

# Carlmont students travel to Zimbabwe

BY AMY BELL  
Staff Editor

Nine students from Carlmont High School are about to embark on an adventure of a lifetime.

The students, all part of the Advanced Via Individual Determination (AVID) program at the school, will travel to Zimbabwe, Africa for five weeks from July 16-Aug. 18.

"The AVID program is for usually first-generation college bound students," said Jeannette LaFors, social studies teacher and AVID instructor at Carlmont. "The program is designed to prepare students from low socioeconomic backgrounds for four-year college eligibility. AVID teaches the students how to prepare for SAT exams and proper study skills. It is an elected program and the students apply or are recruited for admission."

The recruitment process included presentations, applications, letters of recommendation, family meetings, parental consent and personal interviews.

The instructors of the AVID program received school board approval to go ahead with the trip.

"We look at students who are motivated and have the potential to go to college," said LaFors. Admission is not based on grades but once the student is in the program, they are required to maintain good grades."

The trip is the brain child of LaFors and her colleague, Rebecca Zeigler Mano, a former teacher at Carlmont who recently moved to Zimbabwe to teach.

The intent of the program is to create an intensive cultural



SPECIAL TO THE INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPERS

**World travelers:** These students from Carlmont High School are preparing to travel to Zimbabwe, Africa for five weeks from July to August.

exchange program with the Carlmont students and students from a high school in Zimbabwe.

"The students will stay with host families and attend school along with traveling to major sites in Zimbabwe," said LaFors. "The students will experience urban and rural homestay on the trip."

The students who are going on the trip have been active in fundraising to help pay for their stay, along with numerous donations they received from corporate and private donors.

"Some of the fundraising programs we've put on include candy sales, an Africa Night at the school, a Cesar Chavez Fiesta, raffles and book plates, which people can purchase to be placed in books that will be given to the school in Zimbabwe," said LaFors. "We have also received tremendous support from area corporate, community and private sponsors."

The Carlmont students selected were also involved in weekly educational and practical trip preparation sessions throughout the school year.

Upon arriving in Zimbabwe, the students will participate in an orientation in Harare for a few days and then separate to spend two weeks in an urban home/school stay, with partners in Chitungwiza attending a local public high school.

"At one point they will travel with their partners to spend several days with relatives in the rural areas of the country," said LaFors. "The trip will then culminate with a week of travel for the American students and their partners to important sites in Zimbabwe, including Victoria Falls, Hwange National Park and the Great Zimbabwe ruins."

The program will also give the students from Zimbabwe a chance to experience life in America when they travel here

in March of 1998 for a similar stay.

"It is our hope that by experiencing the culture, school and home life of peers in a completely different environment, yet one with substantive economic similarities, that students can begin to expand their horizons and initiate the long-term process of real change," said LaFors. "In addition, such an exchange will dispel stereotyped images that Americans may have of Africans and that Africans hold of Americans."

For example, by staying in both urban and rural areas, American students will experience the immense differences in levels of tradition and modernity found in Zimbabwean life.

The students going on the trip include Ingrid Esparza, Katrina Myles, LaJean Woods, Dominic Bannister, Rosie Barreto-Huacho, Carlos Hernandez, Ricardo Sanchez, Tavita Sosa and Jose Morales.

# Carlmont works to curb gang presence

BY BRENDA JORDAN  
Staff Reporter

In light of the recent gang arrests made by the county's Street Crime Suppression Team, many area residents are wondering about the existence of gangs because some of those arrests took place in Belmont.

"It's there - it's part of life," said Carlmont School Resource Officer Ivan Grosshauser. "It's safe to assume that anywhere there are 1,600 kids coming from five or six different communities, it's possible that you have kids who identify themselves as gang members."

He said there have not been any gang fights or other specific gang violence at the school this year or last. However, last year, police intelligence had heard rumor of a possible gang fight. Police patrols and presence on campus were stepped up and nothing happened.

"High visibility of police is a strong deterrent, it's like if you were a bank robber would you rob a bank with five or six police cars nearby?" Grosshauser said. "We do our best to keep a finger on the pulse and treat each rumor on its merits."

He said "what we see most is clothing, artwork - kids who doodle gang symbols on their notebooks - we have a lot of kids who wear predominantly red or blue, (and etc.). Some kids are getting gang tattoos."

He said despite the signs and symbols, there really is not any obvious gang activity at the high school.

"They may have that association and that attitude but these kids don't get into

any more fights than anyone else," Grosshauser said.

## Counseling

Carlmont High School employs a school psychologist and also contracts with a counseling agency, Family and Community Enrichment Services (FACES). Working together, the school psychologist and FACES professionals say they have had occasion to work with gang-associated youth at Carlmont.

Carlmont School Psychologist Eida Aghazarian said her primary goals are to steer gang associated students, or any student for that matter, into working hard at school and going to class.

"My attitude is, and this is what I tell them, 'you come here from 8 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. to learn - you're not coming here to socialize,'" she said. "You need to get to your classes and graduate."

She said the common problem for students who become involved with gang activity is that they often are falling behind in school.

"They know that school is important," she said. "When they are doing better in school they talk less about the gang."

When she is working with a child she suspects is in a gang, she tries to establish trust, identify the student's problems and asks that student to bring his/her friends in to see her.

"Once I have one student feeling comfortable with me then I have a better chance to get his friends in to see me," Aghazarian said. "I want to utilize the student's peers who may be pulling him away from school."

By doing this, she hopes to affect a number of students who may be becoming involved with gangs.

FACES Family Therapist Denise Tooner comes to Carlmont each Wednesday to do student counseling.

Tooner, a licensed therapist, said that forms are distributed to all teachers in which they are asked to identify students who may benefit from counseling services. Together, Tooner, the guidance counselors and the school psychologist review the forms and discuss ways to help each particular student. Students also are referred to FACES by Grosshauser as a first chance for students who would otherwise be referred to a juvenile detention center.

"We're someone they can come and talk to about their problems, whether it be gang violence or family problems,

we're here to help," Tooner said.

As far as actual gang presence in the communities of San Carlos or Belmont, police say it's not a problem.

"Gangs in San Carlos are close to non-existent," San Carlos Police Commander Jim Costello said. "We have what we call 'gang wanna bes' who do a little bit of graffiti, dress like and look like gangsters, but this community has done a good job of looking after kids and keeping them going in the right direction."

Belmont Police Chief James Goulart said "there are no recognized gangs in Belmont. We've been pretty lucky."

"As different nearby cities like San Mateo, Redwood City, get hot (meaning police closing in on gang operations, members) we may see some activity here," Goulart added. "But the (neighboring police) about who may be in town."

Continued from 1A

struction of needed classrooms.

The tax burden per property owner is estimated to be about \$7.20 per \$100,000 of assessed property value for the life of the bonds, translates to about \$18 a year for the average homeowner with property assessed at \$250,000.

If the bond measure is approved, Carlmont High School may soon have 18 new classrooms and a new look.

"This could be the first project," said Don Gielow, assistant superintendent of administrative services of the school district.

A Carlmont committee has completed its plans for the addition of two new buildings to be built at the front of the high school complex. Open space between the two buildings would be used as a student gathering place.

"Payoff is going to be great in terms of the returns for Carlmont," said Carlmont High School Principal Michael Johnson.

He said the school certainly needs the additional classroom space and a center point where students can gather. The addition of the new buildings would also make it easier for the public to access support services.

Both of the buildings would be two stories tall, one would house six classroom-sized rooms, and the other, 12. The 6-room building would house all of the student support services

(student body office, finance office, attendance, career center, and work experience), as well as three classrooms, a conference room and a faculty workroom. The 12-room building would be home to six science classrooms and six regular classrooms.

Together the buildings would give Carlmont a new face.

"The community will be very proud of the new look Carlmont will have if Proposition V passes," Johnson said.

If the measure passes, about \$15 million is estimated to be spent on the Carlmont additions and facilities improvements. Construction would begin in the summer of 1997.

Johnson said the infrastructure at Carlmont indeed needs repair.

"Our roofs leak," he said. "When it rains, it floods the hallways."

Also, classrooms would be retrofitted with electrical wiring to accommodate computer technology, playing grounds would be renovated, and classrooms would be modernized.

#### **District-wide improvements**

If the bond is approved, expenditures will be made during the next five years on the following types of projects for all district facilities:

- modernization of all classrooms, labs and non-classroom areas;
- repair of aging

infrastructure, including electrical, plumbing, roofs, drainage, earthquake safety upgrades, etc.;

- update and repair of all restrooms, and

- additional classrooms for expected growth.

The school district includes Carlmont, Menlo Atherton, Redwood, Sequoia and Woodside high schools.

Gielow said about 30 classrooms are needed district-wide to accommodate an increase of about 1,000 students now enrolled at local elementary schools. He said the general objective is to have the needed additional classrooms by the time those larger classes reach high school. But exact details for construction of classrooms at the other high schools has not been officially worked out.

#### **Menlo-Atherton**

One of the largest projects slated for Menlo-Atherton High School is the creation of recreational fields.

Ideally, the school will set aside an amount of money and ask the communities of Menlo Park and Atherton to match the funds for the construction of school/community recreational fields.

#### **Community support**

Community support has been positive, school officials say.

"We're very encouraged by the support from community people," Johnson said. "They're helping raise funds and giving up their time to make phone calls and help pass measure V"

ELECTION '96

# Bond benefits schools

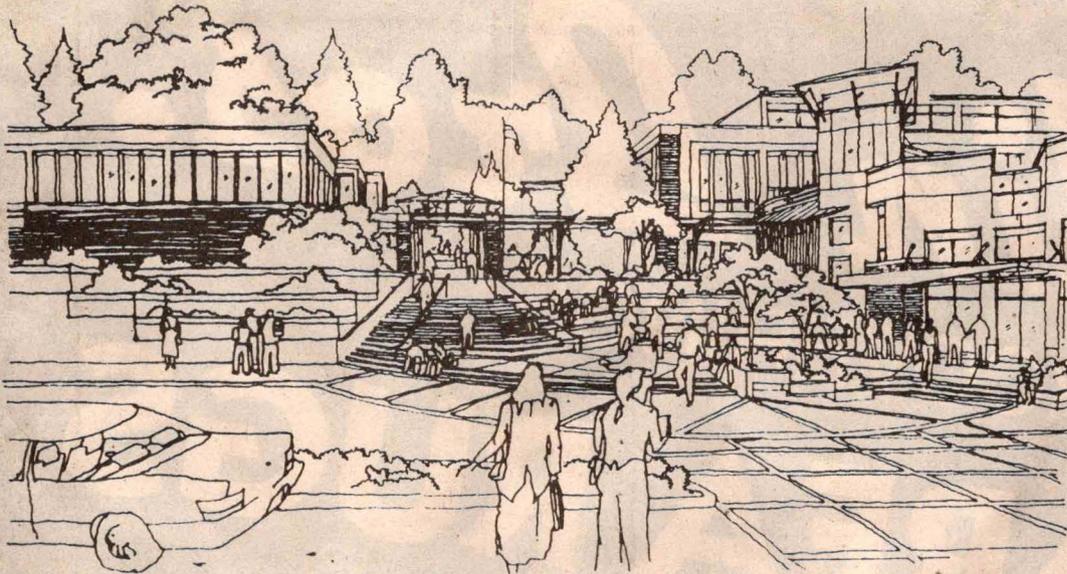
BY BRENDA JORDAN  
Staff Reporter

Carlmont High School students, teachers and parents, who have worked hard since April toward needed expansion at the high school, will learn the fate of their plans on Nov. 5.

On election day, property owners in the Sequoia-Union High School District, which stretches from Belmont to Atherton, will be asked to approve a \$45 million bond measure for improving the infrastructure of SUHSD schools and the con-

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## MEASURE V: In the hands of voters



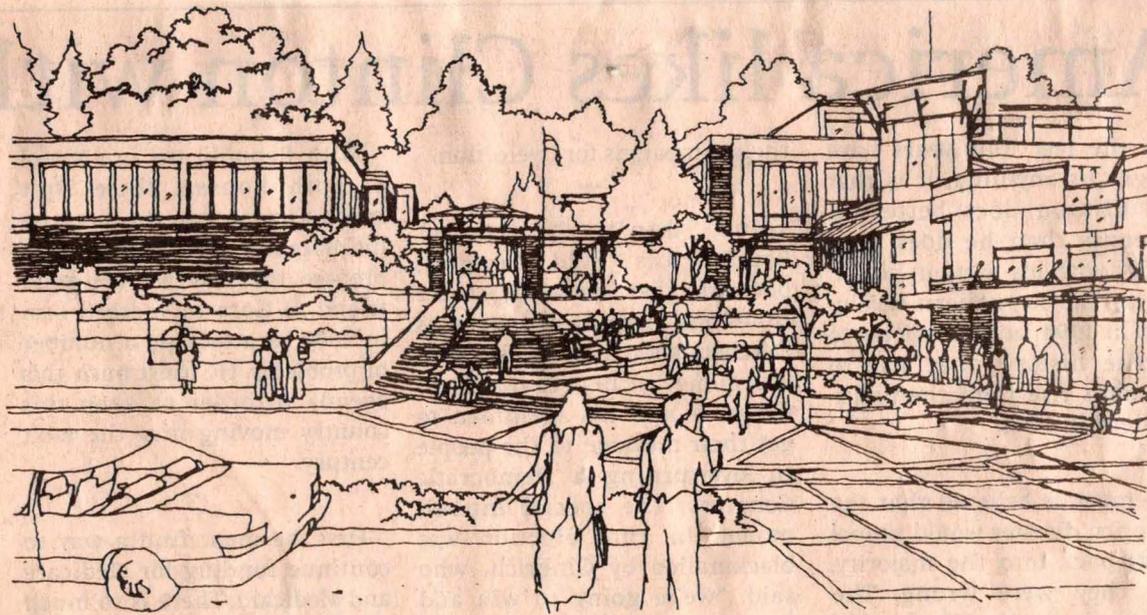
CARLMONT HIGH SCHOOL

VIEW OF CAMPUS PLAZA

DES

GRAPHIC COURTESY OF DES ARCHITECTS + ENGINEERS

**New look:** Should Measure V pass, the above sketch shows how the front of Carlmont High School would look after construction is completed.



CARLMONT HIGH SCHOOL

VIEW OF CAMPUS PLAZA



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additional classrooms by the time those larger classes reach high school.

## MEASURE V

# Voters aid Carlmont

BY BRENDA JORDAN  
Staff Reporter

On election day, voters in the Sequoia-Union High School District approved Measure V, the \$45 million bond measure for improving the infrastructure of SUHSD schools and the construction of needed classrooms.

The measure needed a two-thirds majority vote which it received hands down. At press time, 57,464 "yes" votes and 15,012 "no" votes had been counted.

"When the results were published, we were very surprised," said Carlmont High School Principal Michael Johnson. "It's very hard to pass a bond measure and to do so with this kind of margin makes it very special for us."

The tax burden per property owner is estimated to be about \$7.20 per \$100,000 of assessed property value for the life of the bonds. This translates to about \$18 a year for the average homeowner with property assessed at

# VOTE: Measure V boosts Carlmont High

*Enquirer Bulletin Nov 13, 1996*

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\$250,000.

Don Gielow, assistant superintendent of administrative services, said the money will be spent wisely.

"We're not going to spend the money immediately," Gielow explained. "We're going to do the necessary planning first. We'll be setting up committees at all schools to examine the educational needs, and our maintenance staff will do a more detailed study of what our infrastructure needs are."

Gielow said the construction of new classrooms at Carlmont will be the first project.

"We will recommend that the board move ahead on the Carlmont project," he said. "They'll be going to the state for approval of (construction) plans and hopefully construction will start next summer."

A Carlmont committee has completed plans for the addition of two new buildings to be built at the front of the

high school complex. An outside amphitheater will be built in the open space between the two buildings and will serve as a student gathering place.

Both of the buildings will be two stories tall, one will house six classrooms and the other 12. The 6-room building will contain student support services (student body office, finance office, attendance, career center, and work experience), as well as three classrooms, a conference room and a faculty workroom. The 12-room building will house six science classrooms and six regular classrooms.

Together the buildings would give Carlmont a new face, Johnson said.

About \$15 million will be spent on the Carlmont additions and facilities improvements.

Also, classrooms will be retrofitted with electrical wiring to accommodate computer technology,

playgrounds will be renovated, and classrooms will be modernized.

"I would like to thank the community for a vote of confidence in their schools and the Sequoia-Union High School District," Johnson said. "Everybody stands to gain from the funding that will be made available to provide structural improvements to facilities in dire need of repair."

### District-wide improvements

Expenditures will be made during the next five years on the following types of projects for all district facilities:

- modernization of all classrooms, labs and non-classroom areas;
- repair of aging infrastructure, including electrical, plumbing, roofs, drainage, earthquake safety upgrades, etc.;
- update and repair of all restrooms, and
- addition of classrooms for expected growth where

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### EDITORIAL

# Belmont curfew a poor law

Belmont is in the throes of some mass hysteria, reflected in the attitude and laws passed by its City Council.

First, the council enacted an ordinance establishing a nighttime curfew against teens. Now, the council, by a vote of 4-0, has passed a curfew to prohibit teens from "remaining, loitering, idling or wandering in public streets, highways, roads, alleys, parks, playgrounds or other public buildings, places of amusement, eating places, vacant lots or any unsupervised place within the city," between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. on days when school is in session.

What is wrong with this ordinance is that there has been no evidence demonstrated for such action. Belmont is not in the grip of teenage crime, nor is there any reason for the Traffic Division of Juvenile Court to enforce truancy laws. If the Belmont City Council is truly concerned about truancy rates at Carlmont High School, it could take a position in favor of a closed campus environment, something which every high school in the San Mateo Union District has found works successfully.

We can't help but be critical of the Belmont City Council because it has targeted teens for persecution. San Mateo County Chief Probation Officer Gene Roh wants every city in the

county to follow Belmont's lead in passing the daytime curfew. What he neglects to explain is why we need it. Are there not laws on the books that prohibit truancy and give him the authority to do his job?

Councilmember Nancy Levitt was absent at the time of the vote, but her statement opposing the ordinance makes much more sense to us. She says other Bay Area cities have found daytime curfew ordinance to be ineffective. She said that in 1990 the San Francisco Police Commission recommended that the city scrap its teenage curfew law because it could not be enforced fairly and would just multiply the problems the police department already faces.

Many teens are involved in home schooling, special programs and working arrangements. Why should these teens be harassed as a result of this law? Others have been abandoned by their parents, are homeless, sick and on addictive substances. This law would drive them underground so that the social agencies that provide necessary assistance to bring them into the mainstream will not be able to locate them.

This is not a good law. It is costly and totally unnecessary. We would hate to think that the only answer to teen truancy problems rests with the Traffic Division of Juvenile Court.

# Stay in school and out of court

## BELMONT

### Police begin daytime curfew enforcement

BY JENNIFER NAPIER-PEARCE  
Staff Reporter

Truant students beware.

Armed with another weapon to keep students in school, Belmont police began enforcing a new daytime curfew on Feb. 1.

So far, police have not issued any citations and hope knowledge of the weighty consequences, ranging up to \$150 in

fines, will be enough to dissuade students from cutting class.

Police estimate that, in an average year, 3,800 of the approximate 7,000 students in Belmont's public schools will be truant at one time or another.

"Hopefully students will know we are serious about this," Belmont Police Chief James Goulart said.

On Jan. 11, the Belmont City Council approved the ordinance which stiffens penalties if delinquent students are caught off-campus during school hours, approximately 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., and also outlaws teens from wandering around Belmont between 11 p.m. and 6

a.m. Although the laws went into effect in January, police delayed enforcement in order to educate students and parents about the new provisions.

As part of this education effort, police prepared a neon green pamphlet describing the ordinances and inserted it in the February "Carlmont High Bagpiper," a newsletter sent to families of the roughly 1,500 youth attending Carlmont High School. The flier was distributed to the high school only because the problem exists primarily at the high school level, according to police.

The police department also notified school administrators about the new law

and trained fellow police officers on procedures for enforcing it.

Basically, if officers see juveniles during the curfew periods, they will ask for identification and reasons why the minor is not in school or at home.

Under the law, teens can be out under certain circumstances including when accompanied by a parent or guardian, while on emergency errands for a parent or guardian, or if they are married. Minors are also allowed to leave campus to go to and from work or a doctor appointment; during school lunch periods and with school permission; to attend home

See **CURFEW**, page 12A

## CURFEW: Police hope new law deters truants

*Continued from 1A*

school or field trips; to engage in constitutionally protected activities (religion, speech, assembly); and to attend events sponsored and supervised by an organization.

When a student is out without such an excuse, much of the penalty is at the discretion of the police officer. The officer can call a parent, issue a ticket, send a letter home indicating the parents can be held financially liable, and/or require the young

person to attend an 8-hour counseling session on "Choices and Decision-Making."

Currently there is no requirement that the excuse be written; police intend to follow up on excuses in whatever form.

If the officer gives a citation, the minor must appear in Juvenile Traffic Court with a parent or guardian. First-time offenders could be fined \$35, while second and third convictions could result in fines of \$75 and \$150 each.

By showing an immediate

consequence, police said they are optimistic the new measures will keep kids in school.

"We've always had a truancy program so that if a police officer sees someone who has skipped class, they will bring him or her back onto campus," Chief Goulart said. "Now, we're trying to put some responsibility back on the kids and we hope it will have positive effect by giving them a decision to make," Goulart said.

Carlmont High School Principal Michael Johnson also

supports the ordinance. "It can only help," he said.

"The school [Carlmont High] spends about \$400 in postage per semester sending out truancy letters to parents," according to Ivan Grosshauser, school resource officer who works on the Carlmont campus. "Some of those are habitual truants, but that gives an idea of how many cases there are."

Asked how many youth police anticipate to cite and/or send to juvenile traffic court, Chief Goulart said, "I hope it's none."