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**Palo Alto to cut
nonprofit grants**

Page 3

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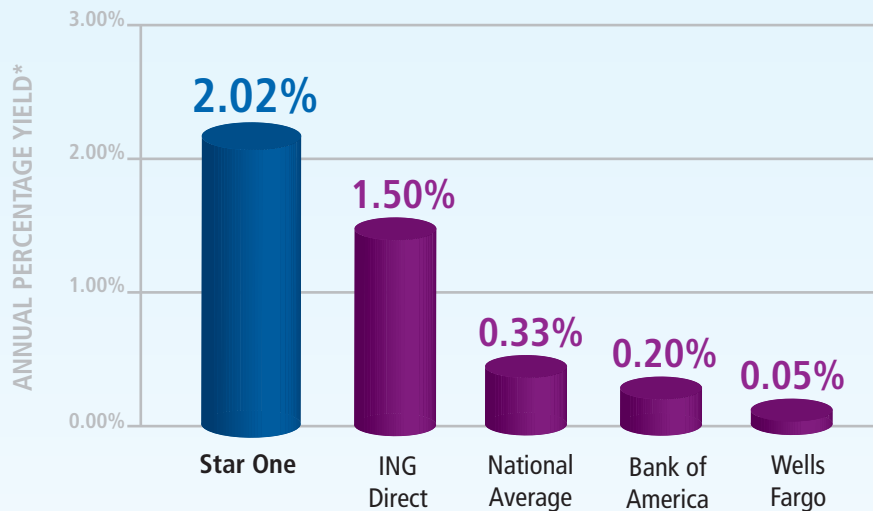
**Palo Alto's downtown
business are feeling
the blues**

page 17

Spectrum 14 Movies 29 Eating Out 32 ShopTalk 34 Crossword/Sudoku 66

- **Arts** Going in style with wearable art **Page 24**
- **Sports** A baseball milestone for Marquess **Page 36**
- **Home** Wacky garden on Open Days tour **Page 45**

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Upfront

Local news, information and analysis

Palo Alto may cut social-service grants 5 percent

Committee recommends no funding for agencies not already getting city funds

by Gennady Sheyner

Already rocked by slumping donations and surging demand for services, Palo Alto's nonprofit organizations are now facing shrinking grants from the city.

Nonprofit groups that don't al-

ready get city funds need not apply at all.

The City Council's Finance Committee unanimously endorsed staff's recommendation to cut city grants to nonprofit social-service organi-

zations by 5 percent in fiscal years 2010 and 2011. The committee also agreed at its Tuesday night meeting to recommend the city not grant money to any new programs.

Under the current plan, which still must be approved by the entire City Council, the bulk of the \$1.1 million the city plans to allocate would go to two "sole source" groups offering high-priority ser-

VICES that the city would otherwise have to administer.

Avenidas, which offers a range of services for senior citizens, and Palo Alto Community Child Care would get more than \$400,000 each.

Together, the two organizations would get 73 percent of the city's total grant allocation for social-service providers (though each allocation would represent a 5 percent

reduction from the current year).

Meanwhile, newer or previously unfunded groups will have to look elsewhere for money. These include Family and Children Services (which specializes in youth counseling), Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County (which steers homeless people toward permanent hous-

(continued on page 5)



Jeff Selzer, left, general manager of Palo Alto Bicycles, and architect Joe Bellomo stand beside the prototypes for the Half Arc and Rac Arc parking structures they designed. The new racks would keep bicycles from becoming jumbled together when parked.

Veronica Weber

BUSINESS

Business owners create bike rack that's state of the arc

Downtown pair hopes 'bike arc' will promote urban elegance, parking convenience

by Gennady Sheyner

About a year ago, Jeff Selzer launched an ambitious crusade: to get the bicycles parked in downtown Palo Alto the respect they deserve.

While cars get their own parking lots and long stretches of space along the sidewalks, he noted, bicycles often have to rely on poles, trees and other improvised anchors

to protect themselves from thieves. For Selzer, the general manager of Palo Alto Bicycles on University Avenue, the status quo paints bikes in a rather undignified light.

"It just looks like a jumble of metal," Selzer said.

Early last year, Selzer teamed up with a local architect — and fellow University Avenue business

owner — Joe Bellomo to design a new type of parking structure for bicycles. Bellomo, who specializes in eco-friendly architecture, got to work and, a few months later, the "bike arc" was born.

Though the bike arc now comes in five different designs, some of them going far beyond the "arc" concept, the most basic bike arc is exactly what the name implies. Shaped like a crescent, each arc supports an upright bicycle. The bike stands on an arc in diagonal alignment, with the front wheel pointing toward the sky. More advanced designs include the "umbrella" (a statuesque structure capable of sheltering up to eight arc-locked bikes under a canopy), a "half-arc" (much like a regular arc, but with an extended top that

protects bikes from rain) and the "tube arc" (a series of individual bike arcs that form a tube and are capable of housing more than 60 bikes). And then there is the "house arc," a fully enclosed tube composed of bike arcs and other materials.

"Our goal was to come up with something that kind of separates organized bikes and gives them a place of honor, much like we've got with cars," Selzer said.

While businesses throughout Palo Alto — and the nation at large — are struggling to stay afloat amid a recession, Selzer and Bellomo are optimistic about their invention. In fact, they hope the bike arcs could help spruce up

(continued on page 12)

LAND USE

City pushes for Stanford 'urban village'

Planning commission lobbies for bike paths, walkways, transit access as part of medical-center plan

by Gennady Sheyner

Stanford University's recent decision to scrap plans to enlarge Stanford Shopping Center and to focus on expanding its hospital facilities hasn't stopped Palo Alto officials from pushing for an "urban village" connecting the two areas.

In fact, as one member of the Planning and Transportation Commission said Wednesday night, the withdrawal of the shopping-center application could make it easier for the city and Stanford to agree on a suitable urban design.

City staff says it's too early to tell how Stanford's retreat from the shopping-mall plan would ultimately affect the design of the medical center, which Stanford plans to expand by 1.3 million square feet. But commissioners agreed that the major additions to Lucile Packard Children's Hospital and Stanford Hospital and Clinics as well as renovations to Hoover Pavilion and to the medical school should include amenities and design elements that would make strolling, biking and taking the bus to and from the hospital an attractive experience.

Commission Chair Daniel Garber said Palo Alto and Stanford should strive to integrate the proposed medical buildings with the surrounding area. Stanford's proposed design, which features courtyards, fountains and elevated gardens, seeks to provide patients and visitors with islands of peace and serenity. But Garber argued the designs should also carefully consider walkways, transit options and other elements geared toward creating an "urban experience" for pedestrians and commuters.

(continued on page 12)

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Upfront

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“

“Why keep doing it? ... Go back and fix it.”

”

Bob Moss, Barron Park resident who is concerned that the Alma Plaza redevelopment project will have too-narrow streets. See story on page 5.

Around Town

STILL THE BEST ... When it comes to converting to the gospel of renewable energy, no one beats Palo Alto. No one, in fact, even comes close. That's according to a new report released by the **National Renewable Energy Laboratory**, which recently released its Top 10 rankings for energy-efficient companies and utility departments. For the fourth straight year, the City of Palo Alto Utilities ran away with the highest rate of customers participating in its voluntary renewable-energy program, **PaloAltoGreen**. The city's 21 percent rate of customer participation is twice the rate of the next utility on the list, Lenox Municipal Utilities, an association of Iowa utilities that boasts a 10.5 percent participation rate. “I'm proud to live in a community that has chosen to support renewable energy and make PaloAltoGreen the enormous success it has been,” Palo Alto Mayor **Peter Dreke** stated in a news release. “This is a prime example of how Palo Altans can lead the nation in environmental stewardship and create a healthy and sustainable city.”

BUDGET BLUES ... Tough Times. Hard Choices. No, it's not a name of a blues album, but the title of a forum organized by City Manager **James Keene** for next week to discuss the city's budget woes. Keene plans to present his proposed budget for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 to the City Council at Monday's meeting. The council's Finance Committee will begin reviewing the budget on May 5. But before the May hearings begin, Keene hopes to hold a few talks with residents about the city's tough-and-getting-tougher economic climate. The city is projected to have a budget gap of at least \$10 million in fiscal year 2010 and service cuts appear inevitable. The first forum will be held at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, April 29, at Cubberley Community Center, 4000 Middlefield Road. It will be followed by another session at 9 a.m. on Friday, May 1, at the Council Chambers in City Hall, 250 Hamilton Ave. “It is critical that our residents fully understand the financial constraints and service demands of

the city as background for the council budget hearings,” Keene stated in a news release. “I hope community members will join us for a conversation around these important issues.”

FAMILY BUSINESS ... During his trip to Portland, Ore., this week for the Green Cities Conference, Councilman **Larry Klein** was mingling with an elected official from Boulder, Colo., when talk somehow turned to **Crystal Gray**, member of the Boulder City Council. Gray, a Palo Alto native, is the daughter of **Crystal Gamage**, who sits on the board of directors for La Comida de California, a Palo Alto nonprofit that provides hot meals to seniors. On Tuesday, La Comida was one of more than a dozen local nonprofits vying for local grants at the City Council Finance Committee meeting (the group is on track to receive \$32,300 from the city). Crystal the Elder was in attendance and couldn't repress a smile when Klein, fresh off his return flight, mentioned Crystal the Younger. He noted that Gray often alludes to Palo Alto when discussing good governing practices. He thanked Gamage for her daughter's kind words. The family connection also inspired an idea from Committee **Chair Pat Burt**. “Maybe they'll have some sort of sister-city relationship where they can ski here and we can ski there,” Burt said.

CALLING ALL HANDS ... Students, families and nonprofit groups from Palo Alto, East Palo Alto and Menlo Park will celebrate local volunteers and encourage others to get involved in community service at the **Family Service Day** festival. The sixth annual event, which will take place Saturday at the Cesar Chavez Academy in East Palo Alto, will feature games, prizes, awards and display booths offering information on volunteering. The festival was organized by **Youth Community Service**, the **Ravenswood City School District** and **Public Allies**. The festival will take place from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, April 25, at the academy, 2450 Ralmar St., East Palo Alto. ■

Social service

(continued from page 3)

ing and jobs), and The Health Trust (which provides a Meals-on-Wheels service).

All three applied for grants, but because they were new applicants each is slated to walk away empty-handed.

The Opportunity Center, a local center that provides housing, counseling, services, food and clothing for the homeless, also would receive no city money at all.

The center's parent company, InnVision, requested \$57,500 to meet the soaring demand for the center's array of services. But city officials recommended denying the request because the center didn't receive any local funds last year.

Audrey Sullivan, who chairs the advisory council for InnVision, asked the Finance Committee to reconsider its methods for allocating funds.

"(The City's) priorities may have changed since they were established, given the economy. Perhaps services for those in poverty have risen a little bit higher," she said.

Committee Chair Pat Burt challenged the rationale for not funding new applicants and said he could envision a hypothetical situation in which the policy would exclude worthy nonprofits. But he also said he had no objection to specific allocations proposed by staff.

Kathy Espinoza-Howard, the city's director of social services, said the

city's priority in putting together its list of recommended grants was to keep reductions for currently funded programs as small as possible. She said just because the city couldn't fund some programs doesn't mean these programs aren't worthy.

The city's growing budget gap has forced each department to reduce spending. The special committee in charge of putting the list together chose to reject new applicants in order to preserve adequate funding levels for programs the city currently supports, Espinoza-Howard said.

"We felt that a 5 percent cut might be able to be absorbed by our current nonprofits, but a 10 percent or even further cut would be very egregious to the services they might provide," she said.

The list was compiled by a special committee of staff members and volunteers earlier this year and was unanimously endorsed by the Human Relations Commission on March 12.

The Finance Committee voted 4-0 to recommend staff's grant proposals, though council members displayed no pleasure at making the cuts.

"It's hard to say no to any of the requests we received," Councilman Larry Klein said. "Even whatever funds we can come up with won't be sufficient with the great need out there." ■

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

LAND USE

Residents' group challenges Alma Plaza

Narrow, private roads a sticking point

by Sue Dremann and Jocelyn Dong

A Palo Alto group led by Barron Park resident Bob Moss is challenging the City Council's January approval of the long-contended Alma Plaza redevelopment project.

Moss' group, 2narrow4safety.org, is circulating a petition that members want the council to act upon, or — if not adopted — could lead to an initiative on the November ballot.

The petition is two-fold, with one part addressing the proposed plan for retail, community space, a park and homes at the site of the former Alma Plaza Shopping Center on Alma Street near Meadow Drive. It calls for a 22 percent larger community room, removal of one of the 37 housing units, inclusion of 10 new parking spaces and wider roads. The streets are currently planned to be 20 feet wide.

The second part addresses roads within future housing developments across the city and specifies that private streets should have uniform widths — 32 feet, with some exceptions.

Private roads have become the norm in large-scale housing developments built in Palo Alto over the past several years. The streets are narrower than public roads and have

triggered complaints over a lack of adequate parking space. The council directed staff a year ago to examine the impact of private roads on neighborhoods.

"Requiring greater private-street width at Alma Plaza will provide on-site parking for residents and visitors and prevent spill-over parking in adjacent neighborhood streets. ... More public-parking spaces are needed to assure that the 'public benefits' offered in exchange for re-zoning the site ... actually occur," Moss said, referring to access to Alma Plaza's planned park and community room.

John McNellis of McNellis Partners, which is redeveloping Alma Plaza, is out of town and could not be reached for comment on the initiative, according to a colleague.

City Councilwoman Yoriko Kishimoto, however, said that trying to modify Alma Plaza at this point "seems like it's too late."

The council's 6-3 endorsement of Alma Plaza covered the project's site plan and tentative map.

"There is a policy that is important to both the city and to developers, and that is being consistent and fair," she said.

But Moss pointed to outcry from residents in the new Arbor Real de-

velopment, which replaced Rickey's Hyatt Hotel along El Camino Real at Charleston Road, over the lack of parking in their neighborhood.

The council is "hearing that it's not working for Arbor Real, yet they're still applying it to Alma Plaza," Moss said.

"Why keep doing it? ... Go back and fix it," he added.

Moss' effort to overturn the council's approval of a redevelopment project is not the city's first. In 2003, a group of residents and business owners mounted Measure C, which targeted 800 High St., a planned condominium-and-retail project. Voters, however, affirmed the council's approval by a slim margin of several hundred votes.

Numerous Palo Alto developments with private streets are either completed or under construction: Vantage and Echelon on East Meadow Drive, Classic Communities on West Bayshore Road, Arbor Real on El Camino Real, SummerHill Homes at the Elk's Lodge property, the "Tree House" affordable-housing project on West Charleston Road, and the Bridge/BUILD development on Fabian Way.

(continued on page 6)



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Upfront

SCHOOLS

Auditors sought for school-bond project

*First Measure A construction project,
an aquatics center at Gunn High, to be finished by June*

by Chris Kenrick

The citizens committee charged with tracking spending of the \$378 million Palo Alto school bond that voters approved last year are planning summer audits of the massive school-district-wide building program.

The committee and school district are seeking auditors willing to critique the performance of the project so far, as well as the financials.

"The audits will be done more rigorously because we're looking for auditors willing to express an opinion, which is a tougher way to go about it," said Ray Bacchetti, a former Palo Alto school district and Foothill-De Anza Community College District trustee who chairs the oversight committee.

Other committee members are lawyer Scott Darling, corporate controller Gary Hornbeek, financial advisor Deepak Kanungo, law firm CFO Caroline Maser, architect Jim McFall, and corporate CFO Steve Shevick. All are parents of students currently or formerly in the Palo Alto schools.

Spending of a previous bond, 1995's \$143 million bond Measure B, also dubbed the "B4E" or "Building for Excellence" campaign, was criticized for mismanagement. School district officials have said they can oversee construction better now because they rely on dedicated staff rather than outside consultants and have changed how contracts are managed.

The committee has devised a framework for tracking financials based on monthly reports. Members have asked the contractor to develop a flow chart on how decisions are made and at what stage they are reviewed to ensure the district is getting the most for its money, to be presented at the next meeting in July.

The first bond project, an aquatics center at Gunn, is set for completion in June. A new industrial-arts building on the campus is slated to open in November.

Elementary school principals and teachers by August will have a chance to inspect samples of new "teaching walls" for the front of each classroom. The walls, with built-in whiteboards and storage, will likely be installed in classrooms in the summer of 2010, said Bob Golton, school district co-chief business officer.

Architects have been hired for major renovations and the 2010 re-opening of Garland Elementary School; a new two-story classroom building at Ohlone Elementary School; as well as major building at Gunn and Palo Alto high schools and numerous projects at the middle schools and other elementary schools, Golton said.

State law requires the school district to adhere to the project list set out in the bond measure and not to add other projects.

The bond measure laid out a broad project list, without certainty that all projects could be covered. However, district officials say they are hoping to capitalize on the current construction-bidding environment to get better prices.

While it may not add new projects, the school board already has shifted allocations, beefing up the Garland budget from \$7 million to \$22 million, Bacchetti said. ■

Staff Writer Chris Kenrick can be e-mailed at ckenrick@paweekly.com. Kenrick was a member of Strong Schools for a Strong Community, the pro-Measure A committee in the June 2008 election before joining the Weekly.

Alma Plaza

(continued from page 5)

The petition calls for the requirements to apply "to any project or development that has not obtained a final map, building permit and performed significant construction as of July 31, 2009."

Barring a council adoption of the ordinance prior to July 31, the regulations would apply to projects as of Nov. 4 if the initiative is approved by voters, the petition states.

Moss is confident the petition drive is necessary, and timely.

"If you look at the city ordinances, for the first time, this initiative will really define what a private street will really be," Moss said.

Palo Alto had few private streets until recently, including Miranda Avenue and Waverley Oaks Court. In the mid-1990s, developers began proposing the narrower private streets, according to Curtis Williams, the city's acting planning

director.

But infill projects have required configurations that made wider streets infeasible, developers have said in the past.

"There is very little in our code or Comprehensive Plan about private streets. They have just been allowed as they come on," Williams said, adding that the roads must be safe and satisfy the public-works director.

Moss is aiming to collect 3,000 signatures, which he believes will be enough to qualify the initiative for the November election. He did not know how many signatures had been gathered to date but said he is sure there is significant public concern about the issue.

"An awful lot of people are not happy with the way development has been going in the last few years. Just read the letters in the (council meeting) packet," he said. ■

The reporters can be e-mailed at sdreemann@paweekly.com and jdong@paweekly.com.

News Digest

Weekly awards \$270,000 in community grants

A total of \$270,000 in grants, scholarships and awards were presented Thursday evening at the Palo Alto Weekly's 15th annual Holiday Fund grant-recipient reception.

This year's fundraising effort raised \$253,000, including \$35,000 in proceeds from the Weekly's annual Moonlight Run in the Palo Alto baylands last October. Donations from 450 donors were matched by funds from longtime supporting foundations: the William & Flora Hewlett Foundation, the David & Lucile Packard Foundation and the Peery & Arrillaga family foundations.

Additional funds came from \$15,000 returned from an earlier grant recipient that wasn't able to implement the program that had been funded, according to Amy Renalds, assistant to the publisher and coordinator of the Holiday Fund program.

The grants are awarded each April at a parking-lot reception at the Weekly in downtown Palo Alto.

Featured speakers this year were Philippe Rey, executive director of Adolescent Counseling Services; Christine Burroughs, executive director of InnVision, which operates The Opportunity Center in Palo Alto; and Leor Neta, program director of East Palo Alto Youth Court.

Most grants ranged from \$1,200 to \$10,000 and were awarded based on the potential for expanding or enhancing programs of local nonprofit organizations that serve children, youth and families. In addition, \$8,000 is awarded to high school graduates as college scholarships, and \$2,000 is awarded to high school students at Gunn, Palo Alto, Menlo-Atherton and Woodside high schools to recognize community-service efforts.

Food was donated by Whole Foods Market and music provided by the Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra at the reception.

A complete list of winners is posted on the Weekly's community website, www.PaloAltoOnline.com. ■

Palo Alto sued over plastic-bag ban

As anticipated by the Palo Alto City Council when it enacted a ban against plastic bags March 16, a coalition of groups filed a lawsuit Tuesday against the city.

The group, SaveThePlasticBag.com, claims the city violated California law when it chose not to conduct a detailed Environmental Impact Report before it adopted an ordinance banning plastic bags from grocery stores. Palo Alto's ban is slated to take effect Sept. 18.

Stephen Joseph, the coalition's attorney, argues in the lawsuit that the city's ordinance will force shoppers to shift to paper bags and that the city has failed to adequately consider the environmental impacts of this shift. The basis for the plastic-bag ban, the suit argues, is rooted in misleading information spread by "anti-plastic bag activists."

Palo Alto's ordinance should be nullified, according to the lawsuit. Joseph's group successfully used a similar argument in its lawsuit against the City of Manhattan Beach. Manhattan Beach is currently appealing that decision.

Palo Alto officials have also argued they have a stronger case than did Manhattan Beach because the city provided a "negative mitigated declaration" — an environmental-impact study that is less comprehensive than an Environmental Impact Report but more detailed than the "negative declaration" that Manhattan Beach supplied.

Assistant City Attorney Donald Larkin said Tuesday the city's negative mitigated declaration already addressed the issues Joseph brought up. ■

A longer version of this article is available at www.PaloAltoOnline.com.

—Gennady Sheyner

Ambulance driver 'negligent' in December crash

The driver of a private ambulance that crashed into a tree on University Avenue in December, killing a patient, could face up to a year in a Santa Clara County jail, police said Tuesday.

John Curiel, 19, was charged with misdemeanor manslaughter for crashing the ambulance he was driving into a tree near Chaucer Street in Palo Alto Dec. 22, police said.

Curiel was behind the wheel of a Bay Medic ambulance when the westbound vehicle veered to the side of the road, hit a tree and rolled over on its side, killing 56-year-old Alba Perez. Two other workers were inside the Concord-based ambulance and suffered minor injuries.

Palo Alto Police Agent Dan Ryan said the police investigation suggested that Curiel was distracted at the time of the crash and was not looking at the road. He also appeared to have been driving too fast for the wet conditions, Ryan said. In addition to the misdemeanor manslaughter charge — which carries up to a year in county jail — Curiel was cited for driving at an unsafe speed and making an unsafe lane change. ■

— Gennady Sheyner



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

653 Homer Avenue: Request by Amir Shahmirzaon for preliminary parcel map for a 3-unit condominium subdivision. Zoning: RM-15.

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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- Saturday, May 9

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This family-based, behavioral and educational weight management program promotes healthy eating and exercise habits for overweight children and their families. More than 80% of children achieve long-term weight loss through this program — and parents lose weight too! **Call (650) 725-4424 for information.**

- Monday, May 11

* MOTHERS OF SONS: THE JOYS AND CHALLENGES OF GUIDING YOUR SON THROUGH ADOLESCENCE

Robert Lehman, MD, co-creator of the "Heart to Heart" program will be joined by family counselor Nancy Sanchez in an evening just for mothers of adolescent sons. Emphasis will be on understanding and encouraging open communication between parents and children.

- Wednesday, May 20

* HEART TO HEART SEMINAR ON GROWING UP

Informative, humorous and lively discussions between parents and their pre-teens on puberty, the opposite sex and growing up. Girls attend these two-part sessions with their moms and boys attend with their dads.

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

CityView

A round-up of  Palo Alto government action this week

City Council Finance Committee (April 21)

Business License Tax: The committee agreed to hold two meetings in May with a committee of business owners and to bring back a revised proposal for a business-license tax on June 2. **Action:** None

Nonprofit grants: The committee endorsed a staff recommendation to cut grants to nonprofit organizations providing human services by 5 percent in fiscal years 2010 and 2011. **Yes:** Unanimous

Planning & Transportation Commission (April 22)

Stanford Medical Center: The commission held a study session on the architectural and urban-design elements of the proposed Stanford University Medical Center expansion. The commission expressed concerns about building heights and stressed the need for a design that encourages walking, biking and taking public transit. **Action:** None

Public Agenda

PALO ALTO CITY COUNCIL ... The City Council is scheduled to hear a presentation on the budget from City Manager James Keene. The council is also scheduled to hold a public hearing on a proposed ordinance to limit use of polystyrene containers in the city. The meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Monday, April 27, in the Council Chambers at City Hall (250 Hamilton Ave.).

PALO ALTO BOARD OF EDUCATION ... The school board will discuss and possibly adopt new mathematics textbook series for the district's elementary and middle schools. The meeting is scheduled for 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 28, in the board room at Palo Alto Unified School District headquarters (25 Churchill Ave.).

PALO ALTO PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION ... The commission plans to discuss making revisions to the city's dog-leash regulations to allow leashed dogs to enter Foothills Park on weekends, and appointing a liaison to the Palo Alto Unified School District. The meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 28, in the Council Conference Room at City Hall (250 Hamilton Ave.).

PALO ALTO PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION ... The commission plans to hold a preliminary review for proposed Planned Community (PC) zoning at 2180 El Camino Real (College Terrace Centre). The proposed development would include 14 one-bedroom units, 39,980 square feet of office space, 5,580 square feet of retail and 8,000 square feet of grocery space intended for JJ&F Market. The commission also plans to review the Santa Clara County Comprehensive Land Use Plan for the Palo Alto Airport. The meeting is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Wednesday, April 29, in the Council Chambers at City Hall (250 Hamilton Ave.).

PALO ALTO CITY MANAGER ... City Manager James Keene plans to hold two public forums about the city's proposed budget for fiscal years 2010 and 2011, including the projected budget gap of at least \$10 million in fiscal year 2010. The first forum is scheduled for 7 p.m. on Wednesday, April 29, at Cubberley Community Center Theatre (4000 Middlefield Road). A second forum is scheduled for 9 a.m. on Friday, May 1, at the Council Chambers in City Hall (250 Hamilton Ave.). ■

GRANT-WRITING WORKSHOP

Tuesday, May 5th, Nine-to-noon
Crown Plaza Hotel, 4290 El Camino Real, Palo Alto

Dr. Deborah McAfee, who has acquired millions of dollars in grant money for schools and non-profit organizations throughout the country, will conduct a three-hour class in Palo Alto on Tuesday, May 5th. The workshop will focus on the essential grant writing techniques and the art of creating hooks and buzz words necessary for acquiring and sustaining grants. Dr. McAfee will share her successes as well as failures and attendees will leave with "easy money" grants including a \$1,000 grant ready to be faxed plus the more complex and detailed grants. Cost of the workshop is \$225 and pre-registration is encouraged. For information or to register, contact Dr. McAfee at deborah@grantqueen.com or telephone 501-626-8372. Registration and information is also available at www.grantqueen.com.

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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.

Deadline for Citywide Yard Sale looms

Palo Alto's Citywide Yard Sale is lacking the usual participation of past years -- and the city is urging interested residents to register for free by Friday, May 8. The city will host the event Saturday, June 6. The sale is being coordinated by Palo Alto's Zero Waste Program. (Posted April 23 at 1:10 p.m.)

Garbage pile at M-A is 'shock factor' on waste

Menlo-Atherton High School students are dumping trash on the campus' outside-eating area lawn because they think the "shock factor" could help save the environment by reducing personal wastefulness. (Posted April 23 at 8:13 a.m.)

Palo Alto seeks to calm furor over business tax

Faced with heated criticism from the business community, Palo Alto officials have agreed to slow down plans for a new business-license tax to give business leaders a greater say in the process. (Posted April 22 at 9:15 p.m.)

Two teens arrested in iPod robbery attempt

Two teenagers were arrested Wednesday afternoon after they tried to rob another teenager of his iPod near the downtown Caltrain station, police reported. (Posted April 22 at 9:28 p.m.)

jZCool in Menlo Park closes after 10 years

After 10 years in business, jZ Cool Eatery and Wine Bar on Santa Cruz Avenue in downtown Menlo Park has closed. (Posted April 22 at 1:43 p.m.)

VIDEO: A celebration of everything Earth

Palo Alto residents celebrated Earth Day 2009 at the Lucie Stern Community Center with gardening demonstrations, booths (highlighting energy efficiency and conservation), music, food and education about local food. (Posted April 22 at 11:21 a.m.)

Stanford study criticizes high school exit exam

California's three-year-old high school exit exam has failed to meet the goal of significantly increasing student achievement, Stanford scholars said. (Posted April 22 at 10:12 a.m.)

Newsom declares governor run in Palo Alto

Trailed by TV cameras, San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsom made one of his first gubernatorial campaign stops at Facebook headquarters in downtown Palo Alto Tuesday. (Posted April 21 at 6:06 p.m.)

Attempted TV purchase at Fry's leads to jail

A man juggling several identities was arrested at Fry's Electronics Monday after trying to purchase two big-screen TVs using a forged credit card and driver's license. (Posted April 21 at 2:28 p.m.)

Altercation at Pizza My Heart leads to arrest

A Redwood City man was arrested for assaulting a police officer early Saturday morning outside the Pizza My Heart restaurant in downtown Palo Alto, police Agent Dan Ryan said. (Posted April 20 at 2:51 p.m.)

Lytton Gardens imposes quarantine

Lytton Gardens senior community imposed a "precautionary quarantine" on its 145-bed skilled-nursing unit after several patients developed flu-like symptoms Friday night. (Posted April 20 at 11:03 a.m.)

Doctor sentenced in Internet prescription case

A Colorado doctor accused of illegally prescribing anti-depressants to a Menlo Park resident who later committed suicide was sentenced Friday in San Mateo County Superior Court to nine months in county jail for practicing medicine without a California medical license. (Posted April 20 at 10:59 a.m.)

Oracle says it will acquire Sun Microsystems

Software company Oracle Corp. announced Monday that it would acquire Sun Microsystems, which has a major Menlo Park campus, for \$9.40 a share. (Posted April 20 at 10:58 a.m.)

Police partner up to stop red-light runners

Police from all law-enforcement agencies in Santa Clara County are joining forces this week to target red-light runners throughout the county. (Posted April 20 at 8:59 a.m.)

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Neighborhoods

A roundup of neighborhood news edited by Sue Dremann



Veronica Weber

Palo Alto Girl Scouts Drew Leary (bottom center) and (clockwise) Lydia Miller, Alix Barry, Hannah, Jennifer Zhuge and Katarina Lyseggen surround themselves with donated stuffed animals, which they will clean and give away to those in need.

Some bunny to love

Neighborhood Scouts gather stuffed animals for charity

by Karla Kane

Stuffed animals, be they fuzzy teddy bears or cuddly cats, can lend comfort in hard times for those suffering, afraid or lonely.

With that in mind, a Duveneck/St. Francis neighborhood Girl Scouts troop (No. 60585) is collecting new and gently used stuffed animals to be donated to shelters, nursing homes and other places “where people young and old could use something soft to hug,” according to an e-mail from troop member Lydia Miller.

The scouts, who are third- and fourth-graders, are collecting the plush toys for their annual community-service project. The stuffed animals will be washed and donated to the Belmont charity Animal Beacons of Light, which then distributes them to the needy.

The girls look forward to the yearly project and have even donated many of their own toys, troop leader Mimi Leary said. A couple of the girls even sorted their personal

stuffed animals into “yes,” “no” and “maybe” piles, choosing to donate a large number of them, she said.

“They’re completely motivated, and they love giving. It’s part of the Girl Scouts philosophy that really sinks in, helping the less fortunate,” Leary said.

Leary said the girls also gain valuable public-speaking and marketing experience by going out into the community to discuss the drive at schools and churches and by using e-mail and creating posters.

Leary’s daughter, 11-year-old Drew, a troop member, said the drive offers the chance for people with too many possessions to put them to use where they’ll be needed more.

“For people who don’t have any or more than one stuffed animal, it’s really nice for them,” she said.

Stuffed animals are especially cherished “because you can just hug them. They’re soft and you can cuddle them,” she said.

Fellow scout Hannah, a Duveneck Elementary School fourth-grader, agreed.

“Stuffed animals are like best friends: You can tell them anything, and they really give people company. It’s someone to love and hug.”

Last year, the animal-loving troop baked dog biscuits and collected pet toys for Palo Alto Animal Services.

Leary said around 20 garbage bags full of stuffed animals have been collected so far.

Those interested in donating can drop off toys at 54 Morton Way or 1411 Arcadia Place. Plush toys from the size of a Beanie Baby to up to 2-foot high in good condition will be accepted.

The stuffed-animal collection will continue through the end of April. ■

Editorial Assistant Karla Kane can be e-mailed at kkane@paweekly.com.

AROUND THE BLOCK

1, 2, THREE FOR THE CREEK

... Residents living near the San Francisquito Creek in Palo Alto, East Palo Alto and Menlo Park are seeing dollar signs — federal stimulus money, to be precise. And they’ve recently formed a group, Three for the Creek, in an attempt to capture some of that

funding to fix problems with San Francisquito. Duveneck-St. Francis Neighborhood Association President **Karen White**, Crescent Park Neighborhood Association President **Norm Beamer**, East Palo Alto resident **Dennis Parker** and Menlo Park resident **Jim Wiley** are co-chairs of the grass-roots group, which aims to hasten flood-control work in the area. Projects along the creek are ripe for federal stimulus mon-

ey, according to White. Three for the Creek is asking residents in each city to write to elected officials by May 15 urging them to lobby for federal funding for the San Francisquito repair work. A sample letter to federal officials is available in English and Spanish at www.threeforthecreek.com and requests 2010 appropriations in the amounts of \$700,000

(continued on page 12)

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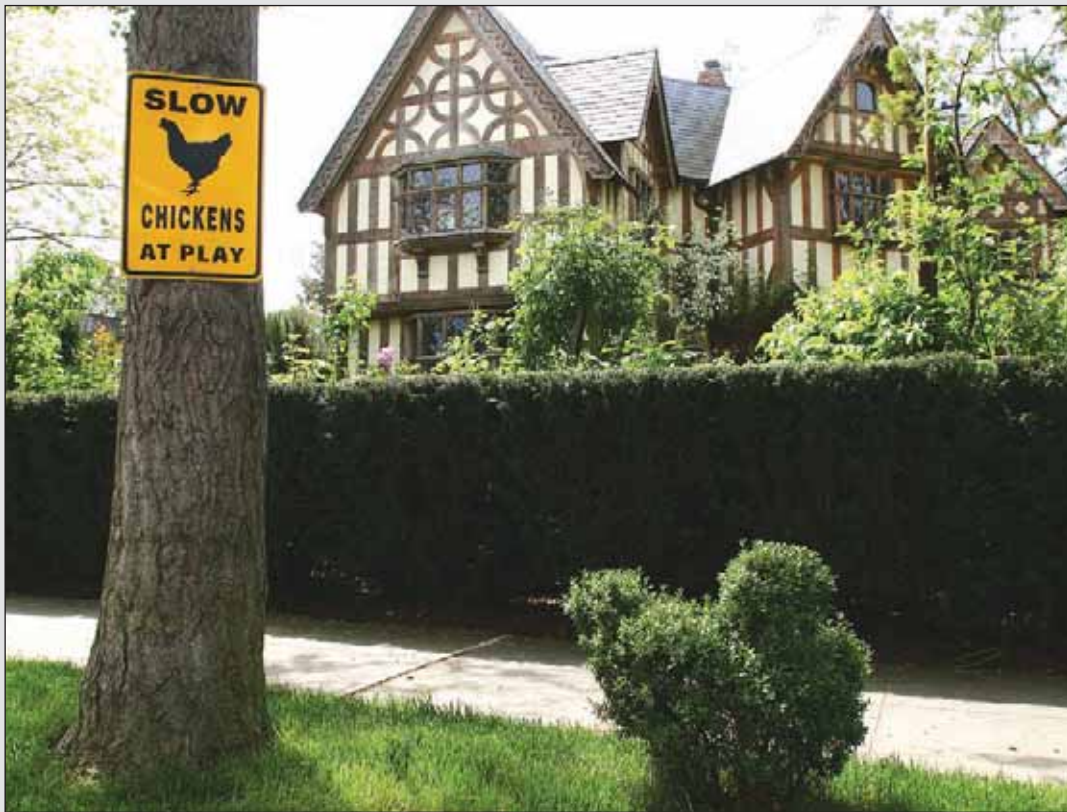


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WHAT'S HAPPENING HERE



Veronica Weber

Where: 1106 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto

What: Drivers have been taking a second look when passing by this stately Crescent Park home. The bright yellow sign warns drivers to use caution when the chickens cross the road, but these fowl are topiary birds — shrubs clipped into animal shapes in the planting strip.

Who: At the home of Peter Fortenbaugh, executive director of the Boys and Girls Clubs of the Peninsula

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EARTH DAY CELEBRATION

Saturday, April 25
11:00 am–1:00 pm | Center Pavilion

Bay Area Parent Magazine is hosting an Academic Eco-Friendly Health Fair from 10:00am - 4:00pm. Parents will have the opportunity to meet and learn about top local private schools and health organizations while kids will enjoy hands-on green activities. Come and spin the wheel for special prizes!

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Bike rack

(continued from page 3)

downtown Palo Alto and make it a more attractive destination for potential consumers arriving on two wheels.

So far, Selzer said, the reception has been overwhelmingly positive. Plans are under way to include two half-arc structures in a renovated Lytton Plaza, a project spearheaded by a group of downtown business owners. And Selzer said he's been fielding calls from outside Palo Alto, including Michigan State University and a city in Southern California. Ultimately, Selzer and Bellomo hope to bring the new structures to supermarkets and to Silicon Valley companies with bike-friendly campuses.

The partners have also been talking to a manufacturer in Oregon who would build the structures.

Bellomo said he wanted to create a design that would allow the new structures to be built in a modular fashion, with few layers and easy-to-acquire materials. The bike arc, he said, is very easy for builders to understand.

The goals of the new design are two-fold, he said: to promote bicycling and to create a clean and elegant urban setting. The arc, he said, fulfills both.

"The genesis of the idea was based on how we can value the bike and have a light footprint in an urban environment," Bellomo said.

The arc designs are displayed at the company's site, www.bikearc.com. ■

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

Urban village

(continued from page 3)

"Those buildings don't seem to be responding to the ground plane, to the urban experience we want to be successful," Garber said. "There's no connection of buildings to pedestrian movement."

"This project has been talked about as having the largest impact on Palo Alto ever," he added. "There's responsibility to do not just good buildings, not to do just good design, but to do great buildings and great design. We are still midway through the process."

The village concept would also require Stanford University to build hundreds of homes around Quarry Road to accommodate the added workforce (original plans called for 594 residential units, though that number is likely to go down because of the withdrawal of the shopping-center application).

The plan, as proposed by city consultant Bruce Fukuji, would also require Stanford to divert some of its planned housing units from its academic campus to the medical center, a prospect that Stanford officials have shown little enthusiasm for. The bulk of these homes would be built on land un-

der Santa Clara County, not Palo Alto, jurisdiction.

Michael Peterson, Stanford Hospitals & Clinic's vice president for special projects, emphasized the hospital's recent financial woes and the difficulties Stanford would face to provide the housing called for in the village concept.

"These sites along Quarry Road are in county land and the hospitals neither control nor own these sites," Peterson said. "They are set up for academic reasons."

He pointed out, however, that Stanford plans to provide housing for medical students employed by Stanford Hospital and the Children's Hospital.

The City Council is still negotiating with Stanford over the community benefits the university would need to provide to get the city's approval for the medical-center expansion. The benefits, which would likely include new housing units, will be laid out in a development agreement between the city and Stanford.

But while housing remains the main sticking point between the city and Stanford, the planning commission focused Wednesday's discussion on transportation and design elements. Commissioner Lee

Lippert, an avid bicyclist, emphasized the need for creating attractive bike paths and bus routes.

"What is so important is that we get people out of cars and that they are able to live near to where they work," Lippert said.

He also said he was encouraged that the shopping mall is no longer part of the expansion plan.

"We're beginning to have compromises, negotiations, a way to make this work from an urban-design point of view because we already eliminated a significant amount of density and population from the project," Lippert said.

But Commissioner Arthur Keller disagreed that dropping the mall expansion — which had been going through the approval process for almost two years — would affect the medical-center expansion.

"For a project of this magnitude, we've been going through a fairly expeditious process," he said. "Withdrawing the Stanford Shopping Center at the eleventh or tenth hour doesn't really speed things up." ■

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

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Block

(continued from page 10)

to complete an Army Corps of Engineers feasibility study, \$1.5 million to increase flow capacity adjacent to and tidal protection for East Palo Alto and Palo Alto residents and \$1.5 million to temporarily detain water upstream during peak rains. The consulting firm hired to review potential projects will present options at the San Francisco Creek Joint Powers Authority (JPA) meeting on May 28 from 4 to 6 p.m. at the City of East Palo Alto Council Chambers, 2415 University Ave., East Palo Alto.

JUST LIKE BOY SCOUTS ... April is **National Earthquake Month** and the **Palo Alto Association of Neighborhoods** is encouraging all residents to prepare their households for an emergency. The group's web page lists ways residents can ready their homes: www.paneighborhoods.org (click on "Emergency Preparedness" and then "Earthquake Info"). In addition, the group's **Block Preparedness Coordinator program** will hold a three-hour training session on May 9. Information is also listed on the Palo Alto Neighborhoods home page. For even more comprehensive training, Palo Alto Neighborhood Disaster Activities (**PANDA**) will hold a six-week training course starting on April 29. The curriculum includes fire suppression, search and rescue, radio communication, triage, first aid and incident-command training. Information is available at www.cityofpaloalto.org. (Click on the "Emergency Information" box and then on "PANDA") or at www.theassociationofpanda.org. ■

Send news of neighborhood events and happenings to Neighborhoods Editor Sue Dremann at sdremann@pawekly.com.

Pulse

A weekly compendium of vital statistics

POLICE CALLS

Palo Alto

April 14-20

Violence related

Arson	4
Battery	2
Child abuse	2
Domestic violence	3
Strong arm robbery	1

Theft related

Commercial burglaries	1
Grand theft	4
Identity theft	2
Petty theft	9
Residential burglaries	5
Shoplifting	3

Vehicle related

Abandoned bicycle	1
Auto theft	3
Bicycle recovery	1
Bicycle theft	7
Driving with suspended license	2
Hit and run	3
Misc. traffic	1
Theft from auto	4
Vehicle accident/minor injury	1
Vehicle accident/property damage	4
Vehicle impound	8

Alcohol or drug related

Drunk in public	1
Drunken driving	3
Possession of drugs	2

Miscellaneous

Found property	2
Lost property	2
Misc. penal code violation	2
Missing person	2
Noise ordinance violation	9
Other/misc.	2
Outside assistance	1
Psychiatric hold	3
Suspicious circumstances	3
Vandalism	9
Warrant/other agency	5

Menlo Park

April 15-20

Violence related

Assault	1
---------	---

Theft related

Petty theft	5
Shoplifting	1

Vehicle related

Driving with suspended license	2
Driving without license	3
Hit and run	3
Theft from auto	3
Vehicle accident/major injury	1
Vehicle accident/no injury	4
Vehicle accident/property damage	2

Alcohol or drug related

Drunken driving	1
Possession of drugs	1
Possession of paraphernalia	1

Miscellaneous

Civil	1
CPS referral	2
Disturbance	3
Found property	1
Indecent exposure	1
Information case	2
Juvenile problem	1
Lost property	1
Medical aid	1
Property for destruction	2
Psychiatric hold	1
Suspicious circumstances	2
Suspicious person	1
Vandalism	3
Warrant arrest	6

Atherton

April 15-21

Violence related

Attempted suicide	1
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Theft related

Commercial burglaries	1
Fraud	2
Petty theft	1

Vehicle related

Abandoned auto	1
Bicycle stop	1
Hit and run	1
Misc. traffic	2

Suspicious vehicle	5
Vehicle accident/minor injury	1
Vehicle accident/ no injury	2
Vehicle code violation	2
Miscellaneous	
911 hang-up	2
Animal call	1
Disturbance	1
Dumping complaint	1
Follow up	2
Foot patrol	2
Located missing person	2
Medical aid	2

Meet citizen	3
Missing person	1
Noise ordinance violation	1
Outside assistance	10
Pedestrian check	2
Special detail	1
Suspicious circumstances	6
Suspicious person	6
Town ordinance violation	2
Tree blocking roadway	2
Warrant arrest	1
Watermain break	1



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CLEORA REUSCHER FLEGEL



Cleora Reuscher Flegel, wife, mother, grandmother and great-grandmother peacefully entered her heavenly abode the evening of April 17, 2009 at the age of 90 years, surrounded by her adoring family at her home in Menlo Park. Mourning her passing are her husband, Arthur, sons and daughters-in-law Robert and Karen, Mark and Anne, and John and Ellie, nine grandchildren and their spouses, eight great-grandchildren, three sisters, one brother, and many nieces and nephews. Born in 1918 in Ramona, Kansas, she moved with her family to Lodi when she was two years old. She and Arthur were married in 1940

and were to celebrate their 69th anniversary in two weeks. In 1954 they moved to Menlo Park and started Flegel's Home Furnishings. Cleora, known as Cleo, was a member of Menlo Park Presbyterian Church for 55 years, participating in several women's organizations. Cleo was blessed with a warm and winsome personality, and was a gifted artist of still-life oil paintings. She and Arthur enjoyed membership in the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia. As a result of several research trips to Germany and Russia, she was able to trace her ancestry back many generations. Cleo and Arthur enjoyed numerous educational experiences while traveling throughout Canada, South America, Europe, Asia, and the South Pacific. A celebration of her life will be held at Menlo Park Presbyterian Church on April 29 at 2 PM.

PAID OBITUARY

DR. RALPH JOSHUA SPIEGL

On Thursday, April 16, 2009, Stanford University and the Peninsula lost one of its most dedicated alumni and physicians with the passing of Dr. Ralph (Bud) Speigl. He died at age 86 from Parkinson's disease.

A native San Franciscan, Ralph retired from his 41 years of practice in 1995. In addition to his medical practice Ralph had many interests and passions. He and his beloved wife of 33 years, Marilyn, were full partners in their adventures: art collecting, travel, gardening, entertaining, and volunteering. Together they created a warm, vibrant environment for family and friends. Because giving back to the communities they loved was important to both of them they donated their prized art pieces to the Cantor Museum at Stanford and the DeYoung Museum in San Francisco.

In recognition of his 35 years of volunteer fundraising service to Stanford, Ralph received four separate awards culminating with the Gold Spike Award in April, 1999. He was the third medical doctor to receive this prestigious award for outstanding volunteer leadership. Among his most challenging fundraising assignments was to encourage the creation of the Richard M. Lucas Center for Magnetic Resonance Spectroscopy and Imaging.

In 2003 at a special recognition dinner, Stanford University School of Medicine awarded Ralph the Dean's Medal, the highest award presented by the School to individuals whose service or support is deemed exemplary. Thanks to the support of many friends and most notably Skip and Linda Law of Atherton, the Ralph and Marilyn Speigl Simulation Surgery Suite was opened in 2006 allowing Stanford physicians and young residents to practice various treatment procedures on sophisticated, computerize mannequins before performing on real patients

He leaves his wife, Marilyn of Palo Alto, his three daughters: Jacqui Speigl, Lori Speigl, Carin Pollock and grandchildren Zack and Aubrey Pollock, Kindra and Eric Zaballa. He is also survived by his son Bob Speigl and his children Michael and spouse Michele, Weston and spouse Jessica, Reid Speigl all of Southern California. His stepchildren included Sherry King, Deborah Clansky, and Jim Clansky and spouse Kathy. Surviving step-grandchildren are Owen King, Sean King, Ethan Clansky, Anne Clansky, and Sarah Clansky. All of whom loved him greatly.

A memorial service will be held on Thursday, May 7, 2009 at 4:00 in the Stanford Memorial Church and the campus of Stanford University. In lieu of flowers the family requests that donations be made to the Ralph and Marilyn Speigl, Scholarship Fund. Checks should be made payables to Stanford School of Medicine and sent to the Stanford Office of Gift processing: 326 Galvez St, Stanford, CA 94305. Please note on your check it is in memory of Dr. Ralph Speigl.

PAID OBITUARY

JOANNA EAKIN DESPRES



Joanna Eakin Despres, nationally recognized American Muralist and Painter (listed in the 1968 edition of HHS publication of AMERICAN PUBLIC ARTISTS) died peacefully at home at Stanford, CA, Sunday, March 29, 2009, attended by family and friends.

JOANNA, as she was known by almost every one, had one-woman art shows in Sete, France, Paris, New York, Karachi, Pakistan, San Francisco and her work is in many collections, including work in the Neuberger Collection at State University of New York, Purchase-NY,

Williams College Art Museum, and in numerous private collections, as well as in the municipal collection of "local artists" in Sete, France.

Joanna described her attitude towards her art and painting as akin to that of a kindergartener. "I like to get 'messy' in my art," she writes in answer to a grandchild's written question as to what motivates her in her chosen work.

Daughter of Willard Eakin, aide to Sen. Hitchcock of Nebraska, and Leila Hitt Eakin, artist, Joanna was born in Washington, D.C. on April 11, 1912.

Her only sibling, John Eakin, was a flight training teacher and pilot who died in a training mission for the Army Air Corps shortly before the advent of WWII.

After traveling around the world on a freighter with two girlfriends in 1938 Joanna was voted Miss Ipana Toothpaste in Honolulu, HI.

She attended Hathaway Brown School in Ohio, where she boarded, and received her BA from Connecticut College for Women.

She also received a Masters Degree in Studio Art from Stanford University.

She was the Secretary to the Executive Council that implemented the National Recovery Act's WPA during the New Deal.

It was in this capacity that she met her future husband, Emile Despres, economist and international trade advisor to all presidents from FDR through LBJ. Ultimately, Emile would teach at Stanford University, where he died in 1973.

Joanna and Emile had three Children: Lani Despres Burack of Brooklyn, NY, John Despres of Washington, DC and Santa Monica, and Chuck Despres of Crescent City, CA. As well she leaves grandchildren Jed Burack, Sarah Despres, Heather Burack, Naomi Despres and Eli Despres. In addition, she leaves great grandchildren Desi Nelson, Clyde Nelson, Oscar Heilbrunn, Kaz Despres, Quincy Rose Despres; an additional grandchild, Seth Despres, predeceased her. She also leaves family Catherine Despres, Gina Despres, David A. Burack, Tray Brown, Raul Cuza, Arty Nelson, Jacob Heilbrunn, and Kim Roberts.

Joanna traveled with her husband, Emile Despres, to all continents--and lived overseas in Karachi, Pakistan; Paris, and Sete, France. She traveled to Paris many winters to paint at Galerie de la Grande Chaumiere--where many French painters from Degas to Picasso to Mary Cassatt practiced "figure drawing" and portraiture. Her favorite French poster artist was Toulouse Lautrec, whose posters, she said, were an "inspiration" to her.

Gifts in memory may be made to the American Friends Service Committee or to your favorite charity.

A "Celebration of Joanna's Life" will be held for friends of Joanna and her family on Sunday, May 3, 2009, 2-5 p.m. at Ladera Community Church, 3300 Alpine Road, Portola Valley, CA.

PAID OBITUARY

Editorial

Quick response needed on burglar-alarm fines

A \$250 penalty for a \$35 annual permit lapse is unconscionably high, and raises questions about bureaucratic lack of judgment

Some Palo Altans who have equipped their homes with burglar-alarm systems have gotten rude awakenings — but not from their alarms going off.

A number of residents report they were hit with a \$250 bill from the city after they failed to renew their annual \$35 alarm permits. Some claimed they didn't receive renewal notices, but city officials say they diligently send out notices a month in advance of the expiration dates.

But the real issues here are the size of the lapsed-permit penalty, basic fairness and the city's defensive reaction when the matter came to light by way of community online-forum exchanges — where people discovered they were not alone.

The alarm-permit requirement was enacted by city ordinance in 2001 after police reported a large number of false alarms, to which at least two police officers must respond as a safety procedure. The ordinance is credited with reducing false alarms by about 25 percent, police report.

The \$250 is part of the original ordinance, and is the penalty for operating an alarm system without a city permit.

We agree that the \$250 is an outrageous charge for someone who forgets to renew a \$35 annual permit. It is not the same, as one city official told the Weekly last week, as renewing a car registration — the DMV sends out early renewal notices and reminders, with graduated penalties, not an oversized fine that kicks in immediately.

This is the type of system the city needs to put in place quickly, with retroactive "fairness" adjustments.

The purpose of the ordinance was not to raise money but to reduce the number of costly, time-consuming false alarms in the city, which occupy officers' time and attention and distract them from other patrol duties.

Renewals provide current information as to whom to contact about alarms, to assure an alarm is an actual emergency and to facilitate education about how to avoid repeated false alarms — a particular problem with businesses with multiple employees.

Charles Cullen of the Police Department, who oversees the alarm program, said only between 1 and 2 percent of the 3,500 home and business alarm systems fail to renew on time and become subject to the \$250 fee. But that's 35 to 70 households.

"We're not looking for this to be a revenue generator," Cullen said of the fee, adding that it is being assessed because it is part of the original ordinance. A hearing officer for appeals, Louis Amadeo, an attorney, works independently under the City Clerk's office, he noted.

But resident William Neidig alleges that Amadeo told him he has always and always will deny requests for waivers of the fee, which Neidig said makes the hearing process a "charade." Amadeo told the Weekly he is acting in a capacity of a judge and cannot give advice, but he added it is irrelevant whether someone has received a renewal notice because it is the permit holder's responsibility to renew in any case.

Of course it is the permit holder's responsibility to renew. But it is also the city's responsibility to set reasonable penalties and administer them wisely. If it is true that the hearings are predetermined denials, then the program becomes a bureaucratic farce: Why hold hearings at all?

What is most distressing is that this situation has been allowed to continue for seven years. Why did no one think that a fine or penalty of such magnitude might be unfairly high and that perhaps the ordinance might be out of line? This has all the hallmarks of the kind of bureaucratic rigidity and unthinking adherence to procedures that makes citizens suspicious of and hostile toward City Hall.

Relief is on the way. City Manager James Keene has asked Interim Police Chief Dennis Burns to come up with recommendations for an overhaul within the next few weeks.

Burns agrees changes are needed: "We want people to have alarms," he said, adding that he will review the overall situation. The City Council will then need to amend the problematic ordinance, and weigh the issue of basic fairness for those who have already paid the penalty.

As when an alarm goes off, the city's response should be quick and effective.

Spectrum

Editorials, letters and opinions

Gilroy without the garlic?

Editor,

A wonderful relationship began when the Stanford Medical School moved from San Francisco to the Stanford campus in 1959. Stanford and Palo Alto jointly built a new hospital. For a half century this relationship has had its ups and downs, but it has generally been mutually beneficial.

Palo Alto sold its share of the Hospital to Stanford in 1968 — an indicator of the difficulty of reconciling needs of the medical center and the city. Having served as both the executive director of the medical center and as a Palo Alto planning commissioner, I had the privilege of seeing this relationship close up from both sides.

Now, as with many relationships, this relationship has now run its course. The time has come for Stanford Medical Center and Palo Alto to go separate ways.

The medical center needs and wants to grow and Palo Alto wishes to remain as it is without either the benefits or the pains of the medical center's growth. The center has established a superb outpatient facility in Redwood City — where it was welcomed. The center should take the next step and relocate all of the medical school, clinics and hospital to Redwood City. The Children's Hospital is a separate entity and it will need to make its own decision, but if it stayed it would be without an emergency room or Stanford Hospital's superb labs.

The center could work with Redwood City to create a Redevelopment Agency to help fund the new medical campus. And they could jointly lobby for Redwood City to be the Midpeninsula high-speed rail stop.

The land left behind should be de-annexed from Palo Alto and turned over to other academic uses. The space would meet Stanford's non-medical expansion needs for decades. Stanford and Palo Alto could then abandon their perpetual posturing and extortion exercises.

Palo Alto residents seeking emergency medical care could either travel to Redwood City or Mountain View — just as they now do for auto repairs and gas stations.

And if moving the medical center works well, then perhaps Stanford might consider doing the same with the Shopping Center. Palo Alto could then slip back into that wonderful time when everything was so grand but wasn't that before there was a Stanford University?

Oh well, just imagine Palo Alto as a northern Gilroy, without the garlic.

Peter Carpenter
Larch Drive
Atherton

Applause for Ofek

Editor,

We would like to take this opportunity to applaud the good news that Sharon Ofek, currently an assistant principal at Jane Lathrop Stanford Middle School, is now in line to become the next principal at JLS.

For the past two years, as Palo Alto PTA Council parent education co-chairs, we have had the privilege to work closely with many administrators at our 17 PAUSD schools. In that capacity, we have always found Ms. Ofek to be a tremendously dedicated, smart, thoughtful and innovative educator, as well as a positive, inspiring leader.

For years, she has worked tirelessly as a pivotal force on the Palo Alto Drug and Alcohol Community Collaborative, in close collaboration with other local, civic leaders.

PADACC's ground-breaking work includes surveying our middle and high school students about their own experiences and attitudes towards alcohol, drugs and bullying. This data (at www.padacc.org) gives us all an important opportunity to better understand and serve the youth of our community, and

for that, we owe Ms. Ofek and the entire PADACC team our thanks.

We also appreciate this opportunity to thank the current principal, Don Cox, who is soon retiring. He leaves a legacy of excellence at JLS, with such innovations as Panther Camp, transparency in financial protocols and a strong commitment to character education. Most of all, he hired and nurtured great teachers, and has built a really positive learning community for students.

"Panther Pride" really means something to JLS students, and that is thanks to the many efforts of Mr. Cox and the many hard-working, dedicated assistant principals, counselors and teachers at JLS.

We thank Superintendent Kevin Skelly for selecting Ms. Ofek, and we encourage the Palo Alto School Board to finalize her well-deserved promotion to JLS principal at the upcoming April 28th board meeting.

Wendy Kandasamy and
Carrie Manley
Parent-Teacher Association
Palo Alto

YOUR TURN

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

What do you think? Would you consider installing a burglar alarm system under current Palo Alto policies of levying a \$250 penalty for non-renewal of permits?

Submit letters to the editor of up to 250 words to letters@pawebly.com or shorter comments to readerwire@pawebly.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@pawebly.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

Prop. 1E is a direct assault on mental health of young Californians

by Vic and Mary Ojakian

For the past four years, following the death in 2004 of our son Adam, we as a couple have tried to improve California's mental-health services and reduce suicides statewide.

Our main, though not exclusive, focus has been on college-age young adults. But much of our progress could be washed away — perhaps siphoned off is a better description — if state voters fall for the arguments for state Prop. 1E in the special May 19 election.

We are far from alone in our concern, which is why this proposition is also opposed by the California League of Women's Voters, California Federation of Teachers, California School Boards Association, California Nurses Association, California Psychiatric Association, California Psychological Association, and Mental Health Association in California, and others listed on the website, <http://www.noprople.com/>.

The independent state legislative analyst wrote: "The proposed temporary redirection in 2004 Proposition 63 funding would make less money available for mental health programs. To the extent that such programs are reduced, state and local governments could incur added costs for homeless shelters, social services programs, medical care, law enforcement, and county jail and state prison operations.

"The extent of these potential costs is unknown and would depend upon the specific programmatic changes that resulted from the redirection of Proposition 63 funding," the analyst concluded.

Though claiming to be a one-time diversion of \$460 million, Prop. 1E threatens to reverse a measure approved by voters in 2004 — the



Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). "Borrowing" these funds places an ominous cloud over the future of mental-health funding.

We have called the proposition an "anti-Robin Hood proposal" — take from the needy to assist the more fortunate. But in this case the "needy" who need mental-health help number in the hundreds of thousands — a past survey indicated that 56 percent of California families had at least one member with a mental-health condition.

The funds involved are minuscule in relation to the state budget as a whole, just a quarter of 1 percent of the overall budget.

Taking these funds will contribute virtually nothing to resolving the state's horrendous budget shortfall, but the loss will have long-term, negative effects on those suffering from mental illness.

Proponents say Prop. 1E is part of a package deal on budget cuts and should be supported for that reason. But technically Props. 1A and 1B have the vast majority of new funding and spending cuts.

The funds affected by Prop. 1E are not in any way "surplus." These funds are seriously overdue and badly needed. Delays in establishing oversight procedures left them unspent

when the agencies earmarked for the funding could have used them three years ago.

We have tried diligently to create awareness about mental-health services available at college and university campuses. We have had some success with all three California public college systems in enhancing services and better communicating what is available for students.

Our work isn't finished. Ultimately it is not our individual actions that determine success, but whether that those in need know of services so they can seek them out and have ready access to them.

Our goal is simple and clear: significantly reduce young-adult suicides, and do so in a way that benefits many others as well.

The passage of the Mental Health Services Act has materially helped what we have been striving to accomplish. This unique act — no other state has similar legislation — provides funding strictly for innovative and evidence-based mental-health programs. Since 2005, 200,000 new persons, including 50,000 children, have received service.

Besides its immediate value, MHSA has far-reaching benefits. At a recent national conference, a question was asked about this specific legislation. MHSA is a national model and a sign of hope for many people across this country.

The reason why we're so disturbed at the recent action by Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger and legislators to raid this program's funding is that there seems to be a hidden agenda. Though publicized as a one-time taking there are indications that some legislators wanted to take far more funding and, in essence, gut this act. Once the funding gates are opened, this taking will probably not end.

Proponents of 1E are presenting seriously misleading "facts" to win support.

The most egregious example is suggesting a popular and effective children's health program is at stake. Not true. The program in question — the Early and Periodic Screening, Diagnosis and Treatment Program (EPSDT) — is federally mandated and will receive state funding regardless of Prop. 1E's outcome.

There is a personal reason we oppose Prop 1E. Its passage threatens funding for two recently approved programs: the California Strategic Plan on Suicide Prevention and the Student Mental Health Initiative. The latter is a first-time statewide funding of public school mental-health programs.

These programs hold the promise of helping young adults, and others, with mental illness and of actually preventing suicides. Many of our college and university campuses have prepared themselves to apply for these funds when they are available, if they become available. This is literally a life-or-death matter for some persons and families.

The funding of these two new programs is in jeopardy. This funding is only possible if each county agrees to assign funds to a statewide account. In talking with a few mental-health directors of larger counties we have found they are reluctant to assign funding because their overall funding could be impacted by Prop. 1E.

For more information go to <http://www.noprople.com/>. ■

Vic and Mary Ojakian lost their son Adam, a student at the University of California, Davis, to suicide in 2004 and have since been successful in getting university administrations to upgrade mental-health services statewide. They can be e-mailed at

Streetwise

What is your favorite Palo Alto business?

Asked on University Avenue. Interviews by Casey Scheld and Kris Young. Photographs by Whitney Dafoe.



George Patterson
Investor
Forest Avenue, Palo Alto

"My two favorite restaurants are Evvia and Tamarine, both have good food and service. I also go to Peet's Coffee, Whole Foods Market and Palo Alto Hardware. They are local and convenient."



Mercy Mejia
Motel Maid
Stanford Avenue, Palo Alto

"Pizza My Heart. Because they have delicious pizza."



Rebecca Justman
Recent MBA Graduate
Ramona Street, Palo Alto

"Ideo is my favorite. They just started with Whole Foods creating a compost program."



Eli Gwin-Kerr
Student
Churchill Avenue, Palo Alto

"Fraiche Yogurt. I like their frozen chocolate yogurt with strawberries. I could eat three or four at once."



Brooke Michael
Receptionist
Carolan Avenue, Burlingame

"My favorite business is Advanced Technology Ventures, ATV, because I work there. They are the best venture capitalist firm in the world. Sprout is my favorite lunch spot. Sprout is spectacular."

VTA Fiscal Year 2010 and 2011 Recommended Budget, Fare Modifications and ADA Paratransit Service Changes Review Meetings

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is holding six public meetings to review and to obtain public input regarding the Fiscal Year 2010 and 2011 Recommended Budget, proposed fare modifications and proposed changes to the ADA paratransit service area, hours, and “premium” services.

Proposed fare modifications include increases for all fixed-route cash fares, day passes, and monthly passes. Eco Pass contract rates and ADA paratransit fares are proposed to increase proportionally. ADA paratransit service changes include eliminating “premium” services not required by ADA, modifying the service area and hours and advanced reservation policies.

The VTA Board of Directors will consider the recommended budget and fare modifications at its June 4, 2009 meeting. If approved, proposed Eco Pass rate changes and fare modifications will become effective no later than July 1, 2010. ADA paratransit service changes are proposed to be effective October 1, 2009.

The recommended budget, fare modifications and ADA paratransit service changes can be viewed at www.vta.org. A written copy can be obtained by contacting VTA Customer Service. If you are unable to attend any of the public meetings, please submit your comments by Friday, May 15, 2009 to VTA.

Comments are also welcome by phone: (408) 321-2300;
Hearing Impaired (TTY only) (408) 321-2330; fax: (408) 321-7537;
Email: customer.service@vta.org

The meetings will be an open house format. The general public is invited to attend any of these meetings. Meeting dates, times and locations:

Monday, May 4, 2009 3-5 p.m. and 6-8 p.m.

County of Santa Clara
Isaac Newton Room
70 West Hedding Street, San Jose
*This location is served by VTA Light Rail
and Bus Lines 61, 62, 66, 180 and 181.*

Tuesday, May 5, 2009 6-8 p.m.

Morgan Hill Community & Cultural
Center
17000 Monterey Road, Morgan Hill
*This location is served by VTA Bus
Line 68.*

Wednesday, May 6, 2009 6-8 p.m.

Milpitas Public Library, Room B
160 North Main Street, Milpitas
*This location is served by
VTA Bus Line 66.*

Monday, May 11, 2009 6-8 p.m.

Mountain View Council Chambers
500 Castro Street, Mountain View
*This location is served by VTA Light Rail
and Bus Lines 35, 51 and 52.*

Tuesday, May 12, 2009 6-8 p.m.

Quinlan Community Center
10185 N. Stelling Road, Cupertino
*This location is served by VTA Bus Lines
23, 25, 54 and 55.*

If you require special accommodations to participate in the meetings, please contact VTA (see below) at least five days in advance of the meetings.

For More Information

For a detailed list of the proposed changes, contact VTA Customer Service.
(408) 321-2300
TTY: (408) 321-2330
www.vta.org

Guest Opinion

What worked — and what's next — for our libraries

by Alison Cormack

It's been about six months since Measure N passed last November with more than 69 percent approval by Palo Alto voters, comfortably over the 67 percent required. It was a remarkably positive outcome given that in June the city's poll showed 65 percent support and then in September the economy crashed.

Why did Measure N pass when Measure D failed in 2002 with just 61 percent approval? This is a question to which I have given some thought, as chair of the Yes on Measure N campaign.

I believe there are three structural reasons: First, the city put together a balanced plan with deep support from a unified City Council. Second, many new residents in those intervening six years came for the vaunted school system and were surprised to find our decrepit libraries. Third, communities from San Francisco to San Jose invested in their libraries while ours got worse.

We knew from the beginning that our task would be difficult, so we started earlier than any other campaign and focused relentlessly on communication. I spoke at 17 private house parties and a dozen public presentations.

We had an information kiosk at countless farmer's markets, our team got approval for and delivered over 1,300 lawn signs. Precinct walkers knocked on hundreds of doors in the fall, and we sent five mailers to 20,000 registered voter households.

This was an extraordinary amount of work for our executive team, steering committee, and more than 100 volunteers, and it all required substantial fundraising.

Something that surprises people is that my goal was not to win on Nov. 4.

It was to run the campaign so that if we lost we would feel great about the campaign we ran and know that it wasn't for lack of effort on our part. My watchword for the campaign process and materials was “reasonable.” What would a reasonable person ask about? Not someone steeped in library minutiae or someone opposed to all city taxes but someone who might have voted no on Measure D in 2002 because he or she didn't like the proposal or didn't understand the situation. When we found people early on in the campaign who were against Measure D and for Measure N we felt like we had a good chance of succeeding.

Now the questions I get have shifted from “How did it happen?” to “What's happening now?” Here's a summary:

The city has hired Group 4 Architects to do the detailed architectural planning for Downtown Library, Mitchell Park Library and Community Center, and the temporary location for Mitchell Park Library (which will be the Cubberley Auditorium).



This detailed work will take about a year and is already well underway. A stakeholder committee comprised of city staff, commission representatives and non-profit leaders meets monthly to review progress.

With respect to the bonds themselves, the City Council is forming a citizens' bond-oversight committee. The city plans to issue the first series of bonds in the spring of 2010, concurrent with construction beginning for the Downtown Library and the Mitchell Park Library and Community Center. Phase two will be for Main Library, and planning for that will begin in 2011.

In other news, the city has recently added Link+ access to the online-library catalog. I needed a book by Stanford Professor Jack Rakove for a course I am taking and our library doesn't have it. However, four libraries in the Link+ system did, so it was delivered to Main Library for me — for free.

This is an example of how technology can improve our library experience, and we have the city and the Friends of the Palo Alto Library to thank for funding this project.

The final piece of the library projects on which I am working on is the private fundraising campaign that the Library Foundation will be conducting to provide thousands of books, more computers and modern furniture for our beautiful new libraries. Look for more details on this campaign later this year.

What I'll be watching closely as the city works to make these library projects a reality is the timeline. Part of the reason our campaign ran without a crisis (a rarity in elections, I'm told) is that we worked to a timeline that identified crucial tasks and we started everything earlier than others thought was reasonable.

The city plans to reopen College Terrace Library in 2010, Downtown Library in 2011, Mitchell Park Library and Community Center in 2012, and Main Library in 2013. I'll be watching for the projects to stay on those targets.

The reality is that four of our five libraries plus one of our community centers will close and reopen over the next five years. This is a massive undertaking for our Library department and Public Works, along with many other city departments. All of us will need to be patient as these projects move along. The end result will be worth it, though. You can watch for new and improved libraries, coming soon to a location near you, thanks to the passage of Measure N. ■

Alison Cormack was the chair of the Yes on N campaign last year and is the president of the Palo Alto Library Foundation. This column represents her personal opinion about the campaign. She can be reached at acormack@sb-cglobal.net.



Lisa Hunter, co-owner of downtown clothing store Vian Hunter, arranges a few clothes as she prepares for the store's closing sale. After three years, she and her husband, Scott Hunter, are pulling up stakes and moving to Seattle.

Down times

Palo Alto's downtown businesses are feeling the blues, expecting tougher times ahead

Story by Gennady Sheyner. Photographs by Veronica Weber.

After three years of chasing dreams and weathering storms in downtown Palo Alto, Lisa and Scott Hunter are packing it in.

Their Bryant Street shop, Vian Hunter, overflows with bright dresses, patterned blouses and a variety of shirts and shifts, all designed by Lisa Hunter. But these days, customers are scarce, even on a sunny afternoon in one of the busiest areas of town.

"Nobody shops any more," Hunter said. "Even I don't shop any more."

Though Vian Hunter opened with high hopes three years ago, these days the first thing passersby see when they walk past the boutique is a bright yellow sign proclaiming a closing sale. The Palo Alto family now hopes to keep the dream alive by moving its shop to Seattle.

The dismal economy, which continues to keep customers away, has

been shrinking store sales for more than a year. But it doesn't help, Scott Hunter noted, that the city is considering instituting a business-license tax, which would be based on gross receipts. Or that the former Walgreens site — reduced to rubble by a fire two years ago — is only half a block from the store. Closed streets and recent construction noise made it harder than ever to operate a customer-friendly boutique.

"Nobody shops any more. Even I don't shop any more."

— Lisa Hunter, co-owner of Vian Hunter

"It's a whole combination of things: the construction, the lack of foot traffic, the tax," Scott Hunter said. "The longer you sit and watch

this house of cards fall the harder it gets."

Their story has become commonplace. Stores all over downtown are either shuttering their doors or struggling to hold on to ever-dwindling profit margins. Z Gallerie, a home-furnishings store, departed from its location at 340 University Ave. last month, leaving more than 13,000 square feet of empty retail space in a central downtown location. Magnolia Audio Video, one of the few big-box retailers in downtown Palo Alto, also abandoned its University Avenue property earlier this year. And on March 22, Wolf Camera became the latest University Avenue business to close up shop. The store sign on the front door thanks customers for "allowing us to be a part of your lives and memories" and directs them to Ritz Camera in Menlo Park.

"It's definitely a trend," said Sherry Bijan, president of the Palo

Alto Downtown Business and Professional Association, which represents downtown business interests. "We need to really start paying attention to this."

Bijan, whose association has about 800 members, said about 10 downtown businesses have closed down in recent months. But she has also been fielding calls from many other business owners who told her they could no longer afford to pay their rent.

Charles "Chop" Keenan, whose many downtown holdings include the Whole Foods, Borders Books/Varsity Theatre and Miyake restaurant buildings, said he gets calls just about every day from tenants who need help.

"Retention is the new acquisition," Keenan said.

In some cases, including Vian Hunter's, landlords have been willing to compromise on rent payments. But another downtown

store, Shady Lane, recently saw its rent double amid a change in ownership.

Bijan said she would like to see the city and downtown landlords become more proactive in helping local merchants stay in business during tough times. One way, she said, would be to have business owners sign one-year leases on their properties, which would then be reviewed and, when necessary, adjusted at the end of the year. Property owners could also be more mindful of sales figures and economic conditions when setting the lease terms, she said.

"As a city, as property owners, we really need to get ahead of this trend instead of getting bowled over by it," Bijan said. "It's really become survival mode."

To be sure, the scene is not completely bleak. Most businesses are

(continued on next page)



Artist Sandi Morey (left) and Shady Lane co-owner Lesley Obermayer take a moment to chat between customers in early April. Shady Lane's rent was recently doubled.



A sign for 'Home Theater and Audio' still hangs in the former site of Magnolia Audio Video on the corner of University Avenue and Emerson Street in Palo Alto.

Down times

(continued from previous page)

still finding ways to hang on and a few are even thriving. But, as a walk up and down University makes clear, hope is becoming an increasingly rare commodity along one of the city's most vibrant stretches. "For Lease" and "Clearance Sale" and "Store Closing" signs almost leap out from windowpanes and doorways on both sides of the street, and parking spots, once rare on this busy stretch, are becoming easier to spot.

"Retention is the new acquisition."

— Chop Keenan, downtown Palo Alto property owner

"Nobody is signing leases," Deputy City Manager Steve Emslie observed at a roundtable discussion sponsored by the downtown association Wednesday morning.

One doesn't need to flip through the city's bleak-and-getting-bleaker revenue figures to sense the obvious truth: Downtown businesses are fighting to stay alive.

The decline of business in downtown Palo Alto, and throughout the city in general, hasn't come as a shock to City Hall. With the nation trapped in a recession, the question asked by City Manager James Keene and other officials isn't "Is business declining?" so much as "How bad will it get?"

Most recent signs point downward. A staff report released last month projected a \$2.1 million drop in sales taxes this fiscal year, a 9.5 percent decrease from the budgeted amount.

"With American consumer confidence at its lowest point in decades, consumers are scaling back their spending plans for major purchases resulting in substantial declines in this major revenue source," the report stated.

On April 6, staff came back with even bleaker news: Sales taxes are now down by \$2.3 million, or 10.4 percent, from the projected total of \$22.1 million. The downward trend, coupled with decreases in hotel-

occupancy taxes and document-transfer taxes, has pushed the city's projected budget shortfall to \$7.8 million in fiscal year 2009, which ends on June 30.

Emslie said city officials are particularly concerned about downtown's increasing focus on restaurants, to the exclusion of other types of businesses. He noted that both Borders Books and Restoration Hardware — major companies with downtown Palo Alto stores — have seen their figures plummet in recent months. The city is worried about how this trend will affect downtown, he said.

"We've always enjoyed a mix," Emslie told business leaders. "If you end up heading into entertainment and food, it makes us a little

bit nervous."

Ironically, the happiest news for many in the downtown community is Stanford University's recent decision not to bring more stores to Palo Alto. On April 13, the university — which leases the shopping center land to mall manager Simon Property Group — formally withdrew the application to expand the Stanford mall. The proposed expansion, which would have added 240,000 square feet of retail and a 120-room hotel within walking distance of downtown, had alarmed many downtown merchants, who viewed the proposal as a direct challenge to downtown business. The design of the new expansion featured a village-like hub inside the shopping center, full of restaurants, bars and

other amenities that would encourage lingering. In short, the proposal would have created a downtown-like environment within a few blocks of downtown itself.

Business leaders had plenty of reasons to be afraid. When Stanford Shopping Center opened its doors in 1956, it drew stores and customers away from University Avenue, turning a previously vibrant stretch into a ghost-town full of boarded-up buildings. In the following decades, downtown merchants responded by creating an assessment district and contributing funds to build parking lots. The new parking structures, coupled with a 1970 court ruling that allowed downtown merchants to serve alcohol, helped businesses flourish in the coming decades.

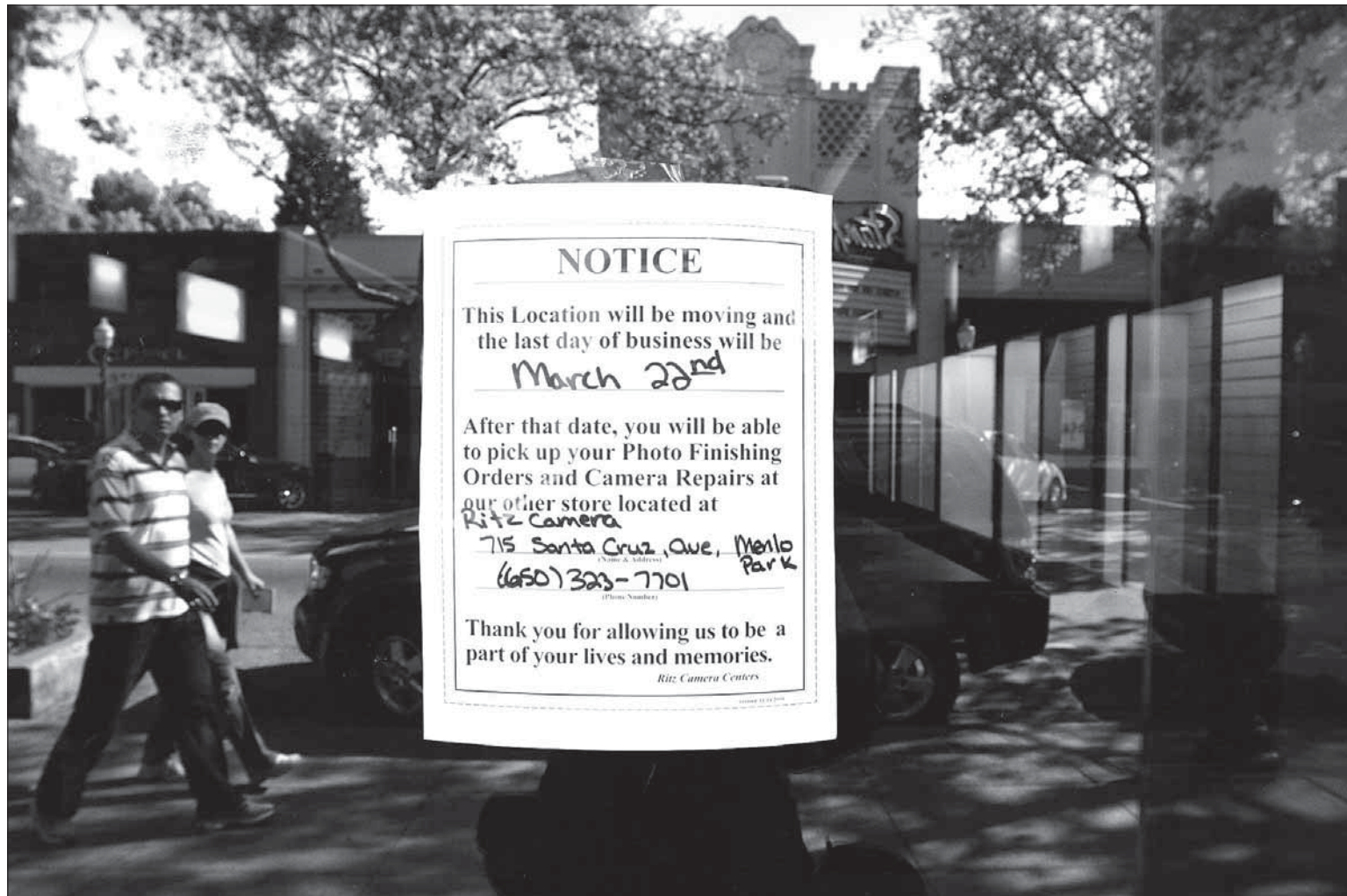
Not surprisingly, when Stanford dropped its expansion plans, downtown businesses heaved a collective — yet cautious — sigh of relief.

Barbara Gross, general manager of the Garden Court Hotel, said at a meeting this week that the shopping center's application withdrawal is a good thing (particularly, from her standpoint, because the proposal included a new hotel). But she also said she wouldn't be surprised if the proposal re-emerges sometime in the future.

"I don't think it's totally off the table, just suspended," Gross said. (A Stanford spokesperson, however, indicated the plan will not return.)

City officials have mixed feelings

(continued on page 20)



Pedestrians walking along University Avenue found a sign in the window, indicating Wolf Camera had closed on March 22 — but customers could still pick up their orders at the Menlo Park Ritz Camera.

Amid recession, a new push to think locally

Palo Alto rolls out events, promotes discounts to keep shoppers within city limits

by Gennady Sheyner

Shop locally. The often-repeated phrase is gaining weight these days as Palo Alto businesses find themselves ensnared by the worldwide recession.

Many city officials and business leaders hope the coming months will stir a new effort within the community to support the local economy, what with a mayor whose theme for the year is "regional cooperation for local self-reliance," the launch next week of a farmers market outside City Hall and an ongoing campaign to encourage shopping within Palo Alto.

In this effort at least, the sagging economy could be the city's staunchest ally. Earlier this month, the city trimmed \$837,000 off its community-service budget, largely because of slumping sales tax and other city revenues. One upshot of the budget reduction is that it underscored the connection between shopping locally and maintaining city services, said Tommy Fehrenbach, chairman of the Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce board of directors.

"It's more important now than

ever for people to support their local businesses," Fehrenbach said. "It's more important than ever for people to understand the connection between local business and community services."

To promote local commerce, city officials and business groups are planning a series of outdoor events and street parties, most slated for the summer.

"It's more important than ever for people to understand the connection between local business and community services."

— Tommy Fehrenbach, chairman, Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce board of directors

The most significant, and potentially lucrative, of these is the 2009 Senior Games, which is expected to bring about 12,500 athletes and their families to Palo Alto and surrounding cities. The 2007 Games



Two children on their way to Dog Town are reflected in the windows of the former site of Colorburst Flowers on Bryant Street in Palo Alto.

Veronica Weber

brought an estimated \$32 million in revenues to Louisville, Ky., and Palo Alto officials expect the August event to provide a major revenue boost to the city.

At the same time, city officials and local merchants are organizing smaller-scale events aimed at re-energizing downtown Palo Alto and other retail-heavy districts.

The World Music Day, spearheaded by Human Rights Commission

member Claude Ezran, is expected to bring dozens of musicians to downtown Palo Alto for free performances on June 21.

Skin Spirit Skincare and Spa plans to help organize weekly block parties throughout July, said Sherry Bijan, president of the Palo Alto Downtown Business and Professional Association.

City officials are also banking on the new farmers market, which

rolled out on April 22 in King Plaza, to bring some life to the City Hall area.

"I think it's going to bring some activity and color to downtown and generate some vitality," Bijan said. "And possibly, some commerce."

On a parallel track, the city is seeking to encourage residents to direct more of their patronage toward

(continued on page 21)



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(continued from previous page)

something that Palo Alto currently doesn't have.

"If the council comes back and says, 'Yes, we will tax at revenue base, but we're going to give it back to the business community,' I think the businesses will be more receptive to it," Bijan said.

On Tuesday, the icy tension between city staff and the business community thawed somewhat when city officials agreed to hold meetings with an eight-member group of business owners. Paula Sandas, CEO of Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce, thanked council members for working with the business community and said the chamber is currently selecting the eight members who would take part in the discussions.

But many remain upset about the city's proposal for a new tax. Beth Rosenthal, a psychologist who works downtown and is a member of the business-improvement district, said the city is acting with "undue haste" in proposing its plan.

"There seems to be an implicit assumption that there are deep untapped pockets of revenue in the downtown community," Rosenthal told the Finance Committee. "This is not what I heard from business owners who describe themselves as quite upset at the lower revenues and outraged that the city would propose a tax at a time like this."

A shortage of customers, expensive rents and ongoing competition from Stanford Shopping Center have already chased some downtown business owners away and have prompted others to consider shutting down their businesses. But most say they are staying put, confident that the bad times will reverse.

Alice Deutscher, co-owner of Shady Lane, a store that specializes in handcrafted gifts and accessories, has been running the University Avenue shop for the past 35 years. While sales have dropped precipitously over the last year, Deutscher and co-owner Lesley Obermayer have been scraping by the old-fashioned way: by working harder and

responding to changes in customer demand.

Over the past few months, Shady Lane has expanded its variety of offerings, most recently adding a new line of beads created by local artists. They are also willing to keep the store open later, if a customer requests it.

"It does take work, it does take effort, it does take doing things a little differently than before."

— Jeff Selzer, general manager of Palo Alto Bicycles

"We're working twice as hard now because that's what we have to do," Deutscher said.

"We try to be very positive because we feel extremely grateful to our customers," she added. "But it's really heartbreaking to see all the small businesses that can no longer make it here."

Jeff Selzer, meanwhile, is thriving through innovation. Since last year, Selzer — general manager of Palo Alto Bicycles — and local architect Joe Bellomo have designed a line of "bike arcs" that allow bicyclists to park their bikes in an orderly fashion.

Selzer said the sales in Palo Alto Bicycles were actually up last year, despite the dire economic conditions. He remained hopeful that the business community would find a way to meet whatever challenges come up.

"The economy is in turmoil, the big-box stores have left and there's the business license tax," Selzer said. "But I get up in the morning excited because there's so much opportunity out there."

"It does take work, it does take effort, it does take doing things a little differently than before," he added. "But that doesn't mean we can't succeed." ■

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

Recession

(continued from page 19)

local businesses.

Paula Sandas, the CEO of the Chamber of Commerce, said the Chamber is working with local merchants and Destination Palo Alto — the city's tourism program — on a new initiative to promote local shopping. Participating businesses — designated with a "Palo Alto. Shop. Dine. Stay" label and the El Palo Alto tree symbol — would all offer discounts or other shopping incentives during the Senior Games, Stanford University's "admit week" and other visitor-friendly occasions.

"We're trying to promote local businesses, particularly the downtown and California Avenue area businesses," Sandas said.

But the renewed emphasis on local shopping isn't limited to retail. Joe Bellomo, who heads an architectural firm on University Avenue, said the dark economic climate is

starting to change residents', and even cities', attitudes toward small, local firms.

"There is a new way of thinking that basically recognizes that small business, small firms, local businesses — that's what we should be working toward celebrating," Bellomo said.

His firm, for example, recently received a request for a proposal from the City of San Jose for a new environmental-innovation center. In the past, such requests typically went to large firms in major cities such as San Francisco or New York, he said. Now, cities are giving more weight to the smaller firms around the corner, Bellomo said.

"We believe there's truth in this newfound directive," Bellomo said. "That's where I find hope. When you say something is homegrown — that's where the power of renewal starts." ■

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

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Stanford Hospital Health Notes

A community health education series from Stanford Hospital & Clinics

Saving Your Skin—And Your Life

Fair-skinned, fair-haired Robert Mansell grew up in Australia, where sunshine is plentiful. He spent much of his youth outside, for as many hours as there was daylight. That's what kids like him did in the ranching and farming community where he was raised. There was work to be done.

Clad in shorts, boots, and a hat, but often shirtless, Mansell didn't ignore the idea of protecting his skin. He did coat his nose with a goopy white zinc-based sunblock. But even that heavy-duty barrier was no match for the 100-degree heat. And the moist sunblock would attract so much dust, Mansell's skin would quickly become a cakey mess.

Finally, in 1988, Mansell's work in information technology began to keep him more inside than out, so much so he didn't think much

about protecting his skin. Five years later, Mansell's wife, Wendy, a keen-eyed daughter of a nurse, spotted something on her husband's back that did not look right.

"I was a textbook case."

— Robert Mansell, treated for skin cancer at Stanford Hospital & Clinics

Mansell, who has lived in Half Moon Bay for the last several years, is now a regular patient at Stanford Hospital & Clinics Department of Dermatology. His doctor is Hayes Gladstone, MD, a specialist in one of the most effective treatments for basal cell carcinoma, the kind of skin cancer that has emerged many times on Mansell's body in the last 15 years.

Preserving a delicate barrier

Think of the skin as delicate wrapping paper for the body and it is easy to see its vulnerability. At any given time, one out of every three people in the U.S. suffers from a skin disease. More than 3,000 varieties of skin disease have been identified, from common conditions like herpes simplex and contact dermatitis to the more uncommon, and very serious, melanoma and blistering diseases. Skin cancer is the second most diagnosed condition.

Stanford Hospital & Clinics dermatology department was an early



Robert Mansell, fair-skinned and fair-haired, grew up in a ranching community in Australia. Dermatology surgeons have now removed several cancers from his skin and Mansell maintains a close watch on his exposure to sunlight.

adopter of innovative treatments for skin cancers, including an approach called a Mohs micrographic procedure. Named after its creator, the Mohs is a tissue-saving surgery, very precisely removing just cancerous skin and tissue. Previously, surgeons did not have the microscopic support now available to accurately chart a skin cancer's depth and width. They had no choice but to take more skin and tissue. The scars could be quite disfiguring.

Gladstone, who has performed more than 20,000 Mohs procedures, also specializes in any reconstructive surgery needed afterwards to restore the skin in the affected area as naturally as possible.

What alarms dermatologists and dermatologic surgeons is the number of patients they see who come in with late-stage skin cancer—especially men, and especially on their backs.

Vigilance rewarded

Wendy Mansell was particularly aware of skin cancer's appearance. She'd been the one to notice a suspicious mole, later diagnosed as cancer, on her 18-year-old brother's back. She also grew up in Australia, and, like her husband, wishes that Americans would take skin

cancer a bit more seriously. The Australian government takes it so seriously that it passed legislation several years ago requiring schoolchildren without hats to stay inside at recess.

"You just need to be aware, and you need to go to a doctor who knows the difference."

— Wendy Mansell, Robert Mansell's wife

Gladstone knows that Americans are more aware that sun can cause skin cancer, but he would be happier if people insisted their doctors start doing skin checks from an early age. "Sun damage starts at an early age," he said. He recently treated a young woman who grew up in Southern California and now, at 21, has had her first skin cancer removed.

Catching skin cancer early, and preventing its recurrence, is an important part of the clinical care at Stanford. Within the department are special clinics and services focused on different types of skin cancer, unusual skin diseases and scar reduction. The department is also a partner in a national awareness campaign focused on the most lethal type of skin cancer, melanoma. The message repeated by these dermatologists is simple. Most skin cancers

What you need to know about sunscreens

- **Use an SPF of at least 30**, but be aware that number only reflects how well UVB rays are screened. There is no effective way to measure a sunscreen's protection against UVA rays, equally as dangerous as UVB.
- **Look for sunblocks with titanium dioxide or zinc oxide.** These substances act as actual barriers against the sun. Two ingredients are musts for a sunscreen to be effective against UVA rays: avobenzone (also known as parsol 1789) and, to keep it from breaking down in the sun, Mexoryl.

How to protect your skin

- **Apply sunscreen or sunblock 30 minutes before going out.** Use enough: two tablespoons, a palm-full, for full body coverage. Reapply at least every two hours. If your scalp is not fully covered by hair, try a spray-on sunscreen.
- **Wear a hat that covers your ears and the back of your neck.**
- **What else you wear counts, too.** Cover as much of your skin as you can. A tightly-woven fabric can protect skin better than inadequately-applied sunscreen. For extra protection, look for clothing rated for its UVA-protection.
- **Avoid the 10am-3pm sun, unless fully protected.** Seek shade when available.

Free lecture

Hayes Gladstone, MD, and Susan Swetter, MD, will give a free talk about skin cancer, skin protection and skin rejuvenation at 6:30 pm, May 13, at the Frances C. Arrillaga Alumni Center, 326 Galvez St., near Campus Drive on the Stanford University campus. For more information, phone 650.725.0455.

Free screening

Stanford Hospital & Clinics hosts its annual free skin check clinic from 9 am to noon, May 16 at the new Stanford Medicine Outpatient Center, 450 Broadway, Redwood City. For more information call 650.723.6316.

are treatable with great success, if removed before they grow large or spread to other parts of the body. And doctors know that if one skin carcinoma has appeared, there's a 50 percent chance of another emerging.

New ways to see

Gladstone is looking forward to the arrival at Stanford of a brand-new diagnostic tool, a confocal microscope. It uses a probe to send light through the skin. Cancer cells respond to that light differently and make it possible to map a cancer without an invasive biopsy.

Other non-invasive treatments in development at Stanford include the use of non-toxic substances that would chemically deter skin cancer growth.

And, Stanford bioengineers are working with Stanford physicians to create computer software that could build a 3-D image of a skin cancer, again without the pain of surgery. "In an ideal world there will be no more cutting to treat skin cancer," Gladstone said. "We might have to inject something or use a topical treatment, but we're at a new frontier in skin medicine. We are definitely getting there."

Robert Mansell still goes to the beach, bikes with his kids and enjoys outdoor life, but he does so with scrupulous care of his skin. Whenever the opportunity arises, he also does his best to be an advocate of skin protection and skin



A technician prepares a five micron-thin frozen sample for Gladstone's microscopic examination.



Hayes Gladstone, MD, determining the type of skin cancer he's seeing.

checks. He's not always effective. "If they're not doing it, with all the media coverage and the information that's out there, they won't listen to me. I just back off and shake my head."

Wendy Mansell is eager to share what she has learned about sunscreens "They have a shelf-life, although the date isn't stamped on the tube," she said. "So I throw out the unused tubes every season and buy new. For what you're playing with, and the odds of getting it, it's not worth taking the risk."

Gladstone talks about sunscreen to patients who tell him, "I never go out in the sun." His response? "We live in California, so it's impossible not to."



Hats are a must when the family goes outside, although a windy day can be a challenge for keeping them on.



Robert Mansell and his wife, Wendy, and their children: Adam, 9, and Tegan, 5. The Mansells protect their kids' skin with sunblock—and with clothing.

Stanford Hospital & Clinics is known worldwide for advanced treatment of complex disorders in areas such as cardiovascular care, cancer treatment, neurosciences, surgery, and organ transplants. Consistently ranked among the top institutions in the U.S. News & World Report annual list of "America's Best Hospitals," Stanford Hospital & Clinics is internationally recognized for translating medical breakthroughs into the care of patients. It is part of the Stanford University Medical Center, along with the Stanford University School of Medicine and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford. For more information, visit <http://stanfordmedicine.org>.



Arts & Entertainment

A weekly guide to music, theater, art, movies and more, edited by Rebecca Wallace



In her Woodside studio, Karin Moggridge stands with clothing she designed and made.

OUTSIDE THE GALLERY

Annual event features art for the closet and jewelry box



A cuff by Bigazzi.

Top: A skirt and jacket that Moggridge created from a kimono. Right: A necklace made by jewelry artist Davide Bigazzi. Far right: Bigazzi at work in his Allied Arts Guild studio.





This dress, jacket and scarf are one-size-fits-all, characteristic of Moggridge's pieces.

photographs by Veronica Weber
story by Ashley Ramirez

Fashion designer Donatella Versace once said that fashion is all about happiness. Many other designers feel the same way — they get to work with materials, colors and styles that inspire them.

Woodside's Karin Moggridge surrounds herself with silk, velvet, leather, cotton and polyester. Her handmade pieces include scarves, lightweight jackets, shirts and pleated skirts. She's always looking for fabrics with a texture that will pick up a dye well.

Growing up in Copenhagen, Moggridge learned how to sew in school when she was 7 years old. She said fashion was always on her mind.

"Anything that needed sewing was done by me," she said about her childhood duties. "I used to make all my own clothes."

This Saturday, Moggridge will join about 35 other artists bringing the fruits of their inspiration to the Palo Alto Art Center. The fifth annual "Style" trunk show and sale takes place from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., filling the art center with artists and their original clothing, accessories and jewelry. The event raises funds for the Palo Alto Art Center Foundation and its art education programs.

Event producer Diane Master says about 500 people typically attend each year. She also manages The Gallery Shop at the art center and says she's always looking for new, talented artists.

"I look for excellence in their field," Master said. "The show is full of styles and all price ranges. There's really something for everyone."

Moggridge echoes that sentiment in her women's clothing, which she creates to be one-size-fits-all. She designs her pieces with a layering and drapery effect. Her technique includes dyeing, weaving, crushing and pleating.

She's drawn to darker colors, favoring solid fall hues. But don't expect to see any blue. She's not sure why, but she just doesn't like blue.

Moggridge got her start designing furniture and sculptures in London after studying at Hornsey College of Art from 1967 to 1970. She then focused on turning fabrics and fibers into wall art, tapestries and folding screens. In 1994, she expanded her artwork with a clothing line, which is being sold in upscale stores and galleries. She works in two studios: one at the 1870 Art Center in Belmont, and one in her home high in the hills above Woodside.

Moggridge has found some of her inspiration in Japan; after a
 (continued on next page)

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'Style'

(continued from previous page)

trip there, she set out to design her version of a kimono. She says her kimonos are some of her best sellers and that she's going to carry on till she drops.

"I would find old kimonos and weave them in my hotel room," using the kimono material like basket fibers to weave it into her own art pieces, she said. "People think of my artwork as an investment and my clothing as a necessity."

Another local artist taking part in "Style" is Menlo Park jeweler Davide Bigazzi, whose studio and shop is at the Allied Arts Guild. Bigazzi's gold and silver necklaces, rings, bracelets and earrings are carefully planned and made by hand. He's returning to "Style" for the third year and says he enjoys the mix of artists there.

Born in Italy, Bigazzi works with Old World mastery. He uses the techniques of repoussé and chasing, shaping and embellishing metal with raised surface designs.

Bigazzi says he creates his pieces the way he did when he was growing up, trying to recapture a sensation of home. "I like that there's a classic feeling to the piece."

He began as an apprentice at 14 years old under the careful watch of metalsmith and sculptor Bino Bini in Florence. Since then, he has also worked on designs for the Vatican, churches and banks, and become a freelance designer and

model-maker.

Inspired by nature and Italy, Bigazzi likes to make classic jewelry with a contemporary twist. He makes every piece one at a time. Many have a geometric sensibility, with occasional stones for accent.

"I always use the same technique. I really like to use the combination of the two metals," he said. "I let the metal speak for the piece."

He and his wife, Elisa, joined together to establish a studio in Florence and one located at the Allied Arts Guild. In Menlo Park, he has his workshop with machines and tools in every corner. He also teaches one-on-one classes and displays his jewelry and hollowware (vases and other table items) for the customers. All of his tools are handmade as well.

"You need a different measure of tools. Each gives a certain touch. It can give you more or less of variety," he said. ■

What: "Style," an annual trunk show and sale of original clothing, jewelry and accessories
Where: Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road
When: Saturday, April 25, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Cost: Admission is \$10 (free for members of the Palo Alto Art Center Foundation).
Info: Go to www.paacf.org/style or call 650-329-2366.

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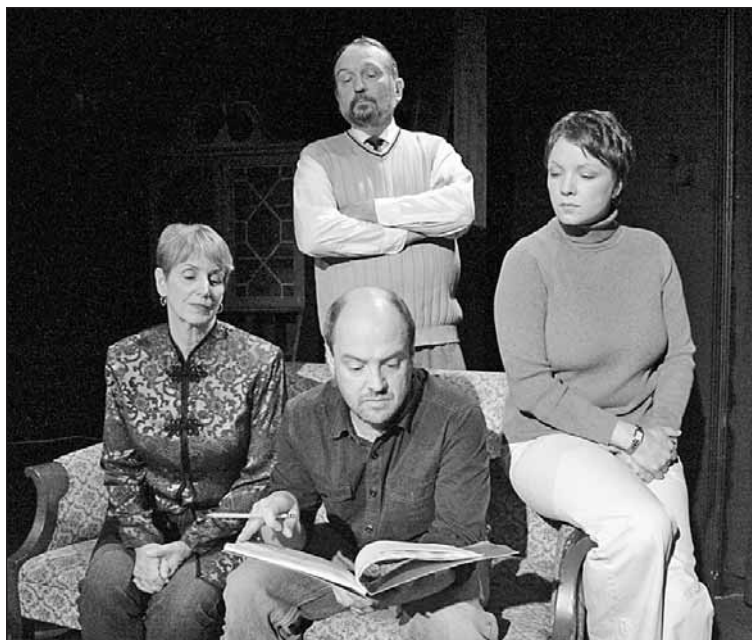
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C. Conrad Cady (reading a script) portrays playwright John. Surrounding him, from left, are Ann Kuchins (playing John's mother), Charles Mumrich (his father) and Janine Evans (his sister).

A gentle satire

'The Cocktail Hour' airs family laundry that's never very dirty

by Kevin Kirby

Playwright A.R. Gurney is the chronicler of a vanishing lifestyle. His best-known comedies are snapshots of the dwindling WASP aristocracy of the eastern U.S. — the starched, patrician world of prestigious schools, private country clubs and money so old that it's impolite to mention it.

This is the world in which Gurney grew up, and it's no secret that much of his material is drawn from his own family's history. Nor is it a secret that his family, over the years, has been less than enthusiastic about seeing their quirks and foibles dissected on the Off-Broadway stage.

The cliché "airing dirty laundry" is not really apropos, since Gurney's laundry is never that dirty. The worst that one is likely to see in a Gurney play is the dramatic equivalent of a muddy paw print on white yachting pants: unsightly, perhaps, but certainly no scarlet letter to besmirch the family honor.

In fact, the worst that Gurney captures is the *humanity* of his subjects: the small self-deceptions, the fits of pride, the vague unspoken sadness. This has always been his strength as a writer; it grants his stories a universality, making his family feel like our family, regardless of politics or bloodlines or social strata.

Given the gentleness of Gurney's portraiture, it's hard to understand his family's discomfort. And yet, the plot of "The Cocktail Hour" — the latest offering from Palo Alto's Dragon Productions — hinges on that very discomfort.

"The Cocktail Hour" is the story of a middle-aged playwright, John, who returns to his parents' home in upstate New York, seeking their permission to produce a play based heavily on their family relationships. John's play, none-too-incidentally, is also called "The Cocktail Hour," and Gurney has set the debate over John's script squarely in the middle of the family's cocktail hour — that sacrosanct hour (or two) before din-

appointing, the phone call happens offstage.)

Furthermore, perhaps to avoid accusations that he has stacked the deck in his alter ego's favor, Gurney spends a great deal of time beating up on John, painting him as a life-long trouble maker who's "jealous of anyone who seems to have a leg up on life." This, combined with a certain gloominess in Cady's manner, ultimately makes John the least likable character in the play.

On the other hand, Numrich's Bradley is perhaps insufficiently cantankerous. Numrich plays him as a rigid, emotionally distant man with outdated attitudes. This is all well and good. What's missing, though, is the sense that he is, in his final years, truly desperate to control the public perception on which his hollow social standing is based. (We're told that the character is in his late 70s and believes his time is short, but this hardly shows up in his demeanor.) In any case, an edgier performance from Numrich would serve to up the ante for Cady, adding a bit of zing to a well-mannered first act.

Kuchins and Evans are both fine comic actresses. Each handles Gurney's text with ease, and they nicely embody the different attitudes of two generations of American women.

Director Rachel Manheim has chosen to accentuate the self-referential meta-ness of the narrative, reminding us in various ways that we may be watching the very play whose fate the characters are discussing. She has Cady carry a typewritten copy of John's script for much of the first act, making pencil notations as the other characters speak — sometimes even mouthing their lines along with them.

In a similar vein, scenic designer Ron Gasparinetti has provided a self-conscious skeleton of a set, in which the massive sloping beams serve to dispel rather than create an illusion of spaciousness. Around the edges of the playing space — outside the confines of the sitting room — unused flats and an aluminum step ladder lean against the stage walls, never letting us forget that we are in a theater.

These Brechtian touches are interesting; whether they enhance or merely complicate Gurney's intent is a question open to debate.

Overall, Dragon's production of "The Cocktail Hour" is a well-paced, honestly acted, faintly dysthemic comedy, characterized by Gurney's gently satiric treatment of the people he knows best. The family dynamics will be recognizable to everyone, and the script is packed with inside jokes about the theater world that regular theatergoers will appreciate. ■

What: "The Cocktail Hour," a play presented by Dragon Productions

Where: Dragon Theatre, 535 Alma St., Palo Alto

When: Thursday-Saturday at 8 p.m. and Sundays at 2 p.m., through May 10

Cost: \$20 general admission, \$16 for students and seniors

Info: Go to www.dragonproductions.net or call the box office at 1-800-838-3006.

THEATER REVIEW

ner when the men sip scotch and relax in their own civility.

While John's mother, Ann, urges him to turn it into a book instead (books, she says, are much less public), his father, Bradley, takes a more direct tack, offering John \$20,000 to leave the script in a drawer until all members of the older generation are safely dead. John's sister Nina, in contrast, is less concerned with the play's subject matter than with the insignificance of her own role therein.

C. Conrad Cady plays the playwright. Charles Mumrich and Ann Kuchins are his parents, and Janine Evans plays sister Nina. They are all confident, seasoned performers; all but Evans are making their Dragon debut with this show.

The show also has two important unseen characters: a newly hired domestic servant named Sheila (or Shirley or Sharon or Cheryl — the family can't quite be bothered to get it right) whose inept handling of dinner stretches the cocktail hour into a second act; and John's brother Jigger (seemingly named after a bartender's implement), the favorite son who always got the parental approval that John craved.

Gurney's script is funny and well-observed — he has a good ear for the way these people speak — but it is not his best work. His alter ego, John, admits that *his* "Cocktail Hour" doesn't have much plot ("I can't seem to write them," he says), and the same can be said for Gurney's play about the play. The second act gets a bit preachy on the topics of unearned wealth and the exploitation of servants. And, weirdly, the conflict over John's script is resolved by a major life decision made by the absent Jigger, which is revealed in a phone call to the family. (To make this *deus ex machina* even more dis-

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Nick Bayne, left, and Mark Thurber play the Venetian heartthrobs Marco and Giuseppe Palmieri.

Happy gondolieri at Stanford

G&S' 'Gondoliers' gets good outing by the Savoyards

by Jeanie Forte

If, like me, you have at some point in your life discovered the joys of Gilbert and Sullivan operettas, then you should head over to Dinkelspiel Auditorium for the Stanford Savoyards' latest offering — a delightful production of "The Gondoliers." The show isn't done that often, so it's a treat to see it here now, in a lively and thoroughly enjoyable show.

The company has been around since 1973, which is amazing longevity for a small theater group putting on two shows a year on a shoestring budget and a lot of volunteer love. Students, staff and community members participate, so there's a wide range of ages and involvement both on and offstage, with an emphasis on having fun while putting on a classic operetta that was written with fun in mind.

G&S shows are for enjoyment and for satire, with adults as the intended audience. The sentiments expressed are mature comedy, and while the prancing choreography and colorful costumes might appeal to children, the jokes are for us. The shows also have, over the last 100 years or so, generated a huge following: people who appreciate the

THEATER REVIEW

music, the fun, the satire and being "in the know" as to the motifs and style of the shows.

In that vein, "Gondoliers" is no exception, and has all the much-loved G&S trademarks: common folk clashing with nobility, mistaken identities, babies switched at birth, thwarted romance, and the requisite plot reveal at the end. Set in Venice and Spain, the show revels in the supposed light-heartedness of sunny climes while poking satiric jabs at politics, arrogance and pretense.

Basically, Marco (Nick Bayne) and Giuseppe (Mark Thurber) are two hunky and idolized gondolieri who finally choose two lovely Venetian maidens for their wives: Gianetta (Susie Lape) and Tessa (Kate O'Connor). But the minute they wed they're informed that one of them is a king by birth, and that they must travel to Spain where they will wait for three months for the one woman on earth, a former nursemaid, who can identify the true king. They do, sans wives, and then are also informed that whoever is king was married at birth to the daughter of the Duke of Plaza Toro (Joshua Solomon). That's the lovely Casilda (Marisa Lenhardt), who, alas, is in love with her family's drummer, Luiz (Toland Doud). Oh what a tangled web ...

But this is a comedy, so it will all work out in the end, given a few funny mishaps and misgivings along the way.

This Savoyards show is blessed

with a cast of excellent voices and acting, women and men who can handle the operatic demands as well as the tongue-in-cheek style. Stand-outs include all the above leads, the Grand Inquisitor Don Alhambra played by David Simon, and Aumna Iqbal as the Duchess of Plaza Toro. The ensembles of Contadine and Gondoliers also sound very solid and include some fine secondary voices, especially those of Alexandra Quinn and Geoff Schaeffer. The entire cast throws big energy into the dancing and posing, keeping the audience engaged in the action. The vocal blends are quite nice, in the trio, quartet, and quintet — all spot-on.

The show revels in sunny climes while poking jabs at politics, arrogance and pretense.

None of the songs is particularly memorable, but there are some musical gems, and some very clever lyrics. Happily, Savoyards has taken to showing the lyrics on proscenium projections, which makes it easier to follow the plot twists and the sophisticated jokes.

Kudos to whoever put together the bright, color-coded costumes; there is no one person listed in the program, but the outfits are appropriate and charming, with clever changes for the shift to the palace in Act Two. The massive set includes the nice touch of a moving gondola in Act One. No lighting designer is listed for the generally serviceable lighting (I would also hint to that person that it's not necessary for the lights to go green to signify seasickness). Choreography by Kenzi Amodei and Annie Loggins is vigorous and entertaining.

Special congratulations to music director Jeff Yaeger and assistant Cheryl Forest Morganson for the superb sound from the volunteer orchestra. Its excellence is testament to the depth and breadth of talent in our region. And new director Gary Gerber should definitely come back and work with the company again — it's a fine first outing, demonstrating skillful staging and comedic know-how. ■

What: "The Gondoliers," a musical operetta, presented by the Stanford Savoyards

Where: Dinkelspiel Auditorium, Stanford University

When: Through April 26, with an 8 p.m. show Saturday and a 2:30 p.m. matinee on Sundays

Cost: Tickets are \$8-\$16.

Info: Go to www.stanford.edu/group/savoyards or call 650-723-2300.

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Movies

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

OPENINGS

Is Anybody There?

★★★★1/2

(CineArts) Venerable Michael Caine is the talented centerpiece in this cookie-cutter dramedy that beu-gles and rankles.

Caine is Clarence Parkinson, a suicidal ex-magician ("The Amazing Clarence") who refuses to accept the passage of time. Clarence reluctantly takes up residence at ramshackle Lark Hall, a quirky English senior residence center run by a harried young couple (David Morrissey and Anne-Marie Duff) and their resentful 10-year-old son Edward (Bill Milner) who is obsessed with ghosts and the mysteries of the great beyond.

In fits and starts Edward and Clarence craft a friendship, a yin and yang that spans decades of differences. Clarence slowly — very slowly — sloughs off his armor of rage and encourages Edward to make more contact with the living. For his part, the wise-beyond-his-years youngster engages Clarence in his imaginative games and refuses to join in the pity-party.

Behind the scenes are a number of mini-plot points that meander with no resolution: an extramarital temptation, geriatric sparks and some furtive hints at an afterlife.

At its core "Anything" relies on the chemistry of its enigmatic leads to keep its narrative airy. Caine is the consummate pro, offering up pain and pathos along with a dynamic dose of wry humor. Seventy-six years old and he's still got it — his is a lovely, nuanced performance. Milner puts it all up front and over the top with churlish exasperation and pre-adolescent angst.

Leads are supported by a gaggle of A-list old-timers — Rosemary Harris, Leslie Phillips and Peter Vaughan — who gamely, if a bit farcically, give life to the notion of letting go with grace.

Director John Crowley ("Boy A") shamelessly peddles the waterworks; the material is solid if not exactly sparkly.

Rated: PG-13 for strong language and mature themes. 1 hour, 34 minutes.

— *Jeanne Aufmuth*

Earth ★★★

(Century 16, Century 20) Disney teams with the mastermind British documentarians behind the Emmy-winning "Planet Earth" series for this family-friendly look at life on the third planet from the sun. Magnificent landscapes and an array of marvelous creatures traverse the big screen with breathtaking beauty.

But the footage is primarily pulled from the "Planet Earth" series, so many viewers will get the feeling they've seen it all before. In a way, the film itself is recycled.

James Earl Jones narrates with his familiar baritone voice, occasionally offering a playful, light-hearted tone, depending on the scene. The film focuses on three mothers and their respective offspring: a polar bear and her two young cubs, an elephant and her calf, and a humpback whale and her calf. The mothers lead their young through dangerous environments to find food and security in an ever-changing world. The long journey of the elephant and her calf provides the most drama as the duo falls behind the herd and is later confronted by a hungry lion pride.

Other visually stunning snippets of life away from iPhones and "American Idol" include a flock of birds battling frigid winds above the Himalayas, translucent waterfalls that seem to tumble for miles and time-lapse photography that presents the passage of seasons with seamless fluidity.

But the narrative lacks cohesion, often straying from one "storyline" to the next. This is no big sur-

prise — "Earth" is 90 minutes long, whereas the "Planet Earth" series stretched out to more than 500 minutes all told. The filmmakers behind "Earth" clearly cherry-picked the richest material to present to a theatrical audience, a challenging task in itself.

Although "Earth" comments on the fact that the planet's temperature is rising and habitats such as those of the polar bear are deeply threatened, it doesn't lecture about global warming. Instead, it presents the simple natural beauty of the planet — its forests and deserts, its star-filled skies and deep seas, and its wildlife.

This is a film the younger generation should see. As I watched, I heard a group of adolescent girls nearby giggling and teasing the creatures on the screen. They scoffed at animals they found unusual and squirmed at those they deemed unattractive. One of their cell phones blared Britney Spears while the polar bears braved the frozen tundra. This film is for them — for those so buried in gadgets and The Gap that the Earth, at its roots, has become something foreign.

Rated: G. 1 hour, 30 minutes.

— *Tyler Hanley*

The Soloist ★★

(Century 16, Century 20) This mawkish melodrama's reedy charms can be summed up in three simple words: Robert Downey Jr.

Downey is Steve Lopez, an intrepid L.A. columnist with fancy digs, a high-profile divorce and an empty soul. That changes — or does it? — when Lopez happens upon a homeless violin player named Nathaniel Ayers (Jamie Foxx), a musical genius and schizophrenic. A former cello prodigy from Juilliard, Ayers was forced to leave the program because he couldn't turn off the voices in his head.

For Lopez this spells story with a capital S. He digs deep into Ayers' life, contacting family and former friends and offering the recluse the kind of exposure he doesn't need or want.

Director Joe Wright serves up a hornet's nest of mixed messages: on one hand the steep price of charity and the other a poignant homage to those felled by mental illness. Or ruminations on the evils of greed vs. a bitter expose on the plight of the homeless.

On the whole "Soloist" is a staged affair, a glossy awards contender (mysteriously delayed from December to April) that desperately seeks a visceral reaction to its inherent dramas.

No denying that Downey is the real deal. His quirky charisma, chiseled good looks and concentrated scrabble up a slippery ethical slope go a long way toward righting the wrongs of a hyper-sentimental screenplay. Foxx plays Ayers "Rain Man"-style, all stream of consciousness and Mad Hatter dialogue. The story loses its footing by lingering too long (a lost colony of broken souls at a community for the emotionally impaired) or too fleetingly (why is Lopez divorced from his co-working ex, played with lovely nuance by Catherine Keener?) on elemental themes. Flashbacks are poorly executed but do fill in some blanks.

The production is a beauty, a high-resolution love affair with the upside of L.A. and with its more sinister underbelly. But frankly I expect more from Wright, whose previous outings ("Atonement," "Pride & Prejudice") hit all the right notes. "Soloist" is a pitchy affair that ultimately misses its mark.

Rated: PG-13 for language, intensity and mature themes. 1 hour, 57 minutes.

— *Jeanne Aufmuth*



To view the trailers for "Is Anybody There," "Earth" and "The Soloist" go to Palo Alto Online at www.PaloAltoOnline.com

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Answers to this week's puzzles, which can be found on page 66



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Today's news, sports & hot picks

NOW PLAYING

The following is a sampling of movies recently reviewed in the Weekly:

17 Again ★★1/2

(Century 16, Century 20) Zac 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 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 best bud Ned (Thomas Lennon), Mike reasons that "spirit-guide transformation magic" has given him a second chance at life and/or an 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). As for lessons, young viewers can learn empathy for their parents, to seize the day, or to vicariously enjoy a father's loving care. Rated PG-13 for some sexual material, language and teen partying. 1 hour, 42 minutes. — P.C. (Reviewed April 17, 2009)

The Great Buck Howard ★★★1/2

(Aquarius) Troy Gabel (Colin Hanks) is toiling away at law school and hating every minute. Despite his dad's objections he does what any self-respecting 20-something would do — quits school and decides to become a writer. Until that Great American Novel is published Troy needs to eat, and inexplicably lands himself a personal-assistant gig with famed Kreskin-like mentalist The Great Buck Howard (John Malkovich). Despite his pathetic attempts to regain his former glory, Howard exudes a cheesy timeless charm that audiences eat up. Howard is magic onstage; offstage he's a tyrannical egomaniac refusing to accept the inevitable passage of time. "Buck Howard" is refreshingly wholesome, an affectionate and even nostalgic tale with an easy narrative sans agenda or guile. — P.C. (Reviewed April 3, 2009) Rated: PG for language and suggestive remarks. 1 hour, 27 minutes. — J.A. (Reviewed April 10, 2009)

Observe and Report ★★1/2

(Century 16, Century 20) Ronnie Barnhardt could be Paul Blart's sick-and-twisted brother. Both are mall cops who live with their mothers and have dreams of trading their security-guard badges for the real thing.

Movies

MOVIE TIMES

17 Again (PG-13) ★★1/2	Century 16: 11:35 a.m.; 2:15, 4:55, 7:25 & 9:55 p.m.
Adventureland (R) ★★★	Century 20: 2:35 p.m. Fri.-Tue. & Thu. also at 7:45 p.m.
Anvil! The Story of Anvil (Not Rated) (Not Reviewed)	Aquarius: Sat. at 9:45 p.m.
Crank: High Voltage (R) (Not Reviewed)	Century 16: 11:10 a.m.; 1:20, 3:35, 5:50, 8:05 & 10:30 p.m. Century 20: 12:20, 1:25, 3:35 & 6:55 p.m. Fri.-Tue. also at 5:55, 8:15 & 10:40 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 11 a.m.
Death Note L: Change of Mind (Not Rated) (Not Reviewed)	Century 16: Wed. at 7:30 p.m. (subtitled). Thu. at 7:30 the (dubbed). Century 20: Wed. at 7:30 p.m. (subtitled). Thu. at 7:30 (dubbed).
Duplicity (PG-13) ★★1/2	Century 20: 2:45 & 9:20 p.m.
Earth (G) ★★★	Century 16: 11 a.m. & 1:15, 3:30, 5:45, 8 & 10:15 p.m. Fri.-Tue. also at 12:15, 2:30, 4:45, 7 and 9:15 p.m. Century 20: 12:25, 1:40, 2:50, 4, 5:15, 6:25, 7:40, 8:55 & 10:05 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 10 & 11:20 a.m.
Fast and Furious (PG-13) ★★	Century 16: 12:20, 2:55, 5:25, 8 & 10:30 p.m. Century 20: 12:25, 2:55, 5:30, 8:05 & 10:40 p.m.
Fighting (PG-13)	Century 16: 11:20 a.m.; 1:50, 4:25, 7:30 & 10:10 p.m. Century 20: 12:20, 2:55, 5:25, 7:55 & 10:25 p.m.
Ghosts of Girlfriends Past (PG-13) (Not Reviewed)	Century 16: Thu. at midnight. Century 20: Thu. at midnight.
The Great Buck Howard (PG) ★★1/2	Aquarius: 4:45 p.m. Fri. & Sun.-Thu. also at 9:45 p.m.
Hannah Montana: The Movie (G) (Not Reviewed)	Century 16: 11:50 a.m.; 2:20, 4:50, 7:20 & 9:50 p.m. Century 20: 12:30, 3, 5:30, 8 & 10:30 p.m.
I Love You, Man (R) (Not Reviewed)	Century 16: 11:45 a.m.; 2:25, 5, 7:35 & 10:10 p.m. Century 20: 12:10, 2:40, 5:15, 7:50 & 10:20 p.m.
The Informers (R) (Not Reviewed)	Century 16: 12:25, 2:50, 5:20, 7:55 & 10:20 p.m. Century 20: 12:40, 3:10, 5:40, 8:10 & 10:35 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 10:15 a.m.
Is Anybody There? (PG-13) ★★★	Palo Alto Square: 2:20, 4:50 & 7:20 p.m. Fri.-Sat. also at 9:50 p.m.
Lymelife (R) (Not Reviewed)	Aquarius: 2:30, 5, 7:30 & 10 p.m.
Monsters vs. Aliens (PG) ★★1/2	Century 16: 11:05 a.m.; 1:40, 4:20, 7 & 9:30 p.m. Century 20: Noon, 2:20, 4:40, 7 & 9:20 p.m.
Observe and Report (R) ★★1/2	Century 20: 12:15, 2:25, 4:45, 7 & 9:25 p.m.
Obsessed (PG-13) (Not Reviewed)	Century 16: Noon, 2:40, 5:15, 7:50 & 10:25 p.m. Century 20: 12:05, 1:20, 2:40, 3:55, 5:20, 6:30, 7:55, 9:10 & 10:30 p.m. Fri., Mon. & Tue. also at 10:40 a.m.
Shall We Kiss? (Not Rated) (Not Reviewed)	Guild: 1, 3:30, 6 & 8:30 p.m.
Sin Nombre (R) (Not Reviewed)	Century 16: 11:40 a.m.; 2 & 4:30 p.m. Fri.-Tue. also at 7:10 & 9:35 p.m.
The Soloist (PG-13) ★★	Century 16: 11:15 a.m.; 12:35, 1:55, 3:15, 4:35, 6, 7:15, 8:45 & 10:05 p.m. Century 20: 12:05, 1:35, 2:50, 4:20, 5:40, 7:05, 8:25 & 9:50 p.m. Fri. Mon. & Tue. also at 10:45 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. & Mon.-Tue. also at 10:35 a.m.
Sugar (R) (Not Reviewed)	Aquarius: 2 & 7 p.m.
Sunshine Cleaning (R) ★★1/2	Century 20: 12:10 p.m. Fri.-Tue. & Thu. also at 5:10 & 10:15 p.m. Palo Alto Square: 2:15, 4:45 & 7:15 p.m. Fri. & Sat. also at 9:45 p.m.
X-Men Origins: Wolverine (PG-13) (Not Reviewed)	Century 16: Thu. at midnight. Century 20: Thu. at midnight.

★ Skip it ★★ Some redeeming qualities ★★★ A good bet ★★★★ Outstanding

Aquarius: 430 Emerson St., Palo Alto (266-9260)

Century Cinema 16: 1500 N. Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View (800-326-3264)

Century Park 12: 557 E. Bayshore Blvd., Redwood City (800-326-3264)

Century 20 Downtown: 825 Middlefield Road, Redwood City (800-326-3264)

CinÉArts at Palo Alto Square: 3000 El Camino Real, Palo Alto (493-3456)

Guild: 949 El Camino Real, Menlo Park (266-9260)

Stanford: 221 University Ave., Palo Alto (324-3700)

Internet address: For show times, plot synopses, trailers and more information about films playing, go to Palo Alto Online at <http://www.PaloAltoOnline.com/>

Rolling Stone

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Peter Travers

STATE OF PLAY

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But beneath his good-natured surface, Seth Rogen's lumbering Ronnie is a bipolar, delusional vigilante with visions of greatness. All he needs is a real case to prove himself — and some firearm power instead of being restricted to using tasers and mace. A flasher harassing women in the mall's parking lot provides the perfect opportunity. A comic conundrum, the movie feels fresh and unpredictable within its formulaic narrative. Adding a dark underbelly to the genre, the vulgarity has some redeeming value. But like the shopping-mall experience, "Observe

and Report" isn't for everyone. Rated: R for pervasive language, graphic nudity, drug use, sexual content and violence. 1 hour, 25 minutes. — S.T. (Reviewed April 10, 2009)

State of Play ★★★
(Century 16, Century 20) 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

STANFORD THEATER

The Stanford Theatre is at 221 University Ave. in Palo Alto. Go to www.stanfordtheatre.org or call 650-324-3700.

The Life and Death of Colonel Blimp (1943) A British officer tries to hold onto his ideals as the world changes around him. Fri. at 7:30 p.m.

Gaslight (UK 1940) A man with a past makes his wife believe she is going insane. Fri. at 5:45 & 10:25 p.m.

Gone With the Wind (1946) This epic of the American South hardly needs a description. Sat.-Mon. at 7:30 p.m. Sat. and Sun. also at 2 p.m.

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, McAffrey 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?" Rated PG-13 for brief drug content, some violence, sexual references and language. 1 hour, 58 minutes. — P.C. (Reviewed April 17, 2009)

Sunshine Cleaning *1/2**
(Cinearts) Rose Norkowski (Amy Adams) is between a rock and hard spot: shacking up with ex-high school squeeze and married cop Mac (Steve Zahn), raising a kid on her own and wasting her potential cleaning houses. A chance suggestion by Mac turns to gold when Rose partners with sister Norah (Emily Blunt) to start her own crime-scene clean-up company, aptly named Sunshine Cleaning. Adams has the chops, bringing a fresh spin to deep hurts and a spark to her determination to get things right. Blunt plays off her with ease — two hot actresses on their inevitable paths to greatness. But the narrative has trouble balancing its dark tones and its peculiar humor, never finding a comfortable niche. Rated: R for language, gore and sexuality. 1 hour, 42 minutes. — J.A. (Reviewed March 20, 2009)

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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 6:30 PM, Wednesday, May 6, 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 agendized 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:

- Capital Improvement Program 2009-2014:** Review and recommendation of the Capital Improvement Program for Comprehensive Plan consistency.
- 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), 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), regarding subdivision incentives for historic preservation


APPROVAL OF MINUTES: Special Meetings of April 1 and April 15, 2009

NEXT MEETING: Regular Meeting of May 13, 2009 at 7:00 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




NOTICE OF A PUBLIC MEETING of the City of Palo Alto Architectural Review Board (ARB)

Please be advised that Thursday, May 7, 2009, the ARB shall conduct a public hearing at 8:30 AM in the Council Chambers, 1st Floor, 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, California. Any interested persons may appear and be heard.

1805 El Camino Real [09PLN-00070]: Request by Danny Moran on behalf of Dr. Thomas Tayeri for a sign exception to allow a blade sign to exceed the allowable area of five square feet by four square feet for a total of nine square feet.

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Amy French, Manager of Current Planning



PALO ALTO CITY COUNCIL
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(TENTATIVE) AGENDA – SPECIAL MEETING COUNCIL CHAMBERS
APRIL 27, 2009 – 4:00 P.M. – 6:30 P.M.

- Mayor's Forum on Smart Energy Future "See the Change: Tools for the Transition to a Smart Energy Future"

(TENTATIVE) AGENDA – SPECIAL MEETING COUNCIL CHAMBERS
APRIL 27, 2009 – 7:00 P.M.

- Resolution of the Council of the City of Palo Alto Expressing Appreciation to PASCO Sam Upon His Retirement
- Selection of Applicants to be Interviewed for the Library Bond Citizens Oversight Committee
- Approval of Amendment No. 2 to the Memorandum of Understanding with the Santa Clara Valley Water District to Allow for up to \$125,000 in Additional Funds Over Two Years for Increased Water Conservation Rebates and Adoption of a Water Enterprise Fund Budget Amendment Ordinance in the Amount of \$50,000 to Provide Funding for These Activities
- Approval of an Amendment to Purchase Order No. S05110315 with Toter Incorporated to Increase the Compensation Amount by \$25,000 for the Purchase of Additional Carts for a Total Amount Not to Exceed \$2,123,300
- Adoption of a Resolution Authorizing the Filing of an Application for Federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 Funding in the Amount of Approximately \$1,244,760 for Street Rehabilitation Projects on San Antonio Avenue, Lytton Avenue and Guinda Street
- Approval of: 1) Amendment No. 1 to the Lease Between the City of Palo Alto and Community Skating, Inc. for the Tennis Facility at 3005 Middlefield Road, Extending the Term for an Additional Ten Years; and 2) Amendment No. 2 to the Lease Between the City of Palo Alto and Community Skating, Inc. for the Winter Lodge at 3009 Middlefield Road, Extending the Term for an Additional Twenty Years
- Approval of a Contract with Kuehne Construction in the Amount of \$244,977 for Cubberley Community Center Wing "I" Elevator Upgrade and Accessibility Improvements - Capital Improvement Program Projects PF-07001 and PF-93009
- Approval of Amendment No. 2 to Contract No. C06116197, with Advanced Data Processing West, Incorporated (ADPI) to Extend the Term and Add \$215,000 for a Total not to Exceed Amount of \$600,000
- Resolution of the Council of the City of Palo Alto Expressing Appreciation to Russell Reiserer Upon His Retirement
- Approval of a Recommendation from the Historic Resources Board to Designate a Residence Located at 175 Byron Street to the City of Palo Alto's Historic Inventory in Category 2 and Record of Land Use Action at the Request of the Owner
- 2nd Reading Ordinance Amending Sections 18.16.060 (D) (Neighborhood, Community, and Service Commercial Zoning Districts), 18.18.060 (D) (Downtown Commercial District), 18.30(D) (Hotel Combining District), and 18.34.040(c) (Pedestrian and Transit Oriented Development Combining District) of Title 18 (Zoning) of the Palo Alto Municipal Code Regarding Development Criteria for Hotel Development (1st Reading April 13, 2009, Passed 9-0)
- City Manager Proposed Budget
- Update on City Sustainability and Environmental Initiatives
- Update on City Departments' Climate Protection Plans
- Approval of a Negative Declaration and Adoption of Ordinance Repealing Chapter 5.30 ("Chlorofluorocarbon – Processed Food Packaging") and Adding a New Chapter 5.30 ("Expanded Polystyrene and Non-Recyclable Food Service Containers") to Title 5 ("Health and Sanitation") of the Palo Alto Municipal Code
- Adoption of an Ordinance Amending Chapter 5.24 of the City of Palo Alto Municipal Code (Requirements to Divert Construction and Demolition Waste from Landfill) to Increase Diversion Rate and Expand Applicability to Projects in Excess of \$25,000; Environmental Assessment: Categorically Exempt Pursuant to Section 15308 of the CEQA Guidelines

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Ballot Measures Pros & Cons

The League of Women Voters of Palo Alto will hold three free public forums to present Pros & Cons of the six ballot measures in the May 19 election.

Monday, April 27. Channing House, 850 Webster St, Palo Alto, 7:00 p.m.

Friday, May 8. Stevenson House, 455 E. Charleston Rd., Palo Alto, 1:30 p.m.

Tuesday, May 12. Avenidas, 450 Bryant St., Palo Alto, 2:00 p.m.

This space donated as a community service by the Palo Alto Weekly

RESTAURANT REVIEW



Chef Charlie Ayers dishes up a winner.

Calafia, here we come

Right back at Town & Country Village, a restaurant with legs

by Sheila Himmel

Charlie Ayers may finally be able to shed his exes. The chef formerly known for feeding Google and the Grateful Dead has a hit in Calafia Cafe and Market-A-Go-Go, his contribution to the amazing revival of Palo Alto's revived Town & Country Village. Good luck finding a parking space at this recently moribund center at lunchtime.

What is Calafia? If you Google "Calafia," the first three hits are: a hotel in Baja California, a consortium of California libraries and the Barony of Calafia, a club dedicated to reliving and recreating the Middle Ages.

What it means to Ayers is an homage to Queen Calafia, goddess of an enchanted land ruled by courageous black women, according to 15th-century literature. Thus the state name California, legend has it.

What it means to us: at last, a sensibly priced, enjoyably furnished, all-purpose restaurant in Palo Alto. Breakfast, lunch, dinner, takeout. From vegans to omnivores, tofu scramble to braised pork, the food is good and the menu is the soul of diversity.

Comfort classics are listed under the "You Don't Have to Be a Kid Menu." They change daily, as does much of the menu. Recent comforts included turkey Bolognese, chicken tempura and vegetable potpie.

Macaroni and cheese (\$6.50), la creme de la creme of comfort foods, is served in a baby cast-iron pot. The spinach melts so thoroughly into the cheese that you hardly notice it's there. This mac 'n' cheese is like a warm hug

from a favorite aunt. For me, a little more bite to the cheese and crunch to the breadcrumbs would be welcome.

Chicken potpie (\$6.95) is equally mild, but loaded with tender roasted chicken and topped with flaky puff pastry. I found it more satisfying.

The 9-inch pizzas make perfect starters to share. Wolfgang's Pizza (\$11) is a Puck-ish combination of goat cheese and Oaxaca-style mozzarella, pumpkinseed pesto and shredded duck leg. It can't help being a little greasy. Vegan Love Fest (\$9) is another pizza option.

The best dish we tried was the signature mahogany salmon (\$15). It's a big hunk of beautiful fish with crispy skin, grilled asparagus and brown rice. Servers ask if you want it medium-rare, and you do.

Also excellent, the new Bohemia salad (\$8.50) is a near-meal in itself, with baby spinach, avocado, jicama and toasted pumpkinseeds, tossed in basil-citrus vinaigrette and topped with warm braised pork shoulder. Less filling but more exciting, the crimson quinoa (KEEN-wah) salad (\$8.75) is a tangy treat, unless you hate beets or arugula.

Servers are friendly and eager, as befits the whole tenor of Calafia. But, our neighbors' potpie was cold, pacing is problematic, and we never got the promised water refill. Don't expect perfection. On the other hand, servers talk you down if you're ordering too much, a nice gesture.

The point may be that you leave room for dessert, coffee and after-dinner drinks. Carrot cake and

warm apple galette (\$8) are OK. My advice is to go home with a Calafia cake (\$3.95 at the market). Light years from the Hostess Cupcake, whose main virtue is that you can pull off the frosting in one piece, the Calafia Cake has a white squiggly line bisecting creamy perfect chocolate frosting that covers the dark, densely moist cake with a layer of whipped frosting inside.

Procedures at the market are a little goofy. Checking out the case of pre-made salads, entrees and sandwiches, we couldn't find a Stanford muffaletta (\$8.50). It was all gone and would not be reproduced for the time being. Tough luck. The dinner receipt offered 15 percent off for market items, which the poor clerk had to laboriously deduct one by one: Calafia Cake, minus 60 cents; avocado, minus 8 cents.

It was a tasty avocado, on an excellent made-to-order sandwich (\$7) of Canadian bacon, smoked turkey, lettuce, tomato and a whole-wheat roll. The market offers self-checkout, which is smart, considering the nearness of Palo Alto High School, the Palo Alto Medical Foundation, and soon, Trader Joe's.

Calafia's ambiance sets the bar for environmentalism. San Francisco interior designer Nicole Hollis is all about re-use, re-purpose and redefine. Find the surprising objects yourself. I won't spoil the fun. ■

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Market hours: 10 a.m.-8:30 p.m. daily

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ShopTalk

by Daryl Savage

JZCOOL GONE ... One of Menlo Park's hipper restaurants has called it quits. jzCool Eatery and Wine Bar, at 827 Santa Cruz Ave., has closed its doors after a 10-year run. The restaurant, known as much for its organic food as it was for its owner, Jesse Cool, served its last potato-pea cake on April 18. But Cool — a Palo Alto who also owns West Menlo Park's Flea St. Cafe, which opened in 1981, and The Cool Cafe, opened in 2000 in Stanford's Cantor Arts Center — is already on to a new venture. "My team and I are so excited. What an extraordinary time to be closing one door but enthusiastically opening another," Cool said, explaining that she is set to

begin yet another business. This one, called The Cool Cafe in the Menlo Business Park, is expected to open in late June. Located at O'Brien Drive and University Avenue just before the Dumbarton Bridge, it will be a small cafe open only for lunch. The new location will also house Cool's catering business. "We continue to try and break through the mystique that organic food is a great deal more expensive by venturing into new ideas for dining and catering opportunities," she said. Cool started in the restaurant business in 1976 with Late for The Train on Middlefield Road in Menlo Park. She was one of the Bay Area's pioneers at that time to use direct farm-fresh, in-season, organic

and local ingredients in her dishes. Cool's philosophy on sustainable food has slowly become the restaurant standard in the region.

SUSTAINABLE ART ... Speaking of sustainability, Jesse Cool's philosophy on food apparently transfers to the fashion industry. "Style," the Palo Alto Art Center's annual wearable art event, which takes place Saturday, April 25, at 1313 Newell Road, embodies a "sustainable, personal approach to clothing and fashion," according to spokeswoman Lisa Van Dusen, formerly with the Weekly for many years. The popular event, now in its fifth year, features many artists from the Bay Area. "Someone recently described it as part of the slow-fashion movement — like slow food, but for clothes. It fits," Van Dusen said. The artists often use organic, natural and recycled materials in their work, making the items both practical and edgy. "Style" is a major fundraiser for the Palo Alto Art Center Foundation to benefit the center's children's art-education programs.

CONDI SIGHTING AT MACPARK ...

MacArthur Park restaurant customers did a double take last week when they saw former U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice having dinner there. Restaurant manager Michael Grossman, a Gunn high school graduate, personally welcomed Rice, who is back at Stanford at the Hoover Institution after her D.C. stint. Before Rice entered the restaurant, her security detail "scoped out the building," according to Grossman, who said Rice is familiar with MacArthur Park and was a frequent diner there in the 1980s. So what did Condi eat? "She ordered our classic dish; barbecued chicken and ribs," Grossman said, adding, "She cleaned her plate."

MY FINAL COLUMN ... A short farewell to my readers, whose e-mails and phone calls made this column a labor of love for me. I have been privileged to have had the opportunity to report on the comings and goings of businesses in the community in which I live. But an important part of one's career is knowing when to say goodbye. I am about to move on to another chapter of my life. So it is with sadness tempered with anticipation that I sign off and look forward to getting to know the community even better.

Editor's Note: Daryl Savage this week is announcing her candidacy for the Palo Alto City Council in November's election, after serving on the Palo Alto Human Relations Commission since 2002, including currently serving as chair. She is a former staff writer for the Weekly, then worked for State Sen. Joe Simitian during his successful campaign, and has been ShopTalk columnist for five years. She currently works with Santa Clara County Supervisor Liz Kniss. Savage lives in south Palo Alto.


Early Learning Builds a Better Future!

You can make a difference in the lives of families with young children in Palo Alto. During the Week of the Young Child, April 19th-25th, the following early childhood programs will be holding individual Scholarship Drives so that more families in our community can benefit from an early start. Especially in these difficult economic times, families struggle to afford high-quality early education. Consider joining us with a donation to the program of your choice. For more information, contact sharon.murphy@cityofpaloalto.org.



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PALO ALTO WEEKLY PHOTO CONTEST



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



**City of Palo Alto
Environmental Assessment**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that an Initial Study and Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration have been prepared by the Palo Alto Department of Planning and Community Environment for the project described below. The documents will be available for review and comment during a minimum 30-day inspection period beginning **April 24, 2009 through May 25, 2009** during the hours of 8:00 A.M. to 12:00 noon and 1:00 P.M. to 4:00 P.M. in the Planning Division, Civic Center, 250 Hamilton Avenue, fifth floor, Palo Alto, California 94301.

195 Page Mill Rd. [08PLN-00000-00281]:
A request by Hohbach Realty Company Limited Partnership for Architectural Review of a mixed use, 157,387 square foot building within the GM zone, and Design Enhancement Exceptions and Variances for encroachments into the rear and interior side setbacks and concessions, pursuant to California Govt. Code 65915-65918, to allow residential use (84 rental units) in a GM zone and to exceed the maximum floor area ratio. The project involves a request for a Tentative Map to merge three parcels into a 2.52 acre parcel for the proposed development.

Application number 08PLN-00000-00281 is tentatively scheduled for a public hearing before the Architectural Review Board on Thursday, June 4, 2009 at 8:30 a.m. in the Palo Alto City Council Chambers on the first floor of the Civic Center, located at 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, California. Review of the Tentative Map by Planning and Transportation Commission has not yet been scheduled.

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. Sign language interpreters will be provided upon request with 72 hours advance notice.

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Sports Shorts

HONOR COACHES . . . Palo Alto track and field coach **Jason Fung** and Sacred Heart Prep tennis coach **Losaline Mafileo** have been named along with six others as 2009 Spring Sports Honor Coaches, selected by the Central Coast Section. Fung has been the school's track and field coach since 2000. He's a Paly graduate who returned to school as an assistant coach in both football and track. In addition to his coaching duties, he was an aide in an alternative Learning Program for "at risk" students under retired girls' track coach **Paul Jones**. Mafileo has coached the SHP boys and girls for the past five years. Since coaching the boys, they have won the PSAL title all five seasons, CCS titles in 2005, '06 and '08 and NorCal crowns in '06 and last year. In 1989 she became a member of the EPATT (East Palo Alto Tennis Tutoring Program), where she learned that she could make a difference in many young lives with her teachings from tennis and being involved in this program. The Honor Coaches will be recognized at the CCS Board of Managers meeting on April 29.

OF LOCAL NOTE . . . Los Altos Hills resident **Conrad Russell** defeated top-seeded Sam Riffice of Roseville last weekend to win the "Little Mo" Boys 10-under Northern California sectional tennis title at Diamond Hills Sports Club in Oakley. Conrad, a member of the Ladera Oaks Swim and Tennis Club junior tennis team, won his match 6-3, 6-1. The top eight junior players in Northern California for the 10-under division were invited to compete. With his victory, Russell will represent Northern California at the "Little Mo" Western Regionals at the California Tennis Club in San Francisco on July 3-5 . . . Three of the eight inaugural Palo Alto Elite Volleyball teams competed in the Far Western National Qualifying tournament in Reno, Nevada, last weekend, with the 15-and-under Power league team finishing in the tournament's Gold Division — losing to only one team, Club Utah, during the entire tournament. The team beat Club Utah in pool play but lost to the same team twice on the final day.

ON THE AIR

Friday

College baseball: Arizona at Stanford, 5 p.m.; KZSU (90.1 FM)

Saturday

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

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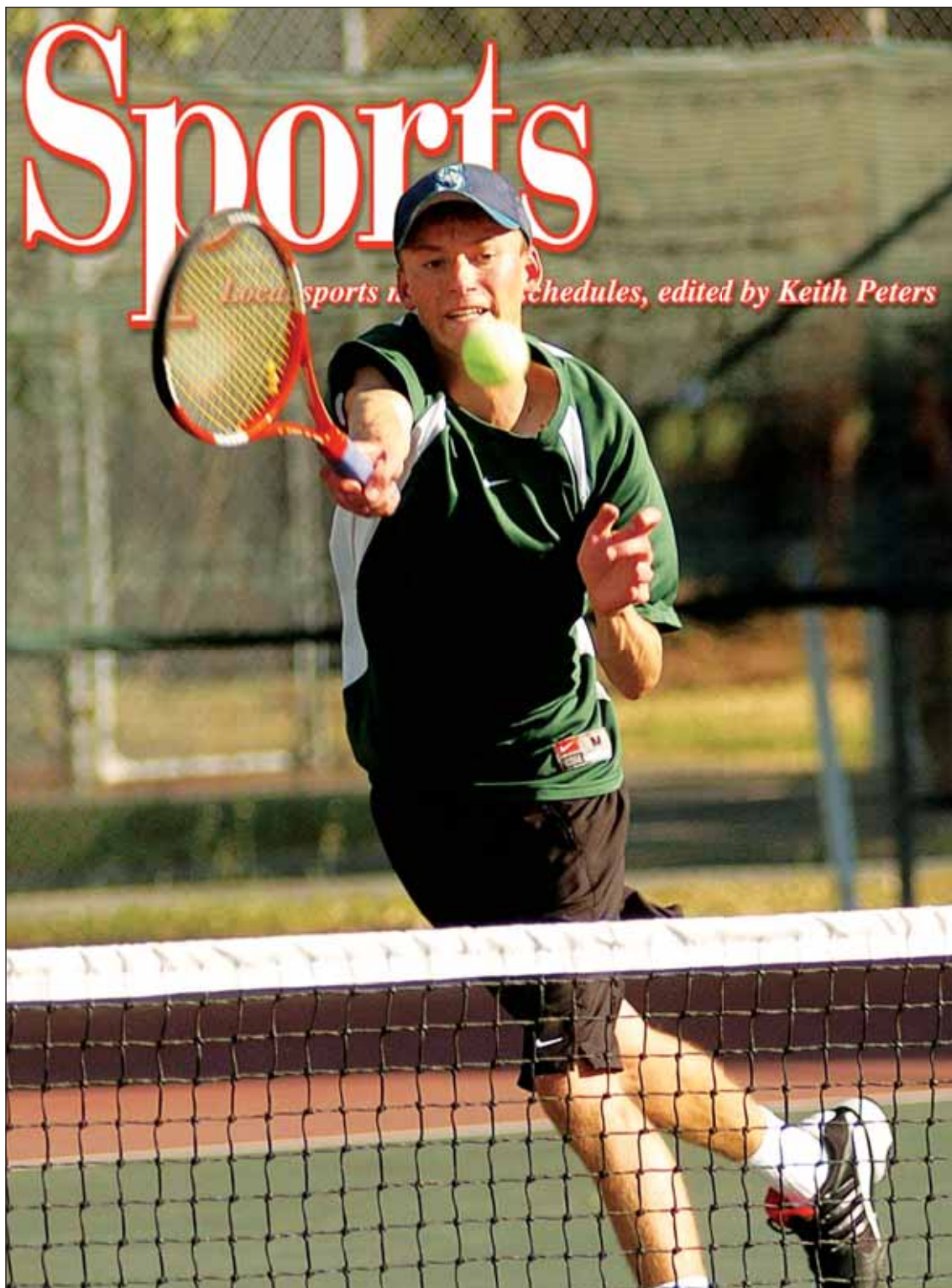
College baseball: Arizona at Stanford, 1 p.m.; KZSU (90.1 FM)

Monday

College baseball: San Francisco at Stanford, 5 p.m.; KZSU (90.1 FM)

SPORTS ONLINE

For expanded daily coverage of college and prep sports, please see our new site at www.PASportsOnline.com



Palo Alto junior **Grand Audet** teamed with **Peter Tseng** to win at No. 3 doubles and give the Vikings a 3-2 lead in their 5-2 victory over Saratoga on Tuesday, virtually clinching the league championship.

PREP TENNIS

Long-awaited titles finally have arrived

Menlo-Atherton, Palo Alto and Menlo all have something to celebrate

by Keith Peters

This has been the most significant week of the season for high school boys' tennis, a week of nearly historical proportions for two teams and a big step toward a possible semi-historic performance by another.

For Menlo-Atherton, the Bears wrapped up their first PAL Bay Division regular-season title since 1998 with a 7-0 blasting of host Mills on Wednesday. Menlo-Atherton (12-0, 14-3) took a shot at an undefeated league season on Thursday against host Aragon.

For Palo Alto, the Vikings all but wrapped up their first SCVAL De Anza Division regular-season crown since 1994 with a 5-2 victory over first-place Saratoga on Tuesday. Paly (9-1, 17-3) needed only to defeat visiting Gunn on Thursday to make the title-winning official.

Menlo School, meanwhile, already has clinched no worse than a tie for the West Bay Athletic League crown and needs only to beat visiting Sacred Heart Prep on



Menlo-Atherton senior **George Horowitz** helped the Bears win their first PAL title since 1998.

STANFORD BASEBALL

Marquess reaches milestone

Cardinal coach passes a legend at No. 8 on Division I wins list

by Rick Eyrer

A list of Mark Marquess' accomplishments might extend the length of Campus Drive, so suffice it to say that he's one of the greats of college baseball and it's more than just his leadership on the field.

That's why career win No. 1,343 might be one of his favorites. Not only does it leave him eighth on the all-time NCAA Division I wins list, but it's one more than USC's legendary coach Rod Dedeaux, who had a profound influence on Marquess' career and remains one of his inspirations.

The Cardinal defeated visiting California, 11-7, in a nonconference game Wednesday to give Marquess the milestone victory. Across the way, Bears' coach David Esquer could share in the moment despite the setback. He helped Marquess win many of those games during his time as a player at Stanford, including one in the national championship contest.

Win No. 1,342 came two days earlier with an 11-1 victory over visiting Santa Clara, coached by former Stanford assistant Mark O'Brien.

And so it goes, Dedeaux to Marquess to Esquer and beyond. It's college baseball history at our finger tips.

"He's a legend in college and amateur baseball," Marquess said of Dedeaux. "He was a great ambassador of the game and quite a character. He's responsible for the USA-Japan college series and I was fortunate enough to get involved with him at the U.S. National Team level."

Dedeaux won the first of his 11 first national championships in 1948. The year after he retired, Stanford won the first of its two consecutive national titles.

Dedeaux also won in 1958, 1968, and 1978 around five straight in 1970-74. The Trojans also won again in 1998.

Stanford (7-8, 17-16) is at a crossroads this weekend with visiting Arizona (3-12, 17-19) in town for another important Pac-10 series. After this weekend the Cardinal plays nine conference games against teams ahead of them in the standings. Getting a running start in these games would be helpful.

It won't be easy. The Wildcats have beaten both Oregon State and USC; two of the teams ahead of Stanford. They were recently swept by co-second place Washington State (with the Beavers), and every game was decided by one run. Arizona has lost five conference games by one run and another two by three or less.

The Wildcats lead the Pac-10

(continued on page 40)

(continued on next page)

STANFORD ROUNDUP

Chinn's no-hitter ends softball slide

Cardinal women host Pac-10 golf championships; Stanford hosts MPSF lacrosse, volleyball playoffs

by Rick Eyrer

Sophomore Ashley Chinn grabbed the spotlight Wednesday with her third career no-hitter as the Stanford softball team downed visiting San Jose State, 3-0, in nonconference affair.

Chinn (12-2) walked three and struck out nine as she recorded the 19th no-hitter in school history in helping Stanford end a three-game slide.

The Cardinal (7-5, 38-6) remain at home for a week-end Pac-10 series which begins Friday against Oregon (2-10, 13-26) at 7 p.m. Oregon State (3-9, 22-22) follows Saturday at 1 p.m. and Sunday at noon.

Stanford resides in fifth place in the conference standings, but is a mere half-game out of second place and three games behind Pac-10 leader Arizona. It's the Pac-10; that's the only way such a tight race can be explained.

Chinn improved her ERA to 1.82 on the season by holding the Spartans in check. The Cardinal needed her performance because, even though it had plenty of scoring chances early, it didn't score until the sixth.

Junior All-American outfielder Alissa Haber (.430-8-23) recorded her team-leading 18th double with two outs in the inning to drive in the first two runs of the game. Freshman shortstop Ashley Hansen followed with an RBI double.

Haber also leads the team with her .430 average and ranks second with eight home runs. Hansen is hitting .410 with a team-best 41 RBI.

With her third no-hitter, Chinn moved into third place all-time in career no-no's behind Missy Penna and Dana Sorensen.

Women's golf

The road to the Pac-10 women's golf title begins on the first tee of the Stanford Golf Course Friday and continues through to the 18th hole on Sunday.

The Cardinal hosts the conference tournament in what is probably the most competitive conference in the nation for the first time in 10 years. The first two rounds tee off at 8:30 a.m., while the final round on Sunday will begin at 7:30 a.m.

Stanford looks for its first conference championship since hosting the last time. Hilary Homeyer, who went on to win a U.S. Open women's title, led the Cardinal that season.

Stanford has won one tournament, finished third in another and was among the top 10 in four of the six tournaments overall.

Cardinal senior Mari Chun owns a team best 74.2 average score, with freshman Sydney Burlison right behind at 74.5.

Chun won the Edean Ihlandfeldt Invitational in October and finished fifth at the Kent Youel Invitational. Sophomore Rebecca Durham also has a top 10 finish.

Women's lacrosse

No. 14 Stanford takes aims at its fifth consecutive Mountain Pacific Sports Federation title when the Cardinal plays host to the MPSF Tournament, which began



Kyle Terada/Stanford Athletics

Stanford sophomore Ashley Chinn pitched the 19th no-hitter in school history to beat San Jose St.

Thursday

Stanford (6-0, 10-4) plays its first game against either Denver or UC Davis on Friday at 6 p.m.

The Cardinal owns an all-time tournament record of 11-1, losing only to California. Stanford has a 10-game tournament winning streak intact.

Stanford has outscored MPSF opponents by a combined 105-30. The Cardinal has outscored conference opponents by 12.5 goals per game.

Stanford's balanced attack features 10 players with nine or more goals, led by Sarah Flynn's 31. Goalie Annie Read has a 5.00 goals-against average in MPSF play.

Women's water polo

Second-ranked Stanford (22-2), after playing its first 24 matches in the state of California, travels to Hawaii for the MPSF tournament, with the NCAA tournament looming in Maryland.

The Cardinal meet seventh-seeded San Diego State on Friday in the first round, with a likely match against Hawaii or UCLA in the semifinals.

Men's volleyball

Stanford earned first-round home court advantage for the eight-team Mountain Pacific Sports Federation tournament and plays USC on Saturday (7 p.m.) at Maples Pavilion.

Stanford (21-10) clinched the No. 4 seed on the final night of the regular season, with help from Hawaii's upset of USC, dropping the Trojans (17-10) into the No. 5 position.

This marks the first home postseason match for Stanford since 2003 and first at Maples Pavilion since 1995. ■

Marquess

(continued from previous page)

with their .314 team batting average. Stanford is eighth at .267. The Wildcats have hit more doubles and triples than any other conference team. They recently swept a short series from New Mexico, currently tied for first place in the Mountain West Conference.

"There are no last place teams in the Pac-10," Marquess said. "Arizona State is the best team in the league right now and everybody else fights it out every weekend."

The Cardinal opens the series with a 5 p.m. contest Friday and follows with 1 p.m. starts on Saturday

and Sunday.

"Sure we keep an eye on the standings," said Stanford first baseman Brent Milleville, who hit a home run against Cal and went 4-for-4 with three RBI against Santa Clara. "It's important but we still have to put forth our best effort out there."

Scott Snodgrass became the fourth freshman pitcher to earn a victory with his effort against the Broncos. Junior Kyle Thompson earned his first college win Wednesday.

Home has been kind to the Cardinal lately. Stanford has won seven of its last eight games at Sunken Diamond and seems to enjoy the atmosphere.

"We feel comfortable here," Milleville said. "It's a great hitter's

park. This is where we take ground balls and see fastballs every day. We know our field."

Stanford is 2 1-2 games behind second-place Oregon State and Washington State, both teams remaining on the Cardinal schedule.

The Cardinal just needs to win games, not only for their placing within the conference, but for a chance to host a regional. The team has managed to stay around .500 after a poor start but now is the time to start revving it up for the final 22 games on the schedule.

Stanford has a history of finishing strong, and in a year Marquess recorded a little history of his own, it would be nice to repeat past accomplishments. ■

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PREP ROUNDUP

Albanese is perfect once again

Castilleja pitcher throws her fourth perfect game as Gators remain unbeaten in softball

by Keith Peters

The Castilleja softball team looks to be pretty untouchable in the West Bay Athletic League this season, but there are still a few tests remaining for the unbeaten Gators.

In fact, Castilleja's 10-0 record will be challenged Monday when the Gators play host to Sequoia in a nonleague game at 3:30 p.m.

That contest will be yet another opportunity for Castilleja junior pitcher Sammy Albanese to keep her remarkable streaks intact.

In 10 games, Albanese has not allowed an earned run. Her ERA is a perfect 0.00. During that time, she has pitched five no-hitters and five one-hitters. Nine of the 10 games have been shutouts.

And, oh yes, Albanese has four perfect games this season. The latest came Tuesday when she was perfect in a 12-0 victory over host Mercy-San Francisco in a WBAL game at Balboa Park in San Francisco. She struck out 19 of the 21 batters she faced and now has 153 strikeouts in 61 innings.

Albanese and Arianna Yee each had two hits and three RBI to lead the Gators (9-0, 10-0).

Elsewhere in softball action this week:

In a pitching duel between the league's two best pitchers, Palo Alto's Kelly Jenks came out on top in a 2-0 triumph over visiting Los Altos on Wednesday in a SCVAL El Camino Division game.

Jenks threw a five-hit, 13-strikeout effort to post her 13th victory. Los Altos starter Ali Goldberg was also tough, giving up six hits and two runs as the Vikings held on to a share of first place with a 6-0 record (14-6-1 overall).

Palo Alto got on the board in the third inning when Lauren Bucolo singled in Pam Wong for a 1-0 Paly lead. The Vikings scored again in the fifth when Grace Stafford laid down a perfect bunt and Gracie Marshall scored on an overthrow to first.

Baseball

For the second game in a row, Palo Alto rallied in the last inning for a come-from-behind victory, this time over host Monta Vista on Wednesday, 7-5, in a SCVAL De Anza Division game.

Paly junior Joc Pederson led off the top of the seventh with a deep home run to tie the score 4-4 and sophomore TJ Braff, senior Colin Byrne and senior Mike Rizza all singled and scored to give the Vikings a 7-4 lead.

Monta Vista threatened in the

(continued on next page)

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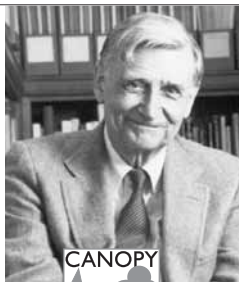
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bottom of the seventh, loading the bases with no outs, but junior Scott Witte came in to close out the game to give Palo Alto its eighth win in its past nine games. Freshman Freddy Avis pitched six strong innings to earn the win as Palo Alto improved its third-place standing to 7-4 (10-13 overall). Eight of Paly's 13 losses have been by one run.

The Vikings will host Monta Vista on Friday at 3:30 p.m.

In Atherton, Menlo stayed atop the PAL Bay Division standings on Wednesday, but Knights' coach Craig Schoof probably wasn't too happy with his team's 13-9 victory over visiting South San Francisco. The Warriors, after all, came into the game with only one league victory but played the Knights tough, scoring eight runs in the second inning before Menlo (6-1, 17-5) finally wore down the visitors (1-6, 7-14).

Menlo starter Alex Smith weathered the eight-run second (six of the runs were earned) to pitch a complete-game seven-hitter. He can thank his teammates for keeping him in the game after the Knights bounced back from an 8-6 deficit with four runs in the third and three more in the fourth to give Smith his fourth victory of the season against two defeats.

Steven Zavodnick had a bases-loaded double to highlight the third inning, that coming after Patrick Clendenning cleared the bases with a double in the first. Every hitter in the Menlo lineup had at least one hit, with the first five in the order combining for nine hits and 10 RBI.

If there has been one constant with Sacred Heart Prep this season, it has been the Gators' offense. It showed up once again Tuesday in the form of a 14-6 blasting of host Menlo-Atherton in a PAL Ocean Division showdown between two teams headed in different directions.

Sacred Heart Prep (4-3, 12-8) won its sixth straight, including three consecutive in league play, while M-A (2-5, 13-6) lost its third straight since returning from spring break.

The Gators banged out 16 hits, including a home run from Ryan Sakowski that was one of six extra-base hits by SHP.

Boys golf

Menlo-Atherton concluded a perfect season in the PAL Bay Division with a 202-230 victory over Terra Nova on Tuesday on another hot day at Sharon Heights Country Club in Menlo Park.

The Bears put the finishing touches in their 10-0 league season (12-1 overall) as senior Ben Jackson earned medalist honors with an even-par 36 and senior Nick Sako added a 38. Menlo-Atherton finishes the regular season with the league's lowest scoring differential and an automatic berth into the Central Coast Section playoffs.

The Bears will participate in PAL Individual Playoffs next week at Shoreline Golf Links in Mountain View on Tuesday before finishing up at Half Moon Bay Golf Course on April 29. After that, the Bears will travel to Carmel the following week to compete in the CCS Re-

gional No. 1 tournament at Rancho Canada on May 5.

Sacred Heart Prep completed its inaugural season in the West Bay Athletic League with a 210-221 victory over Crystal Springs-Uplands on Wednesday at Crystal Springs Golf Course in Hillsborough.

With the victory, the Gators (9-1, 14-1) captured the WBAL team title and will advance to the CCS Regional No. 2 tournament on May 6 in Carmel Valley.

Girls lacrosse

Menlo kept its undefeated season alive in the West Bay Athletic League (Foothill Division) with a 16-6 domination of visiting Pioneer

on Tuesday. While the weather was the complete opposite of when the teams met last week, the outcome was not. The Knights (7-0, 10-4) raced to a 12-2 halftime lead and never were threatened.

Menlo senior captain Madi Shove scored a career-high nine goals.

Palo Alto improved to 13-1 overall with an 8-4 win over host University (San Francisco) on Wednesday. Caroline Lucas-Conwell scored four goals to pace the Vikings, who a day earlier knocked off host Mercy-Burlingame, 11-5, in a WBAL (Skyline Division) match. Emily Fowler, Maya Fielder and Emily Benatar all scored twice for Paly, which leads the division with a an 8-0 record. ■

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Tuesday, April 28, 2009

11 am-12 pm at Fire Station 1 (Classroom),
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3-4 pm at Fire Station 6 (Apparatus Room),
700 Oak Grove Avenue, Menlo Park

Wednesday, May 6, 2009

11 am-12 pm at Fire Station 3,
32 Almedral, Atherton
3-4 pm at Fire Station 77,
1467 Chilco Avenue, Menlo Park

Thursday, May 7, 2009

11 am - 12 pm at Station 4,
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3-4 pm at Station 2,
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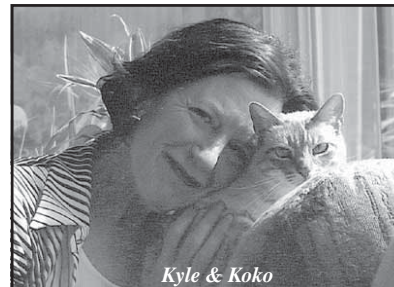
NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, pursuant to Government Code Section 66016, that the City Council of the City of Palo Alto will hold a Public Hearing at the Regular Council Meeting on Monday, May 4, 2009 at 7:00 p.m., or as near thereafter as possible, in the Council Chambers, City Hall, 250 Hamilton Avenue, 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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Prep tennis

(continued from page 36)

Tuesday to win the title outright. However, there are even bigger things on the Knights' collective plate this season — winning a Central Coast Section team title.

Should Menlo accomplish that, it would give the Knights eight section crowns since team competition began in 1972 and putting them closer to overtaking Gunn, the all-time leader with nine (from 1972-1981).

While reaching that plateau established by a Gunn program that once held the national record with 200 consecutive victories might not be Menlo's immediate goal, tying or surpassing the Titans certainly puts the Knights into the history books.

Menlo (17-2) took another positive step in that direction Wednesday with an important 5-2 nonleague victory over previously unbeaten Bellarmine (16-1) at the Decathlon Club in Santa Clara. The win essentially moves the Knights ahead of the Bells in the race for the No. 1 seed for the upcoming CCS team

tournament.

"I let them celebrate and have a good time," Menlo coach Bill Shine said of his players, "but I told them the next match (with Bellarmine) is the one that really counts. This is just one step toward our goal, which is to win CCS."

The Menlo-Bellarmine match was billed as a possible preview of the CCS title match next month, and it's likely the teams could meet again. All the Knights need to do the next time is play as well as they did Wednesday. Even in their only singles loss — senior Daniel Hoffman's three-set defeat at No. 1 — the Knights got off to a good start. Hoffman won 20 points in a row during a 6-0 first set. Menlo's only other loss came at No. 2 doubles, another three-setter.

"The singles were phenomenal and No. 3 doubles came through," said Shine, hoping to get his team back into the section finals after a semifinal loss last season. "I tell the kids that there's not a team out there that we can't beat, if we play well."

Menlo won at No. 2, 3 and 4 singles as Jamin Ball, Patrick Chase

and Max Glenn all won quickly in straight sets, with all finishing in under an hour. That gave Menlo a 3-0 lead. When the No. 3 doubles tandem of Brian Peltz and Jonathan Katzman won 6-4, 6-2, the outcome was decided with three matches still in progress.

"We just hammered them in singles," said Shine. "But, it was closer than the final score indicated."

Palo Alto coach Andy Harader brought a handful of his players to watch both teams, figuring the Vikings likely will have to play one or both during the CCS tournament. Paly appears in line for the No. 3 seed now, behind only Menlo and Bellarmine, with defending champion Sacred Heart Prep probably getting the No. 4 seed. The Vikings beat SHP on Monday, 6-1.

There wasn't much celebrating after Paly defeated Saratoga for the first time this season, perhaps because the Vikings still had Gunn to beat. The other thinking is that Paly knows there are bigger matches ahead and hopes to celebrate something more important than just a league title.

"This was a huge week for us," said Harader. "I thought we peaked right before spring break, and then we came back and lost to Saratoga and Menlo. Suddenly, we lost all that steam that we had. Now, I like we have it back. This is great momentum going into CCS."

The last time the Vikings won the De Anza Division crown, they went on to win the CCS title (in 1994). Palo Alto also won CCS titles in 1995 and '96, even though the Vikings didn't win the league title those years — losing to Monta Vista both times.

Harader gave his team a little pep talk this week, pointing out the sign hanging high on the tennis court fence that Paly received for winning the California High School Boys Tennis Classic this season. The Vikings finished in a three-way tie, losing one match to Saratoga, but had more tiebreaker points and came away as the champs.

"I pointed to the sign and told them they were champions when they won that," Harader related. "I said 'champions are champions.'"

The Vikings took that to heart and won their most significant and timely match of the season by beating the Falcons, who finished second in CCS last season.

Palo Alto senior Sam Wong appropriately clinched the victory with a 6-2, 6-3 triumph over Eric Gast at No. 2 singles. For Wong and Paly's five other seniors, it was their first-ever victory over the Falcons (the teams didn't play in 2007 when Paly competed in the El Camino Division).

For Wong, the victory was extra special because, before Monday's match with SHP, an ankle injury had sidelined him for two weeks.

"I was confident after I took the first set, and never looked back," said Wong. "I'm a captain. I couldn't let my team down . . . I'm happy to win league my senior year."

Juniors Grant Audet and Peter Tseng helped make it happen when they rallied for a 6-7, 6-4, 6-4 win at No. 3 doubles. Sophomore Ba-



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(continued on next page)

ATHLETES OF THE WEEK



Jasmine Tosky
Palo Alto High

The freshman had a hand in four victories in a dual-meet victory, then set a school record in the 200 IM and scored 42 1/2 points to help the Vikings win the team title at the Section Challenge swim meet by just a half point.



Mark Higgins
Palo Alto High

The senior swam two lifetime bests (100 free, 200 free) to help the Vikings beat Saratoga, 92-91, in a dual meet, then won the 200 free and 100 free (PR) to help the Vikings finish third in the Section Challenge swim meet.

Honorable mention

Allie Bollela

Palo Alto swimming

Katie Howard

Sacred Heart Prep swimming

Sarah Liang

Palo Alto swimming

Sunny Margerum

Gunn track and field

Allegra Mayer

Gunn track and field

Tammy Vujovich

Menlo-Atherton softball

Matt Brezinski

Sacred Heart Prep baseball

Kenny Diekroeger*

Menlo baseball

Wade Hauser

Palo Alto baseball

Nick Sako

Menlo-Atherton golf

JJ Suttle

Sacred Heart Prep baseball

Tim Wenzlau

Palo Alto swimming

* previous winner

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

(continued from previous page)

ramee Wongbanchai gave Paly the tiebreaker for the outright league title when his opponent defaulted in the third set, making it 5-2. Saratoga had won the first meeting, 4-3.

Menlo-Atherton's league matches haven't been that close, especially this week as the Bears closed in on their long-awaited title. With Menlo in the Bay Division previously, the Bears were always playing for second. This season it was all M-A, which defeated Woodside, Half Moon Bay and Mills by 7-0 scores prior to Thursday's regular-season finale at Aragon.

Menlo-Atherton was so dominant against Mills that the Bears' No. 1 and 2 singles plus No. 1 doubles finished their matches in less than 30 minutes. Junior Alec Haley and senior George Horowitz won their matches, 6-0, 6-0, at No. 1 and 2 singles, respectively.

Menlo-Atherton had gotten it done this season with two seniors (Horowitz and Takai Tuionetoa at No. 1 doubles), three juniors (Haley, Avinash Shah and Alden Mitchell), No. 4 singles player sophomore Jonathan Friedman (who was brought up from frosh-soph) and four fresh-



Keith Peters

Menlo's Jamin Ball helped beat Bellarmine, 5-2.

men in doubles — Christian and Jesse Perkins plus Zeke Brown and No. 3 partner Matt Giordano.

"If we win out, going undefeated, it will be ever more sweet because had not Menlo joined the PAL, we would have already had a league title in the 21st century," said co-head coach Carlos Aguilar. "This will be very sweet!" ■

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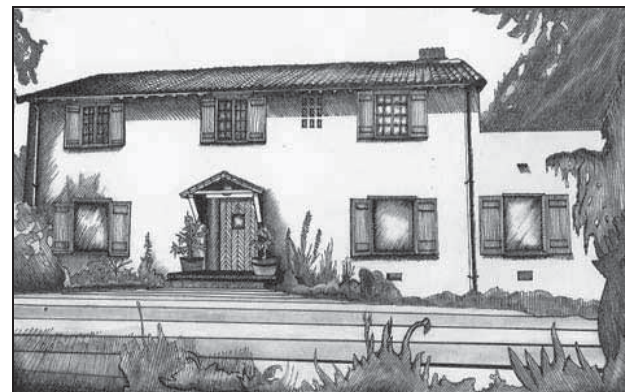
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PREP SWIMMING

Top finish for Paly girls could be just a start

Vikings win Section Challenge by a half-point and beat CCS champ Monta Vista, runnerup Mitty in the process

by Keith Peters

Jasmine Tosky walked up to Palo Alto swim coach Danny Dye on Saturday morning before the fourth annual Section Challenge and asked: "Do I have to swim fast?" It was a legitimate question for the freshman, who had to compete in another meet in the afternoon. "He said it would be a good idea if I did."

Tosky, a freshman, didn't have a problem swimming fast. It just has been a busy few days, with Paly beating Saratoga on Thursday in a dual meet. Then there was Saturday morning's annual challenge meet that brought together many of the best swim teams from the Central Coast and North Coast sections.

To top it off, Tosky had to swim for her club team (Palo Alto Stanford Aquatics) at the Stanford Invite on Saturday afternoon — giving her an opportunity to race over long-course meters, something she'll be doing with the U.S. Junior National Team this summer.

So, Tosky got her answer from Dye and did what she usually does — she gave it her best. She won the 200 IM in a meet and school record of 2:03.64, finished third in the 500 free and swam legs on two relay teams that helped the Palo Alto girls win the team championship by a mere half point.

Paly finished with 186 points with defending champion Campolindo taking second with 185.5. Monte



Keith Peters

Paly freshman Jasmine Tosky set a 29-year old school record.

Vista (Danville) was third with 174 and perennial CCS champ Mitty was fourth with 158. Monta Vista (Cupertino), the defending CCS champion, was fifth with 146.

Thus, the meet was a huge success in many ways for the Palo Alto girls as they sent a message, perhaps, as a team to be reckoned with at the CCS finals next month. The victory was accomplished without Tosky and sophomore Sarah Liang swimming on the final relay and without Liang competing in the 100 breast. Both were already across the street at Stanford.

Before each of them left, they contributed in a big way toward Palo Alto swimming off with the title. Both were on the 200 medley relay team that finished third in a 1:50.49 (No. 4 in school history). Tosky then won the 200 IM, surpassing the previous school record of 2:03.92 by Karen Kraemer in 1985. The clocking was an automatic All-American time.

"It wasn't even my best time," said Tosky, who swam 2:01 earlier this season in Las Vegas during a club meet. "But, I'm happy with it. I wasn't expecting to go that fast. I wasn't feeling that well during warm-ups, but once I got in the water it was all right. I like racing. Competition is the thing for me in swimming."

Tosky later finished third in the 500 free in 5:00.92 (she swam 4:50 in December in Long Beach) and topped her successful day by anchoring the 200 free relay team to second place in 1:39.12.

Liang was fifth in the 200 IM in a season-best 2:07.36; Paly senior Allie Bollela was third in the 50 free (24.78) and seventh in the 100 free; freshman Margaret Wenzlau was sixth in the 100 fly (59.16); Grace Greenwood was second in diving and freshman Laura Cui tied for sixth in the 100 breast in a personal-best 1:09.60 to help highlight Palo Alto successful efforts.

The Sacred Heart Prep girls finished ninth in the team race with 61 points, but junior Katie Howard was an individual standout for the Gators by winning the 100 free in a season best of 52.19 and taking second in the 50 free in 24.24.

Howard's time in the 100 free was faster than her seventh-place finish at CCS last season and her fastest

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(continued from previous page)

time ever in an open race. She set the school record of 51.98 on the opening leg of the 400 relay in the CCS prelims last season.

The Palo Alto boys, meanwhile, moved up a place from last season and finished third with 178 points. Campolindo won the team title with 237.5 points after finishing second last year. Defending champion Belarmine finished second this time with 219 points.

Palo Alto seniors Mark Higgins and Tim Wenzlau combined for three individual victories. Higgins and Wenzlau first teamed together on the 200 medley relay team that finished fifth in 1:41.30.

Higgins then led from start to finish in the 200 free, clocking a 1:42.13 winning time that was slower than his PR of 1:41.52 that he swam in a dual meet on Thursday. Higgins returned to win the 100 free in a personal-best 47.13, that broke the meet record and put him No. 2 on Paly's all-time list in the event. Higgins finished up his day with a third leg on Paly's sixth-place 200 free relay team (1:32.46).

Higgins is concentrating on the 100 and 200 freestyles this season (giving up the 500 free) after sitting out much of the fall training schedule.

"It's my senior year and I wanted to take some time off and do some other things," Higgins said. "So, I took off 3-4 months where I normally would have been training."

Higgins, of course, kept himself in shape doing other things. Once he got into the pool, he worked hard on distance training and his turns. Despite the time off, he's swimming faster now than ever before. His victory in the 100 free was his first title in a big meet at that distance.

"I've never even swum the 100 in a big-level meet since I was a kid," Higgins said. "I've been training a lot harder than last year. I want to make a statement going into CCS."

Wenzlau would like to make a statement at CCS, as well, this being his senior year and perhaps his final in the pool as a swimmer. He's been accepted to Princeton, where he'll likely concentrate on water polo in the fall.

He certainly made a statement on Saturday with his victory in the 100 backstroke in a season best of 53.49. He holds the school record of 52.24, set at CCS last season. Wenzlau also led off Paly's sixth-place 400 free relay team (3:23.46) on Saturday.

Paly freshman Byron Sanborn was fifth in the 200 IM (2:02.05) and sixth in the 100 breast (1:01.59) in addition to swimming on the 200 medley and 400 free relays.

Sacred Heart Prep finished sixth in the team race with 113 points and with a very young lineup. Freshman Tom Kremer swam a personal best of 1:57.76 to win the 200 IM and added another PR of 4:40.55 while taking second in the 500 free by .07 seconds.

Kremer also led off the Gators' fifth-place 200 free relay team (1:30.22) that included freshman Evan Navarro, junior David Culpan and senior Paul Rudolph. That same foursome clocked a season best of 3:18.59 while finishing third in the 400 free relay. ■

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856-7700



10% Off

LUNCH
(Includes Dim Sum on Carts)
(Maximum Discount \$15.00)

DINNER
(Maximum Discount \$15.00)

TAKE-OUT

DELIVERY
(Minimum \$30.00)

Not valid on private room dining. Must present coupon. Valid only for orders placed directly with Ming's. Black-out dates may apply. Cannot be combined with other offer.



COMPLETE CAR CARE SPECIALISTS

301 El Camino Real, Menlo Park
650.328.0287

Oil Change

\$19.95*
+Tax and disposal fee

*Most cars & light trucks.
Cannot be combined with any other offer.
Must present coupon.



We are a consumer assistance program
Gold Shield station



Schedule Maintenance
30/60/90K
Factory Recommended Service

- Brakes
- Mufflers
- Catalytic Converters

(1 block north of Stanford Shopping Center & 2 blocks south of Downtown Menlo Park)

Expires 5/30/09



HealthyPets.com sells quality pet health products such as Advantage flea control, Program, Frontline, Cosequin and much more.

HealthyPets.com

70% off

Already on pet medications and supplies.

Use the coupon PIZAZZ33 and save \$3 off any purchase of \$50 or more and PIZAZZ88 save \$4 off any purchase of \$60 or more at HealthyPets.com. Enter coupon code during checkout.

Offer expires 5/30/09

(800) 889-9475

www.HealthyPets.com



Buy 1 dinner entree and get the 2nd free of equal or lesser value. Valid at South Palo Alto and Town and Country Village locations.

Offer expires 5/30/09

4224 El Camino Real • Palo Alto 650.856.6124
67 Town & Country Village • Palo Alto/Stanford • 650.327.4111
2312 Central Expressway • Mountain View • 650.968.6050
(Mtn. View location closed for dinner.)

www.hobees.com



"The Best Pizza in Town"

GRAND OPENING IN PALO ALTO

Any 2 X-tra Large Pizzas

\$29.99



NEW SPOT!
great for team parties

Dine-in, Pick-up & Delivery
115 Hamilton Ave,
Palo Alto
650.324.3131
133 Main St, Los Altos
650.947.7768
Open 7 days 11:00-9:00
Delivery from door to door

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