

New hurdles for high-speed rail

Page 3



Palo Alto's ticking time bomb

Employee pensions are helping fuel fiscal crisis

page 12

Pulse 20

Transitions 21

Spectrum 22

Eating Out 27

Movies 29

Puzzles 65

■ **Arts** Botanical artist in Gamble's 'paint-out' and exhibit **Page 24**

■ **Sports** Palo Alto's Jeremy Lin to remain with Knicks **Page 31**

■ **Home** Community Center: where the action is **Page 37**

CITY OF PALO ALTO PRESENTS THE 28TH ANNUAL

★ PALO ALTO WEEKLY ★

MOONLIGHT RUN & WALK



5K WALK, 5K & 10K RUN — GREAT FOR KIDS AND FAMILIES

A benefit event for local non-profits supporting kids and families

Register online: PaloAltoOnline.com/moonlight_run

TIME & PLACE

5K walk 7:00pm, 10K run 8:15pm, 5K run 8:45pm.
Race-night registration 6 to 8pm at City of Palo Alto Baylands Athletic Center, Embarcadero & Geng Roads (just east of the Embarcadero Exit off Highway 101). **Parking** — go to PaloAltoOnline.com to check for specific parking locations.

COURSE

5K and 10K loop courses over Palo Alto Baylands levee, through the marshlands by the light of the Harvest Moon! Course is flat, USAT&F certified (10k run only) on levee and paved roads. Water at all stops. Course map available at www.PaloAltoOnline.com.

REGISTRATIONS & ENTRY FEE

Adult Registration (13 +) registration fee is \$30 per entrant by 9/14/12. Includes a long-sleeved t-shirt. **Youth Registration (6 - 12)** registration is \$20 per entrant by 9/14/12. Includes a long-sleeved t-shirt. **Youth (5 and under)** run free with an adult, but must be registered through Evenbrite with signed parental guardian waiver, or may bring/fill out a signed waiver to race-night registration. **Late Registration** fee is \$35 for adults, \$25 for youth from 9/15 - 9/26. **Race night registration** fee is \$40 for adult; \$30 for youth from 6 to 8pm. T-shirts available only while supplies last. **Refunds will not be issued for no-show registrations and t-shirts will not be held.** **MINORS:** If not pre-registered, minors under 18 **MUST** bring signed parental/waiver form on race night.

SPORTS TEAM/CLUBS:

Online pre-registration opportunity for organizations of 10 or more runners; e-mail MoonlightRun@paweekly.com.

DIVISIONS

Age divisions: 9 & under; 10 - 12; 13 - 15; 16 - 19; 20 - 24; 25 - 29; 30 - 34; 35 - 39; 40 - 44; 45 - 49; 50 - 54; 55 - 59; 60 - 64; 65 - 69; 70 & over with separate divisions for male and female runners in each age group. Race timing provided for 5K and 10K runs only.

COMPUTERIZED RESULTS BY A Change of Pace

Chip timing results will be posted on PaloAltoOnline.com by 11pm race night. Race organizers are not responsible for incorrect results caused by incomplete/incorrect registration forms.

AWARDS/PRIZES/ENTERTAINMENT

Top three finishers in each division. Prize giveaways and refreshments. Pre-race warmups by Noxcuses Fitness, Palo Alto

PALO ALTO GRAND PRIZ

Road Race Series — Moonlight Run, 9/28; Marsh Madness, 10/27; Home Run, 9/11, for more information go to www.paloaltogp.org.

BENEFICIARY

Palo Alto Weekly Holiday Fund. A holiday-giving fund to benefit Palo Alto area non-profits and charitable organizations. In April 2012, 55 organizations received a total of \$353,000 (from the 2011-2012 Holiday Fund.)

MORE INFORMATION

Call (650) 463-4920, (650) 326-8210, email MoonlightRun@paweekly.com or go to www.PaloAltoOnline.com.

For safety reasons, no dogs allowed on course for the 5K and 10K runs. They are welcome on the 5K walk only. No retractable leashes. Bring your own clean-up bag. Jogging strollers welcome in the 5K walk or at the back of either run.

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FRIDAY SEPT. 28 7PM

Upfront

Local news, information and analysis

High-speed-rail critics prepare for next chapter

Even with initial funding secured, California's embattled project faces major hurdles

by Gennady Sheyner

California's contentious drive to build a high-speed-rail system between San Francisco and Los Angeles sped ahead last week, when state lawmakers approved funding for the first construction phase. But the \$68 billion project still has to pass through a

gauntlet of legal, financial and political obstacles before it becomes reality.

The most immediate threat comes from litigation, of which there has been no shortage. Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Atherton remain involved in a lawsuit against the California

High-Speed Rail Authority, the agency charged with building the system. The lawsuit, which claims that the authority's environmental analysis relies on erroneous ridership projections, will be the subject of a settlement conference in Sacramento Monday morning, July 16, said Palo Alto City Councilman Larry Klein, who chairs the city's Rail Committee.

Even if the rail authority settles the Peninsula lawsuit, it will still

face fierce opposition from Central Valley, where construction is set to begin. A coalition of agencies, including the Madera County and Merced County farm bureaus and the Chowchilla Water District, filed a lawsuit last month, arguing that the rail authority "due to a myriad of analytical deficiencies, failed to disclose and analyze the full scope and severity of impacts."

The litigation could continue as the rail authority unveils its "project-

level" Environmental Impact Reports, which pertain to specific segments of the San Francisco-to-Los Angeles line and have a higher level of engineering and design specificity. Klein said the city will consider in the coming months whether it should file or join any other lawsuits against the rail authority.

Then there are the political hurdles, including bids to have Califor-

(continued on page 9)



Veronica Weber

Welcome, big guy

Edward, a 12-year-old Sulcata Tortoise, is the newest acquisition of the Palo Alto Junior Museum & Zoo. Weighing in at 136 pounds and the size of an end table, he may not have reached his full size yet. The species is native to North Africa, and the oldest recorded in captivity is 54 years old, according to Wikipedia. Lifespan is estimated at 50 to 150 years.

NONPROFITS

InnVision merges with Shelter Network

New agency expects to serve 20,000 homeless people from San Jose to Daly City

by Sue Dremann

InnVision, Santa Clara County's largest nonprofit organization serving the homeless, has merged with Shelter Network of San Mateo, the two agencies announced Tuesday, July 10.

The new agency, called InnVision Shelter Network, will become one of the largest providers of transitional shelter and housing in the state. With a \$16 million budget, it expects to serve more than 20,000 homeless families and individuals in at least 20 major sites throughout Silicon Valley and the Midpeninsula, organization officials said.

The merger is the latest in a trend of nonprofit organizations forging

new partnerships and collaborations in order to survive. Donations plummeted after the 2008 economic crisis, and many organizations have not been able to recover, the heads of foundations and nonprofit groups have said.

InnVision, which formed in 1974, had a roughly \$7 million budget last year and sheltered 4,000 to 6,000 people, according to the agency. Among its programs, the organization runs the Opportunity Center in Palo Alto. It also served thousands more at-risk and low-income through food, counseling and other programs at two dozen sites, agency officials said.

Shelter Network last year served 4,600 clients in San Mateo County through six facilities with an \$8 million budget. Founded in 1987, the majority of its clients are families and veterans.

Shelter Network CEO Karae Lisle will run the merged agency. InnVision CEO Christine Burroughs has retired after 24 years but remains a consultant for the new organization.

Burroughs said she approached Shelter Network last fall about a merger.

"It was a combination of factors. I decided it was time to step down. I

(continued on page 10)

LAND USE

Future Palo Alto housing: taller, smaller

City signs off on Housing Element that stresses proximity to transit hubs

by Gennady Sheyner

In a radical departure from recent trends, Palo Alto officials endorsed a new vision for housing on Monday, July 9, that prizes taller buildings with smaller units.

The vision is encoded in the city's Housing Element, a state-mandated, broad document that lays out the city's strategy for responding to regional housing mandates. Palo Alto is required by state law to plan for — though not actually build — 2,860 housing units during the planning period of 2007-14.

The City Council has consistently argued that the mandate is grossly unrealistic and impossible to attain in a built-out city with astronomical real-estate prices. But to comply with state law, the council agreed to forward the new Housing Element to the state Department of Housing and Community Development for review.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the city's new housing strategy is its break from the past. The council had previously encouraged the development of housing by allowing dense residential complexes to be built on commercially zoned sites. Over the past decade, this policy has spurred a boon in residential complexes in south Palo Alto, with major housing projects such as Vantage, Altaire and Echelon recently going up in the area of East Meadow Circle. The trend, however, has left city planners and council members concerned about the lack of amenities and transportation options to support the explosion in residential units.

The new Housing Element, by contrast, eschews major zoning changes and targets areas around major transportation hubs for growth. The vision calls for protecting single-family residential neigh-

borhoods from additional housing and instead targeting growth at dense sites such as downtown, El Camino Real and California Avenue that are well-connected to transportation. In some cases, this could mean breaking the city's longstanding 50-foot height limit — a policy that would be explored at select sites near Caltrain stations under the new strategy.

The strategy also calls for smaller units, which are both more affordable and whose residents would require fewer city services, such as use of "roads, water, sewer and schools," according to a report from city planner Tim Wong. In particular, the housing could serve the needs of the growing elderly population.

"As Palo Alto's senior population continues to increase, the need for smaller senior units is important as many senior households have become 'empty nesters' and would prefer to downsize," Wong wrote.

The vision statement in the Housing Element also alludes to the recent trends and the council's emphasis on protecting neighborhoods and ensuring new developments are supported by nearby stores, buses and trains. The vision reads: "Our housing and neighborhoods shall enhance the livable human environment for all residents, be accessible to civic and community services and sustain our natural resources."

The new Housing Element identifies 2,976 units. Of these, 1,192 have already been either constructed since January 2007 or are in process. The remaining 1,784 are potential housing units that are scattered around major transit hubs, including the Caltrain stations near University and California avenues.

(continued on page 7)



CITY OF PALO ALTO NOTICE OF ELECTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a General Municipal Election will be held in the City of Palo Alto on Tuesday, November 6, 2012 for the following officers:

FOUR FULL TERMS (4 years)
January 1, 2013, to December 31, 2016
Terms of Council Members
Burt, Espinosa, Schmid, Yeh
(Terms Expire December 31, 2012)

The polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday, November 6, 2012.

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Upfront

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

“

There is no impact.

”

— **Jaime Rodriguez**, Palo Alto's chief transportation official, citing an analysis of changing California Avenue from four lanes to two. See story on page 7.

Around Town

THE DEPARTURE ... After four years on the City Council, **Sid Espinosa** is preparing for the next chapter in his life. Espinosa, who in 2011 became the fourth youngest mayor in the city's history (he dropped to fifth after his friend, **Yiaway Yeh**, ascended to the mayor's chair this year), announced Thursday that he will not be seeking a second term. Espinosa, a Microsoft executive who directs the company's philanthropic efforts in Silicon Valley, said he is weighing various opportunities in the private and public sectors and plans to spend some time between now and the end of the year figuring out which of these to pursue. He called his time on the council “an incredible experience.” “I definitely intend to remain actively engaged in Palo Alto and in the Palo Alto community,” Espinosa told the Weekly. Espinosa's departure further opens up what promises to be a busy race for the four council seats that will be up for grabs in November. Yeh, and Councilmen **Pat Burt** and **Greg Schmid**, were all elected in 2007 and are up for reelection this year. Schmid is the only member of this quartet to publicly announce his decision to seek another term. Former mayor and current Santa Clara County Supervisor **Liz Kniss** and attorney **Marc Berman** are also seeking seats on the nine-member council.

SMOKY SUBJECT ... Palo Alto often touts itself as a “green” giant, but the topic of marijuana has traditionally been a buzz kill for city leaders. In 1996, the City Council decided that pot dispensaries have no business being in the city and adopted an ordinance prohibiting these establishments. But this week, a reluctant City Council will once again be sucked into the murky national debate over pot laws. The council is scheduled on Monday to place on the ballot a measure that members have little appetite for — one that would allow up to three medical marijuana dispensaries to operate in Palo Alto. The council has little say in the matter. A citizen initiative last year succeeded in drawing enough signatures for the November ballot measure. But even if it passes, the initiative could find itself in legal limbo because of the inconsistencies between state law, which allows pot dispensaries, and federal law, which doesn't. According to a new memo from the office of City Attorney **Molly Stump**, there

are four pot-related cases pending with the California Supreme Court. This puts a cloud over Palo Alto's pot initiative. Stump notes that even if the measure is adopted, “it is possible that it would be vulnerable to judicial challenge.” At the same time, the memo notes, “if the **Initiative Measure** is not adopted, the City's existing ban may also be vulnerable to challenge.” To deal with this dilemma, Stump proposed another option: preparing a companion measure for the voters that would keep the pot initiative from taking effect “until there is a definitive judicial decision removing any question that local jurisdictions may lawfully regulate medical marijuana dispensaries in the manner that the Initiative Ordinance regulates ...” It might, however, take a while to get these issues resolved. According to Stump's memo, briefing is currently under way in the cases accepted by the state Supreme Court. Because federal laws are involved, it's possible that some of the issues may ultimately be resolved by the U.S. Supreme Court.

WHAT'S IN THE WATER? ... When Palo Alto's utility officials were testing customers' water quality in May they uncovered something strange — an unusually high amount of coliform bacteria — a bacteria that is generally considered to be nonthreatening but that can indicate the presence of other unsavory organisms. The city responded by notifying its water supplier, the **San Francisco Public Utilities Commission**, and asking the agency to clean the grates at its connection to Palo Alto's water system. It also sent out notices to all water customers, advising them of this unwelcome finding and began follow-up testing to determine whether harmful bacteria, such as E. coli, is present in the water. There wasn't and after nearly three weeks of testing, the Utilities Department determined that the water is clean and safe. In its notice to customers, the department states that “bacteria are no longer present and this is not an emergency.” City Manager **James Keene** re-emphasized at Monday's City Council meeting that “there was never any emergency.” “However, because this temporary water-quality change was a violation of state drinking-water standards, we are required by law to notify everyone about what happened and what the city has done to rectify the situation.” ■

EDUCATION

A long view on learning disabilities

Coaching students and parents for decades, Morrissey and Compton have seen every trend

by Chris Kenrick

After nearly a half-century of working with learning disabilities, Pat Morrissey and Carolyn Compton have witnessed every trend — as well as the birth of an industry.

Special education didn't even have a name when Morrissey was hired by the Palo Alto Unified School District in 1964 to teach in a "reading program" for struggling students.

Fast forward to today: Bright kids who once would have fallen through the cracks because they "couldn't read" can get diagnosed and taught compensatory techniques — including use of technology tools — to help them get through college and beyond.

Take a client, seen by Morrissey and Compton since he was 8, who's now a 37-year-old corporate manager with degrees from the University of California at Berkeley and the University of Southern California. He still uses technology tools to mitigate

his trouble with reading and writing. "He spends maybe three hours more than the average person to get something out, but when he gets it out it's first-class," Compton said.

After teaching elsewhere, Morrissey and Compton teamed up in the early 1980s to launch their own non-profit tutoring program and summer school, which has grown to a staff of six psychologists and other specialists offering diagnostic evaluations for children and adults. They also offer parent education and school-related psychotherapy for students suffering from anxiety, depression and school phobias.

The summer program, Challenge School — for K-6 students who have academic trouble in the regular classroom — this month marks its 30th year in session.

"We try to mix the work and the fun so some kids really think it's a summer camp," Compton said.

In their decades in business, the

educational psychologists have seen a surge in the use of "study drugs" — as well as a significant group of parents who steadfastly reject the idea of medicating their kids.

They've seen a growth in use of "accommodations" — extended test-taking times and the like — to help students with learning disabilities meet academic challenges.

They've observed the stubborn persistence of learning disabilities in students — if compensation techniques are removed, the child who couldn't spell as a third-grader still cannot spell as an adult.

They've seen a shift in a once common belief that learning disabilities were mostly a problem for boys to an understanding that they affect both sexes.

But most of all, the two said in a recent interview, they've seen improved diagnosis and awareness of learning differences — and a conviction that techniques can be taught that can help a student work around their disabilities.

"We see students over their educational lifespan, and we've learned so much from them," Compton said.

"We can convey to anxious parents who come in with their 8-year-old and ask, 'Will he ever read, will he ever write, what are we going to do?' that, yes, he's going to be fine. 'To me, that is thrilling.'"

Compton once wrote a book called, "Guide to 100 Tests for Special Education," acquainting readers with the huge range of available diagnostic evaluations.

In reality, she and Morrissey have narrowed that list to about 20 "pretty standard" tests that they use for evaluations, depending on the needs of the student.

Often, they're testing elementary-age children. But they say they've also tested students from Stanford,



Veronica Weber

Carolyn Compton, left, and Patricia Morrissey, founders of the Morrissey-Compton Educational Center, sit in a classroom at Juana Briones Elementary School where the summer program — Challenge School — is hosted every year.



Veronica Weber

Gayl Giannik, a teacher with the Morrissey-Compton Educational Center, explains to incoming first-grader Daniel Houston how to add and subtract numbers using the Touch Math method.

Princeton, Harvard — "every major university."

"We have a number of kids here who are at Stanford," Compton said.

"People say, 'How can there be students at Stanford with a learning disability?'"

"Usually you're smart and you've had good tutoring and education, so your scores on standardized tests are pretty good, but the amount of work it takes you to get those good grades and scores is much heavier than for other students."

Occasionally, parents of a young client will ask to be tested themselves.

"They say, 'He's just like me, and I'd really like to know,'" Compton said.

Increased academic pressure on young children has led to more test-

ing, though not necessarily a greater incidence of learning disabilities, they said.

"The bar keeps going up a little higher all the time," Morrissey noted.

Compton, once a first-grade teacher, said, "The things that were taught in first grade are now taught in day care."

"Actual curriculum is being pushed down, and pressures on young children are very high, so more children get tested."

Their advice to anxious parents would be: "If they're very anxious parents they should gather information," Morrissey said.

"The more solid, good information you have, the better equipped you are to sort of understand what

(continued on page 8)

TRAFFIC

City set to rule on Professorville parking permits

Palo Alto City Council to consider pilot program for historic neighborhood with a parking shortage

by Gennady Sheyner

Professorville residents might soon get more muscle in their irksome tug-of-war with downtown workers over parking spots in the historic district — a parking-permit program that would limit visitors' stays to two hours.

The program, which the City Council will discuss Monday night, is the city's response to years of complaints from the residential neighborhood adjacent to the bustling high-tech scene in downtown Palo Alto.

Unlike in downtown itself, where parking is generally restricted to two hours, Professorville currently doesn't have parking restrictions. To

make matters worse, most houses in the neighborhood are so old, they don't have garages. So when downtown employees park their cars on the Professorville streets to avoid time limits, residents find themselves without a spot.

Now, city staff is proposing to begin a trial permit-parking program in August that will cover an area roughly bounded by Addison Avenue to the north and Lincoln Avenue to the south, between Emerson and Bryant streets.

The city would give away one permit per household in Professorville and allow additional permits to be purchased for \$50. The city would

make two-thirds of the for-sale permits available only to residents, while the rest could be purchased by non-residents. The program would be in effect from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on weekdays. The results will be evaluated next spring.

Staff had surveyed Professorville residents last month and 83 percent supported the trial; 17 percent opposed it.

The trial will measure how many permits are sold, how adjacent neighborhoods are affected and the costs and revenue of the program, according to a report by Chief Transportation Official Jaime Rodriguez.

Some residents heralded the new program as a sorely needed solution.

"The parking crush from living in a neighborhood adjacent to downtown Palo Alto is — without question — the most negative factor in our daily existence in Palo Alto," Matt Mealiffe, who lives on Addison Avenue, wrote in a letter to the council. "It is also — admittedly — the only thing that drives us to anything resembling local political activism."

But not everyone agrees with the city's approach. Some area residents and employees complained in letters to the council that the permit area is too small and that the city's solution would only shift the parking problem to other areas. Donald Barr, a Stanford University professor and affordable-housing advocate who lives in Professorville, wrote to the council urging it to reject the proposal.

"It is clear that street parking during business hours has become a scarce commodity in many neighborhoods of Palo Alto, including

ours," Barr wrote. "Parking on city streets is a common good, shared by residents and workers alike. I believe it is your job to develop a process that allocates that scarce good fairly and equitably. The current proposal does not do this."

The residential parking-permit program is one component of Palo Alto's broader drive to make downtown parking easier and more efficient — a plan that appears to be working. In recent months, the city revised its policies for downtown garages to encourage workers to park in these underused structures rather than on residential streets. Changes included converting the fourth floor of the Bryant Street garage to permit parking only and introducing a new monthly rate (\$45) for parking permits. Previously, the city only offered annual or quarterly permits.

Since then, parking in garages during the noon peak period has increased an average of 20 percent among parking-permit holders, according to Rodriguez's report. ■

CITY HALL

East Palo Alto city manager hunt down to the wire

Two candidates come from communities of minorities and years in public service

by Sue Dremann

Whoever East Palo Alto's City Council chooses this summer to become city manager, he or she will possess a background that promises to bring understanding to the mix of rough streets and diverse cultures that define the city.

The council is scheduled to hold a closed session next Tuesday, July 17, to discuss the final two candidates, Jesus Nava and Magda Gonzalez.

Former manager ML Gordon resigned in January and was replaced on an interim basis by Police Chief Ronald Davis, who has not applied for the job.

Nava, the City of Burlingame's current finance director, grew up in a tough San Antonio, Texas, barrio. He is the second oldest of 11 children. In a career spanning 29 years, he has been a city administrator in some of the West's toughest towns. That experience makes managing East Palo Alto attractive, he said.

Magda Gonzalez, former Redwood City deputy city manager, grew up in Redwood City and spent

her teen years working at the Fair Oaks Community Center in the city's core Latino district. The center provides services to some of the city's most needy.

Nava has worked for governments in San Antonio, Santa Barbara and Denton, Texas. He was assistant city manager in the border town of Laredo, Texas, and city manager in Las Cruces, N.M. He was deputy city manager in San Jose, he said.

He graduated from the University of Texas in Austin in 1982 and holds a master's degree in public administration from the University of Kansas.

Gonzalez worked her way up to director of Fair Oaks. She was deputy city manager in Redwood City

until she was laid off last year, and she was president of the International Hispanic Network and is current conference-planning chairperson at the International City/County Management Association (ICMA).

She graduated from Sequoia High School in Redwood City in 1981 and obtained a degree in social science from California State University in Sacramento. She has a law degree from Santa Clara University.

Nava said his interest in public service began with his parents' example. Both were community activists in the Texas Farmworkers' Movement and were active in political campaigns. His mother served as the local Catholic Church parish priest for a time.

It was common for her to enlist her large family, including Nava, to

bring food she cooked to the sick or to tell her kids, "Hey, you need to go mow this person's lawn today," he said.

Nava said he wants to help East Palo Alto re-

solve its problems and to help position the city for a strong financial future. The city had an operational surplus of \$1 million in 2011, but it was taking money from its reserves.

He said he also wants to move

forward with the city's Ravenswood Business District/Four Corners Transit Oriented Development Plan. The city is depending on the redevelopment for a large chunk of its future tax revenue and to help revitalize the area with housing, parkland, businesses and services.

East Palo Alto, like other California cities, faces challenges to carrying forth its redevelopment plans since the state dissolved redevelopment districts. The city laid off its redevelopment staff earlier this year.

If he is hired, Nava said his first job is to "listen and learn" — to get a full

understanding of the city, the culture of the government, and the council and the community, he said.

Gonzalez did not return phone calls requesting an interview, but she has written that she became hooked on local government while still a teen working at Fair Oaks.

East Palo Alto Mayor Laura Martinez said Thursday that the council would most likely take the rest of the summer to finalize its decision or possibly before the council's recess, which starts Aug. 1. ■

Staff Writer Sue Dremann can be emailed at sdremann@paweekly.com.



Jesus Nava



Magda Gonzalez

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.

School district hires new wellness coordinator

The Palo Alto school district will hire a county education worker to coordinate district efforts on the social-emotional health of students. Brenda Carrillo, most recently a staff member in the Santa Clara County Office of Education, replaces Amy Drolette. (Posted July 12 at 9:48 a.m.)

Mountain View driver arrested in deadly crash

Police on Tuesday, July 10, arrested the 21-year-old Mountain View man they say hit and killed a well-known resident in a grisly June 21 collision on California Street. (Posted July 11 at 8:08 a.m.)

Two arrested in Palo Alto for having burglary tools

Two men who were spotted climbing a fence on Oxford Avenue were arrested Sunday, July 8, for possession of burglary tools, Palo Alto police Agent Adrienne Moore said. (Posted July 10 at 3:15 p.m.)

Man killed in Highway 101 crash identified

A man who was killed in a multi-car pileup on U.S. Highway 101 in San Mateo early Sunday morning, July 8, has been identified as 29-year-old Mariano Ortega of San Martin, Argentina. (Posted July 10 at 11:23 a.m.)

Coroner: Stabbing led to Menlo Park man's death

The stab wounds Lawrence Cronin, 67, received March 26 did kill the Menlo Park man two months later, San Mateo County Coroner Robert Foucrault said. (Posted July 10 at 10:48 a.m.)

Second fire burns near Paly in six weeks

A fire Monday evening, July 9, near Palo Alto High School burned in an area where the school district stores its buses. It was the second suspicious fire in the area in six weeks. (Posted July 10 at 9:52 a.m.)

Palo Alto charges forward with new bike plan

Palo Alto's dream of leading the pack of America's most bike-friendly cities now has a roadmap — an ambitious "master plan" that the City Council enthusiastically approved Monday night, July 9. (Posted July 9 at 11:03 p.m.)

Rollover crash snarls traffic on Highway 101

A Hayward man was seriously injured in a rollover crash on U.S. Highway 101 in Palo Alto Monday afternoon, July 9, a California Highway Patrol officer said. (Posted July 9 at 3:54 p.m.)

One person killed Sunday in multi-car crash

The California Highway Patrol has contacted the driver of a white pickup truck who fled the scene of a fatal crash on U.S. Highway 101 in San Mateo early Sunday morning, July 8, a CHP spokesman said Monday, July 9. (Posted July 9 at 8:42 a.m.)

Car flips in crash on Embarcadero and Middlefield

A woman suffered minor injuries after her car flipped in a crash at the intersection of Embarcadero and Middlefield roads at 9:20 p.m. Friday, July 6. (Posted July 6 at 10:51 p.m.)

Fourth of July DUI arrests drop in Bay Area

DUI arrests were down throughout the Bay Area over the Independence Day holiday, authorities said Thursday, July 5. (Posted July 6 at 8:23 a.m.)

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REDEVELOPMENT

California Avenue redesign evolves; opposition persists

City looks to reduce lanes, add plaza, benches and trees to commercial strip

by Gennady Sheyner

Wider sidewalks, new plazas and a scattering of benches, trees and other streetscape amenities are the latest components in Palo Alto's ambitious and controversial proposal to transform the California Avenue business district into a bustling pedestrian thoroughfare.

The plan, which the Planning and Transportation Commission discussed and approved by a 4-0 vote Wednesday night, July 11, has undergone a series of changes since the city first began exploring it almost two years ago. The most significant and contentious part of the proposal is the reduction of driving lanes from four to two — an idea that continues to stir opposition from dozens of merchants.

Though the proposed lane reduction featured prominently in Wednesday's hearing, with about a dozen California Avenue business owners attending to reassert their opposition, the commission's decision centered on the latest design proposals, including a bench-filled plaza at the east end of California Avenue with bollards, new trees and a "green screen" of hedge blocking the view of the Caltrain tracks.

David Gates, a consultant who is working with the city on the designs, presented a "preferred plan" that includes wider sidewalks, sand-colored paving, bollards that can be used to temporarily remove parking spots, and a plaza between Ash and Birch streets that could be used for farmers markets, music events and other public functions.

The street would be reconfigured to consist of two 15-foot-wide lanes and a 3-foot-wide "street band" separating travel lanes from parked

cars. The plan also calls for a well-lit plaza at Park Boulevard featuring a fountain, a grassy area and bike parking.

"In all cases, we're gaining vitality, we're getting better pedestrian character, we're getting more usability," Gates said, noting that the addition of greenery and vegetation would both calm traffic and create more shade.

The commission had a few concerns but found plenty to like about the new designs. The four members present (Chair Eduardo Martinez was absent and Commissioner Samir Tuma recused himself) voted to recommend that the City Council approve the latest design changes.

Palo Alto expects to fund the project through a \$1.2 million grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission and from \$700,000 in funds from Valley Transportation Authority's vehicle-registration fees. The city would also contribute about \$500,000 for the project, which officials hope to break ground on by fall 2013.

Vice Chair Susan Fineberg called the proposed Park Boulevard plaza "absolutely lovely compared to what is there now" and lauded the proposed plan for plucking the best streetscape elements from the various concept plans staff had considered before settling on the preferred alternative. But like her colleagues, she had major qualms about the level of opposition from merchants.

"We're not revisiting that decision tonight, but I think we're still left with the impact of the public that doesn't believe what we're saying," Fineberg said, referring to the decision to shift the street to two lanes. "That's not a good position for the city to be in, and I think we have to

work to resolve that."

Commissioner Arthur Keller shared her concerns about the merchants, 55 of whom signed a petition opposing the lane reduction. The commission, under Keller's direction, asked staff to solicit from the merchants a proposal for a lane-reduction trial period. Planning officials would then consider whether the proposed trial could be implemented.

"The issue for me isn't so much to change the decision but the fact that there is a significant amount of the community that is up in arms and feels that they haven't been adequately heard," Keller said. "I'd feel the investment of doing that would be worthwhile to prove either that it does work and that the impacts are minimal or to avoid spending millions on a plan that's a disaster."

A trial, however, could be problematic, Chief Transportation Official Jaime Rodriguez said. Though lanes could be temporarily reduced, the city would have a hard time replicating on a trial basis many of the aesthetic enhancements in the plan, including new paving and wider sidewalks — elements that are crucial to the city's vision. There's also the problem of measuring success, Rodriguez said, because "everyone will have a different opinion."

So far, the city's traffic analysis showed that the lane reduction would not impact traffic levels, he said.

"The traffic studies we've done do a good job demonstrating that the impacts from the lane reduction aren't there," he said. "There is no impact."

Many disagreed. Robert Davidson, who launched one of two law-

(continued on page 11)

Housing

(continued from page 3)

The list of potential housing units includes 1,335 that could be placed in commercial districts capable of accommodating mixed-use developments. It also includes 264 units on sites that are currently zoned for residential use.

The city had previously considered allowing residential units to be built at city-owned parking lots, provided the amount of parking spots does not get reduced. But that proposal was shot down by the council's Regional Housing Mandate Committee, which reviewed the Housing Element in June.

"We thought it was premature to turn city parking lots into multi-unit housing at this time, with so much unsettled with parking and development in those areas," said Councilman Greg Schmid, a member of the committee.

Councilwoman Gail Price disagreed and argued that the city should keep the parking-lot policy

in its Housing Element. She dissented in the final vote after the rest of the council decided to scrap this proposal.

"I do feel that this particular program ... provides flexibility and opportunity, and that's what Housing Elements and Comprehensive Plans should be all about — not closing doors but opening doors to opportunity," Price said.

Local hotels are also part of the new housing plan. Turning some hotel rooms into condominiums could provide 113 housing units, Planning Director Curtis Williams said.

But even as they prepared to submit the document to the state, council members continued to criticize the housing-allocation process, which is directed by the Association of Bay Area Governments. Councilman Larry Klein urged the city to include in its submission to the state a note regarding the city's opposition to the process.

Klein's colleagues shared his frustrations with the state mandates. Councilwoman Nancy Shepherd alluded to the tension inherent in the

city's journey toward adopting the Housing Element. On one hand, the city is required to submit a document to remain qualified for state grants and to avoid potential litigation. On the other hand, the community wants to maintain its independent power to set its own density objectives. The document, she said, is a major source of "angst" in the community.

The council's decision to forward the Housing Element to the state will now prompt a dialogue between city and state officials about the policies in the document. Once the state signs off, the council can adopt it and integrate it into its Comprehensive Plan, the city's official land-use bible. But planners won't be able to rest for long. The planning period for the newly approved Housing Element stretches to 2014, meaning the city will have to start working on the document's next iteration, which covers the following seven years, within the next year, Williams said. ■

Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner can be emailed at gshyner@paweekly.com.

REAL ESTATE TRENDS

by Samia Cullen



2012 Semi-Annual Local Market Activity and Trends

The local housing market showed strength throughout the first half of 2012. The Facebook IPO fueled the market, with the buzz being that buyers were rushing to buy before Facebook went public and pushed up home prices.

At June 30 the listing inventory in Palo Alto was at an almost historic low, with 46 active listings as opposed to 64 listings at the same time last year. The median sale price for the first half of 2012 was at a record high of \$1,700,000 (compared to the previous record of \$1,552,000 in 2007), the sale to list price ratio was 106% and the average days on the market was 21 days. The strongest sales activity was in the \$2 to \$3 million price range followed by the \$1.2 to \$1.4 million range.

In Menlo Park there were 44 active listings at June 30, with 198 homes sold

during the first half at a median sale price of \$1,344,000, a sale to list price ratio of 102.5% and average days on market of 28 days. The strongest activity was in the above \$2 million range, followed by the \$1.5 to \$2 million range.

Atherton had 37 active listings at June 30, with 33 houses sold in the first half on MLS. The median sale price was \$3,305,000 compared to \$3,295,000 last year. It is worth noting that we had strong sales activity off MLS, especially in Atherton.

It seems that the market is more balanced now than the beginning of the year. We saw a slow-down in market activity since early June. For now it is hard to determine if this is the seasonal summer slow-down or a letdown following the Facebook IPO.

If you have a real estate question or would like a free market analysis for your home, please call me at 650-384-5392, Alain Pinel Realtors, or email me at scullen@apr.com. For the latest news, follow my blog at www.samiacullen.com.



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Celebrity Chef/Author Joanne Weir, 12:45 p.m. Saturday
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Learning

(continued from page 5)

might be going on, and the better you are at projecting a program that sounds realistic and reasonable.

"I don't encourage people who aren't all that anxious to get kids tested at young ages. But when you don't know something, your anxiety can create all kinds of images of things that might not necessarily be true."

Like Morrissey-Compton Educational Center, the Children's Health Council of Palo Alto — where Compton once worked — offers diagnostic testing for learning disabilities.

The difference, said Compton, is her group is "smaller and focused almost entirely on learning disabilities, while the Children's Health Council does a much broader look at mental health, speech and language, and motor involvement.

"If a family calls and has many issues, we often say, 'You'd do much better to go to the Children's Health Council and get everything in one place.'"

For the past decade, Morrissey-Compton has tried to boost school opportunities for kids in the juvenile justice system and other county programs through arrangements with the Santa Clara County departments of Juvenile Probation and Child and Family Services.

Though rarely serving those children directly, they counsel parents, foster parents and social workers on how to get special education and other services.

"When you have children in the court system, the likelihood of having (learning) problems — all kinds of problems — is huge," Morrissey said.

"Often, the behavior problems overwhelm the teacher so nobody looks at the educational issue. Trying to get a child back on track has been very rewarding, but it's been very hard."

They cited the case of a San Jose boy picked up by the police for graffiti who got into further trouble for using extreme profanity with police and a judge. Morrissey and Compton suggested a psychiatric evaluation for Tourette Syndrome, which turned out to be his diagnosis.

The case resulted in an apology from the judge and a special program for the boy within the San Jose Unified School District, Morrissey said.

Morrissey and Compton have tried to diversify their caseload, creating a scholarship fund and broadening the summer program to include some low-income students.

The fact that neither Morrissey nor Compton has biological children occasionally has led to skepticism from parents.

"When I started out, people would say, 'Unless you're a parent I don't think you can really understand the parent perspective,' but I think that has passed," Compton said.

Morrissey told of a recent lunch with a client she once tutored who is now a teacher in Palo Alto. The former client recalled that when learning issues had come up when she was a child, her mother would say: "Go talk that over with your other mother." ■

Staff Writer Chris Kenrick can be emailed at ckenrick@paweekly.com.

News Digest

Palo Alto Chamber names MacKenzie interim CEO

The Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce has selected local businessman David S.G. MacKenzie to serve as its interim president and CEO while the organization searches for a permanent replacement for MacKenzie's predecessor, Paul Wright.

The chamber's board of directors announced that it has chosen MacKenzie, an accountant, because of his knowledge and understanding of the Palo Alto community. According to the board's announcement, MacKenzie has been working with Wright in recent months to improve the organization's administrative and management functions.

Wright resigned last month after six months on the job.

"It is the board's opinion that David's blend of business acumen, familiarity with the Chamber and knowledge of the Palo Alto community will provide the Chamber with sound organizational leadership as we conduct our search to fill the permanent position," board Chair Rebecca Teutschel said in a statement.

In announcing its selection, the Chamber touted MacKenzie's more than 35 years of experience on executive teams of various startups, large companies and nonprofit organizations. He is past president of the Palo Alto/University Rotary Club and has served on boards at the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, the Palo Alto Medical Foundation and the Cantor Arts Center.

"Palo Alto is where I was born, have lived, worked and volunteered," MacKenzie said in a statement. "I look forward to working more closely with the business community and other organizations to ensure it continues to be the kind of city I am very proud to say I've been associated with as a resident, family member and business person my entire life." ■

— Gennady Sheyner

Pinterest moves HQ from Palo Alto to San Francisco

On Monday, July 9, growing social-networking giant Pinterest moved its headquarters from Palo Alto to San Francisco, the company announced.

Employees vacated the company's headquarters at 635 High St. after CEO Ben Silberman signed a lease for the new building in San Francisco's South of Market neighborhood, citing the appeal of reasonably priced office space and the city's available technology talent as reasons for the move. The neighborhood also houses the headquarters of social-games juggernaut Zynga and Airbnb, an online room-rental service.

According to Pinterest spokesman Barry Schnitt, the company has officially signed a short-term lease for 572 7th St. at Brannan Street and has plans to expand that space in the future.

The company has been headquartered in Palo Alto since it was founded in 2010. Pinterest allows users to collect photos online and "pin" the images into categorized collections, or boards. Users can create multiple pinboards, which can be shared with followers.

Though the site currently requires an invitation for access, it has experienced rapid growth in recent months. ■

— Helen Carefoot

PG&E work may affect traffic through July

Commuters experiencing traffic delays on East Bayshore Road near Embarcadero Road should expect slowdowns for the rest of July. PG&E crews are excavating a gas-transmission line to test for hazardous conditions.

The corrosion inspections are part of an extensive testing project the utility must conduct on parts of its aging infrastructure. The state ordered PG&E to test parts of its network after a segment of Line 132 in San Bruno exploded, killing seven people and injuring scores of others in September 2010.

Sections of other pipelines — including Line 101, which runs through Palo Alto along the U.S. Highway 101 corridor — have come under scrutiny because of a pipe-seam weld that is similar to one implicated in the San Bruno blast.

A PG&E study considers 239 of its natural-gas transmission lines to be at risk of a similar failure, including segments of Line 101 on the Peninsula, the San Francisco Chronicle reported on June 6. PG&E identified more than 500 spots on those lines throughout a 48-mile area that are at risk.

The stretch of Line 101 in Palo Alto is 2.5 miles long and includes no fewer than five different pipe types, ranging from 20 inches to 36 inches in diameter, according to PG&E. Because of its complexity, testing the pipe has been difficult.

PG&E in November announced it would replace parts of Line 101 in Palo Alto. During a routine inspection June 28, a leak requiring immediate repair was found and fixed, according to the City of Palo Alto.

PG&E plans to install a permanent station for launching pipeline-inspection devices adjacent to East Bayshore to allow ongoing inspections of the line. Construction of this facility is delayed until 2013.

The public can check the status of the work and other PG&E projects in town by visiting the city Utilities Department website at www.cityofpaloalto.org/utilities. ■

— Sue Dremann

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High-speed rail

(continued from page 3)

nia voters weigh in a second time on the high-speed-rail project. Although a bill by State Sen. Doug LaMalfa, R-Richvale, met a quick death on the Senate floor last week, a group of opponents led by former U.S. Rep. George Radanovich is pursuing a similar citizen initiative. In its petition, the group argues that the state “cannot afford to pay for a high-speed train system that will cost more than \$100 billion at a time when teachers and police are being laid off, prisoners are being released from prisons, and taxpayers are being asked to dig deeper into their own pockets to pay for basic services.”

The Palo Alto City Council, which last December adopted as its official stance a call for the project’s termination, is scheduled to consider endorsing the citizen initiative on July 23. The council’s Rail Committee has recommended that the full council do exactly that, even though state law bars the city from spending money on the campaign.

“Our action might be helpful to the cause symbolically,” Klein said.

Meanwhile, city officials and rail watchdogs are still analyzing the text of Senate Bill 1029, which lawmakers released in the waning hours of July 3 and which the 40-member state Senate approved by a single vote on July 6. Elizabeth

Alexis, co-founder of the Palo Alto-based group Californians Advocating Responsible Rail Design, said the group remains concerned about where the rest of the funds for the system will come from.

“When you look at full costs and benefits in Central Valley — it’s very little positive transportation value unless you spend another \$30 billion dollars,” Alexis said. “The concern is that this will act as a sponge for all available money that can go to other worthy projects.”

The specific language of the budget-trailer bill only adds to the anxiety. For example, the bill allocates \$1.1 billion for a “blended system” on the Peninsula — a design under which high-speed rail and Caltrain can share two tracks between San Jose and San Francisco. But the bill also states that the \$1.1 billion can be transferred to other items, including construction in the Central Valley (known in the bill as Item 2665-306-6043), with approval from the state Department of Finance.

“It looks like accounting minutiae, but if you translate it, it means that with one signature from a governor appointee, the money for Caltrain can be moved to the Central Valley project,” Alexis said.

“The first time you read a bill it seems very clear to you,” she added. “It’s only on the 12th reading of the bill that you really understand all the loopholes.”

Palo Alto officials have other concerns about the specific bill, including the fact that the language

specifies that “any funds appropriated in this item” shall be used for a blended system and not to “expand the blended system to a dedicated four-track system.” City officials argued that this language doesn’t offer sufficient protection to ensure that the rail authority would pursue a blended system rather than the deeply unpopular four-track alternative. They called for language specifying that “funding in subsequent years may also not be used for a four-track system on the Peninsula.”

Despite major reservations from all Republicans and some Democrats in the Senate, the appropriation bill received 21 votes, the minimum needed for advancement. The bill allocates \$2.7 billion from the Proposition 1A bond to launch construction on the system’s opening segment in the Central Valley and another \$1.1 billion to support the “blended system” on the Peninsula. The state Assembly had voted 51-27 on July 5 to approve the bill.

Much like in the Assembly, members of the Senate lined up largely along party lines, with Democrats supporting and Republicans opposing the bill. But some Senators, including Joe Simitian, D-Palo Alto, and Alan Lowenthal, D-Long Beach, crossed the party lines and voted against the project. Both of them have been heavily involved in oversight of the project since 2008, when voters approved a \$9.95 billion bond for high-speed rail.

Supporters of the appropriation bill, led by Senate President Pro

Tem Darrell Steinberg, argued that the rail project is badly needed to create jobs and improve California’s transportation infrastructure.

“In this era of term limits, how many chances do we have to vote for something this important and long-lasting?” Steinberg asked his colleagues at the beginning of the debate. “How many chances do we have to vote for something that will inject a colossal stimulus into today’s economy while looking at the future far beyond our days in this house?”

Simitian rejected this logic and focused on the particulars of the bill. He cited the fact that the rail authority has a leadership structure riddled with vacancies and that the bulk of the funding in the bill would go toward a 130-mile track in the Central Valley. He also noted that the bill fails to answer the critical question of how the rest of the \$68 billion system would be funded and cited criticism from a variety of nonpartisan agencies, including the Legislative Analyst’s Office and the Office of the State Auditor.

Simitian also alluded to the Field Poll conducted last week, which showed that the controversial project could derail the tax measure that Gov. Jerry Brown plans to bring to the voters in November. Though 54 percent of the survey respondents said they support Brown’s proposal, a third of those surveyed said they would be less likely to vote in favor of the measure if the legislature were to fund high-speed rail.

Simitian cited the souring public opinion for the project in explaining his vote. By chasing the \$3.3 billion in federal funding for high-speed rail, Simitian said, the legislature is risking a \$40 billion hole in the budget that lawmakers would have to fill if Brown’s measure fails.

“How are we going to feel if we wake up on Wednesday after Election Day and look at the trigger cuts — the \$40 billion that will have to be pulled painfully from the budget — from schools, colleges, universities, health, welfare and public safety?” Simitian said. “We may not think that’s the way it ought to be but the hard practical reality is that that’s the way the folks back home are thinking about these tradeoffs.”

In the Assembly, both Jerry Hill and Rich Gordon voted to support the appropriation bill. Gordon said at the Assembly hearing that he went through a “period of doubt” on the high-speed-rail project but that his “faith has been restored” by the rail authority’s embracing of the blended approach, which he had championed along with Simitian and U.S. Rep. Anna Eshoo.

“I do think that this is a part and parcel of our future, and I think the projects that are defined in this legislation also stand alone on their own for the moment, as we move in the future toward full implementation of high-speed rail,” Gordon said. ■

Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner can be emailed at gsheyner@paweekly.com.



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Palo Alto Unified School District

Strong Schools Bond – Citizens’ Oversight Committee Senior Citizen Member

The Palo Alto Unified School District Board of Education seeks an applicant for appointment to the independent, volunteer Strong Schools Bond Citizens’ Oversight Committee. The Committee reviews and report to the public on the District’s bond expenditures. The applicant must be active in a senior citizen organization and must reside within the Palo Alto Unified School District. An applicant may not be an employee, contractor, consultant, or vendor of the District.

The successful applicants will serve a two-year term that will extend from the date of appointment to August 22, 2014.

The purpose of the Citizens’ Oversight Committee (COC) is to inform the public concerning the expenditure of bond revenues. The COC is required by state law to actively review and report on the proper expenditure of taxpayers’ money for school construction.

Application forms can be obtained by writing to: Dr. Kevin Skelly, Superintendent, Palo Alto Unified School District, 25 Churchill Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94306, or by emailing: lbaranoff@pausd.org. You can obtain information by phone by calling 650-329-3737.

Completed applications must be sent to: Dr. Kevin Skelly, Superintendent, Palo Alto Unified School District, 25 Churchill Avenue, Palo Alto, CA 94306, or emailed to: lbaranoff@pausd.org. **All applications must be received by Friday, July 20, 2012 at 4:30 pm.**

This week on Town Square

Blog: London 94301

Posted July 9 at 2:38 p.m. by David Vinokur, a former resident of the Crescent Park neighborhood:

Hello again from soggy London. Today a nationwide drought (or garden “hosepipe ban”) was officially called off after the wettest spring in recorded history. Who woulda’ thought? In my ongoing efforts to give you my expat’s perspective on London living and attending the London 2012 Olympic Games (including the opening ceremony), I will try to strike a balance between what I find noteworthy and what you might deem interesting about the Games of the XXX Olympiad. In that vein I will return another time to the topic of life on a crowded island. Right now, let’s talk sports.

Growing up in Palo Alto, two of my favorite sports to play were soccer and tennis. I also loved badminton at Jordan and Paly. What luck to find myself living in the country that created these sports. Britain is, of course, also the land that gave us golf and rugby, the latter of which is the clear progenitor of American football. Even the indigenous game of rounders can plausibly be considered the birth-sport (when spliced with cricket) of America’s Pastime. So yes, Britain is absolutely a sporting nation.

Read more online by going to www.PaloAltoOnline.com/square and clicking “London 94301.”

Merger

(continued from page 3)

felt with the economy being what it is, it would be better to partner,” she said by phone last week.

InnVision had been struggling financially for some years. Net assets for the years ending June 30 dropped \$220,672 in 2008, rose slightly in 2009, then plunged \$626,188 in 2010 and by \$1,011,862 in 2011, according to financial statements. An independent auditor did not find any deficiencies in InnVision’s financial reporting.

Burroughs offered perhaps a prescient outlook on InnVision’s future in May 2009 during an interview: “I’m on pins and needles, to tell you the truth,” she said.

On April 30, 2011, the organization closed the Clara-Mateo Alliance homeless shelter on the grounds of the Veterans Affairs’ Menlo Park campus because of the lean economy, she said at the time. The shelter offered transitional housing for families and single adults, and 67 percent of the single residents were veterans.

Lisle said the merger offer came at a time when Shelter Network was looking to increase its ability to house people. Over the past two years, an average of 50 families and more than 70 individuals have been turned away every night for lack of space, she said.

“With more than 18 major facilities, we can increase the capacity of the people we serve by three-

fold. ... We don’t have to start from scratch,” she said.

San Mateo County provides families with children a hotel voucher if there is no room at a shelter, she said. But that does not achieve the goal of getting them into a stable environment and then permanent housing. The merger will allow more people to quickly gain access to shelter and housing at a fraction of the cost, Lisle said.

Both agencies hold similar philosophies, she said. Both have a no-tolerance policy for drugs and alcohol and offer comprehensive services such as counseling for drug and alcohol addiction, unemployment and mental illness.

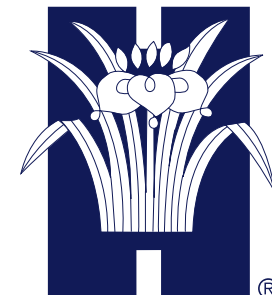
Approximately 60 percent of both agencies’ homeless clients are families, and of those more than half are children under age 18. Roughly 40 percent of transitional-housing clients are single adults, spokesperson Maria Duzon said.

While InnVision charged fees for shelter, the new organization is offering shelter at no charge. It will adopt Shelter Network’s “Beyond the Bed” program, in which clients must work toward an education, job and saving 50 percent of their budget for housing and other essential living expenses. More than 90 percent of families graduating from “Beyond the Bed” have found and maintained permanent housing in about 120 days — slightly over half the national average time.

InnVision’s clients stayed in shelters slightly longer than the national



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average of 232 days, Duzon said.

Lisle said she plans to hire 10 to 20 more caseworkers to aid clients. There are no planned staff layoffs or program closures.

Palo Alto services are not expected to change, she said. The agency has just renewed a contract with the Opportunity Center for another five years.

The merger did not come as a surprise to leaders at the nonprofit Silicon Valley Community Foundation, which has provided grants for InnVision's food and housing programs for the past few years.

"We were aware that the merger was happening," said Erica Wood, vice president of community leadership and grant making.

In 2008 the foundation held a conference that predicted many nonprofits would look for new partnerships in order to survive.

Porcia Chen Silverberg, executive director of Thrive: The Alliance of Nonprofits for San Mateo County, a membership organization, said the financial crisis for

nonprofits is not over.

Providers of "safety net" services, such as InnVision, initially received boosts from donors to help close funding holes in 2008, she said. But in the last couple of years people have pulled away from giving, although it's not clear why.

"It's not getting better any time soon, even though the economy is getting better and starting to turn around. It's just like city governments. You see fire departments are merging between cities. Funding is being cut in every direction," she said.

Silicon Valley Community Foundation is itself the product of a merger. It formed from Santa Clara County-based Community Foundation Silicon Valley and Peninsula Community Foundation in San Mateo County in 2007.

CEO and President Emmett Carson said last February that it took time to rebuild the trust of donors, some of whom feared the merged foundation would no longer fund the projects they supported. Lisle said she is aware of that similar

challenge for InnVision Shelter Network, but Silverberg lent her support to the merger.

"Their missions align pretty well," she said.

One of the biggest challenges is creating one board of directors out of two organizations. Board members are deeply passionate about their own organization, and sometimes boards can't reconcile those differences. That's a big reason why mergers can fail, she said.

"That these two boards are willing to come together — that says a whole lot to me about this merger," she said.

Dan Coonan, InnVision board president, said he supports the merger.

"Karae is absolutely the perfect person to carry on the tremendous work Christine has been doing for decades in this area. ... It is a very good day for this critical cause in the Bay Area," he wrote in an email. ■

Staff Writer Sue Dremann can be emailed at sdremann@paweekly.com.

California Avenue

(continued from page 7)

suits to stop the project (the court dismissed the suit because Davidson didn't exhaust his "administrative remedies" before filing the suit), argued that the lane reduction doesn't make sense and that city officials are only pursuing it in order to get the VTA grant. The street, he said, fills up in the morning with young students on bicycles and with buses and shuttle vans picking up passengers from the Caltrain stations.

"It seems like we can get that free money, which is never free, and that the only way we can get the money is to have a lane reduction," said Davidson, owner of California Paint Company.

Terry Shuchat, who also sued the city over its environmental analysis (the court found in favor of the city, but the litigation forced Palo Alto to forgo its \$1.2 million grant from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission last year — money city officials expect to receive in the next grant round), made a similar point. Shuchat, owner of Keeble & Shuchat Photography, praised most of the elements of the plan, including the new landscape improvements but urged the council not to reduce lanes.

"I think it's a great-looking plan," Shuchat said. "I think it's phenomenal on paper. I don't think it's really practical to put into use."

Others said the streetscape plan, including the lane reductions, is exactly what the neighborhood needs. Todd Burke, who lives close to the California Avenue train station, disputed the assertion that the street is too busy to accommodate a reduction in lanes.

"I can go there in the middle of the day and cook a pork chop on a hibachi and probably not get hit by a car," Burke said.

He characterized some of the opposition from merchants as "hyperbole." The project, he said, would be great for his neighbors and for all businesses on California Avenue.

Ronna Devincenzi, a former board member at the California Avenue

Area Development Association, called the streetscape plan "excellent" and lauded the city for collaborating with merchants and making everyone aware of the changes to come. The association, she said, has been discussing streetscape improvements for California Avenue with the city for many years.

"This is exciting because it's like the Rolls Royce version of the streetscape that always seemed out of reach," Devincenzi said. "This design just oozes city excitement."

The planning commission added a list of stipulations to its approval, including recommendations that staff

consider such elements as raised crosswalks and parklets (planted strips). The commission also directed staff to pay attention to loading zones in the new design, a particular concern of area merchants.

Even though the commission's approval calls for exploration of a trial period, members stressed the need to keep the project going without delay.

"I think it's important to move this forward and to move relatively quickly," Commissioner Greg Tanaka said. "If anyone has walked down California Avenue, you can see that a lot of tender loving care is needed on that street." ■

CityView

A round-up of Palo Alto government action this week

City Council (July 9)

Bicycle plan: The council approved the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, which proposes a wide range of long-term improvements to the city's bicycle infrastructure.

Yes: Espinosa, Holman, Klein, Price, Scharff, Schmid, Shepherd, Yeh **Absent:** Burt
Housing Element: The council agreed to forward the draft Housing Element to the state Department of Housing and Community Development. **Yes:** Espinosa, Holman, Klein, Scharff, Schmid, Shepherd **No:** Price **Absent:** Burt

Council Policy and Services Committee (July 10)

Priorities: The committee discussed the council's priority-setting process and recommended that the committee make an annual recommendation to the full council about the process of the council's annual retreat. **Yes:** Unanimous

Planning and Transportation Commission (July 11)

California Avenue: The commission discussed the streetscape-improvement project at California Avenue and recommended the latest proposed design enhancements, including wider sidewalks and a plaza at Park Boulevard. The commission also recommended a trial period for reducing lanes from four to two. **Yes:** Fineberg, Keller, Michael, Tanaka **Absent:** Martinez **Recused:** Tuma

Utilities Advisory Commission (July 11)

Electric portfolio: The commission discussed and recommended approving staff's proposed definition for "carbon neutrality" as it pertains to the city's electric portfolio. **Yes:** Unanimous

Electric rates: The commission approved a modified version of staff recommendation for a pilot program for time-of-use electric rates for all residential customers. Staff proposal was to adopt the pilot program only for customers with electric vehicles. **Yes:** Chang, Cook, Hall, Melton, Waldfogel **No:** Eglash

Architectural Review Board (July 12)

Ronald McDonald House: The board discussed but did not vote on the proposed expansion of the Ronald McDonald House at 50 El Camino Real. The three-story building would include 70 rooms on a 51,167-square-foot site adjacent to the existing Ronald McDonald House. **Action:** None

Public Agenda

A preview of Palo Alto government meetings next week

CITY COUNCIL ... The council plans to discuss downtown-parking strategies and consider approving a trial residential permit parking program in and around Professorville. The meeting will begin at 5:30 p.m. on Monday, July 16, in the Council Chambers at City Hall (250 Hamilton Ave.). The meeting will be followed by a closed session to discuss the status of the city's negotiations with the two police unions.

HISTORIC RESOURCES BOARD ... The board plans to discuss 411 Lytton, a proposal to designate an example of the square cottage building type to the city's Historic Inventory in Category 2; 1213 Newell Road, proposed additions to the Main Library; and 1305 Middlefield Road, a request for a sign program at Rinconada Park. The meeting will begin at 8 a.m. on Wednesday, July 18, in the Council Chambers at City Hall (250 Hamilton Ave.).

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD ... The board plans to discuss 1213 Newell Road, a proposed expansion of the Main Library and various landscape improvements at the site. The meeting will begin at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, July 19, in the Downtown Library (270 Forest Ave.).

PUBLIC ART COMMISSION ... The commission plans to discuss its website and Byxbee Park art. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. on Thursday, July 19, in the Council Chambers at City Hall (250 Hamilton Ave.).



NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING of the Palo Alto Planning & Transportation Commission

Please be advised the Planning and Transportation Commission (P&TC) shall conduct a **public meeting at 6:00 PM, Wednesday, July 25, 2012 in the Council Chambers, Ground Floor, Civic Center, Palo Alto, California.** Any interested persons may appear and be heard on these items.

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

UNFINISHED BUSINESS. Public Hearing:

1. Comprehensive Plan Amendment: Review of Vision Statement, Goals, Policies and Programs of the Community Services and Facilities Element.

NEW BUSINESS. Public Hearing:

2. Arastradero Road Re-Striping Trial Project: Recommendation for the Permanent Retention of the Arastradero Road Re-Striping Trial Project between El Camino Real and Gunn High School for the re-striping of Arastradero Road from four lanes to a hybrid of three lanes in some sections and various traffic calming and roadway modifications.

Questions. For any questions regarding the above items, please contact the Planning Department 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.

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Curtis Williams, Director of Planning and Community Environment



Veronica Weber

Palo Alto's TICKING TIME BOMB

Employee pensions are helping fuel fiscal crisis
 by Gennady Sheyner

In 2007, the year Warren Buffett famously described public pensions as a time bomb with a long fuse, Palo Alto officials decided to add a little gunpowder to the city's benefits package. The economy was booming, real-estate prices were surging and the council decided that the time was ripe to improve the pension benefit for employees represented by the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), about half the city's workforce. The rapidly rising cost of health care was of greater concern to city officials, who sought to switch the SEIU workers to a less generous health care plan. In exchange, the city offered to bump up the union's pension formula from "2 percent at 55" (that is, 2 percent of the employee's highest salary multiplied by the number of years worked before retirement at 55) to "2.7 percent at 55."

But Buffett's aphorism notwithstanding, the fuse on Palo Alto's time bomb wasn't particularly long. In 2008, as the stock market began to plummet and real-estate investments started to tank, city



Veronica Weber

Top: The Palo Alto City Council discusses union negotiations at its June 25 meeting. Above: Service Employees International Union members attend the council meeting to voice their opinions. Staff compensation currently makes up 63 percent of the city's General Fund.



Veronica Weber

Ratu Serumalani, a maintenance worker for the Community Services Department, speaks to the City Council. The council plans to discuss how to rein in pension costs in September.

leaders realized that the city's generous pension packages — a lasting legacy of the pre-recession era — could not be sustained. The following year, they launched the period of unraveling that continues to this day and that is set to take center stage in the coming months, as the city tries to formulate a broader strategy for containing out-of-control benefit expenditures.

Some progress has already been made. In 2009, after loud protests, heated negotiations and a one-day strike by SEIU workers, Palo Alto became the first city in the region to implement a second pension tier for new employees, one with a less lucrative formula. Last year, the city's firefighters accepted a second pension tier as part of a new union contract, and in May, after nine months of negotiations, police officers followed suit.

But even with these changes, the fuse continues to burn at an accelerating clip. In 2002 and 2003, the city's pension expenditures were \$3.8 million and \$2.4 million, respectively. Since 2008, annual expenditures have consistently hovered around \$20 million. The budget for 2013, which the City Council adopted last month, projects \$23.1 million in pension costs. And with investments by California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) running far below projections this year, City Manager James Keene expects expenses to continue to grow in the coming years, he said in a recent interview.

The issue of pensions is a common topic at the dais at City Hall — especially during the spring when the council considers its annual budget. Increasingly, employee compensation is taking up a greater share of the budget, leaving the council and staff with less to fund city programs and services. This year, financial

pressures prompted officials to propose outsourcing the city's popular animal-services operation in order to save roughly \$500,000 a year. The city ultimately elected to keep the service in-house, but staff is now scrambling to find annual savings of \$470,000.

Staff compensation now makes up about 63 percent of the General Fund. The benefits share has grown particularly fast in recent years. In 2002, the proportion of dollars spent on employee benefits to salaries was 23 percent. That ratio went up to 54 percent in 2010 and to 63 percent by fiscal year 2012.

Health care expenses jumped from about \$10 million in 2002 to a projected \$24 million in fiscal year 2013, which began July 1. They are expected to approach \$30 million in two years. Pensions, meanwhile, jumped from \$3.8 million in 2002 to \$23.9 million in 2012. In 10 years, employee benefit costs will exceed salaries, the city projects.

Vice Mayor Greg Scharff alluded to these trends at a May 7 meeting, when the council was discussing the city's long-term financial forecast. Medical and pension costs, Scharff said, "are running at an unsustainable rate and crowding out everything else." As a result, he said, the citizens of Palo Alto aren't getting a fair shake.

"What we're asking people to do is to accept a lower quality of life so that we can fund pensions and benefits that are growing at an outrageous pace," Scharff said. "I don't accept that that should be the plan."

But, as city officials often acknowledge, identifying the problem is far easier than solving it. The city's annual expenditures hinge on a wide range of decisions, many of which get made in Sacramento. Palo Alto employees are among the

(continued on next page)



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Photo: Carol Friedman

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Pensions

(continued from previous page)

roughly 1.6 million workers — active and retired — who participate in CalPERS, the largest pension fund in the nation.

“What we need to do is we need to basically bring down pension and medical costs, but we’re really hampered in our ability to do that given state law and legacy issues and inability to change pre-existing costs for people who are retired and all sorts of issues out there like that,” Scharff said.

Councilman Pat Burt echoed this sentiment and said that even under recent revisions to pension formulas, “Employees do very well.”

“Retiree pension and retiree medical — that’s what’s blowing up the budget,” Burt said.

He cited the “3 percent at 55” pension formula recently adopted by public-safety employees and the fact that all employees still get 90 percent of their families’ medical coverage paid for by the city. Salaries may remain frozen or get trimmed, Burt said, but Palo Alto’s benefits remain extremely lucrative.

“There’s potential that they won’t be getting a fair shake on salaries, but even new employees get a very fair shake on pension and benefits,” Burt said. “On the benefit side, new employees still do very well.”

Now, Scharff, Burt, Councilman Greg Schmid and Councilwoman Karen Holman hope to launch a broader discussion on reforming employee benefits. Last week, they released a colleagues’ memo that calls for the city to come up with a “benefits strategy” that would guide future reforms. In the memo, they note that the cost of employee benefits and pensions “has risen dramatically for the City of Palo Alto, reducing the funds available for our community’s necessary and valued services and infrastructure.” They recommend the city work with employees to come up with solutions to the pension problem with the goal of “building a modern, flexible workplace environment for Palo Alto City employees while also assuring sustainable costs for its citizens.”

The council plans to launch this discussion in September.



Robert Item, a utilities engineer, told the council on June 25 that Palo Alto’s compensation benefits draw workers to the city.

Palo Alto’s debt per resident is highest in Santa Clara County

FY 2010 unfunded liabilities for county’s large cities

City	Debt per Resident	Pension	OPEB*	Total
Palo Alto	\$4,021	\$153,941,000	\$105,045,000	\$258,986,000
San Jose	\$3,320	\$1,434,696,471	\$1,706,081,881	\$3,140,778,352
Santa Clara	\$2,125	\$223,667,947	\$23,855,000	\$247,522,947
Mountain View	\$1,803	\$104,121,296	\$29,396,467	\$133,517,763
Sunnyvale	\$1,728	\$149,300,000	\$92,800,000	\$242,100,000
Santa Clara County	\$1,547	\$1,455,835,322	\$1,300,000,000	\$2,755,835,322
Milpitas	\$1,518	\$70,166,975	\$31,230,798	\$101,397,773
Gilroy	\$819	\$35,100,000	\$4,900,000	\$40,000,000
Cupertino	\$629	\$18,581,728	\$18,069,366	\$36,651,094
Total		\$3,645,410,739	\$3,311,378,512	\$6,956,789,251

*Other post-employment benefits

Top 10 City of Palo Alto pension earners

For July 1, 2011, to June 30, 2012

Name & Title	Employment Start	Employment End	Total Gross Allowance
Lynne Johnson Police chief	2/3/1975	2/3/2009	201,953
Frank Benest City manager	4/10/2000	8/29/2008	193,351
Richard James Community services director	8/6/1979	7/4/2008	178,681
William Miks Wastewater plant manager	10/2/1972	1/19/2007	176,067
Paul Thiltgen Community services director	8/31/1981	4/2/2004	172,538
June Fleming City manager	9/10/1968	4/7/2000	168,398
Nicholas Marinaro Fire chief	10/15/1994	6/29/2010	166,157
Daniel Lindsey Fire deputy chief	5/22/1999	10/24/2009	164,774
Edward Mrizek Utilities director	2/17/1969	12/30/1998	160,767
Jay Rounds Human resources director	1/26/1970	12/28/2001	149,499

Palo Alto employees make no secret of the fact that generous employee benefits were a major driver in their decisions to join the city’s workforce.

Before a council meeting June 25, about 40 employees represented by the SEIU gathered in City Hall to address the council, which was scheduled to go into closed session to discuss the status of labor negotiations. Employees spoke about morale problems in the workforce and urged the council not to make any drastic benefit reductions.

Robert Item, an engineer in the Utilities Department, said he had previously worked as a consultant in the private sector.

“The (city’s) benefits were something I haven’t seen in the private sector,” Item said, explaining his decision to make the switch.

Palo Alto isn’t unique in this regard. A March Santa Clara County Grand Jury report noted that private-sector employees typically contribute more than 50 percent of the total cost toward their own pen-

sions — 50 percent in the case of Social Security and an even greater share in the case of 401K plans. The generous benefits offered by cities are intended to counterbalance the higher salaries in the private sector.

“Cities reported that they felt compelled to enhance benefits to attract and retain the best work force possible,” the Grand Jury wrote.

But benefits have been particularly generous in Palo Alto, where the city has until recently footed the entire bill for employee pensions, including the employees’ share. The city has also traditionally paid employees’ entire medical costs — a perk that’s generally unheard of in the private sector. Only in the last three years did it start asking workers to chip in — a proposal that has been particularly unpopular among unions.

When it comes to pensions, veterans of the city’s Police and Fire departments have done especially well. Former Police Chief Lynne Johnson, who retired in late 2009 after making comments that many

interpreted as an endorsement of racial profiling, led all local retirees with a pension of \$201,953 in fiscal year 2012, according to documents the Weekly obtained from CalPERS through a Public Records Act request. Former Fire Chief Nick Marinaro, who retired in 2010 under more amicable circumstances, drew a pension of \$166,157.

But high pension payments aren’t restricted to police officers and firefighters. The list of Palo Alto retirees getting hefty pension payments include Richard James, former director of the Community Services Department (\$178,681), and William Miks, former manager of the city’s water-quality control plant (\$176,067). Frank Benest, the former city manager under whose watch the city bumped up the pension formulas for its labor unions, received \$193,351, second only to Johnson.

To be sure, most Palo Alto retirees make far less than that. Many midlevel managers draw pensions in the \$65,000 to \$70,000 range. A

retired arborist received a \$55,718 pension in 2012, while a former manager in the Community Services Department got \$70,728.

But six-digit pension payments, while uncommon, aren’t exactly rare. The list of 954 Palo Alto retirees who received CalPERS funds in 2012 includes 88 who received pensions greater than \$100,000 in 2012. The Santa Clara County Grand Jury also noted in its report on pensions that the average pension for public-safety employees in Palo Alto retiring between the ages of 51 and 54 with 30 years of service is \$108,000.

The pension problem is further compounded by the city’s massive health care liability for retirees. According to the Grand Jury report, the city’s pension liabilities totaled \$153.9 million and its health care liabilities are \$105 million — for a total of \$259 million. Palo Alto’s debt per resident was calculated at \$4,021, higher than in any other city in the county (San Jose was a distant second with \$3,320).

The problem of benefit costs isn’t limited to Palo Alto or, for that matter, to California. Ever since the Great Recession hit, states across the country have been grappling with the fact that they can no longer honor the promises they made to their workers during better times.

A new study by the Pew Center on States, which surveyed financial data from 2010, found 49 states with liabilities in their pension funds (Wisconsin is the lone exception). The problem was particularly glaring in Illinois, Rhode Island, Connecticut and Kentucky, where pension plans were underfunded by about 50 percent. California pension plans were 78 percent funded in 2010, with a \$112 billion funding gap, Pew reported.

Many states have taken steps to address this growing problem. Twenty-three states have both increased employee contributions and reduced benefits, a recent study by the federal Government Accountability Office found.

California’s pension pains are exacerbated by how CalPERS’ pension plans are structured. The fund operates under a “defined benefits”



Victor Farisato, a utilities account representative and chief steward of the Service Employees International Union’s local chapter, also addressed the council in June.

plan, which guarantees each participating employee a certain pension sum, thereby forcing employers to constantly revise their contributions to CalPERS based on the pension fund's returns on investment, known in industry parlance as "discount rates." The private sector, by contrast, uses the "defined contribution" model under which payments to the fund are constant but the pension amount ultimately depends on investment performance.

Under this system, workers in Palo Alto and elsewhere are guaranteed their pension payments regardless of CalPERS' investment performance. The city's contributions, which support the guaranteed payments, thus ebb and flow with the economic tides (lately, it's been mostly flow).

The recent report by the Santa Clara County Grand Jury urges public agencies to switch from the defined-benefit to the defined-contribution plans, in which "costs are predictable and therefore more manageable by the cities." Three states — Georgia, Michigan and Utah — have shifted since 2008 from defined-benefit plans to "hybrid" plans that "shift some investment risk to new employees," according to the Government Accountability Office report.

California Gov. Jerry Brown is trying to take a similar approach. His 12-point plan, which includes such reforms as second pension tiers for new employees and a 50-50 split between employer and employee contributions, also calls for a "hybrid" approach that includes both a defined-benefit and a defined-contribution component.

Rising pension obligations have already helped to push some cities to the brink of insolvency or, in some cases, beyond. When Vallejo declared bankruptcy in 2008, it had a \$195 million unfunded pension obligation, the Grand Jury report notes (the bankruptcy, from which the Vallejo finally emerged in 2011, allowed the city to renegotiate its employee contracts and led to a reduction of pension and health care benefits). Stockton embarked on a similar path in late June when it passed a budget with a \$26 million hole and became the largest city in the nation's history to file for Chapter 9 protection. The Grand Jury report notes that Stockton had less than 70 cents set aside for every dollar of pension benefits its worker are owed. On July 10 the city of San Bernardino, facing a \$46 million deficit, voted to seek bankruptcy protection.

Other California cities have pushed through aggressive pension reforms in an effort to avoid similar fates. In June, San Diego and San Jose both passed major pension-reform measures with overwhelming support from voters. The San Jose measure gives city workers a choice between accepting a less lucrative pension plan and increasing their pension contributions to 13 percent (employee contributions currently range from 5 to 11 percent). The San Diego measure goes a step further and creates a 401K-like pension system for new employees, with the exception of police officers.

So far, Palo Alto's pension re-

forms have been relatively modest. The city's new contract with the police union raises the retirement age for collecting pensions by shifting new employees from a "3 percent at 50" formula to "3 percent at 55."

It also changes the way pensions are calculated. They used to be based on a single year of highest salary; now they're based on the average of three consecutive years with highest salaries. The reform addresses the problem of pension spiking, when an employee cashes in on unused vacation and sick days and pulls extra overtime in his final year to increase his "highest salary" and bump up his pension payments.

The city is also now asking its workers to fund the entire employee share of the CalPERS contribution. In the case of the police union — the latest labor group to agree to a contract — this comprises 9 percent of the total pension contribution. Other employee groups will soon be asked likewise to pick up the full share of employees' CalPERS costs, Keene said in a recent interview.

"In our current negotiations with the SEIU, one of our fundamental components is having them pick up that remaining 2.75 percent gap and paying the full employee share," Keene said. "We'll be working with the management-and-professionals group to have them move in that direction, too."

While state policies and economic trends have fueled Palo Alto's pension crisis, some of the wounds have been self-inflicted. In 2001, the city increased pension benefits for public safety workers by 50 percent, effective retroactively. Then came the 2007 agreement with SEIU, which resulted in a 35 percent lifetime benefit increase for employees. The city's newly passed budget points to these "large retroactive benefit increases" as a major reason for why "pension costs have skyrocketed (and will continue to grow)."

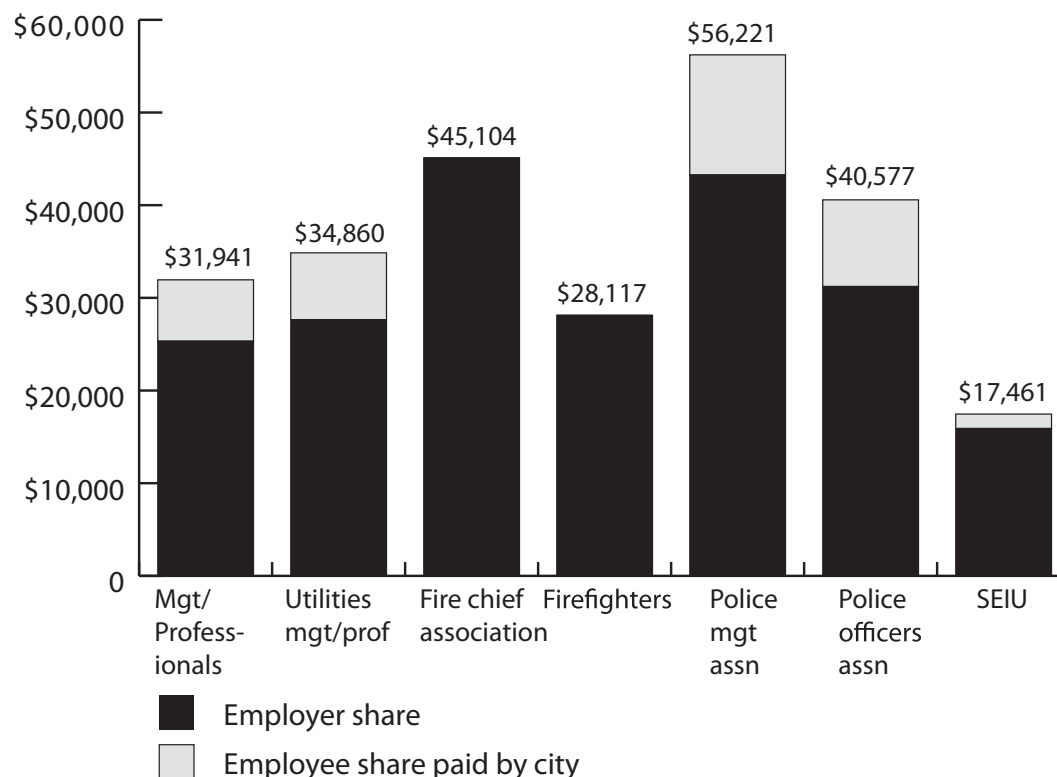
At the time, the city saw the increase in pension benefits as a reasonable exchange for a less generous health care plan. The average monthly health care cost per employee had jumped from \$734 in 2004 to \$1,009 in 2008 (it is projected to be \$1,230 in fiscal year 2013).

"The City is balancing its risk between medical and pension costs by capping its medical premiums while enhancing the pension plan," then-Human Resources Director Russ Carlsen wrote in October 2006. "Since CalPERS manages the pension fund (one of the largest funds in the world) and has a 9.2 percent rate of return over the last 10 years, it is a more predictable expense versus extremely volatile health care expenses, which the City has little control over."

Other cities made similar calculations and opted for "predictable" CalPERS returns. Carlsen noted in his report that nine of the 11 benchmark cities Palo Alto had looked at had similarly "improved or are in the process of improving their re-

What city will pay CalPERS on average per union member

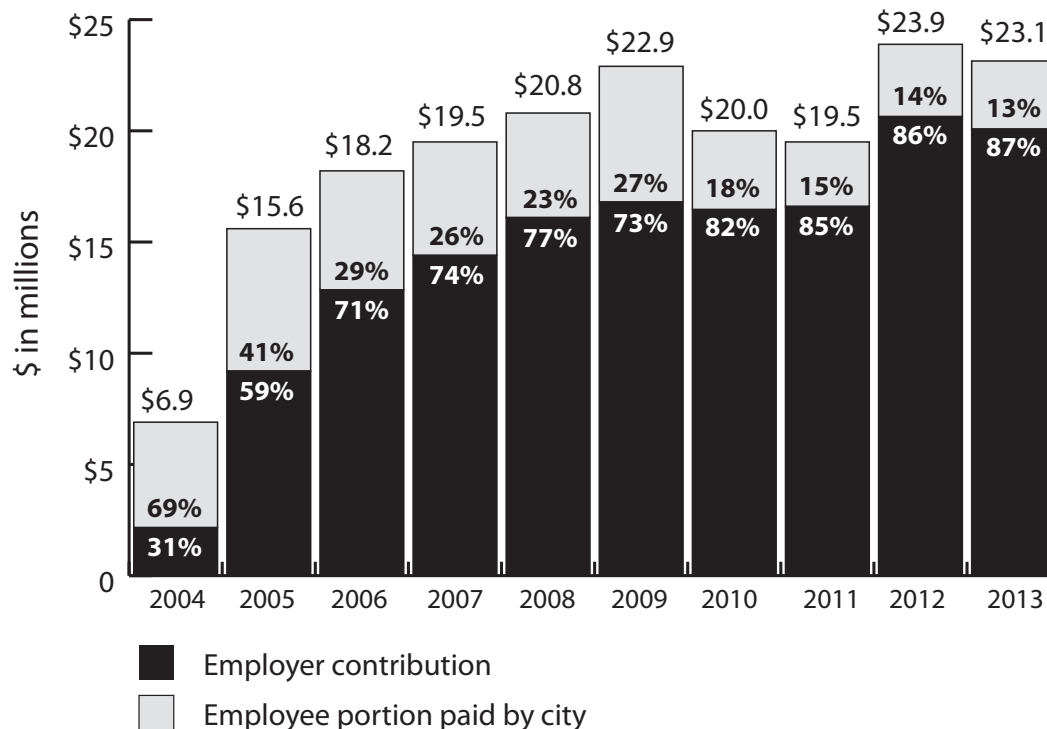
Includes both employer portion and employee portion paid by city



Source: City of Palo Alto. Fiscal year 2013 projection.

City's pension expenses have grown

Costs have tripled in past decade



(continued on next page)

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State investments take a bite out of local budgets

Lowered CalPERS projections cause cities to scramble to meet pension obligations

by Gennady Sheyner

In the grand old days of the mid-2000s, few people talked about California's out-of-control public pensions.

The stock market was flourishing, real estate was soaring and CalPERS was regularly bringing in a rate of return on investments of more than 9 percent. Stephen Levy, director and senior economist of the Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy, called this period of time a "roaring boom in Silicon Valley."

"California was in the middle of this incredible boom," Levy said in a recent interview. "It was coming off a period when the stock market had far exceeded the rate of return that was being assumed."

In this period of excess, the decisions Palo Alto and other cities made to grant greater pension benefits to employees seemed far from unreasonable, particularly given the high salaries offered in Silicon Valley's thriving private sector. Back then, the cities' contributions to CalPERS were minuscule compared to the current level because everyone assumed the good times would keep on rolling and the rates of return would remain high, he said. In 2003, for example, the city paid only \$2.3 million in pension expenses, compared with \$23.1 million now. It's projected to balloon further.

"Part of the reason we're behind is that everyone took a vacation when the stock market was doing good," Levy said. "We underinvested. We were assuming that the dot-com stock market would keep going. It was easy."

The problem with this approach became apparent after the economy tanked in late 2008, sending CalPERS investments on a downward spiral. As the stock market plummeted and the real-estate bubble popped, the pension funds' investments took a sizeable hit. The fund lost about \$100 million in its failed

investment in Page Mill Properties, a company that tried to buy more than half of East Palo Alto's rental-housing stock but later lost it in foreclosure; and another \$500 million in its investment in rental housing in New York.

The pension fund's "predictable" income plummeted by \$12.5 billion in fiscal year 2008 (which began July 1, 2007) and by \$57.4 billion the following year. It rebounded in the 2010 and 2011 with increases of \$25.6 billion and \$43.6 billion. Still, the damage has been done. In March, CalPERS officials decided to adjust the discount rate (that is, the expected rate of return) from 7.75 percent to 7.5 percent, a rate that many view as still far too optimistic. This was the first time in 10 years that the pension fund changed the rate.

The new discount rate means cities will now have to contribute millions more annually to meet their pension obligations. Joe Nation, an analyst at the Stanford Institute for Economic Policy Research, estimated in a December report (tellingly titled, "Pension Math: How California's Retirement Spending Is Squeezing the State Budget") that each percentage-point decrease in the CalPERS discount rate increases municipalities' contribution rates by an average of 10 percent. In Palo Alto, where benefits already take up a growing chunk of employee spending, the trend is expected to extend well into the future.

"Even a quarter of percentage is a multi-million-dollar cost impact on our annual pension requirements," City Manager James Keene said in a recent interview. "And there's preliminary indication that the returns for this coming year will fall far, far short of that guideline (the 7.5 percent rate of return). This means we'll get hit with higher pension contributions." ■

— Gennady Sheyner

'We underinvested. We were assuming that the dot-com stock market would keep going. It was easy.'

— Stephen Levy, director and senior economist of the Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy

Pensions

(continued from previous page)

retirement formula beyond 2 percent at 55 within the last several years."

Since then, the pension problem has added to what was already a perfect storm of budget calamities in Palo Alto. The Great Recession took a bite out of the city's sales and hotel taxes, major sources of General Fund revenues. Health care costs have been rising dramatically, putting the squeeze on the budget and forcing the city to cut workforce by about 10 percent.

But while tax revenues this year returned to their pre-recession levels, the twin problems of health care and pension costs are only getting worse. At the May 7 meeting, Scharff characterized the pension problem as one the city needs to own up to.

"This isn't a calamity that happened to us. This isn't a natural disaster. This is something that we did



Lynne Krug, an inspector for the utilities department and former chair of Service Employees International Union's local chapter, said some of the city's top workers are retiring because of benefit changes.

to ourselves and that the state did to us, frankly," he said.

Now, the city hopes to reverse the trend. Last year, Scharff, Burt and Holman spearheaded a measure to eliminate the long-standing requirement of sending disputes between the city and its public-safety unions to binding arbitration. Measure D easily passed last November, with more than two-thirds of the city's voters supporting it.

The move gives the city more flexibility in labor negotiations and allows it to impose benefit reductions on unions. And while the city has already succeeded in wresting some concessions from its workers, Keene and council members have consistently maintained that employees will have to make even more sacrifices in the future.

"We really have to make moves to reduce our long-term liability in this regard," Keene said, referring to pensions and other benefits. "What that means is increasing employee contributions to those costs. We

made our first moves in that area, but I see in the OPEB (other post-employment benefits) area we'll have to make continual changes in the future."

No one expects these discussions to be easy. Recent reforms have taken a toll on employee morale and have prompted dozens of veteran employees to retire. Keene said the retirements are a testament to the city's "generous pay and benefit packages that allowed people to retire quite young in life." He also said the city has been successful in attracting and recruiting "a new generation of employees who are excited about government."

But not everyone sees the changes as positive. SEIU workers told the council June 25 that they are now doing far more work for less pay relative to their counterparts in similar cities. Lynne Krug, an inspector in the Utilities Department and former chair of SEIU, Local 521, said the city is no longer retaining its top workers because of it.

"We are really doing a lot more work than we ever thought we'd be doing," Krug said. "It's exhausting."

Her colleagues concurred. The loss of experienced workers, several SEIU workers told the council, will necessarily result in a lower quality of services in Palo Alto.

Ratu Serumalani, a maintenance worker in the Community Services Department, said employees are still feeling the pain from the concessions the city forced the union to accept in 2009. City workers are struggling to pay the bills, he said. Many have retired, he said. During this period of concessions, the city lost "a lot of talent," he said.

"There will come a time when you will have no one here actually training," Serumalani said. "There's no succession plan. What you have here is the very last of the very talented." ■

Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner can be emailed at gsheyner@paweekly.com.

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A community health education series from Stanford Hospital & Clinics

New Stanford Program Puts Pancreas At Center of Comprehensive Care Team

Like tens of millions of Americans, Mitzi Moynihan had occasional, sometimes even frequent, unidentified problems with her digestive system. She thought it was probably acid reflux, caused by excess stomach acid. And like those millions who experience similar discomfort, Moynihan would reach for an over the counter medication to quell the pain. That happened a couple of times a day, and most of the time, those medications worked.

Then came the afternoon when the pain was overwhelming and Moynihan went to the emergency room for help. The sensation was so intense she needed a heavy dose of prescription painkillers to relieve it. And it was not her stomach that was the problem, she was told. It was her pancreas, inflamed into a condition called acute pancreatitis. Follow up with your doctor, she was told.

More than 200,000 patients each year learn what Moynihan did—that the pain they think comes from the stomach is actually a problem with the pancreas, a somewhat wrinkled, hot dog-sized gland tucked behind the stomach, between the kidneys. As crucial as the functions of the pancreas are, however, it's a part of the body better known for the very lethal cancer that can grow there. The stomach may get the majority of popular attention, erroneously getting both credit and blame for digestion, but the pancreas is the true workhorse of the digestive system. "The stomach is just a storage organ that allows us to consume good-sized meals," said Brendan Visser, MD, surgical director of the new Stanford Benign Pancreas Program. "After food leaves the stomach and reaches the first portion of the intestine, the pancreas releases enzymes that break down food so we can absorb its nutrients," he said.



Nobert von der Groeben

Moynihan is back to her normal routine now, which includes getting together with friends to play cards. She's smarter, too. More than 200,000 patients each year learn what she did—that the pain they think comes from the stomach is actually a problem with the pancreas.

chemistry; when things go wrong, the pain can be intense and the damage long lasting.

The Stanford Benign Pancreas Program aims to shine a light on treatment for a long-neglected set of illnesses that arise in this often-overlooked but quite important organ. "We want to give more attention to these under-recognized pancreatic diseases," said Visser. "Pancreatic cancers, relatively rare in incidence, have had the bulk of the medical community's focus. The benign far more common pancreatic disorders have had far less. Doctors learn less about them in medical school, so patients don't always get the care they deserve. These benign diseases are certainly benign technically, meaning they're not cancerous, but that doesn't mean they don't cause a lot of pain and suffering."

Gathering new knowledge

Even with a bit of extra knowledge, that pain and suffering are easy to understand. The pancreas is just, by nature, "a finicky little organ," Visser said. "It tends to bite back when you poke at it. When you're operating, as fast as you're trying to cobble it together, pancreatic juice is working to get out through the seams." The gland can also clog, then the pancreas begins to digest itself, eventually leading to scarring, more pain and debilitated function. In short, pancreatic surgery is technically demanding and not to be attempted without great caution and respect for its balanced risks or by those not

well versed in the territory and its challenges.

After a thorough round of image-based evaluations at Stanford, Moynihan's gallbladder was found to have accumulated gallstones, which had likely caused the acute pancreatitis attack. The images also showed something abnormal within her pancreas, possibly a small cyst, which would be checked out again after the surgery to remove her gallbladder.

She recovered quickly from that procedure. To get a better look at her pancreas, Moynihan's physicians ordered a test that extracted fluid from the lesion they'd spotted. The cells, lab analysis showed, confirmed that Moynihan's pancreas had been harboring a cystic tumor. The tumor was producing a thick fluid, called mucin, which was blocking the pancreatic ducts, sending the gland's protein-dissolving enzymes to work on the pancreas itself.

"These benign diseases are certainly benign technically, meaning they're not cancerous, but that doesn't mean they don't cause a lot of pain and suffering."

—Brendan Visser, MD, surgical director, Stanford Benign Pancreas Program

That's when Moynihan sat down for a serious talk about her options with Visser, one of three pancreatic surgeons in the program's multidisciplinary team. She'd heard great things about him from a good friend who'd been a patient of Visser's, but she'd also heard that he often recommended against surgery. That track record reflects the program's special approach. "Pancreatic disorders have traditionally been treated by the surgical specialties because we haven't really had any medications to offer," said gastroenterologist Walter Park, MD, medical director of the Stanford Benign Pancreas program. "A lot has changed since then in imaging, in biopsy, in our knowledge of



Nobert von der Groeben

Like tens of millions of Americans, Mitzi Moynihan had occasional, sometimes even frequent, unidentified problems with her digestive system. She thought it was probably acid reflux, caused by excess stomach acid. She would learn otherwise.

the underlying biology, and that has led to the diseases best being managed by a group of specialists who attack problems from a variety of angles."

That new knowledge has changed the surgery-first protocol to a comprehensive examination of all aspects of a patient's condition in a way that incorporates the latest research and emphasizes cooperative, coordinated care directed by experts in the field. This new program, Visser said, "is an attempt to bring in patients with these less understood diseases for care in one setting from a variety of specialists to attack the problem from a variety of angles."

Acute pancreatitis is one form of pancreatic disease, with severe attacks often

caused by gallstones, as was the case with Moynihan. Hospitalization is usually required. Most episodes are short, Park said. Chronic pancreatitis, where pain can be a constant and eating becomes frightening, can be long term, with repeated bouts, said Visser.

"It's been quite exciting to be able to bring together, to interact and partner with, some very bright individuals in their respective specialties who each bring a unique perspective to the disease."

—Walter Park, MD, medical director, Stanford Benign Pancreas Program

"We are still in the search for therapies that can effectively treat the pain without common side effects," Park said, "as well as trying to stop the process that initiates pancreatitis." Last year, Stanford launched the related, multidisciplinary Gastrointestinal Pain Program, which created an enhanced treatment pathway for patients to see physician specialists in pain and gastrointestinal disorders.

Focused collaboration

The new Benign Pancreas Program represents a large-scale, comprehensive union of experts for coordinated care of patients with pancreatic disorders. "It's a dream come true," Park said. "It's been quite exciting to be able to bring together, to interact and partner with, some very bright individuals in their respective specialties who each bring a unique perspective to the disease." Stanford has also built a large body of experience: it is consistently among the top five medical centers in California as measured by annual volume of pancreas operations. Each year, its physicians care for more than 600 cases of acute pancreatitis and 250 cases of chronic pancreatitis.

The Benign Pancreas Program's team represents almost 20 clinicians in gastroenterology, radiology, pain manage-



Nobert von der Groeben

Moynihan did not want to worry about what might be going on between tests and decided to have her pancreatic tumor removed right away. The laparoscopic approach used by Stanford surgeon Brendan Visser meant Moynihan was home in a couple of days and soon back to her docent tours at Filoli Gardens in Woodside.

ment, nutrition, pathology, therapeutic endoscopy and endocrinology. Each plays an important role in care decisions, Park said. Pain, for example, can be a cardinal symptom of pancreatic conditions; the endocrine system is also affected, sometimes altered enough to trigger diabetes. Because the pancreas is so central to how the body processes food, its disorders often produce nutritional deficiencies. "It's hard to eat when you feel bad afterwards," said Neha Shah, MPH, the program's clinical nutritionist. "We help our patients translate the science of nutrition into practical food choices."

Diagnosis, and sometimes treatment, is enhanced with newer technology carried by endoscopes; the program has three experts in therapeutic endoscopy.

Another area of interest is developing new tests that could predict if a particular benign cyst might turn malignant and which patient with chronic pancreatitis will develop more severe complications.

Visser also is one of a small handful of surgeons in the U.S. skilled in laparoscopy, a minimally invasive surgical approach that avoids large, slow-to-heal incisions. He chose the specialty in part because of the challenge. "When I was a trainee," he said, "the pancreas was the jewel in the crown of surgery cases. Now, after more than 200 pancreatic laparoscopies, Visser is still on high alert. "Every case is its own challenge and every case has to be as perfect as a human can make it."

Visser told Moynihan that her cyst was in the tail of the pancreas, on the left side, near the spleen. Deeper analysis of cells in the cyst showed them as most certainly pre-cancerous. She could have chosen to wait, in that state called watchful observation, but did not want to live with the anxiety that comes from wondering when and if something has changed. She wasn't eager for any uncertainty, or being tested once or twice a year, for years. Even if diagnosed at its earliest stages, pancreatic cancer is among the most lethal forms of the disease. Moynihan did not want to worry about what might be going on between tests. And she had complete confidence in Visser. "I was very comfortable with him, very impressed," she said.

Quick return to health

Visser's laparoscopic approach meant Moynihan was home in a couple of days, doing up and down her stairs on her first day home. The lesion was gone and she'd

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. It is currently ranked No. 17 on the U.S. News & World Report's "America's Best Hospitals" list and No. 1 in the San Jose Metropolitan area. Stanford Hospital & Clinics is internationally recognized for translating medical breakthroughs into the care of patients. The Stanford University Medical Center is comprised of three world renowned institutions: Stanford Hospital & Clinics, the Stanford University School of Medicine, the oldest medical school in the Western United States, and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, an adjacent pediatric teaching hospital providing general acute and tertiary care. For more information, visit <http://stanfordhospital.org/>.

A Pancreas Primer

Symptoms of a pancreas in trouble can include:

- abdominal pain that radiates to the back or chest
- nausea, vomiting, rapid pulse rate, fever
- unexplained weight loss
- jaundice

Tests to diagnose pancreatic conditions may include an abdominal ultrasound, a computerized tomography (CT) scan, an endoscopic ultrasound, magnetic resonance cholangiopancreatography (MRCP) and the measurement of amount and concentration of pancreatic juice.

Treatment may include therapeutic endoscopy procedures, advanced surgical techniques, nutritional counseling, pain management and participation in clinical research trials.

For more information about the Stanford Benign Pancreas Program, phone 650.736.5555 or visit stanfordhospital.org/benignpancreas

Join us at <http://stanfordhospital.org/socialmedia>. Watch the new Stanford Hospital Health Notes television show on Comcast: channel 28 on Mondays at 8:30 p.m., Tuesdays at 3:30 p.m. and Fridays at 8:30 a.m.; channel 30 Saturdays at 10:30 p.m. It can also be viewed at www.youtube.com/stanfordhospital.

had less internal alteration to a neighboring organ: Traditionally, because the blood vessels of the spleen are so immediately adjacent to the pancreas, physicians have removed the spleen in such surgeries, but when the specific location of the cyst and the patient's anatomy allow, Visser leaves the spleen to reduce trauma to the body. He was able to do that with Moynihan.

"I've done really well and I'm enjoying my life!"

—Mitzi Moynihan, patient, Stanford Benign Pancreas Program

"I never felt bad and had any pain after the surgery," she said, and she's taken back the regular rhythm of her life. She's a docent at the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Filoli Gardens in Woodside, leading energetic tours through its expansive acres; she meets friends for outings and bridge games; she also delights in being an active grandmother of two little boys.



Nobert von der Groeben

As do many when they hear that a friend is having pancreatic problems, some of Moynihan's friends had been fearful for her. She's been happy to prove their fears unfounded. "I've done really well," she said, "and I'm enjoying my life!"

"She's had no troubles at all with the function of her pancreas," Park said. "The remaining pancreas has been fully able to do its job, and she hasn't missed a beat."

As do many when they hear that a friend is having pancreatic problems, some of Moynihan's friends had been fearful for her. She's been happy to prove their fears unfounded. "I've done really well," she said, "and I'm enjoying my life!"

Jean Cheng Sao Koo

June 30, 1920 – June 25, 2012
Resident of Palo Alto

Jean C.S. Koo passed away peacefully on June 25 in her home in Palo Alto with her family at her side. Born in China, Jean travelled to the United States for the first time in 1944 to study at Rhode Island School of Design. She returned to Shanghai to marry William Koo. As the Cultural Revolution swept over China, William realized there would never be freedom and opportunity for an education for their children, Peter, Paul, John and Michele. He escaped China in 1957 in an attempt to bring his entire family to freedom. Jean travelled alone with her 4 young children out of the reaches of Communist China to be reunited with William in 1961 in Hong Kong. In 1963, Jean and William travelled with all four of their children to San Francisco and established their home in Palo Alto.

Jean worked at the Stanford University Main Library, later Green Library for over 30 years in the cataloguing department. After her retirement, she was asked to return to aide in digitalizing the cataloguing system.

Jean was born with a flare, elegance, and style that she carried to the day she died. She touched everyone she met with a profound tenderness and genuine love and all felt her warmth and graciousness. She came to be simply known as "Na" not only to her grandchildren but also to everyone in her life. She loved traveling and spending time with her family.

She is survived by her 4 children: Peter Koo (Debbie), Paul Koo (Darice), John Koo (Teresa Yang), Michele Koo (Rick Lehman) & 9 grandchildren: Ryan Koo (Kendall), Jackie Koo, Lauren Koo, Wesley Koo, Dani Koo, Spencer Koo, Cameron Lehman, Alex Lehman, and Sydney Lehman. Services have been held. Arrangements entrusted to Roller & Hapgood & Tinney Funeral Home in Palo Alto, CA.

PAID OBITUARY

Pulse

A weekly compendium of vital statistics

POLICE CALLS

Palo Alto

June 28 - July 10

Violence related

Arson	2
Assault w/a deadly weapon	1
Battery	3
Child abuse	1
Dependent adult abuse	1
Domestic violence	3
Strong-arm robbery	1
Suicide	1

Theft related

Commercial burglaries	3
Embezzlement	1
Grand theft	9
Identity theft	5
Petty theft	13
Residential burglaries	5

Vehicle related

Abandoned auto	3
Auto recovery	2
Auto theft	2
Bicycle theft	1
Driving w/suspended license	19
Hit and run	13
Misc. traffic	17
Theft from auto	12
Vehicle accident/minor injury	15
Vehicle accident/property damage	14
Vehicle impound	3
Vehicle tow	7

Alcohol or drug related

Drunk in public	20
Drunken driving	8
Liquor law	4
Open container	7
Possession of drugs	5
Misc. drugs	2

Miscellaneous

Animal call	1
Construction	1
Disturbing the peace	1
Firearm disposal	2
Found property	7

Lost property	6
Missing person	1
Noise ordinance violation	1
Other/misc.	3
Outside assistance	1
Penal code violation	1
Possession of burglary tools	1
Psychiatric hold	10
Resisting arrest	1
Suspicious circumstances	11
Suspicious circumstances/sex crime	1
Terrorist threats	2
Unattended death	2
Vandalism	8
Warrant/other agency	11

Menlo Park

June 28 - July 10

Violence related

Battery	3
Domestic violence	1
Shot at occupied dwelling	1

Theft related

Fraud	4
Grand theft	1
Petty theft	7
Residential burglaries	5

Vehicle related

Auto recovery	1
Driving w/suspended license	12
Driving without license	2
Hit and run	4
Vehicle accident/minor injury	6
Vehicle accident/property damage	6
Vehicle tow	4

Alcohol or drug related

Drug activity	7
Drunken driving	7
Possession of drugs	5

Miscellaneous

Animal call	1
Disturbance	1
Found property	5
Information case	8
Located missing person	2
Lost property	1

Outside assistance	1
Parole arrest	1
Probation violation	1
Psychiatric hold	4
Suspicious circumstances	2
Vandalism	6
Warrant arrest	10

Atherton

June 28 - July 10

Theft related

Grand theft	1
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Vehicle related

Abandoned auto	2
Parking/driving violation	4
Suspicious vehicle	14
Vehicle accident/minor injury	2
Vehicle accident/property damage	1
Vehicle code violation	12

Alcohol or drug related

Drunken driving	1
Narcotics offense	1

Miscellaneous

Animal call	4
Citizen assist.	4
Construction	6
Disturbance	10
Dumping	7
Fire call	7
Found property	8
Hazard	10
Juvenile problem	1
Medical aid	8
Meet citizen	5
Missing person	2
Outside assistance	4
Psychiatric hold	1
Suspicious circumstances	3
Suspicious person	4
Town ordinance violation	5
Tree down	3
Vandalism	1
Welfare check	1
Wires down	1

VIOLENT CRIMES

Palo Alto

Unlisted block East Meadow Drive, 6/28, 10 a.m.; suicide.
100 block El Camino Real, 6/30, 12:58 p.m.; battery.
Unlisted block Park Boulevard, 6/30, 9:08 p.m.; arson.
Unlisted block Mariposa Avenue, 6/30, 11:34 p.m.; domestic violence.
800 block El Camino Real, 7/1, 1:35 p.m.; assault with a deadly weapon (car).
Unlisted block El Camino Real, 7/2, 10:04 p.m.; strong-arm robbery.
500 block El Camino Real, 7/3, 11:40 a.m.; dependent adult abuse/neglect.
Unlisted block University Avenue, 7/4, 1:35 p.m.; battery.
Unlisted block Indian Drive, 7/6, 4:08 p.m.; domestic violence/battery.
Unlisted block Indian Drive, 7/6, 5:25 p.m.; domestic violence/battery.
Unlisted block Williams Street, 7/8, 7:26 a.m.; child abuse/neglect.
1800 block Park Boulevard, 7/8, 3:27 p.m.; battery.
0 block Embarcadero Road, 7/9, 6:23 p.m.; battery.

William E. Armstrong

William E. Armstrong has passed away on June 29, 2012, in San Mateo County. Bill was born to Col. John Dimmick Armstrong and Helen "Polly" Loveland Armstrong in Pennsylvania on November 11, 1930.

Bill grew up in Palo Alto on Cowper Street, and was a lifelong resident of the Bay Area. He attended Jordan Jr. High, and graduated from Palo Alto High in 1948. In high school he was very active in sports. He graduated from UC Berkeley, where he played inter-collegiate water polo.

After graduation, he served three years in the United States Air Force where he earned his pilot's wings.

After his military service, Bill and his family returned to the Bay Area where he worked in the electronics industry for a number of years, and then worked in accounting. Bill coached his son's Little League team in Palo Alto for many years.

Bill's life-long passion was Dixieland Jazz. He played banjo in a number of Bay Area bands, and was committed to bringing the joy of traditional jazz to the younger generation. He founded the Churchill Street Jazz Band at Palo Alto High School in 1974, sharing his knowledge and extensive music collection with students. The Churchill Street Jazz Band introduced many young musicians to Dixieland Jazz, some of whom have gone on to play professionally. Thanks to Bill's untiring enthusiasm and musical taste, the Churchill Street Jazz Band became a well-known and respected Dixieland jazz band. The band performed at the Sacramento Jazz Jubilee and San Diego Jazz Festival, and many other festivals and venues. Bill was voted, "Jazz Musician of the Year" in 1996 by the Santa Rosa Jazz Society.

One of the highlights of Bill's musical career was performing with the legendary Turk Murphy at Carnegie Hall. Bill continued to be active in music throughout his life, playing his banjo well into his late seventies.

Bill, also known as "Pops" will be missed for his generous heart, positive thinking and the encouragement he gave to those around him. He leaves behind many dear friends in the music world and in San Mateo, where he was an inspiration to many. Bill had a keen interest in spiritual topics.

Bill was pre-deceased by his parents and by his two older brothers John D. "Jack" Armstrong, Jr. and Colonel John L. "Landy" Armstrong of Palo Alto. He is survived by his younger brother, Robert A. Armstrong, and his wife Pat, of Woodland, Ca. He is also survived by his loving children, Lynne Kary, Brooke Armstrong, Dana Armstrong, and their mother, his former wife, Yvonne Armstrong. He leaves behind grandchildren: Radharani, Krishna, Hansa, Brad, Michelle, and Bryan, as well as numerous nieces and nephews, and sister-in-law Kathy Armstrong of Palo Alto. He is also survived by his devoted long-time friend and companion, Freddie Pemberthy of San Mateo.

Please do not send flowers, but donations to your favorite charity would be appreciated. A private family service is planned.



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Transitions

Michael Steven Coffron

Michael Steven Coffron, who grew up in Palo Alto, died in his Chico home June 27 after a long struggle with pancreatic cancer. He was 65.

He was born to Al and Julie Coffron in Tulsa, Okla. He grew up in Palo Alto with three brothers, graduated from Cubberley High School, served four years in the U.S. Marine Corps, and graduated from the University of California Santa Cruz.

He lived in the Chico area for the past 24 years. He worked for Child Protective Services in Butte County and Tehama County for 18 years. Following his passion for construction he pursued real estate development.

He enjoyed traveling, good food, museums, theater, classic movies and books, and spending time with his family and friends.

He is survived by his wife of 21 years, Karen Coffron of Chico; his mother, Julie Coffron of Chico; his brothers, Jim Coffron (Katty) of Atascadero and Wayne Coffron (Marilyn) of Linden, Va.; uncle, Bill Coffron (Ritva) of Colorado; his children, Tammy Coffron Nurisso (Fred) of Redwood City, Brock Coffron (Lynn) of Stevensville, Mont., Beau Coffron (Linnea) of Fremont, Rob Coffron of Petaluma, Daniel and Alex Coffron of Chico. He is also survived by grandchildren, Matthew, Ariana and Bradley Nurisso, Colby and Chase Coffron, Abigail and Zachary Coffron, and numerous nieces and nephews. His father, Al Coffron, and brother, John Coffron, predeceased him.

A memorial service will be held July 15 at 3 p.m. at the Bidwell Presbyterian Church, Chico.

Heinz Furthmayr

Heinz Furthmayr, an emeritus professor of pathology at the Stanford University School of Medicine, died of a heart attack May 1 while on a trek in Nepal, two days before his 71st birthday.

His early work examined the basic chemical and biological properties of cell membranes and interstitial tissues and their relationship to medical problems, which more recently included Marfan syndrome and other microfibrillar disorders. He published more than 120 scientific articles. He was elected to membership in the Pluto Club, an organization of experimental pathologists working at universities in the United States.

He often collaborated with Uta Francke, professor emeritus of genetics and pediatrics and his wife of 25 years.

He was a pilot, as is his wife, and the two of them traveled the world. They went on safari in Africa, learned Spanish in Central and South America, and watched penguins being born in Antarctica. He also ventured on his own, taking overland trips through Europe and Asia and climbing Mount Kilimanjaro twice.

He was born in Linz, Austria, in

1941 and grew up in the nearby village of Ansfelden. His father was a baker who owned his own bakery and his mother had a general store in the village. He earned his doctorate at the University of Vienna Medical School. He completed his clinical pathology internship at Hanusch Hospital in Vienna and his medical residency at the Hospital of Mistelbach, Austria.

He came to the United States in 1972 as a postdoctoral scholar studying red-cell membranes in the lab at Yale School of Medicine, becoming a faculty member in the Department of Pathology there in 1976.

He and his wife met in Colorado over mutual interests in science and skiing. They married in 1986 near the top of Mount Tamalpais. His appointment at Stanford began in 1989. He retired in 2005, and had since spent five months a year traveling.

He is survived by his wife, Francke, of Los Altos Hills, Calif.; three sisters, four brothers, his mother, and numerous nieces and nephews, all in Austria or Germany, as well as his two godchildren in Palo Alto.

Jeannie Pasturel

Jeannie Heidel Pasturel, daughter of Agnes Waters of Palo Alto, died at her home in Oregon on April 21 after a battle with breast cancer. She was 49.

She was surrounded by her husband of 25 years, Patrice Knut, her daughters, Gabrielle Rose and Caitlin Heather, and Patrice's parents, Marc and Ragni Pasturel.

She grew up in Palo Alto, graduating from Palo Alto High School in 1981. Her love of animals, especially horses, led to a degree in animal science equine husbandry from California State Polytechnic University, Pomona, in 1986.

She and her husband met during their junior year in high school and were married in 1987. They moved to Oregon two years later to buy a farm where she could breed, train, show and care for horses.

She trained or bred the champion or reserve-champion Friesian mare six consecutive years. An advocate for horse health and the protection of U.S. horses against a communicable breeding disease, she established one of the first USDA approved quarantine facilities on the West Coast.

To advance research for a cure, contributions in her honor may be made to Hope Rugo, M.D., UCSF, Helen Diller Family Comprehensive Cancer Center, 1600 Divisadero St., 2nd floor, San Francisco, CA 94115.

Lora Fichou

July 4, 1933 – July 5, 2012



With family close by her side, Lora Louise Fichou passed away and moved onward on July 5 at the age of 79. Born July 4, 1933, in Chicago, Lora moved to Menlo Park at the age of 10 with her parents, Fern and Eduardo Colombo, where she lived most of her life. She attended Castilleja School and then graduated from Sequoia High School in 1951.

She married Jean Jacques Fichou in Morocco in 1952 and lived there briefly before moving to France for several years. She is the mother of five children. For many years, Lora worked as a clerk at Village Stationers in Menlo Park, where she became a familiar face to many townspeople. She was also a well-liked assistant at Little House and Rosener House in Menlo Park. Lora was an especially intuitive individual who provided keen insights and valuable counsel to her friends. She had a special affinity to animals, especially the beloved dogs and cats she kept

as pets over the years. Her family lineage has been traced directly to the famed explorer Christopher Columbus.

Lora is survived by her five children, Jean-Yves Fichou, Marc Michel Fichou, Charles Dominique Fichou, Yannette Fichou Edwards, and David Lynn Fichou, as well as seven grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held at Trinity Episcopal Church in Menlo Park on Tuesday, July 24th at 5 p.m. A reception will follow the service; details will be provided at a later date. The family requests that in lieu of flowers, donations be made in Lora's name to Pets In Need (<http://www.petsinneed.org/>).

PAID OBITUARY

Betty Vandenberg



Elisabeth Muldown Vandenberg ("Betty"), 80, a resident of Palo Alto for 44 years, died July 4 after a year-long struggle with head and neck cancer. She was in hospice care and surrounded by her family at the time of her death.

She was born in 1931 in Rochester, Minn., to Benjamin and Dorothy Diepenbrock Muldown. She grew up in Albert Lea, Minn. and attended Vassar College ('53), receiving degrees in Russian and Economics. In 1952, she married Lt. William Vandenberg, USACE, and joined him in Leipheim, Germany, later returning to Europe for additional tours in Karlsruhe, Germany and Livorno, Italy, before settling in Palo Alto, California to raise their four children.

From an early age she sought to widen her sphere from her small-town Midwestern upbringing and embraced cosmopolitan places, issues, and concerns. Always a good cook, she discovered real culinary artistry during her years in Italy and embraced the sentiment that "an appetite for life makes a good cook." An avid reader, lifelong learner, student of the arts, and home designer, she actively supported modern design and smart growth urban planning.

Interested in furniture and fabric, she be-

longed to a community of furniture upholsterers in Palo Alto. A longtime democrat, she supported many worthwhile causes including the San Francisco Symphony, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, Planned Parenthood, the San Francisco Aids Foundation, Project Open Hand, and the Second Harvest Food Bank.

She is survived by her sister Catherine Muldown of Springfield, Ill.; her children Lisa Vandenberg of Berkeley, Calif., Susan Benjamin of Sunnyvale, Calif., Stewart Vandenberg of Geyserville, Calif., and Ann Vandenberg of Atlanta, Georgia; her grandchildren James Benjamin, Sarah Benjamin, and Nathaniel Vandenberg; her Muldown cousins and the extended Vandenberg family.

A private memorial service will be held at the family home. For more information please call 650-387-2847. The family requests that donations be made in Betty's honor to Project Open Hand, (415) 447-2419, <http://www.openhand.org>.

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Editorial

Medicine doesn't offset poison of HSR bill

While Caltrain and the Peninsula come out as winners from high-speed-rail vote, state still can't afford this 'plan'

In a political drama that has potentially massive financial ramifications for California, last week's razor-close vote to move forward with high-speed rail will keep the uncertain project alive but give the Peninsula the benefit of Caltrain electrification.

The two different visions were dramatically on display last week when the Peninsula's three Democratic legislators split their votes, with Assemblymen Rich Gordon and Jerry Hill supporting Governor Brown's proposal based on the good they saw in it for their constituents and Senator Joe Simitian opposing it because of the state's financial predicament.

Simitian, who has often said he is a supporter of high-speed rail done right, shocked his colleagues when he announced on the floor of the Senate that he could not bring himself to vote "aye" on the bill.

As one of the three senators on the high-speed-rail committee, Simitian had worked hard with local, state and federal officials to negotiate improvements to the plan and find a way to move forward that addressed both local objections and the flaws and uncertainties of the business plan. But in the end, Simitian (and his two colleagues on the HSR committee) decided the risks and uncertainties of the overall project were just too great.

Gordon and Hill enthusiastically supported the bill, saying the Peninsula got virtually everything it wanted and had been fighting for, including no high-speed rail between San Francisco and San Jose. Gordon said the vote does not constitute a commitment to build the entire project, only the Madera to Bakersfield segment in the Central Valley, which he said would bring valuable improvements to the current Amtrak line even if high-speed rail doesn't materialize.

Perhaps the biggest prize for Hill and Gordon was the Caltrain electrification, a long overdue project that will increase the number of stops possible in a one-hour trip from San Jose to San Francisco, and could push ridership to 70,000 a day. And the bill protects the blended, two-track system on the Peninsula, meaning that there will no eminent domain taking of property or encroachment onto Alma Street to make way for trains.

Simitian said he is convinced that without the promise of more federal or private funding down the road, the state could be left to foot the bill for nearly the entire project.

By passing the legislation before a deadline imposed by the federal government, the project will receive \$3.3 billion in federal funds and \$2.3 billion in state funds to build the 130 miles of conventional (not electric) passenger train tracks in the Central Valley. The bill also provides or frees up some \$1 billion each for local projects in Northern and Southern California.

Unlike Simitian, three key reasons convinced Gordon and Hill to support the bill:

- A guarantee from the rail authority that it would build only a two-track, rather than four-track, system on the Peninsula. Hill said the stipulation means that there will be no land taken beyond the Caltrain right of way, including earlier projections that tracks might infringe on some homes and portions of Alma Street.

- \$600 million for Caltrain electrification, a goal the commuter train service has had for years. Electric trains, in addition to eliminating the noise and pollution of diesel engines, can travel faster and stop more often for passengers and still make the San Jose to San Francisco run in one hour or less.

- Rail improvements on the Peninsula that could stand on their own even if the full project is never completed.

Simitian's concerns are both immediate and long-term. He fears that Governor Brown's ballot initiative to raise income taxes on wealthy Californians and impose a small sales tax might not pass in November due to a backlash from voters angry that the Legislature passed the high-speed-rail project. And he still sees trouble in the project's business plans and has doubts about the rail authority's leadership, which has several major vacancies and a CEO who has been on the job less than a month.

While some are quick to attribute the votes of all three local legislators to politics, we think all three voted for reasons they found sound, compelling and practical. Gordon and Hill see a unique opportunity to obtain a lot of money that will benefit the Peninsula, and argue if the rest of high-speed-rail doesn't pan out, our region is still a winner. They may be right. Simitian says he hopes he is wrong, but can't support setting in motion a plan that has so many financial risks and uncertainties, even if his district will benefit.

Simitian's reasoning is the more principled in the broader context of how taxpayer money should be prioritized and spent, and we share his worry that in a state with a continuing budget crisis, high-speed rail should not take precedent over other needs.

And now that the bill has passed, like Simitian, we hope to be proven wrong.

Spectrum

Editorials, letters and opinions

Rethink Stanford trails

Editor,

James Sweeney has re-educated us on the background of the Stanford trails. Apparently they were not intended to mitigate the impacts of the GUP development in the form of increased traffic where those impacts were focused: at the periphery of the campus. Instead, the provision was crafted to mitigate the loss of recreational opportunities in center-campus and intended solely to benefit Stanford residents and "frequent users" (whatever "frequent" and "use" mean).

Mr. Sweeney says "gotcha" very nicely, but I must differ with his implication that the Matadero Creek Trail is an example of compliance with the GUP requirement to provide "opportunities that campus residents and facility users will reasonably and frequently use for their recreation." Anyone familiar with the Matadero Creek Trail, or the "S1" (a more descriptive label) knows it is functionally non-compliant with that provision. The proximal section, the "multipurpose trail," is a 30-foot-wide roadway running parallel to Page Mill Road. Bicyclists might ride this section, were there not a much nicer bike route, Old Page Mill Road, only 100 yards to the north. For hikers, it is simply an unpleasant place to walk — so no one does.

Mr. Sweeney avers to a trail proposal to come from the Stanford Residential Leaseholders, which will be "continuous from El Camino to the S1." Unfortunately, no such plan can rest on the value of connecting to the S1. Moreover, the leaseholds — to the credit of their designers — are crisscrossed by a network of trails far more pleasant than the S1.

Would that network be used by more leaseholders, or "frequent users" of Stanford campus, or anyone else, if another \$10.3 million were spent on it? Unlikely. Would some Stanford community members take advantage of a bridge over 101 near Shoreline to bike-commute to Google? In this latter project, at least, would be some measure of genuine benefit.

Steve Woodward
Stanford Avenue
Palo Alto

Vote Lieber

Editor,

Even though a strong educational system is possibly the most integral factor to any thriving society and economy, the funding for California's school systems has only been plummeting. As a concerned student, I want a state senator who prioritizes funding for education and seeks to reform the overall budget to ensure that further cuts

in education are halted.

State Senate candidate Sally Lieber's focus on stronger laws to protect funding for education and her determination to reform the budget as a whole is a clear step toward progress. Her push for absolute budget transparency and greater oversight on state agencies is a huge stride toward protecting funding for education and making sure schools have enough resources to reach their full potential. Anyone who wants a candidate dedicated to education reform and greater transparency should cast their vote for Sally Lieber for State Senate District 13.

Pooja Thapar
Bryant Street
Palo Alto

Preserve Cal Ave

Editor,

The California Avenue shopping center off east El Camino is really the last of Palo Alto's major shopping centers and should be left as it is.

Stanford Shopping was created to draw from a wide regional area. Downtown Palo Alto has — with

the growth in the city and region itself — also been turned into a regional shopping center and not essentially a shopping center for local residents.

Over the years, people in Palo Alto have turned both to smaller neighborhood shopping, like those along Middlefield Road, and increasingly to California Avenue at El Camino in their effort to retain the Palo Alto community shopping and small restaurant ambiance.

It is hard to imagine that our city staff, many of whom do not live in the community, would understand the particular importance of retaining California Avenue for the community as it is. With its broad, wide street and tree-lined sidewalks, California Avenue is very much like the small-town California communities of the past and is much more like the Palo Alto people who have lived here for some time are familiar with and enjoy.

Leave it alone. It really doesn't need any special attention.

Marvin and Alison Lee
Harker Avenue
Palo Alto

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

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



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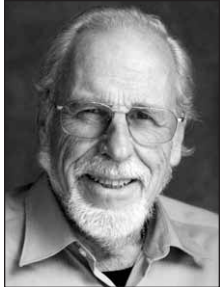
On Deadline

Pete McCloskey charges from retirement to battle secret political funding

by Jay Thorwaldson

It is said that Pete McCloskey has trouble resisting a good fight — especially if the odds are stacked high against him.

So as headlines mount about the millions upon millions of dollars going into secretive “Super PACs” and organizations that don’t have to list their donors, former Congressman Paul N.



“Pete” McCloskey has emerged from his retirement on California’s North Coast to lead a charge against the hidden money of today’s politics.

He was joined in late June by former state Assemblywoman Sally Lieber and current Assemblyman Jerry Hill at the Portola Valley home of Walter and Ruth Anne Bortz — and by about 120 Midpeninsula residents, most capable of providing financial support for a transparency campaign.

There are two fronts to the effort: California and nationally, both known as the “Disclose Act.” The federal bill is officially the “Democracy is Strengthened by Casting Light on Spending in Elections Act” (H.R.5175 and S.3628). The state AB 1648 is simply the “California Clean Money Campaign.”

The immediate focus is California.

“All eyes are really on California, because if we cannot do it here we should not expect that we can do it in Washington, D.C., where it is so much harder,” Lieber said at the gathering.

She reminisced about driving into Sacramento to the Assembly via an old iron drawbridge because the route “takes you down Capitol

Mall straight at our state capital. And on Monday mornings it would look like a pristine, beautiful vision in white, like a white wedding cake that was just waiting to have a slice cut out of it. And I really felt the world of possibilities and that the best things about politics were possible.

“And by about 11:30 or so you’d see the masses coming toward the capital. You’d see the real impact of more than \$500,000 a day in lobbying in Sacramento. It was hard not to start to lose a little bit of hope.

“But there are great and noble things that can be done by government. And something that we must have to be able to do those things is the clarity and transparency about who is spending money in politics. And the Disclose Act is the premier piece of legislation,” to do that.

But Hill cautioned that the odds are high against passage of the California legislation this year.

“Last year I was very optimistic, very optimistic, when we came so close to getting it passed — so close to getting a couple of votes that we needed,” he told the group, speaking as co-author of the bill.

“This year I’m not quite as optimistic. And the bill has changed and evolved.

“So we have a fight on our hands. There are interests coming in from a lot of different places right now. But it’s crucial that we do this, the transparency that’s necessary.”

There’s a broader issue:

“We’re getting attacked at every level. The middle class in this country is being destroyed ... because of the interests that are fighting us,” Hill said.

He provided a glimpse at the inner workings of the Legislature, relating to the close vote in 2011.

To get the two-thirds, two Republican votes

were needed. Some Republican members wrote a letter suggesting changes.

“So I went and sat and talked with a couple of the members on the other side of the aisle who had written the letter. And I said, “OK, if we were to take these amendments, if we were to do this would you then agree to it?”

Hill said the response was: “Well, no. This is a good start. We’re right there. We’re almost there.”

He said he concluded that “We have to go another way because they will never close the deal.”

Two votes short, the legislation moved to 2012.

McCloskey, 84, is an ex-Marine awarded both a Silver Star and Purple Heart plus a Navy Cross from earlier U.S. Navy service. A moderate Republican, he served in Congress from December 1967 to January 1983. He cited past political battles, including his abortive challenge to then-President Richard Nixon over the Vietnam War. His book, “Truth and Untruth: Political Deceit in America,” infuriated conservatives.

He also recalled his primary-election challenge to former Assemblyman Richard Pombo, in a conservative Sierra Foothills district. In a Sunday-morning phone interview, McCloskey told me he knew he couldn’t win in the Republican primary but if he did well enough to show Pombo was vulnerable the Democrats would be heartened and put forth a candidate strong enough to win the general election — precisely what happened.

But he switched parties in 2007, citing a disgust with the dominant Republican leadership of today. The feeling is mutual, dating back decades.

McCloskey said an example of big bucks influencing campaigns was in New Hampshire,

where Annie McLane Kuster challenged a six-term incumbent and came within 1 percent of winning — despite a \$100,000 contribution to her opponent from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce. McCloskey characterized the overall issue as “a test between good and evil.

“If that happens all over the country, big money comes in, and with a hundred seats in the house up in any given year you can imagine what a million dollars (could do) — if the Koch brothers decided to throw in a million dollars against Annie McLane, can she win?”

“So what we’re up against ... is making it plain that some people are getting all of their money from corporate sources and others are getting it from individuals.”

McCloskey’s wife and fellow crusader, Helen Hooper, added a footnote to his remarks.

She said her grandfather told her that any business arrangement between friends should be formalized in a written agreement to prevent friendship from being tainted by vagaries of time and circumstance, and because “Anybody who’s honest would not object to putting their name on a document they agreed to.”

She said she’s thought about that in terms of this clean money campaign “because there’s such a disingenuous aspect to what’s going on in politics in this country and we’re moving so quickly to being a Third World nation on so many fronts.

“And the almost ruthlessness with which this is all happening really demands that we fight back. And I think that this (state) bill and this effort and initiatives like this are THE key thing to support.” ■

Former Weekly Editor Jay Thorwaldson can be emailed at jthorwaldson@paweekly.com with a copy to jaythor@well.com. He also writes biweekly blogs at www.PaloAltoOnline.com (below Town Square).

Streetwise

What do you think about the passing of the bill authorizing the funding of the California high-speed-rail system? Asked on California Avenue and Birch Street in Palo Alto. Interviews and photos by Lauren-Marie Sliter.



Elisabeth Stitt
Teacher
Woodleaf Way, Mountain View

“I’m curious that Joe Simitian withdrew his support ... but I trust his skepticism.”



Jayant Kulkarni
Founder of Quartz
Cowper Street, Palo Alto

“I’m supportive. I think we should invest in infrastructure for the long term.”



Katherine Glazier
Floral designer
Tasso Street, Palo Alto

“I think it’s too expensive. ... It sounded good at first, but once you look at the finances, we can’t afford it.”



Eero Tunkelo
Recent graduate
Embarcadero Road

“From what I’ve heard it seems alright. ... Public transit is a good idea to me.”



Lalitha Acharya
Graduate student
Kendal Street

“I always think public transit is a good idea. ... Hopefully it will be a cheaper alternative to flying.”

Arts & Entertainment

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



Watercolor botanical-art images by Pria Graves are, from top, "Sherwood's Peach Dahlia" and "Seckel Pears."

by Maytal Mark

Pria Graves likes antiques. Not just stoves and houses — her home dates back to 1904 — but antique plants, too. In her prolific Palo Alto garden, there are several species of plants dating back to the 1700s and the Middle Ages.

"I've been around unusual plants always," Graves says. "My mother was a keen gardener when I was a kid and she was always looking for unusual things, so I probably got it from her."

Bursting with greenery, the garden includes more than 20 types of dahlias; vegetables from snow peas to potatoes; and several trees providing shade over small walkways.

Graves has been studying and practicing botanical art since the '90s. Known for its detailed depictions of flowers and plants, botanical art will be featured as one of the genres in Gamble Garden's "Art in the Garden" exhibition on July 20 and 21. On the 21st, Graves and other local artists will paint in real time for visitors and sell their work to benefit the garden.

The event is in its second year of showing and selling paints and pastels. Botanical art is new this year, in part because the new garden co-president, Judy Paris, is a botanical artist and has connections with the community, event organizer Shirley Finckrook said.

Graves says she's excited to participate. For the paint-out, she plans to bring a small painting of

a dahlia with petals already started. "If it gets screwed up it won't be a huge loss."

This makes sense, as the detail required for Graves' paintings means they often take several weeks or months to complete. This can explain her unusual subject choices.

"If you're going to spend a month staring at a piece of paper with a painting on it, you want to be inspired by it," she says. "I've always been a plantaholic, but I started collecting weird stuff because of being a botanical artist." Graves' time in Australia also inspired her love of odd plants.

"Traveling in Australia as a child and seeing things that just couldn't be grown here — and there's a lot of weird plants in Australia — that gave me a taste for it."

In preparation for an upcoming New York exhibition titled "Weird, Wild and Wonderful," Graves has grown several oddball plants. The first is strawberry spinach, used by monks in the Middle Ages as a food source. "It has spinach-like leaves, but it grows these berry-like structures on the stock," Graves says. "It's very bizarre."

Another interesting specimen is the caterpillar plant, with curly, hairy seed pods that resemble the namesake insect. "People used to put them in salads in the 1700s to freak people out," Graves says. "They thought a caterpillar was in their salad, but it's not toxic to eat."

Before she became a botanical artist, Graves

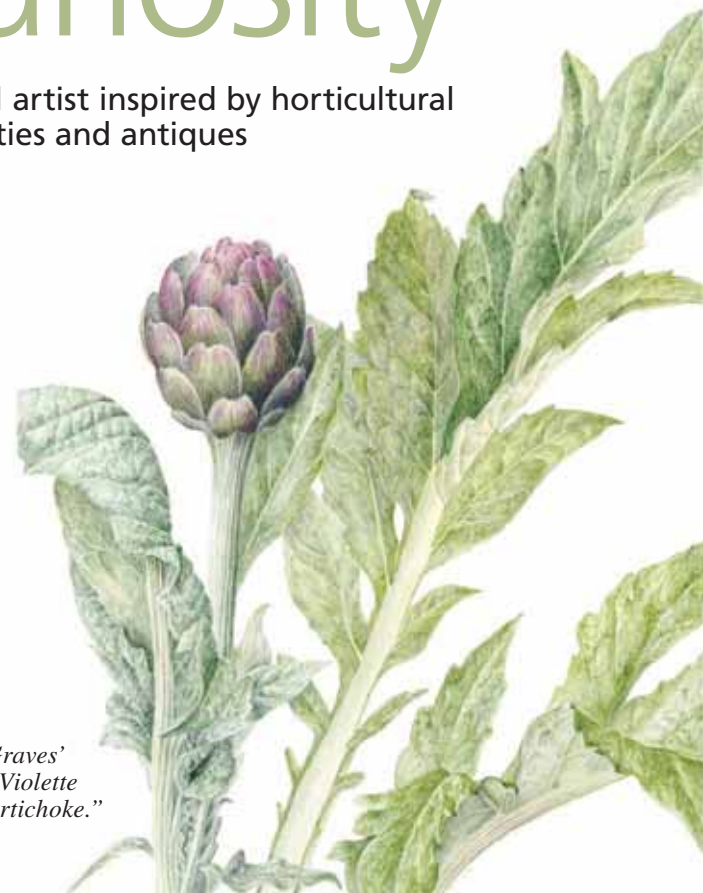


Veronica Weber

Pria Graves, one of the many artists taking part in "Art in the Garden" at Gamble Garden this year, sits in her Palo Alto yard where she grows many antique and heirloom plants.

Botanical curiosity

Local artist inspired by horticultural oddities and antiques



Graves' "Violette Artichoke."

was studying garden design when one of her teachers commented that she was drawing plants, not landscapes. Graves read up on botanical art and took classes in Point Reyes and Filoli in between working as a software engineer, a career from which she is now retired.

At the beginning of her art studies, Graves was set on using colored pencil, whereas most botanical artists stress the use of watercolor.

"With watercolor it felt like I had gone back to kindergarten," she says. "It's much less easily controlled." Today she is thankful for her transition to watercolors due to her carpal tunnel syndrome.

"Using a brush is much less stressful on my hand than using a pencil," Graves says. "Since I'm now painting four or five hours a day, not doing a lot of pressure is a really wise thing."

Graves' artistic detail is grounded in her depth of knowledge in botany. "I have a fair bit of botany and horticulture background. I'm very interested in knowing how the plants are put together."

This detail has served Graves well in various competitions.

"In theory, a scientist could look at your botanical painting and determine exactly what species it is," Graves says. "One of the things you will lose points for is if the way leaves or flowers attach to the stem is not done correctly."

The care required for botanical art extends to the planning process of what to paint and how. "You have to start the paintings when they're growing and flowering, so there's a lot more going on in the summer than in the winter," Graves says.

A 27-year resident of Palo Alto, Graves has become involved in the community, and even ran for city council in 2001.

"It's probably just as well that I didn't get elected," she says. "I enjoy being out in public and meeting people but I don't want to do it 24 hours a day. I still enjoy being well known around Palo Alto. It gives it a small-town feel."

Graves sells some of her artwork as prints and cards, and on rare occasions the original art itself. "It keeps me in paint," she says. "It helps pay for the shipping of stuff to shows. Basically, I don't really make money at it; it kind of helps be self-sustaining."

Ironically, Graves didn't believe she could do art when she was younger. While she was attending high school in the '60s, the art scene never quite sat well with her.

"Art was all large, abstract stuff, and that's not me," she says. "Because of what was going on around me, I became convinced that I couldn't do art, period."

Through botanical art, Graves rediscovered her passion for painting, eventually becoming a member of the local chapter of the Northern California Botanical Artist Society. The other facet of her passion for antique varieties of plants is an ecological and environmental message.

"I'm not a big fan of agribusiness, the vast monocultures of genetically modified corn," Graves says. "I think that's a scary direction we're taking our food supply in, so I'm pushing in the other direction."

The artist's series of historical vegetable paintings is just that.

"One thing I'm going to paint is the kind of potato that was being grown in Ireland when the potato blight hit, causing the potato famine," Graves says. "We're now as vulnerable because all the potatoes we grow are almost all one variety."

Being informative through art has always been important to Graves.

"I philosophically believe that it's important for us to grow (antique vegetables) and preserve them, and I think they have a story to tell," Graves says. "It is definitely my intention to use my art along with my writing to continue to educate people."

Graves' studio is a makeshift space, filled with natural light and a view into her overflowing garden. She often brings her subjects up to the studio to paint, preferring it to the outdoors.

Her paintings start from one spot on the page, almost finishing the layers of paint, then slowly spread outwards to fill in the penciled sketch. Graves often leaves a seemingly finished painting in her studio to let it settle.

"I like to live with it before I declare it done," Graves says. ■

What: "Art in the Garden," a garden-themed art exhibition, "paint-out" and sale

Where: Gamble Garden, 1431 Waverley St., Palo Alto

When: An artist reception and preview sale are scheduled along with the exhibition on Friday, July 20, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. On July 21, the garden will host the exhibition, "paint-out" and art sale.

Cost: A ticket to Friday's events costs \$30; admission on Saturday is free.

Info: Go to gamblegarden.com or call 650-329-1356.



Pria Graves' "Crimson Flowered Fava Bean."

Return engagement

Acclaimed singers and spouses are back on the Music@Menlo stage this summer

by Rebecca Wallace

As Music@Menlo marks its 10th anniversary this summer, the chamber-music festival continues to draw acclaim and audiences. It's also getting big encores: noted musicians who are becoming regulars.

One set of singers comes as a couple. Mezzo-soprano Sasha Cooke will return for her third Music@Menlo, with her husband, baritone Kelly Markgraf, back for the second time.

Based in Chicago, the young vocalists are very accustomed to playing the East Coast. Cooke earned particular praise for her performance as Kitty Oppenheimer in the Metropolitan Opera premiere of John Adams' "Doctor Atomic" in 2008, while Markgraf's résumé includes singing the role of Allazim in Luciano Berio's reconstruction of the unfinished Mozart opera "Zaide" at Carnegie Hall last year.

Still, both said they're looking

forward to being back on the Peninsula, where both audiences and fellow musicians are welcoming.

"It truly feels like a family," Markgraf said of Music@Menlo in a phone interview last week. "Everybody's always attending each others' concerts and thrilled to hear the music. ... So often, especially on the East Coast, it's a very demanding, critical kind of environment."

Cooke said she sees festival founders and artistic directors David Finckel and Wu Han — who are also a married couple — as inspirations. She loves teaching and coaching singers, and said she could see herself starting a festival one day.

"It's always intense at Menlo. ... You want to absorb it all. You want to go to all the talks, be at all the performances," she said. "We go and we're sort of lifted up, and we have the energy to last us the rest of the year."



Kelly Markgraf and Sasha Cooke.

This summer, Cooke and Markgraf will again combine their energies on stage. In one of the festival's "Carte Blanche" concerts, they will present a recital with pianist Gilbert Kalish, singing a program they chose together.

They will also sing in one of the main concerts, a July 27 program called "Transported" that aims to convey listeners to other worlds through music. Markgraf will sing Samuel Barber's "Dover Beach," a look at the natural world and hu-

manity's wars. Cooke will present Gustav Mahler's look at a child's vision of heaven in "Das himmlische Leben," from his Symphony no. 4.

While Cooke says Mahler is the composer she feels closest to, the piece is a bit of a departure. "People think of me for a more grounded repertoire, and this is more of a soprano voice. It's meant to be an angel with this childlike innocence," she said.

Overall, the theme for Music@Menlo this summer is "Resonance." Finckel and Wu Han have sought out music to strike deep chords with listeners and explore music's power to heal and transport. The festival runs July 20 through Aug. 11, with eight main concerts as well as recitals, student concerts and talks. Events are at Menlo School, the Center for Performing Arts at Menlo-Atherton High School and St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Palo Alto.

For their July 28 recital, Cooke and Markgraf said they were thrilled to be choosing their own music. It's a rare gift for a chamber vocalist.

Markgraf, who has been studying his family tree, will honor his Norwegian roots by singing three Edvard Grieg songs. Accustomed

to singing in German, Italian, French and Russian, Markgraf realized he'd never sung in Norwegian before. Grieg, he of piano miniatures and concerti, seemed a natural choice.

"He wrote nearly 150 songs. ... They're not all lighthouses in the sea of lieder repertoire, but the ones that are great are more than great," Markgraf said. "His musical language and the lushness of his harmonic texture really make for some affecting songs. There's nothing standing in the way. It's very immediate music."

Markgraf's recital choices also include "War Scenes," a cycle of Ned Rorem songs set to Walt Whitman poetry. "They are extremely demanding pianistically, so to be able to work on them with a pianist as skilled and seasoned and renowned as Gil (Kalish) is quite a treat," he said.

Cooke is singing songs by Brahms including "Nicht mehr zu dir zu gehen (To visit you no longer)" and "Die Mainacht (The May night)," as well as songs by Francis Poulenc and George Crumb.

Closing the recital, Markgraf and Cooke will sing three love duets from the Jerome Kern/Os-

(continued on page 26)

Music@Menlo

(continued from page 25)

car Hammerstein II musical "Show Boat." It's fitting for a program offering something rare to a pair of traveling musicians: the chance to travel and sing together. Usually they're booked at separate gigs, and with a young daughter in the mix, life is difficult to schedule.

Even back at home, Cooke joked, "Half the time we're just arguing over who gets to use the piano first."

Fortunately, the two are getting to perform together more often, typically at summer festivals. "I was just saying we should make an ad on our website," Cooke said. "People like seeing a couple together."

Regardless of what happens with the festival scene, Cooke is scheduled to be back in the Bay Area again next July. She's making her San Francisco Opera debut playing the title role in Mark Adamo's new opera "The Gospel of Mary Magdalene."

Adamo, who wrote the 1998 op-

era "Little Women," is telling the sacred story from Mary Magdalene's point of view. Cooke says Mary's character is vivid — spiritual, loyal and sensual — and the vocal writing beautiful.

There are advantages to starring in a world premiere. From time to time, Cooke said, Adamo has called to seek her input on musical passages, sometimes even wondering which key she'd prefer.

"You couldn't ask for a kinder composer," Cooke said. "When does a singer get this freedom?" ■

Info: Music@Menlo runs July 20 through Aug. 11. The "Transported" concert is 8 p.m. July 27 at Menlo-Atherton High School's Center for Performing Arts, 555 Middlefield Road, Atherton; tickets are \$20-\$65. Cooke and Markgraf will perform their recital with Gilbert Kalish at 8 p.m. July 28 at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 600 Colorado Ave., Palo Alto. Admission is \$15-\$60. For a complete schedule of concerts, talks and other events, go to musicatmenlo.org or call 650-330-2030.

Worth a Look

Film

Windrider Film Forum



Michelle Le

Terri Bullock of Menlo Park is the director of the Windrider Bay Area Film Forum.

Two more nights remain in the acclaimed Windrider Bay Area Film Forum, giving audience members the chance to learn about a championship wrestler who is deaf, and an influential dog in an Australian mining community. Led by Menlo Park resident Terri Bullock, the Atherton forum features screenings and post-screening audience discussions with the filmmakers.

"The conversations tend to peel away the layers of the film and explore the film's message or impact on culture," Windrider executive Shannon Fischer said.

Tonight, July 13, the Oren Kaplan film "The Hammer" will be shown at 7 p.m. It tells the story of the first deaf wrestler to win a national collegiate championship, and has a deaf actor playing every deaf character in the film. The movie is two-third English and one-third in American Sign Language, with subtitles for both parts.

Kaplan and actress Shoshanna Stern will join the post-film discussion, with an ASL interpreter on hand.

On Saturday, July 14, screenwriter Daniel Paplitz and actor Josh Lucas will visit to talk about their forum film, "Red Dog," following a 7 p.m. screening. Directed by Kriv Stenders, the movie is set in the Australian outback and follows a dog who becomes important to the mining populace there. "It's a story about unconditional love, loyalty and accepting people no matter what," Stenders said.

Events are in the Performing Arts Center at Menlo-Atherton High School, 555 Middlefield Road. Tickets for each night are \$15 general and \$5 for students. Go to windriderbayarea.org.

Books

Emily Jeanne Miller

Once an environmental journalist, now a first-time novelist, Emily Jeanne Miller is coming to town to give an author talk at the Palo Alto Library's downtown branch, through Books Inc.

In "Brand New Human Being," Miller creates the character of Logan Pyle, a former grad student who's a stay-at-home dad to 4-year-old Owen. "My father is dead, my wife is indifferent, and my son is strange," Logan says in the book. "I'm thirty-six years old. My life is nothing like I thought it would be." When Logan spots his wife kissing another guy, he hits the road with Owen in a carseat.

Miller, who has an MFA in fiction from the University of Florida, worked as a journalist in California and the Rocky Mountains, and co-edited a writing anthology in Montana. Her author talk is free and located at 270 Forest Ave. in Palo Alto, starting at 7 p.m. July 17.

For more, go to booksinc.net.

Festival

Connoisseurs' Marketplace

Foodies and arties (if that is a word) alike may find some-

thing worth their whiles in Menlo Park next weekend. For the 26th year, the downtown thoroughfare of Santa Cruz Avenue will host the Connoisseurs' Marketplace street fair.

Visiting foodies may gravitate toward demonstrations by professional chefs; specialty foods; samples from local eateries; and microbrew- and wine-tasting. Chefs will include Joanne Weir, a television cook and cookbook author; and chefs from local restaurants such as Left Bank, Trellis, the Menlo Hub and Carpaccio. Artisan foods will be available for sample and purchase.

In addition, some 250 artists will show and sell their work in the form of sculpture, photography, paintings, ceramics, glass, beadwork, etchings, jewelry, windchimes and other objects. Other events at the fair will include live music, kids' activities, a car show, and home and garden exhibits.

The event runs from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. July 21 and 22; admission is free. For more information, go to miramarevents.com or call 650-325-2818.

Music

Choir of Sidney Sussex College

Hailing from the land of early English composers Robert Fayrfax and Christopher Tye, the Choir of Sidney Sussex College within the University of Cambridge is touring the United States, and will be performing in Stanford University's Memorial Church.

The college was founded in 1596, and has a history of nurturing professional musicians. Its choir has won "Editor's Choice" and "CD of the Month" awards in Gramophone magazine. The group, which tours the States every three years, focuses on 16th-century music, as well as the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It also performs new commissioned works.

At Stanford, the choir will perform at 8 p.m. Aug. 4. Admission is free. For more information, go to music.stanford.edu.

Exhibits

Museum of American Heritage

At the heart of the 20th century lies the foundation of today's technology. Hair dryers, washing machines, vacuum cleaners and refrigerators were all essential inventions that revolutionized everyday life. This is the theme of the latest exhibit at Palo Alto's Museum of American Heritage.

"Inventing the 20th Century" will run through Jan. 13, 2013, and will include several artifacts from the museum's permanent collection, from eggbeaters to typewriters. Displaying pieces from the turn of the century to the second World War, exhibit organizers hope to spark today's innovation with the inventions of the past.

The museum is open from 11 a.m. until 4 p.m. on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, offering free admission as well as group tours. For more information, go to moah.org or call 650-473-6950.

A&E DIGEST

CAMERA CLUB ON THE COASTSIDE ... Fresh from a Palo Alto Camera Club exhibition at the Pacific Art League, five club members are showing work at the 2012 Kellicutt International Photo Show put on the by the Coastal Arts League. Photos by Branko Radonjic, Richard Stulz, Deborah Plumley, Marvin Wax and Laurie Naiman are on display in Half Moon Bay until the show moves to the Gallery at Calument in San Francisco from Aug. 2 through Aug. 30.

The show's theme was "Vibrant!" and drew 1,500 entries from 17 countries, according to a press release; 21 were chosen. Four of the Palo Altans won honors. Wax took one of two second-place awards for his piece "Light thru Blinds," which he shot in his home. "At a specific early-morning hour there was a special vibrant light on the blinds that beckoned to be photographed," he wrote in an artist's statement.

Stultz's photo "Up Escalator" won a third-place prize, and Plumley and Naiman were awarded honorable mentions. For more about the show, go to coastalartsleague.com.



PALO ALTO CITY COUNCIL

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**THIS IS A SUMMARY OF COUNCIL AGENDA ITEMS.
THE AGENDA WITH COMPLETE TITLES INCLUDING LEGAL
DOCUMENTATION CAN BE VIEWED
AT THE BELOW WEBSITE:**

<http://www.cityofpaloalto.org/knowzone/agendas/council.asp>

(TENTATIVE) AGENDA-SPECIAL MEETING- COUNCIL CONFERENCE ROOM July 16, 2012 - 5:30 PM

1. P&TC Interview of One Candidate
COUNCIL CHAMBERS

SPECIAL ORDERS OF THE DAY

2. Bay Area Council Yangpu District Presentation
3. Community Presentation: Project Safety Net

STUDY SESSION

4. Cool Cities Challenge

CONSENT CALENDAR

5. Approval of an Electric Enterprise Fund Contract with Golden State Utility Company for Trenching and Substructure Installation Services in the Amount of \$2,677,800
6. Approval of Contract Amendment with Baker & Taylor to Add \$40,000.00 for Digital Format Books for a Total Amount Not to Exceed \$1,290,000
7. Approval of a Contract with Con-Quest Contractors, Inc. in the Amount of \$518,400 for the Relocation of a 96-Inch Diameter Storm Drain Pipeline on East Bayshore Road Near San Francisquito Creek, Capital Improvement Program Project SD-06101
8. Amendment to Contract C12142966 with Par Electric for the Reconductoring of the 60kV 60Kilovolt Electric System in the Amount of \$85,000
9. Approval and Authorization of the City Manager to Execute a Contract with Canus Corporation in the Amount of \$7,672,500 for Electric, Water, Gas, Wastewater, Storm Drain and Public Works Construction Inspection Services
10. Adoption of Resolution Placing an Initiative Measure on November 2012 Ballot to Permit Three Medical Marijuana Dispensaries to Operate in Palo Alto
11. Approval of a Contract for Goods (Purchase Order) for the Acquisition of Toshiba Laptops
12. Approval of Fiscal Year 2012 Re-appropriation Requests to be Carried Forward into Fiscal Year 2013

ACTION ITEMS

13. Direction on Downtown Parking Strategies and Approval of Trial Residential Permit Parking Program In and Around the Professorville Neighborhood
14. Utilities Advisory Commission Recommendation that Council Approve a Definition of Carbon Neutrality in Anticipation of Achieving a Carbon Neutral Electric Supply Portfolio by 2015

CLOSED SESSION-Labor

15. Palo Alto Police Officers Assoc.
16. Palo Alto Police Manager's Assoc.

STANDING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Cubberley Policy Advisory Committee meeting will be held on July 19, 2012 at 10:00 AM to discuss topics brought forward from the Cubberley Citizen Advisory Committee.

Eating Out

RESTAURANT REVIEW



Veronica Weber

The “original” Philly Cheese Steak features grilled beef, onions, provolone cheese and peppers. It’s served on a roll from Amoroso’s, a bakery in Philadelphia.

Say cheese steak

Palo Alto gets a taste of Philadelphia

by Sheila Himmel

Near the intersection of Palo Alto’s California Avenue and El Camino Real, add a taste of Philadelphia to the array of quick dining opportunities.

The first Cheese Steak Shop opened in San Francisco 40 years ago. Now there are 28 stores sprinkled around Northern California and one in Manila, for some reason. Palo Alto’s opened in December.

The highlight is the light and chewy roll from Amoroso’s, a 100-year-old family-owned bakery in Philadelphia. The bread absorbs all the meaty flavors, and it doesn’t immediately turn to mush if you carry it out of the shop to eat later, as you are most likely to do.

However, the shop does offer handsome wooden furniture, should you choose to stay and study some poster-size photographs of cheese-steak shops and vintage cars.

The Cheese Steak Shop features 100 percent beef loin from Steak-Eze (“The Original Breakaway Steak”). Other cheese-steak purveyors use rib-eye or top round. I can’t see how it matters a lot, after all the meat goes through. It is sliced thin, chopped senseless on a lightly oiled grill, and merged with melted cheese and possibly grilled onions. The Cheese Steak Shop also offers “cheese steaks” made from chicken breast, two versions for vegetarians and an Italian hoagie.

Salads march in the same formation: steak, chicken, vegetable and Italian, which means provolone cheese, mortadella, salami, ham and capicollo (a cross between salami and ham). On the Italian hoagie (\$5.39 for 7 inches) you can taste where each meat stops and starts.

Your options on the cheese steak are grilled onions and hot and/or sweet peppers. I recommend them all, to jazz it up. Mushrooms also are a good addition for 30 cents. Some of the other add-ons, such as pizza sauce and smoky barbecue sauce, would obliterate the meat flavor altogether.

(continued on page 28)

Inspirations

a guide to the spiritual community



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Palo Alto Weekly

Graphic Designer

Embarcadero Media, producers of the Palo Alto Weekly, The Almanac, Mountain View Voice, PaloAltoOnline.com and several other community websites, is looking for a graphic designer to join its award-winning design team.

Design opportunities include online and print ad design and editorial page layout. Applicant must be fluent in InDesign, Photoshop and Illustrator. Flash knowledge is a plus. Newspaper or previous publication experience is preferred, but we will consider qualified — including entry level — candidates. Most importantly, designer must be a team player and demonstrate speed, accuracy and thrive under deadline pressure. The position will be approximately 32 hours per week.

To apply, please send a resume along with samples of your work as a PDF (or URL) to Shannon Corey, Creative Director, at scorey@paweekly.com

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Jose Romero, left, layers provolone cheese atop grilled steak and onions, while shop owner Alex Jen prepares sandwiches.

(continued from page 27)

Side dishes include potato chips, garlic fries, onion rings and hot wings. Twisted fries (\$1.79 for the good-sized small) have a crunchy crust and creamy interior. Steak fries, thick and soft, fall flat in comparison.

You'll find meal deals advertised in newspapers and on the walls. Look for the fine print: "Valid 3 p.m. to closing" on newspaper coupons. But the posted combinations may be just as good, such as a 7-inch classic sandwich, small fries and small (12-ounce, plenty big) soda for \$5.99 at lunch. How lunch is different from dinner, I don't know.

The Cheese Steak Shop guarantees authenticity with its peppers, rolls and Tastycakes imported from Philadelphia. The rolls, in 7-, 10- and 15-inch lengths, are like Italian rolls, but more hot dog-shaped. According to Amoroso's Web site, their specialness comes from hearth baking: "'Hearth-baked' means our bread and rolls never see the inside of a pan and are free to form their own individual 'personalities' in the oven."

About those Tastycakes. Far-flung Philadelphians bond over them, poo-hooing any similarity to Hostess, Little Debbie and others of their ilk. The heavy favorite, butterscotch krimpets (\$2.19 at the Cheese Steak Shop), lug a long and complex list of ingredients and 350 calories in their wake.

Texture-free and extremely sweet, these little iced sponge cakes may be the kind of thing you had to grow up with to appreciate. ■



Yes, Philadelphia, there is a vegetarian "cheese steak." It contains spinach, mushrooms, lettuce, tomatoes, cheese and peppers.

Cheese Steak Shop, 2035B El Camino Real, Palo Alto; (650) 326-1628; cheesesteakshop.com

Hours: 10:30 a.m.-9 p.m. Mon.-Thurs.; 10:30 a.m.-10 p.m. Fri.; 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Sat.; 11:30 a.m.-8:30 p.m. Sun.

<input type="checkbox"/> Reservations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Catering
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Credit cards	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Takeout
<input type="checkbox"/> Lot Parking	Noise level: Fine
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Highchairs	Restroom Cleanliness: OK
<input type="checkbox"/> Outdoor dining	
<input type="checkbox"/> Party and banquet facilities	



The lunchtime crowd at the Cheese Steak Shop.

PENINSULA



DINE OUT

Discover the best places to eat this week!

<p style="text-align: center; color: #00AEEF;">AMERICAN</p> <p>Armadillo Willy's 941-2922 1031 N. San Antonio Road, Los Altos www.armadillowillys.com</p> <p>Cheese Steak Shop 326-1628 2305-B El Camino Real, Palo Alto</p> <p>Luttficken's 854-0291 3535 Alameda, Menlo Park www.luttfickens.com</p> <p>The Old Pro 326-1446 541 Ramona Street, Palo Alto www.oldpropa.com</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #00AEEF;">STEAKHOUSE</p> <p>Sundance the Steakhouse 321-6798 1921 El Camino Real, Palo Alto www.sundancethesteakhouse.com</p>	<p style="text-align: center; color: #00AEEF;">CHINESE</p> <p>Chef Chu's 948-2696 1067 N. San Antonio Road www.chefchu.com</p> <p>Ming's 856-7700 1700 Embarcadero East, Palo Alto www.mings.com</p> <p>New Tung Kee Noodle House 947-8888 520 Showers Drive, Mountain View www.shopmountainview.com/luvnoodlemv</p> <p style="text-align: center; color: #00AEEF;">INDIAN</p> <p>Janta Indian Restaurant 462-5903 369 Lytton Ave. www.jantaindianrestaurant.com</p> <p>Thaiphoon 323-7700 543 Emerson Ave, Palo Alto www.ThaiphoonRestaurant.com</p>
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Movies

OPENINGS

Beasts of the Southern Wild ★★★★★

(Guild) “Once there was a Hushpuppy and she lived with her daddy in The Bathtub,” voices the 6-year-old narrator who wants to record her story for posterity. The little girl has a big imagination. And so does writer-director Benh Zeitlin, whose stunningly original first feature unspools like a dreamlike fable. Independent filmmaking doesn’t come any better than this.

Newcomer Quvenzhané Wallis delivers a riveting performance as the child trying to make sense of her world situated on the wrong side of a southern Louisiana levee. She and her ailing father (Dwight Henry) struggle to stay afloat in the

Bathtub, a floodplain populated with odd characters and littered with ramshackle housing — a hurricane away from disaster. But the bayou community refuses to be displaced. Fiercely protective of their culture and each other, the colorful eccentrics — with names including Wink and Walrus — don’t flinch in the face of Mother Nature or the government workers who try to evacuate them from the home that they love.

Zeitlin’s gift is the ability to pack social commentary within a unique voice and look. He and co-writer Lucy Alibar address the difficulties of preserving a people and their culture in post-Katrina Louisiana. Whether learning how to “beast” a crab by cracking it and sucking out the meat, or sputtering across the delta in a jerry-built boat, Hushpuppy belongs to a community that

will captivate your attention.

Experiencing this subculture from the young girl’s perspective allows us to enter a world of wonder. Looking for her father, Hushpuppy mutters: “Daddy could have turned into a tree or a bug. There wasn’t any way to know.” Clearly the fabric of the universe unravels with her father’s declining health. A storm approaches. The ice caps melt, releasing primordial aurochs — the beasts advancing within Hushpuppy’s mind. The rains come. Waters rise. The coming-of-age story forces the feisty little girl to sink or swim.

Similar to Zeitlin’s award-winning short, “Glory at Sea,” the film’s imagery has a haunting quality, especially once the characters become unmoored. The 2012 Sundance Film Festival recognized Ben Richardson’s cinematography and awarded the Grand Jury Prize to the movie, which has a local angle: The San Francisco Film Society/Kenneth Rainin Foundation supported the production with two grants.

“Beasts of the Southern Wild” is a must-see movie of rare vision. And the defiant brown eyes of Quvenzhané Wallis burn with a warrior spirit that you won’t soon forget.

Rated PG-13 for language, child imperilment, brief sensuality, disturbing images and thematic material. 1 hour, 33 minutes.

— Susan Tavernetti

The Intouchables ★★

(Aquarius) In “The Intouchables,” a rich, stuffy, white man exposes a poor black man to the “finer things” in life; in turn, the black man teaches the white man how to loosen up and find love. No need to check your watch. It’s still 2012.

With its brash humor and emotional generosity, “The Intouchables” has crowd-pleaser written all over it, but there’s no mistaking the queasy racial implications. The comedy-drama has its basis in a true story, whipped by writer-directors Olivier Nakache and Éric Toledano into a buddy-movie froth. François Cluzet (“Tell No One”) plays Philippe, a quadriplegic white mil-



Quvenzhané Wallis and Dwight Henry in “Beasts of the Southern Wild.”

lionaire who unexpectedly plucks Senegalese immigrant Driss (Omar Sy) out of the Parisian ghetto to be a live-in home-care provider. (The real “Driss” was Algerian immigrant Abdel Sellou, who penned the memoir “You Changed My Life.”)

Nakache and Toledano open the film with a sequence that suggests a slick crime movie: speeding cars, energetic music and our heroes conning the cops. But it’s just one of the film’s many artful dodges, an entertaining hook placed at the top because it is, superficially, a good way to start a movie. Thereafter, the story flashes back to how Philippe meets Driss, sees something in him, and installs him in a mansion that offers all the amenities, including a huge bedroom (!), a huge bathtub (!!)

and a hot redhead (!!!), Philippe’s assistant, Magalie (Audrey Fleurot). Driss initially balks at the work of a nurse, especially since it involves intimacy with Philippe’s nether regions. But collecting welfare checks cannot compete with living high on the hog, so Driss settles in, merrily flirts with Magalie and boogies to Earth, Wind & Fire, lest we doubt his credentials as a Life Force capable of reigniting Philippe.

For his part, the classical-music-loving Philippe — also a closet

adventurer — appreciates Driss’ irreverent insistence on prodding his boss out of his discomfort zone and into his need for speed and romance. Phillippe brings Driss to high-society events, including the opera; Driss plays Earth, Wind & Fire for Phillippe and gets him high. Driss needles Phillippe to lay down the law with his spoiled adoptive daughter and, more importantly, to face his fears by meeting his female pen pal. Phillippe teaches Driss about painting, which he profitably takes up.

Wildly popular in its native France, “The Intouchables” applies strict formula to an entirely reassuring story about improving one’s life by coming out of one’s shell and embracing new people and experiences. As told through bromance, it’s a cinematic warm fuzzy if ever there was one, and the performances by Cluzet and Sy prove highly appealing if not irresistible. But here in America, where we invented this formula, audiences are likely to find it discomfitingly retrograde.

Rated R for language and some drug use. One hour, 52 minutes.

— Peter Canavese

NOW PLAYING

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

Savages ★★1/2

(Century 16, Century 20) Oliver Stone still believes in red-meat cinema. The proof is in “Savages,” a hard-R crime drama that never treats the audience as juvenile. A war veteran named Chon (Taylor Kitsch) and his business partner and best friend Ben (Aaron Johnson) have a partnership that brings to mind the entrepreneurship of Ben and Jerry. The boutique product they export isn’t gourmet ice cream but gourmet pot. Ben and Chon face a takeover by a Mexican cartel, but when the duo makes other plans, the cartel takes their surfer girl “O” (Blake Lively) hostage, setting off a war of wills. Salma Hayek’s Elena, the cruel cartel mistress, doesn’t suffer fools, but she’s also a devoted, frustrated mother. Benicio Del Toro plays her top goon, Lado, both psychotic and sensitive. John Travolta is the slick, corrupt DEA agent. All three could be Oscar front-runners. The menage a trois at the heart of the film symbolizes American life: Naive consumer O is in bed with both damaged-goods muscle Chon and Buddhist businessman Ben, but they’ll never want her as much as they want, need and envy each other. Rated R for violence, sexuality, nudity, drug use and language. Two hours, 10 minutes.— P.C. (Reviewed July 6, 2012)

The Amazing Spider-Man ★★★

(Century 16, Century 20) Viewers will compare “The Amazing Spider-Man,” to Sam Raimi’s 2002 effort, and it could be argued that the two are on equal footing. In this comic book movie reboot, Andrew Garfield (“The Social Network”) is high-school outcast Peter Parker, and Peter’s love interest is Gwen Stacy (Emma Stone). Peter’s parents left him with his uncle Ben (Martin Sheen) and aunt May (Sally Field) when he was a boy, and he still puzzles over their sudden departure. Peter discovers his father had been working with one-armed scientist Dr. Curt Connors (Rhys Ifans), and visits Connors at R&D company OsCorp. A genetically altered spider bites Peter, who starts showing enhanced strength and reflexes. He dubs himself Spider-Man, and takes to swinging over the city. The visual effects in “Amazing” are superior (including breathtaking scenes from Spider-Man’s P.O.V.) and its villain, the Lizard, is one of the genre’s most frightening. The battle scenes between Spider-Man and the Lizard are exceptional. Garfield is a terrific actor — better than Maguire — and Stone is a welcome upgrade over the dour Kirsten Dunst. Both familiar and fresh, it’s a spectacle with enough thrills and humor to satisfy most fans. Rated PG-13 for action and violence. Two hours, 16 minutes.— T.H. (Reviewed July 6, 2012)

Take This Waltz ★★1/2

(Aquarius) Films concerned with adultery, or the potential for it, teeter over the pitfall of unlikeableness. A character even asking

the loaded question “Should I cheat?” risks the abandonment of audience sympathy, but writer-director Sarah Polley goes there with her sophomore feature. Polley’s fearlessness is one of many reasons I take no pleasure in saying that “Take This Waltz” stumbles. High expectations accompany her latest film particularly with the cast Polley has enlisted, including Michelle Williams and Seth Rogen as a married couple. Williams’ Margot shares a connection with hipster Daniel (Luke Kirby), who happens to live across the street from her and her husband, Lou. Polley knows well enough that nothing is permanent and, as the Bard wrote, “Affection is not rated from the heart.” But the maturity of these understandings does not, in and of itself, a movie make, and the devil of “Take This Waltz” is in its tonal missteps and unconvincing details. Margot’s maddening indecision is probably entirely realistic, but the way she prolongs the process of making three people miserable quickly alienates the viewer. There’s a movie about this subject that finds the humor in it and lets us sympathize with the characters, but these two hours of discomfort don’t add up to it. Rated R for language, sexual content and nudity. One hour, 57 minutes.— P.C. (Reviewed July 6, 2012)

To Rome with Love ★★

(Palo Alto Square, Century 20) There are three million stories in the Eternal City;

(continued on next page)

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CITY OF PALO ALTO NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN That The Palo Alto City Council At The Special Council Meeting On Monday, July 23, 2012 At 7:00 P.M. Or As Near Thereafter As Possible, In The Council Chambers, 250 Hamilton Avenue, Palo Alto, Will Have a Public Meeting to Consider the Approval of Detailed Sidewalk and Plaza Design for California Avenue Transit Hub Corridor Streetscape Improvements Project.

DONNA J. GRIDER, MMC
City Clerk

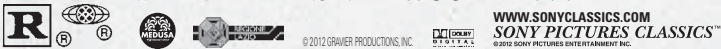
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ALEC BALDWIN
ROBERTO BENIGNI
PENÉLOPE CRUZ
JUDY DAVIS
JESSE EISENBERG
GRETA GERWIG
ELLEN PAGE

“One of the most delightful things about ‘To Rome With Love’ is how casually it blends the plausible and the surreal, and how unabashedly it revels in pure silliness.”
—A.O. Scott, THE NEW YORK TIMES



TO ROME WITH LOVE

WRITTEN AND DIRECTED BY WOODY ALLEN



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(continued from previous page)

Woody Allen tells four of them. To follow the enjoyable but overpraised “Midnight in Paris,” Allen goes “To Rome with Love” and promptly loses his way. Allen long ago made his reputation as a filmmaker and no one can take that away from him, not even Woody himself. But that doesn’t stop him from trying. The most pleasurable aspect of the film — apart from the location photography of Darius Khondji — is the onscreen appearance of Allen. None of the storylines is without problems. The tales tend to be predictable and, in terms of humor and thematic import, weak tea. More distressing is Allen’s regressive treatment of women and an off-putting solipsism. Repeatedly, sexy women confess their attraction to Woody-esque men with power, celebrity, neuroses and a tendency for “reminiscing” about the past. Allen’s privileged-male, American-in-Rome condescension takes most of the fun out of the film. Rated R for sexual references. One hour, 42 minutes. — P.C. (Reviewed June 29, 2012)

Ted *
(Century 16, Century 20) Let’s say you’re a TV mogul, and Universal Pictures hands you \$65 million to make your first big-screen comedy. Would you squander the opportunity by recycling your TV material and spackling on R-rated jokes? Seth MacFarlane (“Family Guy”) would, and did, with “Ted.” Those who love “Family Guy” may love “Ted” even more, but it’s a lazy comedy: stupid, aimless and seldom funny. A magically granted “Christmas wish” imbues the teddy bear of 8-year-old John Bennett with consciousness. The bear, Ted, becomes a celebrity doing Carson one day and forgotten the next, but 27 years later, John (Mark Wahlberg) remains joined at the hip to his fuzzy best friend (voiced by MacFarlane). And MacFarlane’s sense of humor hasn’t evolved. He’s trapped in his own pop-culture nostalgia, and the endless celebrity-themed jokes and movie parodies betray him as more of a comedy parasite than an auteur. It’s almost worth the price of admission to see Wahlberg happily clinging to the waist of Sam “Flash Gordon” Jones, but otherwise MacFarlane enrolls in the school of profane shock comedy that’s gleefully profane but too rarely clever. Rated R for sexual references. One hour, 47 minutes. — P.C. (Reviewed June 29, 2012)

Snow White and the Huntsman
****1/2**
(Century 20) “Snow White and the Huntsman” is neither the kid-friendly take of 1937’s “Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs” nor the two-month-old “Mirror Mirror,” nor the R-rated horror version offered by 1997’s “Snow White: A Tale of Terror.” No, it’s something else. But is it enough? And whom is it for? Rupert Sanders’ frequently intense PG-13 film isn’t for kids, and it’s not exactly for adults either. The soggy new script by Evan Daugherty, John Lee Hancock and Hossein Amini doesn’t dig deep enough or draw compelling enough characters to fascinate or entertain, leaving Sanders to justify his film’s existence through tasteful visuals. “Snow” does give some ammo to future theses: an outpost of self-mutilated women who sacrifice beauty for better lives and a motif of oil slicks that constitutes an environmental consciousness. Still, these feints, along with Sanders’ good eye and appealing naturalistic restraint, can’t turn the thin pages of this picture book into a transcendent fantasy fable. Rated PG-13 for violence and action, and brief sensuality. Two hours, eight minutes. — P.C. (Reviewed June 1, 2012)

Movies

MOVIE TIMES

Showtimes for the Century 16 theater are for Friday through Wednesday unless otherwise noted. Showtimes for the Century 20 theater are for Friday through Tuesday unless otherwise noted.

- The Amazing Spider-Man (PG-13) *****
Century 16: 10:30 a.m.; 12:20, 3:50, 7:20 & 10:30 p.m.; Fri.-Tue. also at 5:20 p.m.; In 3D at 10 & 11:20 a.m.; 1:10, 1:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:20, 8:20 & 9:30 p.m.; In 3D Fri.-Tue. also at 8:50 p.m. **Century 20:** 10:45 a.m.; 12:20, 1:50, 3:30, 4:55, 6:40, 8:15 & 9:45 p.m.; In 3D at 11:30 a.m.; 1:10, 2:40, 4:20, 5:50, 7:30, 9:05 & 10:35 p.m.
- Beasts of the Southern Wild (PG-13) ******
Guild Theatre: 2, 4:30, 7 & 9:45 p.m.
- Bernie (PG-13) *****
Aquarius Theatre: 3:30 & 8:45 p.m.
- The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel (PG-13) **1/2**
Palo Alto Square: 1:15 p.m.; Fri.-Tue. & Thu. also at 4:15 & 7:15 p.m.; Fri. & Sat. also at 10 p.m.
- Brave (PG) ***1/2**
Century 16: 10:10 a.m.; 3:40 & 9:10 p.m.; In 3D at 12:50 & 6:20 p.m. **Century 20:** 11 a.m.; 1:45, 4:25, 6:55 & 9:35 p.m.; In 3D at 12:05, 2:35, 5:15, 7:50 & 10:25 p.m.
- Carrie (1952) (Not Rated) (Not Reviewed)**
Stanford Theatre: Wed. & Thu. at 5:20 & 9:40 p.m.
- The Dark Knight Marathon (PG-13) (Not Reviewed)**
Century 16: Thu. at 6:15 p.m. **Century 20:** Thu. at 6:15 p.m.
- The Dark Knight Rises (PG-13) (Not Reviewed)**
Century 16: Thu. at 12:01 a.m. **Century 20:** Thu. at 12:02, 12:03 & 12:04 a.m.
- Ice Age: Continental Drift (PG) (Not Reviewed)**
Century 16: 10:30 & 11 a.m.; 1, 1:30, 3:30, 4, 6:10, 7, 8:50 & 9:30 p.m.; In 3D Fri.-Thu. at 10 a.m.; 12:30, 3, 5:30, 8:10 & 10:30 p.m.; In 3D Fri.-Wed. also at 11:30 a.m.; 2, 4:30, 7:30 & 10 p.m. **Century 20:** 10:25 & 11:45 a.m.; 12:50, 2:10, 3:10, 4:35, 5:35, 7, 8, 9:25 & 10:20 p.m.; In 3D Fri.-Wed. at 11:10 a.m.; 1:30, 3:45, 6, 8:20 & 10:40 p.m.; In 3D Fri.-Tue. also at 12:20, 2:40, 5, 7:25 & 9:50 p.m.
- The Intouchables (R) ****
Aquarius Theatre: 1:15, 4, 7 & 9:45 p.m.
- Katy Perry: Part of Me (PG) (Not Reviewed)**
Century 16: 10:40 a.m.; In 3D at 1:20, 4:10, 7:05 & 9:40 p.m. **Century 20:** 10:35 a.m.; In 3D at 12:55, 3:15 & 5:40 p.m.; In 3D Sat.-Tue. also at 8:10 & 10:35 p.m.
- Madagascar 3: Europe's Most Wanted (PG) (Not Reviewed)**
Century 16: 1:10 p.m.; Sat.-Wed. also at 7 p.m.; Wed. also at 3:30 p.m.; In 3D at 10 a.m.; In 3D Fri.-Tue. also at 3:30 p.m.; In 3D Sat.-Wed. also at 10:20 p.m. **Century 20:** 10:20 a.m. & 3 p.m.; Sun.-Tue. also at 10 p.m.; In 3D at 12:40 & 5:20 p.m.; In 3D Sun.-Tue. also at 7:40 p.m.
- Magic Mike (R) (Not Reviewed)**
Century 16: 11 a.m.; 1:35, 4:10, 7:40 & 10:30 p.m. **Century 20:** 11:50 a.m.; 2:25, 5, 7:45 & 10:30 p.m.
- The Metropolitan Opera: Lucia di Lammermoor (Not Rated) (Not Reviewed)**
Century 16: Wed. at 6:30 p.m. **Century 20:** Wed. at 6:30 p.m. **Palo Alto Square:** Wed. at 6:30 p.m.
- Moonrise Kingdom (PG-13) ***1/2**
Century 16: 11:20 a.m.; 1:50, 4:20, 7:10 & 9:50 p.m. **Century 20:** 12:25, 2:45, 5:10, 7:45 & 10:10 p.m.
- My Fair Lady (1964) (Not Rated) (Not Reviewed)**
Stanford Theatre: Sat.-Tue. at 7:30 p.m.; Sat. & Sun. also at 2 p.m.
- North by Northwest (1959) (Not Rated) (Not Reviewed)**
Century 16: Wed. at 2 & 7 p.m. **Century 20:** Wed. at 2 & 7 p.m.
- The Prince and the Showgirl (1957) (Not Rated) (Not Reviewed)**
Stanford Theatre: Wed. & Thu. at 7:30 p.m.
- Prometheus (R) (Not Reviewed)**
Century 16: 10 a.m.; Fri.-Tue. also at 3:30 p.m.; Sat.-Tue. also at 10 p.m.; Wed. also at 9:20 p.m.; In 3D Fri.-Tue. at 12:20 p.m.; In 3D Sat.-Tue. also at 7 p.m.
- Savages (R) ***1/2**
Century 16: 10 a.m.; 12:55, 3:50, 7 & 10:10 p.m. **Century 20:** 10:25 a.m.; 1:20, 4:15, 7:20 & 10:25 p.m.
- Snow White and the Huntsman (PG-13) **1/2**
Century 20: 10:40 a.m.; 1:30, 4:20, 7:25 & 10:20 p.m.
- Take This Waltz (R) **1/2**
Aquarius Theatre: 12:45 & 6 p.m.
- Ted (R) ***
Century 16: 10:50 a.m.; 1:40, 4:30, 7:30 & 10:30 p.m. **Century 20:** 10:50 a.m.; 12:10, 1:25, 2:45, 4:05, 5:20, 6:50, 7:55, 9:25 & 10:40 p.m.
- Three Little Words (1950) (Not Rated) (Not Reviewed)**
Stanford Theatre: Fri. at 5:35 & 9:40 p.m.
- To Rome With Love (R) ****
Century 20: 10:55 a.m.; 1:40 & 4:30 p.m.; Sun.-Tue. also at 7:10 & 9:55 p.m. **Palo Alto Square:** 1:30, 4:30 & 7:25 p.m.; Fri. & Sat. also at 10:05 p.m.
- Tyler Perry's Madea's Witness Protection (PG-13) (Not Reviewed)**
Century 20: 12:15, 2:50 & 5:25 p.m.; Fri. & Sun.-Tue. also at 8:05 & 10:45 p.m.
- Words and Music (1948) (Not Rated) (Not Reviewed)**
Stanford Theatre: Fri. at 7:30 p.m.

★ 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 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 PaloAltoOnline.com/movies

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Sun - Tues 7/15-7/17	The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel - 1:15, 4:15, 7:15 To Rome with Love - 1:30, 4:30, 7:25
Wed 7/18	The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel - 1:15 To Rome with Love - 1:30, 4:30, 7:25
Thurs 7/19	The Best Exotic Marigold Hotel - 1:15, 4:15, 7:15 To Rome with Love - 1:30, 4:30, 7:25

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Palo Alto Weekly Photo Contest

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Sports Shorts

LOCAL GOLFERS . . . Former Pac-10 individual champion **Martin Trainer** of Palo Alto will be one of eight local golfers competing on Monday at the U.S. Amateur Sectional Qualifying at the Marin Country Club. Trainer, a Gunn High graduate and member of the USC golf team, will be joined by **Spencer Fletcher** of Los Altos, brothers **Bradley** and **Kevin Knox** of Menlo Park, **Dustin McMillen** of Palo Alto, Menlo School grad **Bobby Pender** of Los Altos Hills, Menlo-Atherton grad **Nick Sako** of Menlo Park, and **Robert Salomon** of Portola Valley. The one-day event features 36 holes of stroke play, with the low individuals advancing to the U.S. Amateur Championship on Aug. 13-19 at Cherry Hills Country Club in Cherry Hills Village, Colo.

FUNDRAISERS . . . The Menlo Park Legends' baseball team will host a fundraising barbeque and other activities on Sunday at Nealon Park in Menlo Park from 5-10 p.m. The evening will feature dinner, music by the Windy Hill Bluegrass Band, baseball-inspired carnival games, music, a home-run derby with Legends players, autograph signing, a balloon raffle and a silent auction. A pickup-style softball game will end the night. The Legends are still accepting contributions to the raffle/silent auction. For any questions about donations, contact Ali at ali@menloparklegends.com. Proceeds from the event will benefit Legends Village, which was created to provide underprivileged children in the surrounding areas (Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Redwood City) free camps, clinics, a mentor program and a chance to learn the game of baseball. . . . The Grizzlies, a local boys' lacrosse club in Menlo Park/Atherton, will host an outdoor movie night (Crooked Arrows will be screened) on July 17 at Las Lomas School at 8:15 p.m. The family package is \$10 and includes parents and up to three siblings while all individuals are \$7.50. Proceeds benefit the nonprofit Grizzlies' club, which has grown from 70 to 140 boys (ages 5 to 14). For more information, go to www.menloathertonlacrosse.com.

SIGNUPS . . . The Mountain View Marauders have begun registration for the upcoming season. Football players between 7-15 years of age are eligible while cheerleading ages are from 9-15. The next signup will be July 19 from 6:30-8 p.m. at the Mountain View Recreation Center, 201 S. Rengstorff.

ON THE AIR

Friday

Women's tennis: Bank of the West Classic, 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.; Tennis Channel

Saturday

Women's tennis: Bank of the West Classic singles semifinals, 1 p.m. and 7 p.m.; ESPN2

Sunday

Women's tennis: Bank of the West Classic singles final, 1 p.m.; ESPN2

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



Reigning Wimbledon champ Serena Williams began defense of her Bank of the West Classic title with a 6-2, 6-1 victory over Stanford junior Nicole Gibbs on Wednesday.



Despite being the NCAA singles and doubles champ in 2012, Stanford's Nicole Gibbs was no match for veteran Serena Williams.

BANK OF THE WEST CLASSIC

Singles showdown looks like a rematch

Wimbledon champ Serena Williams moves closer to facing Bartoli again in BOW finals after eliminating Stanford's Gibbs

by Rick Eymmer

The finals of the 2012 Bank of the West Classic most likely will look like a repeat of the 2011 championship. The path to the last singles match looks that apparent for the favorites.

Barring a major upset along the way, defending champ Serena Williams will be facing '11 runnerup Marion Bartoli on Sunday at Stanford's Taube Family Tennis Center at 1 p.m.

The top-seeded Williams only has to get past No. 6 seed Chanelle Sheepers of South Africa on Friday and likely No. 3 Dominika

Cibulkova on Saturday to reach the finals. The No. 2 Bartoli, who faced Stanford senior Mallory Burdette on Thursday, was favored to face No. 5 seed Yanina Wickmayer of Belgium in Friday's quarterfinals. A likely Saturday semifinal for Bartoli would be No. 8 Marina Erakovic or unseeded Urszula Radwanska.

The differences between the 'haves' and the 'have nots' is that evident in this year's annual stop at Stanford. There is no Maria Sharapova or Victoria Azarenka to keep things interesting. Simply,

(continued on page 33)

Lin will remain with Knicks, keeps starting job

If all the reports that are circling in the NBA are correct, Jeremy Lin won't be changing his mailing address for the coming season. The Palo Alto High grad not only will be returning to the New York Knicks, but will enter training camp as the starting point guard.

Lin could sign a new contract with the Knicks as early as Thursday, for a reported \$28.8 million over four

years.

Knicks' coach Mike Woodson repeated on Wednesday that Lin will "absolutely" be back this season and will be the starter at his position, despite the fact New York will sign veteran Jason Kidd to a reported \$9 million over three years.

"Jeremy was our starter before he got hurt," Woodson told the New York Post. "Unfortunately, he went

down on an injury. He's not going to be punished for that." Woodson said Kidd will back up Lin and help in his development.

Lin received an offer sheet from the Houston Rockets, but the Knicks said all along they planned to match any offer for their restricted free agent. The offer sheet still hasn't been signed and sent to the Knicks, who would then have three days to

match.

"Jeremy Lin has always been a big part of what we're trying to do as we move forward with our franchise," Woodson said.

Lin, meanwhile, received an ESPY Award on Wednesday night in Los Angeles for the best breakthrough athlete of the year despite playing in only 35 games before an injury ended his season. ■

STANFORD COACHES

Floreal heads to Kentucky

Cardinal track coach returns to roots in SEC after Olympic stopover

First it was men's swim coach Skip Kenney, who retired after 33 years. Then it was women's swim coach Lea Maurer, who resigned after seven years to devote more time to her family.

Edrick Floreal, who has served as Stanford's Director of Track and Field for the past eight seasons, joined the list of former Cardinal coaches after he resigned this week to accept the head coaching position at the University of Kentucky.

Floreal was hired as an assistant coach at Stanford in 1998 and was appointed head coach in 2005.

"Coach Floreal has been a tremendous contributor to Stanford Track and Field/Cross Country as well as the broader Stanford Athletics community," said Interim Director of Athletics Patrick Dunkley. "He will certainly be missed and I wish him well in at the University of Kentucky."

Before heading to Kentucky, Floreal will be coaching the decathlon team and will be the jumps coach for the U.S. Olympic track and field team at the London Games.

Floreal, a graduate from the University of Arkansas, will lead six sports programs at Kentucky, including men's and women's cross country, men's and women's indoor track and field, along with men's and women's outdoor track and field.

Floreal, who is the first new track and field head coach in 28 years for



University of Arkansas grad Edrick Floreal will leave Stanford and return to his roots in the SEC at Kentucky.

the Wildcats, returns to Kentucky after serving as an assistant for the Wildcats during the 1996-98 seasons. Floreal left after the 1998 season for Stanford.

"I am very excited to return to Kentucky and guide this program into a new era of success," Floreal said. "I am certain that with the support of the administration and the Wildcat community, we can accomplish great things. The new outdoor track and field facility provides the perfect venue to accomplish the many goals I have for UK. My wife and I are looking forward to being back in the SEC, competing against the best in track and field and taking part in the new rise of champions

at Kentucky. The potential is limitless and I am excited to join the Big Blue Nation as part of the Wildcat Family."

Since his arrival at Stanford, the Cardinal men and women have enjoyed tremendous success at the conference and NCAA championship level. A five-time MPSF Coach of the Year, the 2009 West Regional Indoor Coach of the Year and the 2006 West Regional Outdoor Coach of the Year, Floreal has developed the Stanford sprinters, hurdlers and jumpers into Pac-12 and NCAA Championship title contenders. Under his watch, 91 Stanford athletes have earned 197 All-America honors. ■

PREP SPORTS

Family move costs Paly teams

Two-sport standout E.J. Floreal will be heading to Kentucky

by Keith Peters

If Palo Alto High track coach Jason Fung is putting together a 'Help Wanted' sign just about now, it probably reads something like this:

"Looking for a tall, talented athlete with speed to burn. Must be able to run in the 10.50 range for 100 meters and 21.00 vicinity for the 200. Must like to run relays and have a heart of a champion. Apply ASAP."

After enjoying arguably one of the best track seasons, if not the best, in school history, Fung is without the athlete who helped make it happen — E.J. Floreal.

Floreal will be joining his family in Kentucky this fall after his father, Edrick, resigned as Director of Track and Field at Stanford to take over the men's and women's programs at the University of Kentucky.

"It hasn't hit me yet," wrote Floreal in a text, "but it will. It's life though."

With Floreal moving out of state, the Palo Alto basketball and track programs have some big shoes to fill, aside from the fact the talented senior stands 6-foot-4.

In basketball last season, Floreal averaged 14.3 points, 7.3 rebounds and three assists per game while helping the Vikings to a 21-5 record, including a 10-2 finish in



E.J. Floreal will be leaving Paly.

the SCVAL De Anza Division that helped earn him all-league honors.

It was in track and field, however, where Floreal really made his mark.

Despite competing in the sport for only his second season, Floreal helped the Vikings to the SCVAL De Anza Division dual-meet and league-meet titles, the team's first-ever Central Coast Section team championship and a tie for sixth place at the CIF State Meet.

Floreal set school records of 10.52 in the 100 meters, 21.16 in the 200 and anchored the Vikings to a school mark of 41.56 in the 400 relay. He won individual CCS titles in the 100, 200 and helped Paly win the 400 relay.

At the state meet, Floreal finished third in the 200, fourth in the 100 and helped the Vikings to a seventh place in the 400 relay. ■

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Death of popular former Stanford basketball player Pete Sauer comes as quite a shock

Peter Sauer was a popular member and key contributor on the 1998 Stanford Final Four men's basketball team, thus his death this week caught the Stanford community off guard.

Sauer collapsed and died Sunday night after he hit his head on the court during a pickup basketball game in White Plains, N.Y. He was 35.

According to reports, Sauer was standing on the right side of the foul line while another player was shooting a free throw. He fell back, hitting his head on the concrete floor and stopped moving. He was taken by ambulance to White Plains Hospital, where he was pronounced dead at 9:36 p.m.

An autopsy conducted by the Westchester County medical examiner's office on Monday revealed that Sauer had an enlarged heart and that likely was the cause of his death.

"Everyone in the Stanford community is deeply saddened by

the passing of Peter Sauer," said Stanford men's basketball head coach Johnny Dawkins. "He was a tremendous individual and a devoted husband and father. He was very passionate about Stanford and our basketball program. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his wife Amanda and their three children."

The outgoing Sauer, who played four seasons for the Cardinal and graduated with an economics degree in 1999, was part of a five-man recruiting class that played in the NCAA Tournament four consecutive years and won the Pac-10 title in 1998.

"Meeting him for the first time, you could easily see how invested he was in this program and really, all of Stanford athletics," said Dawkins. "Peter truly embodied what it meant to be a Stanford student-athlete. He spoke to our guys about taking full advantage of their opportunities and how attending Stanford is a lifetime decision."

Sauer was in attendance during Stanford's NIT championship run in March, and also watched practice before speaking briefly to the team. Sauer led an early-morning tour of Bank of America's corporate headquarters the following day.

Smart, tough, confident and dependable, Sauer served as a team captain during his junior and senior years for head coach Mike Montgomery. He started 96 games and played in 124 overall.

Sauer, who played small and power forward, averaged 7.9 points and 4.2 rebounds for his career, but those numbers don't tell the story of his contributions. He was a fearless competitor, a terrific passer, and always had a smile on his face.

"Very tragic," Montgomery said. "To me, he was kind of the epitome of what a student-athlete should be. He wasn't the most athletic guy, but he was very cerebral and made others better. He was one of our more

(continued on page 34)

Tennis

(continued from page 31)

the tourney title is for the taking between world No. 4 Williams and world No. 10 Bartoli.

Despite two weeks at Wimbledon and a long plane ride back to the states, Williams displayed her dominance in her first match with a 6-2, 6-1 dismantling of Stanford junior Nicole Gibbs on Wednesday. It was a matchup of Wimbledon champ versus Colorado International champ, one of the best players ever against the best college female player of 2012.

Williams came in with \$38,035,392 in career prize money while Gibbs was penniless. Williams had 624 WTA-level main-draw matches under her belt while Gibbs had one. When Williams turned pro in 1995, Gibbs was two years old. Thus, the final score was expected.

Gibbs could only laugh when she double-faulted her first serve on the hot day.

"It didn't surprise me," Gibbs said. "I was like, 'really?' I can laugh at that one."

The result didn't matter so much to Gibbs, who was a winner the moment she took the court against her tennis hero.

"It was a great experience for me to match up against someone of that caliber," Gibbs said. "I got a lot of experience points if not physical points. It was a good bench mark for me to realize I can play at this level."

Gibbs gets another chance, too. The Santa Monica native was awarded a wild card for the Mercury Insurance Open in San Diego next week.

Gibbs and Stanford senior Mallory Burdette also played in the doubles tournament, losing to third-seeded Natalie Grandin and Vladimira Uhlirova, 7-6 (7-5), 3-6, 10-6. Burdette is headed to a \$10,000 event next week.

"I thought Mal and I did great for our first time playing in a month," Gibbs said. "We're still meshing together. We just a little unlucky at some of the points. We proved we could play against the third seed of a major tournament."

Stanford women's tennis coach Lele Forood was a proud observer of the match.

"I'm sure Nicole learned a lot out there," she said. "She was impressed with the depth and the pace and she obviously knew darn well she would be seeing a monster serve and had to try to get a racket on it."

Gibbs, her left leg tightly bandaged from almost knee to hip, held serve twice in the first set and broke Williams for her lone point in the second set.

"She held her own today," Williams said of Gibbs, who at age 12 once served as a ballgirl for a Williams match. "She hits the ball well. She played well and moved well. She doesn't quit and that's the best quality you can have as an athlete. She's a fighter. It's really good to see such good Americans coming up."

Forood was quick to agree with Williams' assessment of the reigning NCAA singles and doubles (with Burdette) champion.



Coco Vandeweghe will play in Friday's quarterfinals after winning two matches this week, including an upset of No. 4 Jelena Jankovic.

"I think it's one of her best attributes," Forood said. "She doesn't quit. As a player, I think that's going to help her when she's on tour. There are a lot of matches. There are a lot of weeks. You have to want to win them all and be ready to play them all. I think Nicole is one of those people who will be ready to play them all."

Williams, a 14-time Grand Slam winner, was credited with seven aces, six of those coming in the first set. She also won 78 percent of the points on her first serve, compared to 45 percent for Gibbs.

In other matches Wednesday, fifth-seeded Yanina Wickmayer topped Heather Watson, 5-7, 6-1, 6-4, sixth-seeded Chanelle Scheepers beat Michelle Larcher de Brito, 6-3, 6-4, and unseeded Coco Vandeweghe upset No. 4 Jelena Jankovic, 6-4, 6-2.

Gibbs earned a shot at Williams by beating Thailand's Noppawan Lertcheewakarn, 6-4, 6-4, in the first round on Tuesday. Burdette also advanced with a surprise 2-6, 7-5, 6-4 victory over Great Britain's top-ranked player Anne Keothavong, who is headed to the Olympics.

Gibbs earned a wild card into the main draw following a remarkable season with the Stanford women's team. She won both the NCAA singles and doubles title and then joined the USTA-sponsored college team that plays in summer pro circuit events.

She won the Colorado International title last weekend after first having to qualify for the main draw. That led to some added confidence when she took the court against Lertcheewakarn.

"That was perfect," she said after playing eight singles matches and five doubles matches in eight days. "I played a lot of players who were at the same level as the girl I played today. During the NCAAs I was tested a lot in every match and faced every competitive situation possible. That all happened."

Gibbs, who will be majoring in Economics, said she won't be playing any college tournaments during the fall in order to pursue ranking points and test the waters. As of now she's committed to playing for Stanford in the spring.

For Forood, it was a tremendous day with both of her players win-



Fifth-seeded Yanina Wickmayer earned a Friday quarterfinal berth after rallying for a 5-7, 6-1, 6-4 victory on Wednesday.

ning.

"It was a very fun day for me," she said. "We always project what stage of development our players are and today was validation that college players are not that far behind."

Burdette played her first match since the NCAA tournament ended. Gibbs played in her first matches of the summer last week in Colorado.

"When you play, arguably, the best player in the world you are going to see what it is all about," Forood said. "You get to see what you need to do better. That's the neat thing about summer, you get

exposure to the next level."

Burdette, who had older sisters Lindsay and Erin in the stands rooting her on, had a moment of disbelief when she looked at the qualifying tournament and did not see her name on it.

"I called Lele to find out why I wasn't in it," Burdette said. "That's when I found out I was in the main draw. I was not expecting it."

Sunday's singles winner will earn \$96,000 while the runnerup will get \$53,000. Semifinalists will receive \$28,500 from the total purse of \$640,000. ■



Stanford senior Mallory Burdette was hoping to reach her first WTA quarterfinal, but needed to beat 2011 runner-up Marion Bartoli.



2011 Bank of the West runner-up Marion Bartoli needed to beat Stanford's Mallory Burdette on Thursday to reach Friday's quarterfinals.

Palo Alto Olympian wins a U.S. Open title; local volleyball teams shine at Junior Nationals

by Rick Eyrer

Palo Alto High junior Lily Zhang made her final big tuneup for the Olympic Games a good one by winning the Women's Under-21 title in table tennis at the U.S. Open, which wrapped up last week in Grand Rapids, Mich.

Zhang, 15, who was seeded No. 2 behind Olympic teammate and training partner Ariel Hsing, won three matches before meeting Hsing in the finals and winning, 12-10, 6-11, 12-14, 11-8, 11-9. A game is won by being the first player to reach 11 points, with a lead of at least two points.

The title was Zhang's first in the 21-under division, where she also competed last year and reached the finals.

Girls' volleyball

The Vision Gold 18-1 women's volleyball team suffered two losses

all season. The last one happened to be in the semifinals of the USAV Girls' Junior National Championships in Columbus, Ohio over the weekend.

Vision Gold, coached by Stanford assistant Jason Mansfield, was the top seed entering the tournament and won its first eight matches before getting upset by Sky High Black, from the Great Lakes Region, 25-23, 19-25, 15-12, to finish third in the Open Division.

Meanwhile, the City Beach Black 18-1 team, coached by Stanford grad Leah Hall, won the American Division, beating Skyline RoShamBo, 17-25, 25-17, 15-11, in the championship match.

Sacred Heart Prep grads Jesse Ebner and Sarah Daschbach and Menlo-Atherton grad Sarah Collins, all of whom are headed to the Ivy League, are members of Vision Gold, which dropped only two matches during the summer. Cas-

talleja grad Hannah Boland, heading for UCLA, and Mountain View grad Brittany Howard, who will be a freshman at Stanford, were also major contributors. Howard was named to the all-tournament team.

Hall, who is assisted by Stanford grad and Olympian Ogonna Nnamani, went 11-0 in the American Division, dropping only three sets along the way.

A trio of Palo Alto grads, Melanie Wade, Maddie Kuppe and Kim Whitson, completed a rare triple before heading off to different colleges. Wade was named the MVP.

Wade will be at Washington next year, Kuppe is headed to Connecticut and Whitson will be attending Pacific. Of the 10 recent grads on the team, seven have committed to playing volleyball in college.

Other top performances from local teams at the Junior Nationals came from Paye's Performance 17-1 team, which finished third in

the Open Division, Vision Gold 16-1 and 14-1 teams each finished seventh in their respective Open Divisions and Vision Gold 15 placed third in the American Division.

Palo Alto's Shelby Knowles, Sacred Heart Prep's Ellie Shannon, M-A's Ali Spindt and Castilleja's Lucy Tashman played for Paye's Performance, which finished 7-2 at the tournament. Spindt made the all-tourney team.

Menlo School's Melissa Cairo and Maddie Huber and M-A's Paulina King helped Vision Gold 16 finish 5-5 while Gunn's Meghan Mahoney and M-A's Kaitlin Tavaréz helped guide Vision Gold 15 to a 7-3 record.

Girls' water polo

Three teams from the Stanford Water Polo Club competed in the U.S. Club Championships in San Diego last weekend, but enjoyed a less-than-stellar stay.

The 18s and 16s each finished ninth while the 14s wound up 13th.

The 18s, coached by Jon Burke of Sacred Heart Prep, dropped tough matches to SET, CHAWP and Los

Angeles Water Polo Club, but rebounded to win a sudden-death match over Xtreme, toppled Diablo and then beat San Jose in sudden death to finish ninth.

Team members included Elizabeth Anderson from Gunn; Pippa Temple, Erin Sheridan and Bridgette Harper from Sacred Heart Prep; Skylar Dorosin from Paly and Olivia Santiago from Los Altos. The 16s, coached by Stanford women's assistant Kyle Utsumi, lost to eventual champion SoCal, 8-4, and fifth-place finisher Xtreme, 14-10, but beat Irvine Kahuna, 13-6, to conclude play on Saturday. On Sunday, Stanford topped South Coast, 12-7, beat Foothill, 10-8, and earned ninth by downing 680, 12-7, as Morgan McCracken scored six goals.

Team members included SHP's Kelly Moran, Caitlin Stuewe and McCracken; Caroline Anderson and Rachel Wong from Gunn; Jessica Heilman from Menlo-Atherton; and Courtney Batcheller, Sami Strutner, Katherine Moore, Natalie Williams, Evan Zakula and Anna Edgington from St. Francis. ■

Pete Sauer

(continued from page 32)

popular guys because he was so well-rounded."

The bigger the moment, the more Sauer responded.

"He made some big shots for us," said Montgomery. "I remember in our Final Four game against Kentucky, he hit a deep three to pull us within one. He was very competitive and had a great career for us."

The 6-foot-7, 225-pound Sauer grew up in Pittsburgh and was a standout basketball player at Shady Side Academy. He finished as the school's all-time leading scorer.

Sauer spent the past five years working in New York City in Equity Sales at Bank of America Merrill Lynch. He and his wife, Amanda, had three daughters. He is also survived by his parents, Mark and Georgia Sauer, and younger brother Alex. His father was former president of the St. Louis Blues hockey team and the Pittsburgh Pirates.

REMEMBERING PETER SAUER

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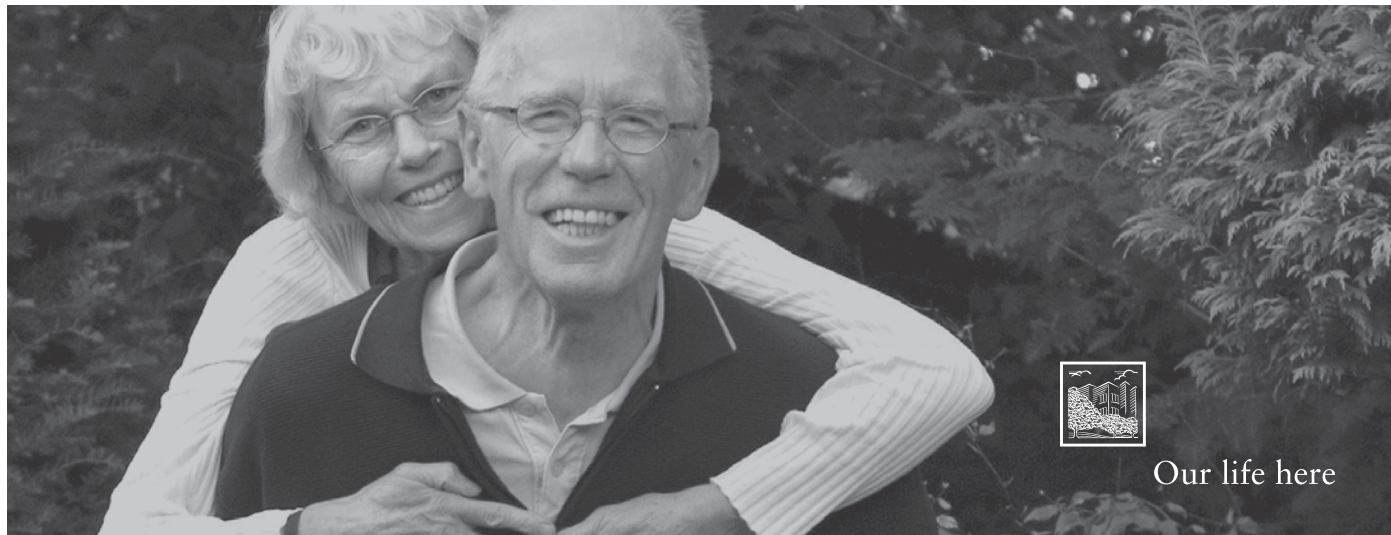
— **John Platz**, Stanford radio play-by-play announcer and former Cardinal basketball letterwinner (1982-84)

"The Stanford Basketball family lost a great player and even better human being. RIP Peter Sauer. My prayers are with your family."

— **Josh Owens**, former Cardinal basketball letterwinner 2008-12

"Coaching is like parenting, no real favorites. Just qualities you love in each. Peter Sauer had a bunch to love. RIP"

— **Eric Reveno**, Portland head coach and former Stanford assistant coach



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YOUTH BASEBALL

Palo Alto Babe Ruth 14s open NorCal State tourney

A year ago, the Palo Alto Babe Ruth 13-year-old all-stars didn't advance past the District 6 Tournament. While those players were heading off on vacations, the Palo Alto 15s and 14s were competing in NorCal State Tournament action.

Those 13s of last year are now 14s and, finally, will have their chance to advance in the postseason.

That opportunity will come starting this weekend when Palo Alto plays host to the NorCal State Tournament at Baylands Athletic Center.

Manager Rick Farr will guide the 14s into the NorCal playoffs. His roster includes John Bird, Kodiak Conrad, Evan Easton, John Guiragossian, Lawrence Han, Albert

Han, Brian Knapp, Daniel Kollar-Gasiewski, AJ Lemons, Jared Luciano, Mitchell Martella, Rylan Pade, Jackson Salabert, Alexii Sigona and Ryan Voltattorni. The team's alternate is Shane Stafford.

Farr coached the 14s in the district tournament, but held out his top pitchers.

"After going 0-2 in the district tournament, I'd say we are big underdogs," Farr said. "We have some arms, but it's hard to gauge how they'll match up against that level of play. I'm interested to find out myself."

"From what I know, Tri Valley and Mountain View are probably the favorites. We're just hoping to make a decent showing."

The 14s will carry the flag for

Palo Alto into this stage of the season, following the elimination of the 15s and 13s in district action last week.

The eight-team, double-elimination event gets under way Saturday with four games. Palo Alto will host East Sacramento to wrap up the first day's activities at 7 p.m.

Palo Alto will either face the winner of Northern Solano and Eel River in a winners'-bracket game Sunday at 7 p.m., or face the loser of that matchup in consolation action at 1 p.m.

Four years ago, in the last Olympic year, the Palo Alto 14s advanced all the way to the World Series for the first time in program history. ■

BABE RUTH 14s NORCAL STATE TOURNAMENT

At Baylands Athletic Center

SATURDAY, July 14

- Game 1** -- Mountain View vs. Alameda, 10 a.m.
- Game 2** -- Novato vs. Tri-Valley, 1 p.m.
- Game 3** -- Northern Solano vs. Eel River, 4 p.m.
- Game 4** -- East Sacramento vs. Palo Alto, 7 p.m.

SUNDAY, July 15

- Game 5** -- Game 1 loser vs. Game 2 loser, 10 a.m.
- Game 6** -- Game 3 loser vs. Game 4 loser, 1 p.m.
- Game 7** -- Game 1 winner vs. Game 2 winner, 4 p.m.
- Game 8** -- Game 3 winner vs. Game 4 winner, 7 p.m.

MONDAY, July 16

- Game 9** -- Game 8 loser vs. Game 5 winner, 5 p.m.
- Game 10** -- Game 7 loser vs. Game 6 winner, 7:30 p.m.

WEDNESDAY, July 18

- Game 11** -- Game 9 winner vs. Game 10 winner, 5 p.m.
- Game 12** -- Game 7 winner vs. Game 8 winner, 7:30 p.m.

THURSDAY, July 19

- Game 13** -- Game 11 winner vs. Game 12 loser, 7 p.m.

FRIDAY, July 20

- Game 14** -- Game 12 winner vs. Game 13 winner, 5 p.m.
- Game 15** -- Challenge game, if necessary, 8 p.m.



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