

Los Altos Town Crier

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Why we protest military recruitment

Military recruitment office protests are getting a lot of attention in the Bay Area.

Here's the issue: The military, virtually desperate to shore up its troop levels, has mounted a recruitment program that has few limits on spending, persuasive deception, seductive promises and no limits on targeting the most susceptible youth.

So we protest to shine a light on these practices and to help young people become aware of them.

In the recruiting process, truth is expendable. Promises are vapor. The only commitment a military

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contract has is to bind the recruit to its conditions. The military is under no obligation to perform or to keep its word. Service terms can be extended at will.

The young men and women who are short on perceived career options bear the brunt of this insidious recruitment system. A draft would be one good alternative. A draft would democratize military service and spread the burden among all segments of society.

None would be immunized from the impacts of this misguided war. Spreading the load would probably have another benefit: ending the war, sooner than later.

Ray Schuster

Los Altos Voices for Peace

Reaction to trail story

Regarding the Feb. 27 article, “Stevens Creek Trail due before council in March,” the description of a trail that would “snake along the creek beside Fremont” is inaccurate. The proposal you are referring to would keep the trail close to the creek until the intersection of Highway 85 and Fremont Avenue, and then would take the trail along Fremont. I believe it’s the portion of this trail, crossing under 85 to reach Fremont, that raises concerns regarding the environmental impact on the creek. The creek banks are steep and overgrown in that section.

You wrote, “the council specified

You wrote, “the council specified that the trail would not cross private residences”; however, five proposed routes would go directly in front of homes in rural, sidewalk-free residential areas.

In my opinion, the most straightforward proposal for connecting the Mountain View and Cupertino segments of the trail is to take cyclists along Bryant Avenue to Grant Road to Foothill Expressway. These are all fairly major roads that would benefit from increased funding from the Valley Transportation Authority to make cycling through Los Altos safer. This route would not cause damage to the creek, disturb the fewest private residences, and does not increase traffic safety problems.

Nicole Frees

Los Altos

Plum trees appreciated

Kudos to the Los Altos grounds planners and workers for planting all the new purple plum trees along San Antonio Road.

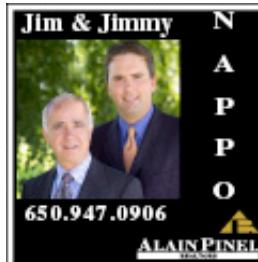
Someone must have heard us suggest restoring those colorful trees that we once had. Many thanks.

Ed McQuistion

Los Altos

More cars stopping for pedestrians

Congratulations to the city for installing pedestrian warning lights on San Antonio Road. It works. Now, we find at least 80 percent of the cars stop for pedestrians. That's a huge increase from our past



In Our Opinion

Editorial

We are uncomfortable with the timing of the Los Altos City Council's March 11 decision to begin changing the city's election year to extend by one year the terms of all five council members.

It's not that we don't agree with the reasons behind the decision. Both in terms of candidate visibility and elections-cost savings, switching election dates from odd or to even-numbered years makes sense. Council members supporting the change noted low voter turnout in odd-numbered years, about half the typical turnout for the presidential elections that occur in even-numbered years. The 2007 election cost the city \$125,200 more than it would have cost during an even-numbered year. In this time of skimpy

a huge increase from our past experiences.

Thank you for increasing access to downtown and helping to save local lives.

Rick and Carolyn Soto

Los Altos

funding for local governments, that's money that could have been put to better use. Why the difference in cost? In even-numbered years there more races with shared costs for printing ballots in the five languages required by law.

Smaller portions, reduced prices

With 70 million babyboomers hitting the age of 60 over the next 10 years, it is time for "sit-down" restaurants to offer senior portions and prices on their entries.

When my wife and I go out to dinner with our mothers (both 84), we always end up coming home with four takeout boxes because there is just too much food to eat in one sitting.

If seniors were offered the option of half portions at proportionally reduced prices, many would be able to eat what they wanted, be satisfied and not waste the extra food, time and packaging to take home leftovers.

There would be a financial impact on restaurants because the price of the meal per person would be reduced.

But these losses would be offset by savings in purchasing less food for senior-potion meals, in the disposal of all the uneaten food that is not taken home, in the additional costs and time for packaging up leftovers and ultimately in the reduction of all that garbage on our environment and landfills.

Restaurants might not even have to change their menus if the senior-portions pricing was posted on a

sign as a half-portion/half-price offering.

Who knows, maybe the younger generations that are tired of being served supersized entries would welcome the half-portion options, too.

Larry J. Gardner

Los Altos

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