



# The Portola Valley Post

Spring/Summer 2004

## Town Center Design Charrette

Dates have been selected for the upcoming design charrette for the new Town Center. The purpose of the charrette is to solicit community input in crafting a new master plan for the eleven-acre campus on Portola Road. This project is necessitated by the hazardous condition of existing Town Center buildings, many of which straddle the San Andreas fault. Only the wood-frame Historic Schoolhouse will remain in its current location.

The charrette will bring together residents, architects, planners and engineers, town staff and local officials in a series of workshops. The process maximizes the involvement of citizens in the design of public spaces, generating a variety of solutions and ideas within a well-bounded timeframe and supported by a multi-disciplinary design team. The charrette will provide residents with immediate feedback from experts on technical questions and an opportunity to see how residents' comments and suggestions have been integrated into the master plan.

Residents are invited and encouraged to attend the charrette in the MUR. It is not necessary to attend all sessions. Please check the website for up-to-date information!

### **Thursday, June 10** (7–10 pm)

- \* *Project Introduction*
- \* *Functions and activities at Town Center*
- \* *Community Character*

### **Sunday June 13**

#### **Afternoon** (1–3:30 pm)

- \* *Sustainable Design Principles and Community Input*
- \* *Site Walk - Features of Importance*

#### **Early evening** (4–7 pm with break for light meal)

- \* *Town Center "Puzzle" (community designs site planning options)*

### **Wednesday, June 30** (7–9 pm)

#### **Town Council Special Session**

- \* *Presentation of Master Plan Alternatives*
- \* *Community Comment and Questions*
- \* *Provide Direction for Preferred Plan*

### **September: Presentation of Master Plan**

## Town Picnic 2004

The Town Council is pleased to announce the Town Picnic is to be held on June 12<sup>th</sup>, 2004 at the Town Center location. The Picnic will showcase Town programs and committees.

To kick off the Picnic, there will be a running/walking race "Zots to Tots", with the starting line at Rossotti's and the finish line at the Tot playground area at the Town Center. Registration begins at 10 am and the race will blast off at 10:30 am.

Meanwhile, down at the Town Center, community programs and committees will have set up information tables to give the residents a chance to interact with program administrators and volunteer committee members. Tables will be open at 11 am and wrap up by 3 pm.

Entertainment will be on-going all day with games for all ages, demonstrations by local groups, music and remarks from the Mayor, who will also award the Race Ribbons.

Food and drinks will be available for purchase.

The Town Picnic is always a great venue for our community to interact. The Community Events Committee and Parks and Recreation Committee are hosting the event and welcome any input or suggestions. Please contact Sally-Ann Reiss, 529-0829 or email [sareiss@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sareiss@sbcglobal.net).

### **June 12, 2004 at Town Center**

#### **Zots to Tots Race**

**Registration 10 am; Race 10:30 am**

**Picnic Festivities 11 am—3 pm**

## Summer Activities

### June

- 1 Fredrick Moyer, piano. Sequoias, Hansen Hall, 4 pm
- 10) Charrette, MUR, Town Center, 7–10 pm
- 11) Talk/slide show. *Weekend Adventures in Northern California*. Carole Meyers talks about her book of the same name. PV Library, 7 pm
- 12) Town Picnic, Town Center 11 am—3 pm; Zots to Tots Race, 10:30
- 13) Charette, MUR, Town Center. 1– 3:30 pm and 4–7 pm
- 15) Lauren Speeth, violin and Marc Jensen, piano. Sequoias, Hansen Hall 4 pm
- 17) Non-fiction discussion group, *Reading Lolita in Tehran* by Azar Nafisi. PV Library, 1 pm
- 18) Family Film Night. *Duck Soup*. Not rated. 70 minutes. PV Library, 7 pm
- 22) Leopards, Etc. roar in with LIVE wild cats! For kids at PV Library, 3 pm
- 30) Charrette, MUR, Town Center, 7–9 pm

### July

- 14) *Magic Dan* works his special blend of magic and fun for kids at PV Library, 3
- 15 Non-fiction discussion group. *American Dynasty: Aristocracy, Fortune and the Politics of Deceit in the House of Bush* by Kevin P. Phillips. PV Library, 1 pm
- 20) George Lu, 14-year old pianist and cellist. Sequoias, Hansen Hall, 4 pm
- 23 Family Film Night. *I Love Lucy*. TV episodes, not rated 75 minutes. PV Library, 7 pm
- 27) *The Boy Who Cried Wolf* by the Puppet Art Theater. For kids at PV Library, 3 pm

### August

- 4 *Teddy Bear Picnic*, bring your teddy or other favorite stuffed animal for stories and songs. For kids at PV Library, 3 pm
- 10 Benjamin Chen, violin. Sequoias, Hansen Hall, 4 pm

### September

- 7 *The Bubble Lady*, bubble sculptures and a “squeaky clean good time” for kids. PV Library, 4 pm
- 21 Timothy Bach, piano. Sequoias, Hansen Hall, 4 pm

### Ongoing

- Storytimes at the PV Library*
- Infants* (to 18 mo.) Thursdays, 10:30 am
- Toddlers* Thursdays, 11 am

**See [www.portolavalley.net](http://www.portolavalley.net) calendars for council meetings, committee meetings and class schedules.**



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## Mayor's Letter

Dear Neighbors,

Your Town Council took a difficult step on April 28 by approving a modular office unit to serve as a temporary Town Hall, which, with installation, will cost \$194,000 over a three-year lease. After several months of consideration, it was the Council's belief that the safety of our employees and members of the public using the facility justify the expense. We have also directed the placement of signs on all present Town Center structures warning users of earthquake hazards.

Our May 1<sup>st</sup> mailing asked for your ideas on facilities that may have been overlooked in previous deliberations but you feel should be considered for inclusion in the new Town Center – a kind of "one more chance" before kick-off of a Charrette to produce a Master Plan for our 11.2 acre site.

We also encourage your active participation in the Charrette - the first public meeting is scheduled for Thursday, June 10 starting at 7 pm.

The Master Plan will depict the placement of structures, recreational facilities, landscaping, and parking. It will portray an aesthetic theme for the Town Center and a time

sequence for construction consistent with projected needs and estimated costs, along with current and future funding considerations. It will be used to guide the preparation of detailed drawings and specifications for bidding.

By working together, we can achieve a well-balanced plan seeking the greatest good for the greatest number - while giving thoughtful consideration to minority opinion. Let's make our new Town Center a delight for all for decades to come.

Other matters coming up in the near future:

- Conditional Use Permits  
- current status and enforcement
- Affordable Housing on lots owned by the Town in the Blue Oaks PUD
- Exercise of an option for acquiring another portion of the Spring Downs Equestrian Center property

Check ([www.portolavalley.net](http://www.portolavalley.net)) for more info.

Now, don't forget the Town Picnic coming up on June 12<sup>th</sup>!

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## Portola Valley Email Forum Now Started

Please join the PVForum, the new private email forum for Portola Valley residents to communicate with each other on a wide range of topics of interest to our community.

Hosted on YahooGroups, this new email forum has been created by Sally Ann Reiss and Rebecca Flynn to help strengthen the bonds of our small community and to help residents stay well informed and more involved in all the events and issues going on in our small town.

"Since so many new and exciting things have been going on in Portola Valley, particularly with the planning for the new Town Center, Sally Ann and I both felt that Portola Valley needed a quick way for residents to stay well informed that was cost effective and easy to implement." said Rebecca Flynn.

The PV Forum allows members to post email messages about any topic that would be of interest to Portola Valley

residents. Postings could include information about upcoming classes or events, items for sale, homes for rent or referrals for contractors. Members could also engage in discussions about the new Town Center, open space initiatives, or potential new regulations. Discussions of political issues are allowed as long as members limit themselves to respectful statements of their opinions.

The PV Forum is a privately run service moderated by local volunteers using the free (advertising sponsored) YahooGroups service and is not affiliated with the Portola Valley Town Administration or Town Council.

All residents of Portola Valley and the Portola Valley school district are invited to be members of the forum by sending an email with their name, email address, Portola Valley home address and telephone number to [PVForum-owner@yahoogroups.com](mailto:PVForum-owner@yahoogroups.com).

## Jazz at the 51 Club a Huge Success

The gentle rolling hills and outdoor sculptures of historic Runnymede Farm in Woodside offered the perfect backdrop for Portola Valley Foundation's gala fundraiser on May 1<sup>st</sup> for the Portola Valley School District.

Called "Jazz at the 51 Club" after the New York City club of the same name, this ambitious event is held once every four years.

This year's sold-out event drew well over 500 parents and friends of the school district and featured cocktails and appetizers, dinner and dancing to a 16-piece band, live and silent auctions, a donation drawing and, of course, jazz.

Foundation Co-Presidents Jill Howard and Eli Khouri thanked the audience for their support of this year's two fundraising events, the Annual Campaign and the Gala.

Contributions from parents and the community helped PVSF reach this year's annual campaign goal of \$725,000. Annual Campaign proceeds will go to the school district budget for the upcoming 2004-2005 school year, allowing the district to maintain the current level of high-quality school programs offered.

The Gala 2004 (last held in 2000) surpassed its goal of \$500,000. The District faced much greater financial needs this year than in prior years and is projecting continued deficits.

Gala proceeds are needed in addition to the Annual Campaign funds in order to help provide both short-term and long-term financial stability to the district.

A portion of the Gala proceeds will be used to improve and support ongoing academic programs and small class sizes over the next few years and the remainder will go to the district's permanent endowment fund established in 2000 to promote academic excellence and provide ongoing financial support for the schools.



*Co-chairs Sherry Andrighetto and Diana Bergeson with Marvin Greene, an actor/coach with ACT in character as Dusty, owner of the 51 Club*

*Photo by Joy Somerset*

## Annual Broom Pull Party



On a warm Saturday in March, thirty Portola Valley residents and students from Woodside Priory and Bellarmine College Preparatory schools volunteered to remove the French Broom along Alpine and Portola Roads.

French Broom is a plant from the Mediterranean that spreads rapidly and blocks native plants. Marilyn Walter organized the successful event.

*Karen Vahtra*

*Tom Cochrane simultaneously exercises and volunteers*

*Photo by Karen Vahtra*

## Teens Dancing

The Teen Committee has been busy putting on successful dances.

The first, on January 30, had a huge turnout of 175 middle school students, who enjoyed an evening of dancing and socializing. The Committee was pleased with the turn out, everyone's good behavior and all the help with clean up. The Spring Dance was held in the Town Center MUR on Friday, April 30.

*Alex Zaffaroni*

## A Tribute

The Historic Schoolhouse was full, people were perched on window sills and spilling out the door as the town bid a fond good-bye to Jane Gallagher on a beautiful March Sunday afternoon. Jane died unexpectedly on January 17, 2004 after a brief illness.

Her contributions were such that in a town where volunteerism is a way of life, she was honored as Volunteer of the Year in 1999. The founder of the Cultural Arts Committee, she was its guiding spirit in the early years and prepared the cultural calendar of events until the web site replaced it. When the Art Gallery had to be closed in the Little Red Schoolhouse, where Jane had been the coordinator for years, she pitched in with her usual enthusiasm and energy to help raise the funds for its rehabilitation, despite the fact that the Town Council would replace the artists in the



building. She served on several Town Center study committees, offering her common sense, wisdom and insight into the town's needs.

And always, she shared her fantastic art for town projects. For example, her work on the Millennium Challenge brochure inspired the donors to that fundraiser for open space. Her interpretations of the beauty around us have helped all of us look at our surroundings with new appreciation.

What a key part of the fabric of this town she was. Her good cheer, can-do attitude and willingness to help however and whenever she could will be missed. Memorial contributions may be made to the Jane Gallagher Memorial Arts Fund, % Bank of America, 2180 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park, Attn Nicole.

*Nancy Lund*

## What's Up at the Schools?

The Portola Valley Schools are blossoming. Local property tax revenues look much better this year than they did last year; the March election brought the passage of a parcel tax, guaranteeing more than \$600,000 per year to the district for the next ten years; and the PV Schools Foundation annual campaign, coupled with the proceeds from the gala quadrennial fundraiser, "Jazz at the '51 Club," held on May 1<sup>st</sup> at historic Runnymede Farm, will assure funding for the excellent programs that have kept Ormondale and Corte Madera at the top of the Academic Performance Index, the cornerstone of California's public school accountability system.

So what exactly *is* happening down at the schools?

At Corte Madera, Math Teacher Virginia Downing's kids celebrated Earth Day by working together to refurbish the slope down by the frog pond. Legendary teacher Donna Kasproicz just finished producing and directing an army of sixth graders at her annual "Ramayana" production, an ambitious retelling of the ancient Indian tale using 120 shadow puppets.

Ms. Kasproicz, who studied in Thailand and Laos last year as the recipient of a Fulbright-Hays award, has recently received a grant to study in Korea. Eighth grade students in history teacher Serge Morgan's class were recently sighted on campus reenacting the Battle of Gettysburg using water guns.

Meanwhile, over at Ormondale, teacher Anna Henderson has developed an ecology unit for the third grade based upon the book, *The Owl in the Shower*, and we spotted a covered wagon in third grade teacher Linda Vlastic's classroom, a clever way to give her kids a truly hands-on Trail experience.

For more information about the schools, please go to our website at [www.pvsd.net](http://www.pvsd.net).

*Maryann Derwin*



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*Learning about art at the Authors and Artists Faire.*

*Photo by Virginia Bacon*

## The Earthquake Game

Want a simple method to estimate the distance to the epicenter of the next local earthquake? It's a helpful distraction and may actually put you at ease when it happens, as you play this earthquake game.

When lightning strikes, the electrical discharge and the clap of thunder originate at the same time. The lightning flash is seen almost instantly because it travels very fast, whereas the sound travels much more slowly. You can tell how far away the lightning occurred by counting the number of seconds from the flash of lightning to the arrival of the first clap of thunder, and then multiplying that number by 1100 feet (the distance sound travels in one second).

It is similar with earthquakes. There are two types of waves created by an earthquake, both of which are sound waves traveling within the crust of the earth. The fastest one, which you feel first, of course, is called the P (primary) wave; the other, which you feel shortly afterwards, is called the S (secondary) wave. The P wave is rather abrupt, sometimes like a sonic boom. The S wave is more noticeable, slowly rolling, lasts much longer and does most of the damage.

Since these waves travel at very different speeds, the further one is from the epicenter, the longer the time interval between the first arrival of the faster P wave and the beginning of the slower S wave. If you have sufficient awareness to estimate when you first feel the earthquake (the P wave) and start counting seconds until you feel the large rolling S wave, you can estimate the distance to the epicenter. The P wave travels about 2.5 miles per second while the S wave travels about 1.5 miles per second. Some simple math applied to these numbers boils down to this simple formula: multiply by 5 the number of seconds between the onset of the first earthquake wave (P) and the slow rolling wave (S) to compute the distance in miles to the epicenter (the point on the ground surface just above the actual earthquake focus).

You can then compare your estimate with the location later reported in the news. This is fun, simple and, allows you to practice seismology in your own kitchen -- without a license and without a PlayStation -- when you play the earthquake game.

*Sheldon Breiner, Geologic Safety Committee*

## The Golden Rule Applies

There is one very simple, effective, and sometimes overlooked step in the presentation of a project to the town.

***Share your ideas and plans with neighbors early in the process and as changes are made***

The ASCC always recommends property owners share their ideas and plans with neighbors early in the process and as changes are made. This way, potential problems may be averted early instead of showing up in a neighbor's angry letter on the day of the ASCC review. All of us prefer to be informed rather than surprised.

It is often helpful to have neighbors speak or write in support of a proposal. The committee also urges that a dialog occur between property owners on projects that are not required to be reviewed by the town. Be sensitive to your impact on your neighbors with projects such as landscaping, trimming, painting and lighting.

Consider what you do on your land not only from the standpoint of your own needs and desires but also how your development could affect your neighbors. The ASCC certainly will.

Besides, there are other wonderful social and community benefits derived from knowing each other better.

Bottom line - the Golden Rule applies. You never know when your neighbor might remodel.

*Bud Eisberg, ASCC*

## Get Town News Fast

The latest news stories pertaining to Portola Valley are now shown in full on the home page at [www.portolavalley.net](http://www.portolavalley.net). And now residents can be notified by email of new postings to the site, including stories, agendas and minutes. A link on the home page will lead to a subscription page for those wanting to keep up to date. Also new to the site is a form to provide website feedback. Check it all out at [www.portolavalley.net](http://www.portolavalley.net).

*Michele Stern*

## Blues & Barbecue Birthday Party To Honor 40-Year Residents

Blues & Barbecue, the annual open-space celebration and fundraiser, will be especially festive this summer as our town turns 40.

"It will be a big birthday party to celebrate the town's 40th anniversary of incorporation," says event chair Beth Bowman. Slated for Sunday afternoon, September 19, the celebration will offer live music, barbecue and activities for the kids, including a climbing wall and pony rides. There will be a silent auction with exciting packages to bid on, and a raffle drawing with dozens of prizes. Proceeds will go to the Portola Valley Open Space Acquisition Fund.

At Blues & Barbecue, the town traditionally honors individuals in the community who've made outstanding contributions to the open-space cause. This year, says Beth, the honorees will be the entire body of residents who 40 years ago had the vision of a rural and beautiful Portola Valley.

"The beauty and preservation of open space we celebrate here didn't just happen by accident," notes Nancy Lund, town historian and a 24-year Portola Valley resident. In her book *Life on the San Andreas Fault: A History of Portola Valley*, Nancy describes how folks here responded to the threat of booming development in the late 1950s and early 1960s. A hotel-restaurant complex and even a free-way were among the proposals for the unincorporated village. In a determined effort to preserve their community's rural character, residents voted for incorporation on June 23, 1964.

Eleanor Boushey, Bob Brown, Samuel Halsted, Nevin Hester and Bill Lane were elected the first town council members, with Nevin becoming the first mayor. Eleanor, Bob and Bill still live in town while Sam lives in Palo Alto. Nevin died in 2002.

The town will honor these early leaders and all those who lived in Portola Valley in the days of its incorporation.

***Look for invitations with order forms for tickets in your mailbox this summer***

Thanks to them, and many others over the years, we enjoy the open space and natural beauty of Portola Valley today.

Come join the fun at Blues & Barbecue! Look for invitations with order forms for tickets in your mailbox this summer. If you are a 40-year resident, please contact Beth Bowman at 529-1459 to add your name to the list of honorees.

For more information, or if you'd like to help out with the event, call Beth at 529-1459.

## Trails and Paths Improved

Your Trails and Paths Committee began this fiscal year with the goal of accomplishing numerous trail improvements.

The most important upgrades were to be on trails immediately adjacent to our schools; our purpose is to encourage children to walk or ride their bikes to school.

We also identified several major "renovations" to other portions of our trails and paths network – the lower part of Old Spanish trail, part of Sweet Springs, Meadowood and the Alpine Trail behind Rossotti field.

With just a few weeks remaining before July, all of these major trail projects have been completed! In addition, regular trail maintenance, as well as responding to fallen trees, broken culverts, and other incidents, was accomplished in a timely fashion.

Howard Young, our Public Works Director, has scheduled

one last major project for this fiscal year - improving the Dwight Crowder path. This paved path runs from the town line all the way out Alpine Road to Portola Road; it will have the cracks filled and will be slurry-sealed. This should come as welcome news to the many people who use this path regularly.

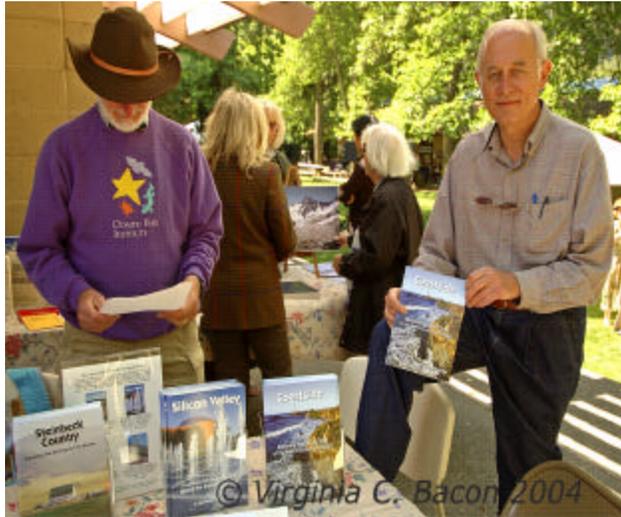
*Lynne Davis, Trails and Paths Committee*



## Authors and Artists Faire 2004

I attended the Portola Valley Authors and Artists Faire the weekend of May 15<sup>th</sup> & 16<sup>th</sup> and had never realized that we had such a wealth of talent right here in the heart of Portola Valley. Combined with the annual spring time Open Studio event of local artists, residents had a chance to hear and see nearly 100 local authors and artists first hand along with sampling the fine wines from Fogarty Winery. Thank you Cultural Arts Committee for bringing us this wonderful event!

*Virginia Bacon*



*Author David Law shows his books to Roland Tabor*



*Art studio at the Town Center*

*Photos by Virginia Bacon*



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