

HIGHLIGHTS

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May 2024
Volume 36, Number 2

www.omvna.org



OMVNA
Quarterly
Newsletter

LAMPPOST

Published and distributed by the Old Mountain View Neighborhood Association

Restaurant Scene

by Max Hauser

The ice cream shop at 292 Castro, formerly **Icicles**, became **Ice Cream Kween** this year, dropping a franchise connection. Proprietor Ashley told me the menu is the same, but with small cakes and other new desserts added.

124 Castro's **Joyous Cuisine** (which replaced Nori Nori Craft Handrolls) soft-opened Feb 26. MV Voice story: <https://tinyurl.com/5bvj59kv>

Kirin revamp (485 Castro): This Cantonese restaurant, Castro's oldest continuously open eatery (since the 1970s), shut for a month in late March for "equipment upgrades and the new menu set up," following notice of an ownership change. Banner sign: "We will be back with **dim sum**."

Cafe Terrace, which replaced Yakko Sushi at 975 W. Dana (see May 2023 "Restaurant Scene"), closed a year after opening.

Front windows of 156 Castro (formerly **Bushido Izakaya**) are papered over, implying new construction.

Since April, **Chez TJ** (938 Villa) offers a shorter, lower-priced 4-course Garden Menu, Tuesdays through Thursdays.

Inside **Ava's Market** (340 Castro), starting with a late-April pop-up, a new restaurant tenant, Creative Collective, plans rotating international casual menus (including German and Peruvian), initially for lunch service, under the name **World Lunch Table**.

Nick The Greek, 298 Castro, remains pending at press time. Construction resumed early 2024 and the notice "Now Hiring" remains. <https://www.nickthegreek.com> •



Old MTV Eventors

The Smile Between the Rain Storms

by Joan Thunderbuilt

The sky was blue and filled with as much hope as the eggs nestled in the grass. You could not have planned a more beautiful morning. The deluge of rain paused long enough on March 30, 2024 for the **THIRD** annual Neighborhood Egg Crawl. From 10-noon, over 300 **HUNTERS** scurried along the streets of Old MV. Armed with a basket and a map, Hunters found their way to volunteer **HIDER** yards, who hid eggs that morning with delicious intent.

Behind the scenes, the late-night algorithm bunny took the stats to determine how many egg stops each hunter will have on their maps. 300 Hunters, 77 Hiders, 48 eggs per yard = 10-12 eggs per basket. 7 best possible routes were mustered from all the yards scattered across the neighborhood and assigned at random.

All Hiders were volunteer neighbors who supplied the treat-filled eggs and yards. This event would not be possible without the kindness and contribution of these neighbors. We hope their heart meters are brimming from Hunter smiles and delight. And from the Old Mountain View Eventors, we express an eggnormous **THANK YOU**. •



More HUNTER & HIDER photos on omvna.org

More Events Coming Soon:

Mixers in May & June, the summer kick off Wheels Party and more! Follow along online via www.omvna.org, www.fb.com/omvna, or X @omvna

Safety Corner

Join the Parade

by Robert Maitland, MVFD



Please join us on Sunday, May 19, at 12:30 p.m. on Castro Street celebrating the 150th anniversary of the Mountain View Fire Department.



The parade will start at the Police and Fire Administration Building on Villa and head up Castro to City Hall.


Check out the antique police and fire fighting equipment, as well as the public education booths, including an inflatable firehouse. Make sure you know about fire safety—an important lesson for all ages.



For those curious about careers in fire and police agencies, visit the recruitment booths.

Help Mountain View celebrate this wonderful, life-saving community service. •

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Mountain View History

Walking through History in Old Mountain View's Celebrated Downtown

by Jerry Steach

As residents and visitors alike will attest, Old Mountain View is an eminently walkable neighborhood. Its flat terrain, compact geography and old-fashioned architecture make for a pleasing walk around town. One popular way of enjoying the neighborhood on foot is to simply stroll—pick a direction and take it. For those looking to add a little context to those strolls, consider a guided walking tour, such as those conducted by the non-profit Mountain View Historical Association.

As we pointed out in a previous Lamppost issue, the MVHA's (mostly) monthly walking tours guide attendees in and around Downtown Mountain View, visiting historical sites and augmenting the visits with narration by an association volunteer. The MVHA has expanded the number of locations visited on its walking tours, which include several buildings dating back to the nineteenth century that bring the city's rich history front and center. They include a number of sites in the Old Mountain View's commercial core: the Weilheimer Building, a general store that opened in the 1880s and presently is home to Oren's Hummus; the 1903-built Ames Building, where a hardware store, newspaper, grocery and most recently the Jehning Family Lock Museum were located (food-service businesses are expected soon); the Rogers Building, once a general store and post office that now has as tenants a variety of restaurants; and the "Four Corners" of Castro and Villa streets—the Farmers and Merchants Bank Building (home to Red Rock Coffee), the Mockbee Building (Eureka), the Jurian Building (Agave); and the First National Bank Building (Odd Fellows Lodge).

Beyond that concentration of historic buildings on the 100 block of Castro St., other locations visited on the MVHA's walking tours include Mtn. View Theater, at one time the center of entertainment in Old Mountain View. The MVHA's walking tours also include historically significant parks, past and present church sites, former city offices and school locations, and others whose agricultural land made way for modern uses, such as a car dealership on Castro St.

For those interested in going on one of its walking tours, visit the MVHA at www.mountainviewhistorical.org and/or follow it on social media at @MtnViewHistory and www.facebook.com/MVHistory. •

Neighborhood News Sources

- Join the neighborhood email lists:
 - OMVNAtalk2@groups.io
 - send email to: omvnataalk2+owner@groups.io
- OldMTVevents1+subscribe@groups.io
- Online www.omvna.org
- Facebook [www.fb.com/omvna](https://www.facebook.com/omvna)
- X (formally twitter) @OMVNA

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Art in Mountain View

Searching for the Bear

by Don McPhail

“When you go out in the woods today, you better not go alone...” True words, indeed. Armed with just enough information to be dangerous, I set out to see the “Visitor Experience” on Google’s extraordinary Mountain View campus.

Living in Old Mountain View for more than 30 years, and more than familiar with Shoreline Golf Course and the Baylands walking trails, I was a little arrogant. The term hubris captures it well.

I set out for a Tuesday midmorning drive, Joan Baez simply nailing my favorite version of “Forever Young” from the CD on my aging car stereo. The sun was out, and as I turned onto Shoreline I should have realized my first rookie mistake. Never drive to Google or Shoreline during the weekday midmorning crush. But the music was inspiring and I was in no particular hurry. “No problemo,” I said confidently.

Prior research, reinforced by my friend Siri, indicated a left turn from Shoreline onto Charleston, and then an immediate right onto Joaquin Road. Good job. No parking lot in sight. Turning into the small Visitor Drop-off section, I was politely referred to an “Alta Parking Lot” by the pleasant and well-informed security guard.

With no idea where or what Alta is, I nodded and drove back to Shoreline

and crossed into the first parking lot I found. It had a Visitor section. Good job.

With my earlier confidence ebbing slightly, I walked over a berm and lowered myself down to the sidewalk, just at a crosswalk leading to the main building where the Google Visitor Experience was certain to be. No problemo.

But no artwork just yet. When I asked, the two security people, who were pleasant and very considerate, pointed to my right and suggested I go to the front entrance. They seemed slightly hesitant about the artwork part, but no matter.

On a bright and glorious day, I enjoyed the walk and appreciated the invariable niceness of the security people. Got to the front entrance, but no sign of art. Located the Google Store, thinking the gallery was in the back. But no art. Realizing my use of the term “art” might be part of the problem, I shifted to “The Bear”, and people immediately perked up and pointed to my right. No problemo.

Into *The Cafe*, an open and impressive space filled with comfy booths and a welcome display of healthy-looking pastries, sandwiches and fruits. No artwork or bear yet. I ventured past the pop-up store where colorful items complemented the enthusiastic young ladies within, then into *The Huddle*, where young people worked with their laptops and pads and enjoyed caffeinated beverages.

Finally, as I walked outside I could see the *Halo* globe, that I had been referring to as “The Sphere”. I knew



The Bear was nearby, but the elevated walkway ended here. The upbeat security guard affirmed that *The Bear* was just past *The Halo*, but I would have to backtrack slightly, descend a few stairs, and resume my walk for a few hundred feet. No problemo.

It was almost too easy now. The *Halo* was right in front of me, *The Bear* just a few steps away, just past *Quantum Meditation II*. When I actually reached *The Bear*, I found his real name was “Curious”. No Problemo. He looked strong and powerful, constructed of many, many copper pennies. He appeared quizzical. I was glad to see *The Bear*.

My conclusion from all of this: make a plan. Drive on a weekend or after 10 a.m. on weekdays. Locate the Alta Parking lot and use it. Enjoy the walk and the art, especially *The Bear*. Save room for some healthy pastries in *The Cafe*.•

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High School Spirit

Eagle Scout

Paw Print Project

Enhances Safety

by Peter Chen

Mountain View High School sophomore Ryan Chen has taken a significant step towards achieving the rank of Eagle Scout by spearheading a project aimed at improving safety for students walking to school. As a Life Scout in Troop 30 Los Altos, Pacific Skyline Council, Boy Scouts of America (BSA), Ryan embarked on his Eagle Service Project titled "Safe Route to Landels Elementary School."

Inspired by the concept of Boston's Freedom Trail, Ryan envisioned utilizing sidewalk markings to guide students safely to school. The project involves painting animal paw prints along the sidewalks leading to Landels Elementary School. This creative initiative not only enhances safety but also adds an element of fun for the students.



The idea for the project emerged from discussions between Ryan and his dad during the Eagle project initiative. Recognizing the potential impact on the community, the concept was later presented to the City of Mountain View Safe Route to School (SRTS) Committee, where I, Ryan's dad, serve as a member. Subsequently, a meeting was arranged at City Hall, attended by City staff, including Transportation Planner Karen Gauss, City Engineer Lorenzo Lopez, and Transportation Manager Ria Lo. Collaborative efforts led to finalizing project details, including stencil design, paw print size, spacing, and designated areas for painting.

Continued on page 7

Old MTV Eventors

Nibbles with Neighbors / Upcoming Mixers

by Joan Thunderbuilt

A key Old MTV Eventor goal is to bring our community together. And this time, it's with nibbles.

The Eventors are bringing back Neighborhood MIXERS at local restaurants. Our first planned mixer is at **Clifford's Chicken & Fish on Calderon & Church. Wednesday, May 15 at 5:30 pm.** No entry fee for this event. Nibbles are complimentary. Drinks available for purchase.

Clifford's website says "Seafood and Fried Chicken done right! Seasoned with their signature herbs & spices." Let's meet and check it out together!

This event is sponsored by OMVNA, to support local and growing restaurants in our neighborhood and promote neighbors meeting neighbors.

For more mixers, sign up for the Old MTV EVENTS ONLY Email List, read the newsletter and check the website for announcements. Visit omvna.org for more details.

Coming this summer: The Ava's Mixer. •

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What's Up

Update on New Development in Old MV

by Robert Cox

So far, 2024 is starting off as the slowest development year since the Great Recession of 2009. It's already April, and not a single development project has come before the City Council.

The recent COVID-19 pandemic is a key reason for the decline in new office development. COVID forced most tech companies to move quickly to a remote work environment. At one point, Mountain View had 50% of its work force working from home. After the pandemic subsided, many workers continued working remotely, while many others returned to the office only several days a week. The result is many empty office buildings and a sharp decline in office space value.

For example, the office building at 303 Bryant St., which was originally purchased for \$65 million in 2014, sold 14 months ago for only \$36 million. Projects for new downtown office space including Marwood (West Evelyn and Hope), Smith Realty (705 West Dana), and Sobrato (590 Castro) were approved by the city but have not begun construction.

This empty office space phenomenon has also been accompanied by three years of tech layoffs with a corresponding three-year Bay Area population decline. Some new residential projects like the new apartments at 777 West Middlefield and new townhomes at 1515 West Middlefield are still under construction, but others like the densification at 555 West Middlefield have yet to break ground.

A key reason is that rents for new apartments (built since 2017) have been flat for the last seven years, even though general inflation is up 25% for that period. These declining real rent values give most developers little motivation to build here, as real rents are appreciating in most other areas of the USA.

The advent of artificial intelligence also adds a degree of uncertainty to the future of (human) tech employment. All these factors together are making 2024 the year of "wait and see." •

Public Library

What's New at the Library

by Katie Hom, library.mountainview.gov



Bicycle Repair Kits

Prepare for your next biking trip by borrowing a bicycle repair kit from the Library! Each kit includes wrenches, a mini air pump, a crank remover, tire levers, glueless patches and a 16-in-1 multitool. Strap the carry-on pouch to

your bike frame so you can easily access it at any point on the trail.

If you need more hands-on help with your bike, come to our Drop-In Bike Clinic every third Saturday from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Professional bike mechanic Ryan Murphy will be available for advice and help with changing a tire, adjusting gears and brakes, identifying mysterious noises, and more.

Adult Learners Program

We are excited to announce the launch of our Adult Learners Program: Achieving Life Goals Through Reading. This program aspires to help adult learners build their English reading and writing skills through free, confidential, one-on-one tutoring. All adults aged 18 and above who are not currently enrolled in school are invited to participate.

We are actively recruiting both volunteer tutors and interested learners. Contact us at Literacy@mountainview.gov for more information.



History Center Reopens

The History Center has a new look! Visit the History Center on the second floor of the Library to see its new paint, carpet and remodeled space filled with new displays. The History Center is open regularly on Tuesdays, 1-5 p.m. or by appointment.

The Mountain View History Center houses information about Mountain View's past. We collect and preserve books, maps, photographs, directories, newspapers, school yearbooks and other materials pertaining to Mountain View's heritage. We display artifacts that reflect both the changing and enduring natures of the area once known as The Valley of the Heart's Delight. •

Parking Woes

Parking Guides

by Elisabeth Seaman

Do you find it difficult to maneuver your car through some of our narrow streets? When cars are parked on both sides of the road, do you find yourself driving on what seems to be a one-lane road?



When parking, look for a space where on the opposite side of the street there is a driveway. That way a car is parked only on one side of the street at that point. This leaves more space for driving.

It's not always possible to do that, but give it a try whenever possible, and make the roadway more easily accessible to drivers •




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Old MTV Eventors

Summer Block Parties – Plan Now

by Joan Thunderbuilt

Want to have a block party in the neighborhood and not sure where to start? Check out our online guide and even apply for a OMVNA block party grant to help cover the cost of a snow cone rental (up to \$150*). There is a downloadable Block Party Packet – go to the events tab



on omvna.org for the packet and email blockparty@omvna.org with questions or to reserve the party kit.

*You will need

to apply for the grant in advance and supply receipts and a sign in sheet to verify your headcount to receive the grant after your event.

This policy was established in fulfillment of the purposes of the Association, namely, the promotion of cultural, civic, social, educational and recreational activities for the benefit of the residents of the Old Mountain View neighborhood. •

A Puzzling Reason to Live in Old MV

A scavenger hunt for the ages. All ages. The second **Get a Clue in Old Mountain View** was held on Saturday, April 27, 2024 from 1p.m.-3p.m.

Sleuths started their mysterious journey at Mercy-Bush park. Two challenges of varying difficulty were laid forth – Scooby-Doo and Sherlock. Solving 12 puzzles from their phones, neighbors took pictures around the hood of their “answers” and checked out to win a prize.

No Spoilers: The prizes may have vanished, but the game is still afoot. Puzzles available online until May 11. Visit omvna.org to play. •

Collectible limited edition pin. Contact social@omvna.org



Page Six

If 100% of Us Shopped at Ava’s... Some of the Time

by Carola Thompson

This article is the third in a three-part series about my experience shopping at Ava’s. This series and my switch to Ava’s was inspired by Max Hauser’s August 2023 Lamppost article. Thanks Max!

I recently sat down with Juan Origel, owner of Ava’s Downtown Market, to get his thoughts on how things are going. The good news is that basket sizes are up, meaning those people that are shopping at Ava’s are doing more of their shopping there.

Juan is extremely grateful for the outpouring of support from the neighborhood.

Juan still has concerns for the future regarding increasing costs of rent, utilities and labor which cut into margins or lead to higher prices. As with other downtown businesses, Ava’s has been impacted by the reduction in foot traffic, the labor shortage, and a rise in shoplifting. In a nutshell, things are better, but the balance is delicate.

For Ava’s to become sustainable, the number of shopper’s needs to increase.

Why go to Ava’s? Juan especially prides himself on his fresh produce section. He says prices are much lower than the farmer’s market and available every day. Quantities are more reasonable than Costco and far less packaging than Trader Joe’s. He is also proud of is the selection of local, artisanal cheeses. Prices are set lower than Whole Foods and Draeger’s to attract local shoppers. International products are another area he pays special attention to. Spanish goods have been a big draw, and he is seeing increased demand for German goods.

Juan goes on to point out that Ava’s has pretty much everything you need. Maybe not the brands you are used to, but good substitutes. They also have

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Community Liaison:	Jamil Shaikh	Next SC Meeting:	August 5, 2024

Community Events

Writing Class

by Deborah Vasquez

If your children haven't had a chance to do a workshop with Beyond the Box Learning, consider it now.

Husband and wife team of Royd Hatta and Shu Shien do a spectacular job teaching children of all ages how to build characters, storylines and are super engaging with heart and enthusiasm. They also do Bay Area meetups and short free workshops at Linden Tree in Los Altos.

I will be hosting their teen writer's workshop sessions at my location, June 17-21 from 1-3 p.m.

If interested, email: RoydHatta@BeyondTheBoxLearning.com

Stay tuned for a possible free workshop as well. •

Exploring Ava's

Continued from page 6

in-store sales all the time. Look for special signage or stickers on items, especially in the meat section.

When discussing people's shopping habits, Juan said that he doesn't expect people to shop at his store 100% of the time. He acknowledges that there are certain stock-up items that you would buy elsewhere. Budget, convenience, and habit all play into how we shop.

Not everyone needs to shop at Ava's 100% of the time, but if 100% of us shopped at Ava's most or even just some of the time, it would make a huge impact.

Be a part of making Ava's a self-sustaining business! Shop Ava's today! •

Nature in OMV

Bee Kind

by Mateo Kaiser

With the arrival of warm spring weather, local honey bee colonies are active and producing swarms that may find their way to your home, garden, cars, etc. If you encounter a bee swarm, there's no need to worry—swarms are harmless but can be a surprise!

I am a beekeeper in the neighborhood and I run a website, Swarmed (beeswarmed.com), where you can easily report a bee swarm. The site notifies local beekeepers and someone will reach out to you to make a plan for relocating the honey bees.



This is a free service to make it easier to find a beekeeper and save bees from the exterminator.

If you spot a bee swarm, or know someone who does, please consider using Swarmed to ensure these important pollinators are handled with care.

I'm working to spread the word as widely as possible, not just in Mountain View, but across the U.S. If you'd like to support this work, I hope you'll visit the website and sharing it with others.

Feel free to contact me directly at mateo@beeswarmed.com •

Opinions expressed herein are not official positions of the OMVNA Steering Committee or its members unless otherwise stated.

Contact the newsletter team at: editor@omvna.org

Submissions for our August 2024 issue are due by July 24, 2024.

Eagle Scout

Continued from page 4

The City of Mountain View, which supports the Safe Route to School program, welcomed Ryan's initiative. Ryan's project commenced on October 29 and concluded on January 28, 2024 with eight Sunday afternoons dedicated to completing the paw prints on planned routes. Positive feedback has been received from both the City and the school.

Despite maintenance concerns, Ryan has offered to coordinate with local scouts and community members to ensure the upkeep of the paw prints. His commitment to safety and community service aligns with the values of the Boy Scouts of America.

In addition to his scouting endeavors, Ryan excels in running, serving as a member of his school's varsity Cross Country & Track and Field team. His recent achievements include securing first place in the Sophomore race at the San Francisco Lowell Invitational and participating in the California State XC Championships in Fresno. Ryan's leadership skills have also been recognized, as he has been appointed captain of his team this summer.



As Ryan continues to make a positive impact on his community, his dedication exemplifies the spirit of service instilled by the Boy Scouts of America.

We are eager to receive the community's input regarding future maintenance and greatly appreciate your feedback via our survey. •



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