Jason Bateman, Jeff Daniels, Harry Lennix and Viola Davis. (Affleck does his best, but still looks like he's playing dress-up with his father's suit).

A dollop or two of low-tech action helps to keep the picture simmering, and stay in your seat for the closing main titles: a loving, wistful and — one hopes — premature elegy for the newspaper.

Rated PG-13 for brief drug content, some violence, sexual references and language. 1 hour, 58 minutes.

— Peter Canavese

17 Again ★1/2

(Century 16, Century 20) It's a strange movie indeed that is all about a 37-year-old heterosexual male and yet isn't likely to appeal to any 37-year-old heterosexual males. Its protagonist notwithstanding, "17 Again" is built to appeal to teen girls, preteen girls and boys, cougars and gay males. The reason will be immediately obvious to anyone who's heard of "High School Musical": "17 Again" is the first full-fledged, non-musical "vehicle" for the teen-idolized, puppy-loved Zac Efron.

When Hollywood sees the opportunity to dress up a new star, it's time for an "old hat" fitting. "17 Again" is an only slightly altered chapeau in the magic-realist comedy style: Remember "Big," "Vice Versa," "13 Going on 30" and "18 Again!" to name but a few? Well, subtract a year from the last, and you get "17 Again," in which Efron's 17-year-old Mike O'Donnell grows up to look like doughy old Matthew Perry. The father of two teens with whom he fails to connect, Mike considers the road not taken: At 17, he passed up a basketball scholarship to commit to family life with Scarlett (Leslie Mann), whose divorce filing is about to be finalized. Before you can say, "Aww, gee, Mary, it is a wonderful life!" Mike looks like Efron again.

With the help of lifelong best bud Ned (Thomas Lennon) — now a filthy rich software engineer — Mike reasons that "spirit guide transformation magic" has given him a second chance at life and/or a unique opportunity to bond with his kids. This is the sort of comedy that hopes we won't notice the plot-holes (like how two key characters who knew Mike well in high school fail to recognize him) and only-in-the-movies nonsense (like Ben eating breakfast wearing pointy ears). As for lessons, young viewers can learn empathy for their parents, to seize the day, or to vicariously enjoy a father's loving care. Don't ask what the cougars and gay men will learn, but it's safe to say they'll be divided when Mike blurts, "I'm not gay!"

Since it's essentially a one-way body-swap movie, "17 Again" sidelines Perry for most of the running time. Unfortunately, if Efron is attempting to adopt his co-star's mannerisms — which, as "Face/Off" proved, is the true pleasure of a body-swap flick — he still needs a few more acting classes. There's a leaden inevitability to the processed uplift and exaggerated, prefab gags — and not just because of the ubiquitous previews. Those indifferent to Efron (or those who loathe him) will hate this movie, while those who love him will enjoy it the same way they enjoy gazing moonily at an Abercrombie & Fitch ad.

So to review "17 Again" is to review Efron. His appeal does reach beyond his genetic gifts (though the film starts there, as a sweaty, topless Efron shoots hoops). His charm and open-heartedness go a long way, as does his physical skill, seen in the b-ball tricks that were also his metier in "High School Musical."

Much as he'd like to break free of the niche, Efron could be the next Gene Kelly. Having dropped out of the "Footloose" remake to book a drama with his "17 Again" director Burr Steers, Efron should take pause from his sole transcendent moment here: when, in his basketball uniform, he does a joyous half-court dance to "Bust a Move." Zac, get back ... c'mon, before we crack.

Rated PG-13 for some sexual material, language and teen partying. 1 hour, 42 minutes.

— Peter Canavese



To view the trailers for "17 Again" and "State of Play," go to Palo Alto Online at www.PaloAltoOnline.com

MOVIE TIMES

17 Again (PG-13) ★1/2	Century 16: 11:35 a.m.; 2:15, 4:55, 7:25 & 9:55 p.m. Century 20: 12:35, 2, 3:05, 4:30, 5:35, 7:05, 8:05, 9:35 & 10:35 p.m. Fri. also at 10:05 & 11:35 a.m.	Observe and Report (R) ★★1/2	Century 16: 11 a.m.; 12:10, 1:15, 2:25, 3:25, 4:35, 5:40, 6:55, 8:05, 9:10 & 10:20 p.m. Century 20: 4:45, 5:45, 7, 8:10, 9:25 & 10:25 p.m. Fri.-Sat. & Mon.-Thu. also at 12:15 & 2:25 p.m.
Adventureland (R) ★★★	Century 16: 11:15 a.m.; 1:45, 4:25, 7:30 & 10:05 p.m. Century 20: 12:05, 2:35, 5:10, 7:45 & 10:15 p.m.	Paris 36 (Not Rated) (Not Reviewed)	Palo Alto Square: 1:30, 4:20 & 7:15 p.m. Fri. & Sat. also at 10:10 p.m.
Audition (R) (Not Reviewed)	Century 16: Sun. at noon. Century 20: Sun. at noon.	Race to Witch Mountain (PG) ★★	Century 20: 12:05, 2:30 & 4:55 p.m.
Crank: High Voltage (R) (Not Reviewed)	Century 16: 11:10 a.m.; 1:20, 3:35, 5:45, 8 & 10:10 p.m. Century 20: 12:20, 1:25, 2:30, 3:35, 4:40, 5:55, 6:55, 8:15, 9:10 & 10:40 p.m. Fri. also at 10:10 & 11:10 a.m.	Shall We Kiss? (Not Rated) (Not Reviewed)	Guild: 1, 3:30, 6 & 8:30 p.m.
Dragonball: Evolution (PG) (Not Reviewed)	Century 16: 11:20 a.m.; 1:30, 3:45, 5:55, 8:05 & 10:15 p.m. Century 20: 12:40, 2:50, 5:05, 7:20 & 9:30 p.m. Fri. also at 10:25 a.m.	Sin Nombre (R) (Not Reviewed)	Century 16: 11:40 a.m.; 2, 4:30, 7:10 & 9:35 p.m.
Duplicity (PG-13) ★★1/2	Century 16: 12:50, 3:50, 6:50 & 9:45 p.m. Century 20: 1:10, 4:10, 7:10 & 10:05 p.m. Fri. also at 10:20 a.m.	State of Play (PG-13) ★★★	Century 16: 11:30 a.m.; 1:05, 2:35, 4, 5:30, 7:05, 8:30 & 10 p.m. Century 20: Noon, 1:30, 3, 4:25, 6, 7:30, 9 & 10:25 p.m. Fri. also at 10:35 a.m.
Earth (G) (Not Reviewed)	Century 20: Wed. & Thu. at 12:25, 2:50, 5:15, 7:40 & 10:05 p.m.	Sugar (R) (Not Reviewed)	Aquarius: 2:30, 5:30 & 8:30 p.m.
Fast and Furious (PG-13) ★★	Century 16: 7:50 & 10:25 p.m. Fri., Sat. & Mon. - Thu. also at 11:05 a.m. & 1:35 p.m. Fri., Sat. & Sun. also at 4:10, 6:45 & 9:20 p.m. Century 20: 12:25, 2:55, 5:30, 8:05 & 10:40 p.m. Fri. & Sat.-Tue. also at 1:55, 4:30, 7:05 & 9:40 p.m. Fri. also at 11:20 a.m.	Sunshine Cleaning (R) ★★1/2	Century 20: 12:10, 2:35, 5, 7:25 & 9:50 p.m. Palo Alto Square: 2:15, 4:45 & 7:30 p.m. Fri. & Sat. also at 10 p.m.
The Great Buck Howard	Aquarius: 2, 4:30, 7 & 9:15 p.m.	This American Life Live (Not Rated) (Not Reviewed)	Century 16: Thu. at 8 p.m. Century 20: Thu. at 8 p.m.
Hannah Montana: The Movie (G) (Not Reviewed)	Century 16: 11:50 a.m.; 1, 2:20, 3:30, 4:50, 6, 7:20, 8:35 & 9:50 p.m. Century 20: 12:30, 3, 5:30, 8 & 10:30 p.m. Fri. & Sat.-Tue. also at 1:45, 4:15, 6:45 & 9:15 p.m. Fri. also at 10:05 & 11:15 a.m.	Aquarius: 430 Emerson St., Palo Alto (266-9260)	no Real, Palo Alto (493-3456)
The Haunting in Connecticut (PG-13) (Not Reviewed)	Century 20: 7:40 & 9:55 p.m.	Century Cinema 16: 1500 N. Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View (800-326-3264)	Guild: 949 El Camino Real, Menlo Park (266-9260)
I Love You, Man (R) (Not Reviewed)	Century 16: 11:45 a.m.; 2:30, 5:10, 7:45 & 10:25 p.m. Century 20: 12:10, 2:40, 5:15, 7:50 & 10:20 p.m.	Century Park 12: 557 E. Bayshore Blvd., Redwood City (800-326-3264)	Stanford: 221 University Ave., Palo Alto (324-3700)
Knowing (PG-13) (Not Reviewed)	Century 20: 1:35, 4:20, 7:15 & 10 p.m. Fri. also at 10:40 a.m.	Century 20 Downtown: 825 Middlefield Road, Redwood City (800-326-3264)	Internet address: For show times, plot synopses, trailers and more information about films playing, go to Palo Alto Online at http://www.PaloAltoOnline.com/
Monsters vs. Aliens (PG) ★★1/2	Century 16: 11 a.m.; 12:20, 1:40, 3, 4:20, 5:25, 7 & 9:30 p.m. Century 20: 1:05, 2:20, 3:30, 4:40, 7, 9:20 p.m. Fri. also at 10:45 a.m. Sat.-Thu. also at noon.	CinéArts at Palo Alto Square: 3000 El Cami-	

STANFORD THEATER

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Portrait of Jennie (1948) A painter meets a girl from another era. Fri. at 9:05 p.m.

A Matter of Life and Death (1946) A crashed pilot learns his survival was a mistake made in heaven. Sat.-Mon. at 7:30 p.m. Sat. and Sun. also at 3:20 p.m.

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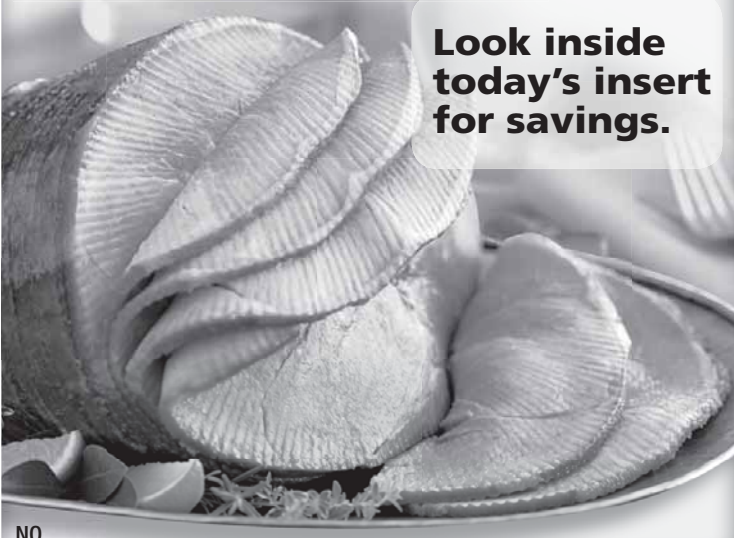
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RESTAURANT REVIEW

Approximately Mexican

Reposado is urbane and stylish, but food needs the volume turned up

by Dale F. Bentson

If I could write two reviews of Reposado, the first appraisal would applaud the stylish decor, the vivid, generous portions, the attentive service and the four dozen or more tequilas.

The second review, though, would take issue with the food. Not that it isn't pleasant; it just isn't south-of-the-border enough for my palate and nearly everything registers low on the taste-o-meter. I want the volume turned up.

I want the food to be assertive in my mouth and scream "Mexican cuisine" with its ingenious layers and combinations of spices and herbs, that collision of unusual textures, rare aromas and incomparable taste sensations. I'd like Reposado to underline why Mexican is among the world's greatest cuisines.

Despite what I think, owner Rob Fischer told me that a number of patrons still send back their orders because the food is just too spicy for them. It's hard to believe that here in Foodieville, U.S.A., that anyone's palate is still so uneducated and so unappreciative of the glories of food. OK, maybe I'm just grouchy today.

The newish, usually jam-packed Reposado is the brainchild of Fischer, who owns the Palo Alto Creameries downtown and at Stanford.

"We didn't want to open a taqueria, not the typical taco, burrito and enchilada restaurant. We wanted something more upscale, something found in the finer areas of Mexico City. And we wanted it updated and eclectic," Fischer said.

Reposado is housed on Hamilton Avenue in downtown Palo Alto, the home of the long-gone Cafe Verona. Fischer spent big and the result is a striking, stylish, restaurant/bar that caught on as soon as it opened.

The Cass Calder Smith architecture stresses open, airy and elemental with concrete walls and ebony-colored floor, high-beamed ceiling and a mezzanine for overflow dining and private parties. Dining room and bar areas are swathed in earth tones with minimal adornment. In all, Reposado is sleek and contemporary without being gimmicky.

The house margarita (\$8) with triple sec and fresh-squeezed lime juice matched my palate perfectly. It reminded me of languid days in Puerto Vallarta, a nice frame of mind from which to peruse the

menu.

For starters one day, I opted for the special crab and corn chowder soup (\$6.50). Creamy and thick, the soup was loaded with chunks of delicate crab and fresh-shucked corn. The cream of sweet corn soup (\$5.50) with fire-toasted poblano chilies is the menu staple. It was like eating creamed corn dotted with tame green chilies: not bold, but not bad.

Three small sopitos (\$9.75) were artistically plated. The beef with toasted guajillo salsa lacked the spicy, tangy, smoky flavor of the chilies. The pork with salsa fresca and the chicken with salsa verde were indistinguishable.

I liked the prawn ceviche (\$10.50) with lime and cucumber juice, serrano chili, avocado and grilled pineapple. The serranos provided nothing more than backdrop but the prawns were meaty and fresh-tasting, and the citrus was slightly less than puckery on the tongue. A refreshing way to whet the appetite.

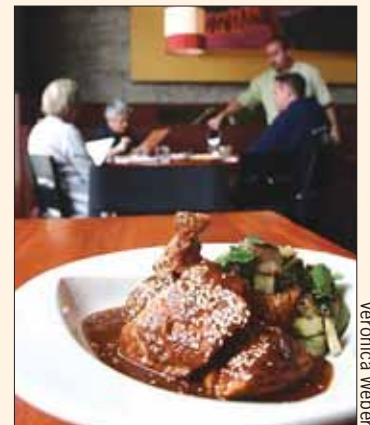
Queso fundido (\$8.75) was a small iron pot of melted cheese, fire-roasted (but not fiery) poblanos, shiitake mushrooms and house-made tortillas. The cheese was wonderfully gooey and the mushrooms provided interest but, again, the chilies were too timid to spark the dish to life.

Main courses didn't veer from this course. Pollo en mole poblano (\$17.25) was a plump, juicy chicken breast blanketed in mole poblano sauce. Mole poblano is a classic and complex Mexican sauce made from chilies and spices, seeds and nuts, often with a hint of chocolate. The finished sauce is rich and fragrant, leaving a sweet to bitter-sweet resonance in the mouth.

Reposado's version of pollo en mole poblano was too sweet for my taste, too bright red to my eye. It covered the chicken more like marinara than mole. It was tasty in a nondescript way but the lovely layers of chilies never manifested.

Better was the rotisserie chicken (\$16.50) with pumpkin seed sauce and red rice. The fleshy fowl was delicious and the kitchen rotisserie, visible from the dining room, seduced the appetite. The sauce was simpler here, and, I suppose, my expectation level was different.

Pescado asado (\$16.75) was my favorite plate. Grilled red snapper, marinated in achiote (a rust-colored seed, slightly sweet and peppery) was served with jicama-mango pico de gallo and green rice. The



Veronica Weber

Pollo en mole poblano is served with vegetable hash and rice.

fleshy and sweet fish tasted ocean-fresh. The pico de gallo sauce was delightfully citrusy and nicely balanced the snapper.

The desserts were excellent. Azteca chocolate cake (\$6.75) was moist and rich with Mexican chocolate sauce, lime sabayon and ancho chili honey. A pleasing hint of chili lingered on the tongue.

Torta de elote (\$6.75) was a sweet corn cheesecake with vanilla bean brulee and kumquat relish. The cheesecake was both rustic and refined, if there can be such a thing. It satisfied without filling and without supercharging the calorie count. It was starchier than most cheesecakes, which was its charm.

The wine menu is eclectic, to say the least. While there's not a large list, wines from every major wine-producing corner of the world are represented. There are some nice wines being made in Mexico; alas, none on this list. Also offered: a myriad of tequilas, cocktails and beers. Corkage fee is \$10.

Reposado is already popular, if not for the food, then for the ambiance. Ideally, Fischer and executive chef Arnulfo Hernandez can find a way to please both those looking for authentic Mexican food and those just looking for a chic place to eat. Perhaps some dishes could be offered both "regular" or "high octane." ■

Reposado, 236 Hamilton Ave. Palo Alto 650-833-3151

Hours: Mon.-Thurs. 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m. Fri. 11:30 a.m.-11 p.m. Sat. 11 a.m.-11 p.m. Sun. 11 a.m.-9 p.m.

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Sports Shorts

ON THE FARM . . . A good week of recruiting got even better when Gainesville (Ga.) wide receiver **Tai-ler Jones** gave Stanford his verbal commitment Thursday according to scout.com, which rated him the nation's 14th best at his position. Jones (6-0, 183) runs a



Tai-ler Jones

4.45 in the 40, benches 275 pounds and squats 405. He caught 81 passes for 979 yards and 12 touchdowns, earning him a class 3A First-Team All-State selection as a junior. His father, Andre Jones, played at Notre Dame and in the NFL. "I knew more about the UCLA and Cal programs than I knew about Stanford," Jones told scout.com. "What I had heard about Stanford was more that they didn't have a strong football team, and they couldn't compare to UCLA and Cal. But after going there, seeing Stanford, seeing the coaches' plan and the athletes they signed in the 2009 class, and who they could potentially get in my class, their football is going to come up in the years when I'm there." He becomes the fourth high-profile recruit for the Cardinal in the past seven days. Bishop Gorman High teammates **Alex Turner** (a 6-1, 245 defensive end) and **Evan Palelei** (a 6-2, 235 middle linebacker) and Livingston, Ohio, safety **Courtney Avery** (5-9, 158) also committed to the Cardinal program.

PREP ALUMNI . . . Palo Alto High grad **Nathan Ford** ranks fourth among Ivy League baseball hitters with a .379 batting average. The two-sport star at Cornell has enjoyed a brilliant senior season after setting football records as a quarterback in the fall. Teammate and Menlo-Atherton grad **Dominic Di Ricco** has struggled this season, although he's been one of the bright spots for Cornell during his career there. At Princeton, Sacred Heart Prep grad **Matt Connor** doubled in the Tigers' 15-12 victory over Seton Hall on Tuesday. The third baseman is hitting .286 on the year.

ON THE AIR

Friday

College baseball: Stanford at Arizona St., 6:30 p.m., KZSU (90.1 FM)

Saturday

College baseball: Stanford at Arizona St., 6:30 p.m., KZSU (90.1 FM)

Sunday

College baseball: Stanford at Arizona St., 1 p.m., KZSU (90.1 FM)

Monday

College baseball: Santa Clara at Stanford, 5 p.m., KZSU (90.1 FM)

SPORTS ONLINE

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She's getting a fresh start after a tragedy

Following the death of her father, CCS champ Sarah Liang resurfaces at a Palo Alto High

by Keith Peters

It was the highlight of the season and the 2008 Central Coast Section Swimming and Diving Championships should have been a time of enjoyment for Sarah Liang, who became the first female in Sacred Heart Prep history to win an individual title last spring.

Liang's victory in the 100-yard breaststroke of 1:04.10 was a school record and an automatic All-American time. She also placed third in the 200 IM with another school record of 2:05.10 (an All-American time) and swam on the 200 medley relay (third) and 400 free relay (seventh), both of which set school marks.

By the time the meet was over for the talented freshman, Liang had scored 50 points and set the stage for an even brighter future. Honors aside, last May was hardly a time to celebrate for Liang, who was dealing with her father's death.

"I lost my dad in May, 2008,

right around CCS," Liang said last week. "So, it was a difficult time."

When Liang's father, Kevin, passed away from cancer in Taiwan before the CCS meet, it changed Sarah's life in a number of ways. Along with the immediate heartbreak, which somehow Sarah swam through at CCS, her father's death forced her to change schools.

"I couldn't stay at Sacred Heart Prep with the way the (financial) situation was," she explained. "It was hard to pay the tuition with the downturn in the economy."

Tuition for high school students this year at Sacred Heart Prep is \$28,635. The sudden loss of her father and the economy forced Li-

(continued on page 34)



Keith Peters

Following the death of her father, sophomore Sarah Liang is now swimming at Palo Alto (top) after winning All-American honors in the breaststroke for Sacred Heart Prep last season (at right).

Palo Alto baseball is turning it around

by Keith Peters

Things didn't start out well for the Palo Alto baseball team this season. Then, it got even worse. A 0-6 start carried over into the SCVAL De Anza Division season, which saw the Vikings open with a 1-4 record.

Since then, however, the season has turned around very quickly. Palo Alto has won five straight games — all in league play — and suddenly finds itself in third place at 5-4 (7-12 overall).

The Vikings trail only Los Gatos

(8-1) and Wilcox (8-2) and are a game up on fourth-place Homestead (5-5). Monta Vista, Cupertino and Los Altos have only four wins and at least six losses.

Palo Alto has five league games remaining, all against teams with non-winning records. After visiting last-place Milpitas (1-8) on Friday, the Vikings will finish up the regular season against Monta Vista (4-6) and Homestead.

Call it a youth movement or whatever, but Palo Alto is looking at an automatic berth into the Cen-

tral Coast Section playoffs should its recent success continue. While there's still the league tournament to consider, a third-place finish will provide the Vikings with a favorable draw and solid opportunity to advance into CCS.

Palo Alto got it done again Wednesday in a 10-3 romp over visiting Milpitas. Paly first-year coach Donny Kadokawa has turned to some of his younger players who just happen to be former Little

(continued on page 32)

STANFORD ROUNDUP

Hitting the road to win

Stanford teams will travel to find success this big weekend

by Rick Eymer

Road conditions become a top priority for several Stanford sports this weekend as conference and/or national titles will be determined or become clearer in venues scattered across the country.

The Cardinal baseball team (7-5, 15-13) rides an 11-3 record in its last 14 games to Tempe to meet second-ranked and Pac-10 leading Arizona State (10-2, 25-8) in a three-game series beginning Friday night.

The Stanford softball team (6-3, 35-4) opens a three-game set in the desert on Friday night with conference leader Arizona (5-2, 33-9) and then plays defending national champion Arizona State (4-3, 34-8) on Saturday and Sunday.

The Stanford women's tennis team (6-1, 17-3) will be in Berkeley at noon Saturday to play co-second place California (6-1, 16-4) with hopes of claiming a share of the Pac-10 title.

The Cardinal will know its situation following Friday's match between USC (7-0, 19-2), and UCLA (5-2, 17-5).

There will be no arguments once top-ranked Stanford (6-0, 22-1) and host USC (6-0, 19-1) play Saturday in the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation regular-season finale.

Should the top-ranked Stanford men's gymnastics team advance to the NCAA finals in Minneapolis on Friday, it will be looking to move up a spot from last year's national runner-up finish.

The ninth-ranked Stanford women's gymnastics team hopes for a third consecutive trip to Friday's NCAA Super Six and a chance to compete for the national title in Lincoln, Neb.

Of course, if staying close to home is preferred, there are several intriguing competitions worth watching, including The Big Meet (track and field), The Big Match (men's tennis) and two important men's volleyball matches.

Freshman Brian Busick helped Stanford baseball kick off an important road trip. Wednesday night he retired all six batters he faced and had the luxury of an offensive smorgasbord to earn his first collegiate victory in a 16-3 nonconference game at Santa Clara.

The Cardinal won three of its four home games over the extended weekend, winning the series with UCLA and beating Cal on Monday.

Stanford gorged on Santa Clara pitching for 17 hits and scored 10 of its runs in the sixth inning.

Toby Gerhart's monster home run in the first inning was just the

(continued on next page)

Stanford roundup

(continued from page 30)

beginning. Colin Walsh had three hits and drove in two runs, Gerhart, Adam Gaylord and Brent Milleville each had two hits and drove in two runs and Joey August and Jonathan Kaskow each drove in a pair.

Stanford won for the 11th time in its last 14 games, including five of six on the road. The Cardinal sent 13 hitters to the plate in the sixth against three Santa Clara pitchers.

The trip to Tempe will go a long way in determining the Pac-10 champion, as well as establishing credentials for hosting a possible NCAA regional.

Softball

Stanford also used Santa Clara as a springboard into an important weekend of games, beating the visiting Broncos, 7-0, Tuesday after losing two-of-three to Cal last weekend.

The second-ranked Cardinal is in no danger of losing a spot in the postseason and a conference title would add some sparkle to its already impressive resume.

With the top three teams tangling in Arizona this weekend, the Pac-10 title chase could become clearer.

Senior pitcher Missy Penna is 25-3 with a 0.90 ERA, 14 shutouts, and 247 strikeouts in 193 2/3 innings entering play this weekend. Ashley Chinn is 11-1 with a 1.63 ERA, four shutouts, and 80 strikeouts in 77 1/3 innings.

The Cardinal has four players hitting .333 or better: Alissa Haber (.428), Ashley Hansen (.415), Shannon Koplitz (.339) and Maddy Coon (.333). As a result the team batting average is .301.

That pales in comparison to the Wildcats, 19-1 at home, whose top four batters are hitting .395 with a combined 58 home runs.

Women's tennis

Stanford's streak of 21 consecutive Pac-10 championships is in danger. The last time a team other than Stanford won the Pac-10 title was 1987, when California won the Southern Division crown and Washington won the Northern Division championship.

USC, which beat the Cardinal last month for the first time since 1986, remains undefeated heading into its

regular-season finale at UCLA.

There are no guarantees Stanford will beat the host Bears on Saturday either. Cal came within a nanosecond of ending the Cardinal's historic home winning streak on March 7.

Stanford, even with its current national ranking of No. 12, still has the talent to compete for a national title.

Women's water polo

Stanford and USC will be playing for the third time this season, and there's a distinct possibility the teams could meet again (and again) this season.

They have split their first two meetings, each winning in overtime. It should come as no surprise that the only loss each has suffered this year has been to the other.

Saturday's match will determine the top seed for the Mountain Pacific Sports Federation tournament, to be held in Hawaii next week. Both teams have most likely already earned a spot in the NCAA championships to be held in Maryland.

The home front

The dual meet used to be a staple of the track and field season. Now it's an endangered species.

That doesn't keep Stanford and Cal from making a big deal out of their lone dual meet competition of the outdoor season. The Big Meet remains a spirited event every year.

Stanford hosts The Big Meet on Saturday beginning at 11 a.m. and there's more emphasis on winning than earning an NCAA qualifying mark, which is why you'll likely see a sprinter trying the hammer throw in an effort of scoring a single point. It's what teammates are willing to do for each other.

The men's tennis match between Stanford and visiting Cal is set for a 1 p.m. first serve. The Cardinal will be looking to establish some momentum entering the Pac-10 championships and beyond.

Stanford (2-3, 17-5) has won four straight following a stretch of four losses in five matches.

Alex Clayton and Matt Bruch each returned to action for the first time in three weeks in Stanford's 7-0 nonconference win over USF on Wednesday and teamed for a doubles victory.

The Stanford men's volleyball team (13-7, 20-9) hosts No. 2 UC Irvine on Friday and No. 9 UCLA

on Saturday, both at Maples Pavilion at 7 p.m.

Stanford likely will have to beat both to gain the fourth seed and a home match in the first round of the MPSF tournament.

A loss might drop the Cardinal into a tie with USC, which plays two at 10th-place Hawaii. The Trojans have the tiebreaker advantage over Stanford.

"Home court would be great," Stanford coach John Kosty said. "But we're just looking to build momentum going into the playoffs. We're going to have to win on someone's home court eventually."

A visit to the Stanford golf course on Saturday and Sunday would mean seeing some of the nation's top collegiate golfers at the U.S. Intercollegiate Invitational. ■

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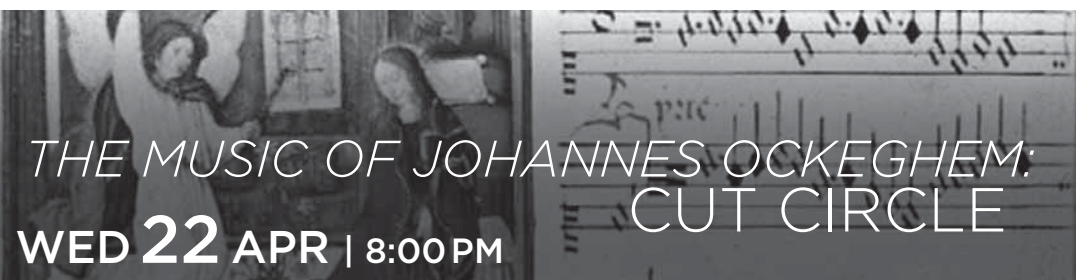
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2009 BIG MEET SCHEDULE

Stanford vs. California

Saturday, April 18 at Cobb Track & Angell Field

The series: Cal men lead, 66-46-2; Stanford women lead 19-10

Field Events

11:50 a.m. -- Women's javelin	2:45 p.m. -- Men's 400 relay
12:20 p.m. -- Men's hammer	2:50 p.m. -- Women's 1,500
12:50 p.m. -- Men's long jump	2:57 p.m. -- Men's 1,500
12:55 p.m. -- Women's pole vault	3:10 p.m. -- Women's 100 hurdles
1 p.m. -- Women's long jump	3:17 p.m. -- Men's 110 HH
1:05 p.m. -- Men's javelin	3:25 p.m. -- Women's 400
1:10 p.m. -- Men's high jump	3:30 p.m. -- Men's 400
1:20 p.m. -- Men's shot put	3:35 p.m. -- Women's 100
1:35 p.m. -- Women's hammer	3:40 p.m. -- Men's 100
2:20 p.m. -- Men's discus	3:45 p.m. -- Women's 800
2:25 p.m. -- Women's shot put	3:50 p.m. -- Men's 800
2:40 p.m. -- Men's triple jump	4 p.m. -- Women's 400 hurdles
2:55 p.m. -- Women's triple jump	4:07 p.m. -- Men's 400 IH
3:05 p.m. -- Men's pole vault	4:15 p.m. -- Women's 200
3:20 p.m. -- Women's high jump	4:20 p.m. -- Men's 200
3:35 p.m. -- Women's discus	4:25 p.m. -- Women's 3,000
	4:45 p.m. -- Men's 3,000
	5:05 p.m. -- Graduating seniors recognition ceremony

Track Events

2 p.m. -- Women's 3,000 steeplechase	5:20 p.m. -- Women's 1,600 relay
2:20 p.m. -- Men's 3,000 steeplechase	5:30 p.m. -- Men's 1,600 relay
2:40 p.m. -- Women's 400 relay	



CITY OF PALO ALTO NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, pursuant to Government Code Section 66016, that the City Council of the City of Palo Alto will hold a Public Hearing at the Regular Council Meeting on Monday, May 4, 2009 at 7:00 p.m., or as near thereafter as possible, in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, California to consider Adoption of a Resolution Amending Utility Rate Schedules W-5 and S-5 of the City of Palo Alto Utilities Rates and Charges Pertaining to Service Connection Fees.

Copies of the proposed service connection fee changes are available in the City Clerk's Office, 7th Floor, 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, California.

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CITY COUNCIL AGENDA

The City Council Meeting Has Been Cancelled for Monday, April 20, 2009. A Special Council Meeting will be held on April 27, 2009.

STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Finance Committee will be held on Tuesday, April 21 at 7:00 p.m. regarding: 1) External Quality Control Review of the Office of the City Auditor; 2) Auditor's Office Quarterly Report as of March 31, 2009; 3) Utilities Advisory Commission Recommendation that Finance Committee Recommend Council Adoption of a Resolution Amending Utilities Rate Schedules C-1, E-16 and W-2; 4) Proposed Fiscal Year 2009/10 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funding Allocations and 2009/10 Draft Action Plan; 5) Recommendation that Finance Committee Recommend Council Adoption of a Resolution Adopting a Fiber Optic Rate Increase and Amending Utilities Rate Schedules EDF-1 and EDF-2; 6) Recommendations to the City Council Regarding Proposed Fiscal Year 2009-11 Human Services Resource Allocation Process Funding; and 7) Business License Tax (ASD)

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East Meadow Circle/ Fabian Way

CONCEPT PLAN

NEIGHBORHOOD WORKSHOP #2

Thursday
April 30, 2009

7:00 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.

Palo Verde Elementary

Auditorium/Multipurpose Rm.

3450 Louis Rd., Palo Alto

You are invited to discuss concepts for the future development of the East Meadow Circle and Fabian Way area of Palo Alto. At this workshop, participants will discuss alternatives for the area including land uses, intensities, mix of businesses and services, potential bicycle/pedestrian connections, and neighborhood amenities. These alternatives will be considered for the area's Concept Plan, which is part of Palo Alto's Comprehensive Plan Amendment. The City of Palo Alto wants you to be a part of planning for this important area.

For more information contact:

Roland Rivera at (650) 329-2541, or
roland.rivera@cityofpaloalto.org

Project website:

<http://www.paloaltocomplan2020.org>



Prep roundup

(continued from page 30)

League all-stars — Freddy Avis, Kevin Kannappan, T.J. Braff and Wade Hauser, among others. Braff had four hits and drove in four runs on Wednesday while fellow sophomore Hauser had an RBI double to give Paly the lead for good at 3-2 in the bottom of the first. He and Braff had back-to-back RBI singles in the second as the Vikings stretched their lead to 5-2.

Avis got the pitching win while fellow freshman Kannappan tossed three innings of shutout ball.

The PAL Bay Division baseball race, meanwhile, has become just that, a real race with more than one entrant. Carlmont made it a two-team affair with a 7-6 upending of visiting Menlo on Wednesday in Belmont. Both teams are 4-1 in the division and will meet again Friday at Menlo at 3:15 p.m.

In the PAL Ocean Division, senior JJ Suttle had a career day with four hits and seven RBI in a Sacred Heart Prep's 15-2 thumping of host Sequoia. The Gators (2-3, 9-8) unloaded on the Cherokees with 16 hits, including four home runs. Sacred Heart, which is on spring break, gave no breaks to Sequoia as Suttle paced the offensive explosion with a career day that included three runs scored.

Suttle needed only a triple to hit for the cycle, but instead hit his second home run in his last at-bat. Adding to SHP's attack was Eric Andrews and Matt Brezinski, each of whom added homers.

Elsewhere in the PAL Ocean Division, it was bad enough that Menlo-Atherton had to brave gale-force winds in its division contest at Half Moon Bay on Tuesday. It didn't get any better when the Bears gave up two runs in the bottom of the seventh, which tied the game and sent it to extra innings in the inclimate weather.

The worst part of the day, however, was the fact Menlo-Atherton eventually dropped a 6-5 decision that was decided in the bottom of the ninth.

Boys tennis

Menlo-Atherton grabbed control of the PAL Bay Division race with a crucial 4-3 victory over second-place Burlingame on Wednesday in Atherton. The Bears improved to 9-0 in league with three matches remaining while the Panthers lost their second PAL match, both of them to Menlo-Atherton.

The Bears had a chance to clinch no worse than a tie for the division crown by beating visiting Woodside on Thursday. After that, M-A can wrap things up by beating host Half Moon Bay on Tuesday.

With the match tied on Wednesday, senior George Horowitz came up with the deciding point with his 6-3, 4-6, 7-6 triumph at No. 2 singles. Junior Alec Haley won at No. 1, 7-6, 6-3.

In doubles, the Bears got two key victories from its tandem of freshmen. Twins Christian and Jesse Perkins won at No. 2, 6-3, 6-4, while freshmen Matt Giordano and Zeke Brown registered a 7-6, 6-0 victory at No. 3. ■

ATHLETES OF THE WEEK



Kelly Jenks

Palo Alto High

The junior pitcher won four times as the Vikings went 4-1 in softball. In 32 innings she struck out 37 while tossing one two-hitter and three four-hitters in addition to getting five hits and driving in five runs.



Eric Stanske

Menlo-Atherton High

The senior pitcher was named the MVP of the River City Classic throwing eight shutout innings with only one walk, six hits and six strikeouts while winning once as the Bears went 4-0 and captured the tournament title.

Honorable mention

Maggie Brown

Menlo lacrosse

Lauren Bucolo

Palo Alto softball

Sarah Liang

Palo Alto swimming

Gracie Marshall

Palo Alto softball

Madi Shove*

Menlo lacrosse

Jasmine Tosky

Palo Alto swimming

Abi Arias

Menlo-Atherton baseball

Matt Brezinski

Sacred Heart Prep baseball

Matt Crowder

Menlo baseball

Kenny Diekroeger*

Menlo baseball

Chris Gow

Menlo-Atherton baseball

Nick Sako

Menlo-Atherton golf

* previous winner

To see video interviews of the Athletes of the Week, go to www.PASportsOnline.com

PREP SWIMMING

Paly's Higgins set for even faster times

by Keith Peters

The team champions of the Central Coast and North Coast sections will be there, and that's just a start to the fourth annual Section Challenge swimming meet at Palo Alto High on Saturday.

Along with CCS champs Bellarmine (boys) and Monta Vista (girls) and NCS champion Campolindo (boys) and Las Lomas (girls), some of the top swimmers in the state — and the nation — will be on hand for the fastest meet this side of the section finals next month.

A total of 10 meet records were set in last year's meet with the current marks setting the bar quite high for this weekend's entrants.

One record that wasn't set last season was the 1:41.11 time in the boys' 200 free by Taylor Smith of Bellarmine in 2007. That mark could be in jeopardy if Palo Alto senior Mark Higgins has anything left in the tank after his performance in the

Vikings' 92-91 victory at Saratoga in a SCVAL De Anza Division dual meet Wednesday.

With every point important, Higgins held off three Saratoga swimmers to win the 200 free in a sizzling 1:41.52 on a cold and blustery day. The time is not only a personal best for Higgins, surpassing his 1:41.99 that got him third at the 2008 CCS finals, but it moves him to No. 2 all-time in the Paly record books behind only Ed Morrison's 1:41.25 from 2006.

Higgins has yet to win the 200 free at the Section Challenge, finishing third two years ago and fifth last season. Higgins' time from Wednesday, however, makes him the fastest in Saturday's field.

Higgins also finished second in the 100 free against Saratoga in a personal best of 47.33, moving to No. 4 in school history. That time also makes Higgins No. 1 in the 100

(continued on page 35)

Join the City of Palo Alto and community, rain or shine, for a fun-filled **Earth Day Celebration on Saturday, April 18, 2009, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.** at the Lucie Stern Community Center located at 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto.



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Sarah Liang

(continued from page 30)

ang to turn to Palo Alto High.

"I live in the school district," she said. "I was close to some of the alums, like Liv Jensen and Colleen Fotsch (teammates of Liang's at Palo Alto Stanford Aquatics) and heard nothing but good things about the program."

Transferring to Palo Alto was not difficult, but becoming eligible was.

Because she started her sophomore year at Sacred Heart Prep in the fall of 2008, Liang would have been ineligible to compete at Palo Alto for the ensuing 12 months unless she filed for hardship.

According to CIF bylaws, a hardship is defined as "an unforeseeable, unavoidable and uncorrectable act, condition or event that causes the imposition or a severe and non-athletic burden upon the student or his/her family." Sections, like the CCS, may only waive the transfer limitation if the conditions of the hardship are met, and there is suf-

ficient documentation to support the hardship claim.

Liang began the process of filing for hardship in December. Normally, it takes a section 20 business days to do a proper investigation before making a decision.

"The CCS was on top of it," said Paly swim coach Danny Dye. "They wanted to make sure it was done correctly."

Thus, Liang's initial request for a hardship transfer was denied.

"The first paperwork was not complete," Dye explained. "It was very simplified. They (the family) had to go into more detail . . . I understand why they (the CCS) first turned it down. Once all the details were in there, (CCS commissioner) Nancy (Lasenby Blaser) was able to approve it."

The transfer process wound up taking nearly three months before Liang was finally ruled eligible to compete for the Vikings. Her first meet was last Thursday against visiting Gunn, and Liang wasted no time in making her presence felt.

(continued on next page)



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Sarah Liang

(continued from page 34)

She swam a leg on the winning 200 medley relay, won the 200 IM in 2:12.31, won the 100 breast in 1:09.01 and swam the third leg on the winning 400 free relay team.

Liang said she's training faster than last season, but doesn't want to jinx anything by tossing out larger-than-life expectations. Her personal best in the 200 IM rivals Paly's school record of 2:03.92 set in 1985 while her 100 breast PR is faster than the Paly record of 1:05.48, set by Terri Baxter in 1979. That is the oldest mark in Paly's swim record book, and one that is certainly within Liang's reach.

Liang continued her progress on Wednesday during the Paly girls' 113-70 victory at Saratoga. The triumph kept the Vikings unbeaten at 6-0 with only one SCVAL De Anza Division meet remaining. She won the 100 breast in a season-best 1:08.44, took second in the 200 IM freshman teammate Jasmine Tosky's season best of 2:07.02. Li-



Keith Peters

Paly's Jasmine Tosky

ang swam a leg on the winning 400 free relay.

Liang will swim in the 200 medley relay and side-by-side Tosky in the 200 IM at Saturday's fourth annual Section Challenge at Palo Alto. The meet begins at 9 a.m. and will attract some of the top boys' and girls' teams in Northern California. A total of 10 meet records were established last season.

An expected showdown in the girls' 100 breast with Las Lomas junior Kasey Carlson, however, will not take place because Liang has to head over to Stanford before noon to swim for the Stanford In-

vite, a PASA-sponsored long-course time-trial meet. Carlson won the 100 breast title at the Section Challenge last season in 1:01.72, the fastest time in the nation at that time. She improved to 59.94 later in the season, a time that would beat most college women.

Tosky, another PASA swimmer, also will join Liang at Stanford for the meet. It will be her only chance to swim meters before she leaves with the U.S. Junior National Team for a long-course meet in Vancouver, Canada, the weekend following the CCS Championships (May 15-16 at the Santa Clara International Swim Center).

Tosky also will go in the 200 medley relay, 200 free relay and 500 free, against fellow freshman Abby Duckett. Both played important roles in the dual-meet victory over Saratoga, as did Liang.

Liang feels good about her improvement and is dedicating the season to her father.

"It does motivate me," she said of her father's death. "But, at the same time I want to push myself. But, yeah, I'm swimming for him." ■

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Prep swimming

(continued from page 33)

free field this weekend.

Higgins also will swim on the 200 medley and 400 free relay teams, which should register very fast times against very fast opponents. Bellarmine set the meet record of 3:12.37 last season.

Paly senior Tim Wenzlau will be on the same relays as Higgins, as well as in the 100 back.

In the girls' portion of the meet on Saturday, the top three teams from the 2008 CCS meet will be on hand along with three of the top four from the NCS.

The top individual is senior Kasey Carlson of Las Lomas, the top prep breaststroker in the nation. Palo Alto freshman Jasmine Tosky, however, is also quite a standout and is already ahead of many of the times set by former Paly star Liv Jensen.

Tosky is scheduled for the 200 medley relay, the 200 IM with sophomore teammate Sarah Liang, the 500 free with fellow Paly freshman Abby Duckett plus the 200 free relay. Then she'll race over to Stanford and compete in a long-course (meters) invitational with her Palo Alto Stanford Aquatics (PASA) teammates.

Tosky won twice in Paly's 113-70 swamping of Saratoga on Wednesday, taking the 100 fly in 56.98 and 200 IM in a season-best 2:07.02 in addition to swimming on two winning relays.

The Vikings (6-0) actually trailed after the opening 200 medley relay and 200 free.

At Menlo, the seniors celebrated their final home swim meet in a three-way meet with Pinewood and Mercy-San Francisco. The Menlo boys topped Pinewood, 133-29, while the girls defeated Pinewood (94-27) and Mercy (99-17).

Making their final splash at home were Menlo seniors Geoffrey Pleiss, Andrew Kim, Gerrard Clark, Mark Hudnall, James Balassone, Ryan Martin, Chelsea Sullivan, Haley Read and Jackie Mora. ■

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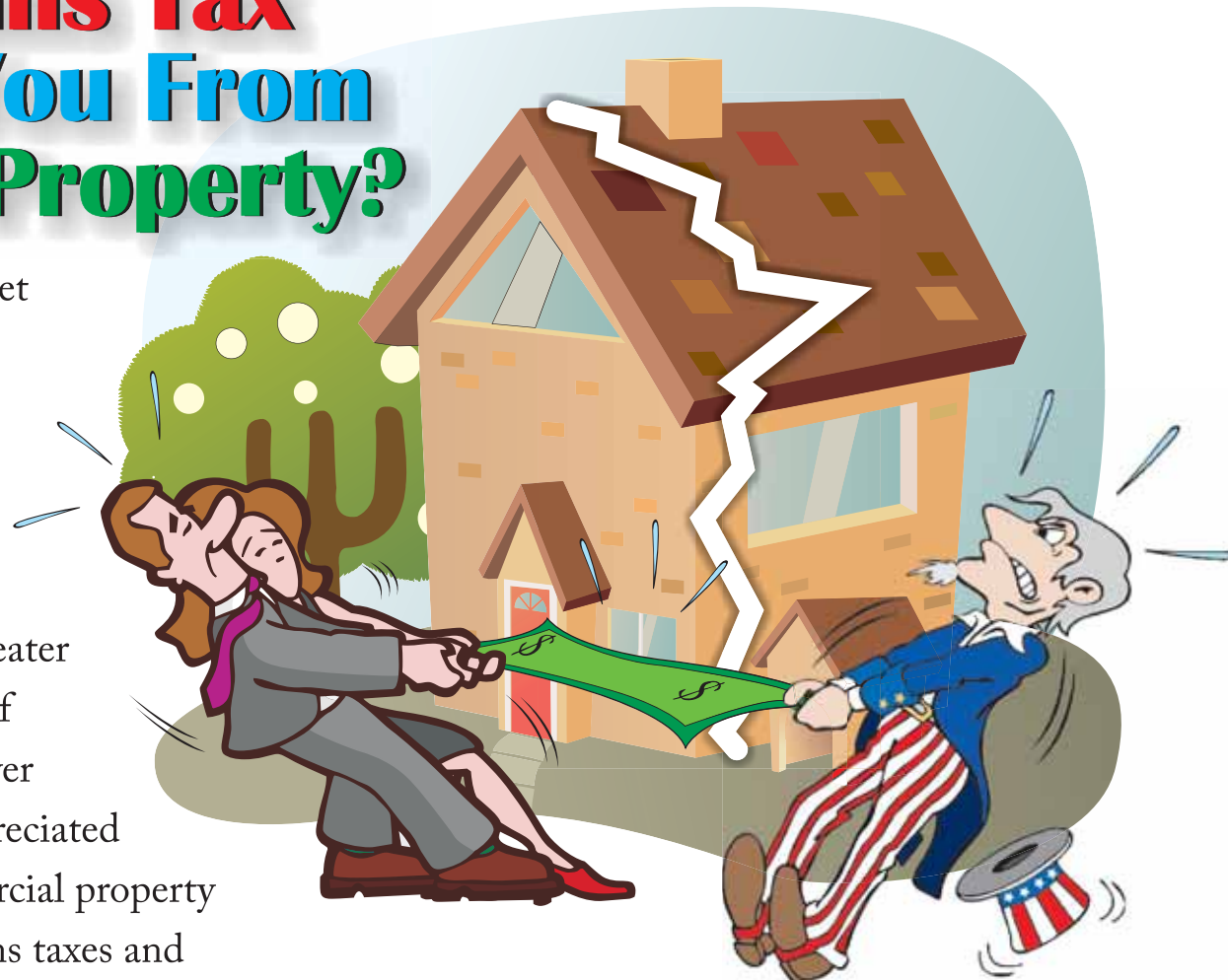


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