



# Belmont City News

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The Belmont City News is prepared by the City of Belmont each Spring and Fall

## NDNU: THE UNIVERSITY IN OUR BACKYARD

*“What is Belmont’s leading industry? Education.”*

Belmont City Manager, Jack Crist

What do Ann Arbor, Michigan; Boulder, Colorado; Boston, Massachusetts and Belmont, California have in common? All are great college towns. Although Belmont may not have the urban depth of Boston or the mountainous appeal of Boulder, as home to Notre Dame de Namur University it does have that spark that comes not only from young minds in pursuit of higher education, but from literary events, Division II collegiate sports teams, historic buildings, rigorous academic programs, and outstanding music and theatre productions. And most importantly, according to Hernan Bucheli, Vice President for Enrollment Management, “There’s always something going on!”

As the only four-year university in San Mateo County, Notre Dame de Namur (NDNU) is well suited to Belmont, an intellectual, cultural and educational hub that balances urban amenities with small town charm. Founded by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur in San Jose in 1851, the college moved to Belmont in 1923. It is a fully accredited, independent Catholic, co-educational university offering 26 undergraduate programs and graduate degrees in 17 areas of study. Intensive undergraduate and evening degree completion programs are designed for working adults seeking a degree completion program. NDNU was recently named to the top tier among western region master’s universities in the annual U.S. News & World; it is ranked 41<sup>st</sup> among all master’s universities in the western region.

“We are very pleased to be ranked among the best master’s universities in the west,” said NDNU Acting President, Dr. Judith Maxwell Greig. “We’d like to think that our higher placement on this year’s list reflects the hard work the faculty, students, and staff have done over the last year to make NDNU an even better place.”

“For example, NDNU places a much higher value on social justice, experiential learning—giving students an opportunity to apply what they are learning to help local communities solve real problems.”

Dr. Greig stresses that those life values are an essential part of the NDNU experience. And to instill those values, NDNU has a strong commitment to “student engagement,” a phrase often heard and actively applied on the campus. Student engagement is clearly the underlying theme of the university’s culture. The university’s champion of student engagement is Sociology and Anthropology Professor Don Stannard-Friel. As director of the Dorothy Stang Center for Social Justice and Community Engagement, Dr. Stannard-Friel says he’s simply following the tradition of service on which the university was founded.

“The first mission of the sisters was based on social justice, and ‘serving the common good.’ We’ve been practicing social engagement and service learning for years in programs such as art therapy and Thanksgiving in the Tenderloin. We use community engagement to connect our campus and the outside world with each other,” remarks Dr. Stannard-Friel.

The Stang Center was founded in honor of Sister Dorothy Stang, an American-born, Brazilian sister of the Sisters of the Notre Dame de Namur order who was murdered in the Amazon Basin of Brazil. Outspoken in her efforts on behalf of the poor and the environment, Sister Dorothy’s mission continues through the students and faculty at NDNU. Through collaboration and partnership, the Center provides leadership and opportunities for NDNU and the larger community to develop an enhanced understanding of critical social issues, a deepened sense of civic commitment, and positive social change.

In addition to academics and service learning, NDNU enhances its relationship with the community through sports and the arts.

Where else can you attend an NCAA sporting event in your own backyard? As a Division II school in the PacWest conference, the Argonauts play a competitive schedule in 12 sports (seven women’s and five men’s).



According to athletic director Josh Doody, “People in the community can come over and watch a competitive, entertaining game against some pretty tough teams for just \$5. For example, men’s and women’s basketball is really exciting and we offer a snack bar where everything is \$1.” At publication time, both the men’s and women’s soccer teams were in first place in the PacWest with just four games remaining. Director Doody added that the strength of the athletic program is growing and that last year NDNU’s student-athletes won an award for maintaining a cumulative 3.3 GPA. For a schedule of all athletic events, go to [ndnu.edu/athletics](http://ndnu.edu/athletics) for a schedule.

Like the sports enthusiast looking for a lively competition, arts enthusiasts don’t have to wander beyond the boundaries of Belmont to experience one of the most vibrant and exciting arts programs in the San Francisco Bay Area. The NDNU theatre, dance, music, and musical theatre productions have drawn rave reviews from local critics. And the art and graphic design programs are known for their rigorous studio practice and the Madison Art Center, which includes the Wiegand Gallery. In addition, lectures by distinguished scholars and professionals, from theologians to comics, are open to the public as well as the campus community.

Of course, the most outreaching of all the arts offerings at NDNU over the years has been, “The Gift,” the Bay Area’s longest running musical performance of A Christmas Carol. Directed by Professor of Theatre Arts, Michael Elkins, A Christmas Carol is presented to the community free of charge. Now in its 22<sup>nd</sup> year, more than 100,000 people have attended these performances, which are held in the 54-year old landmark NDNU theatre. A simple gift of a new toy or canned food is all that is requested to attend a performance. This year’s show will run December 5-7 and December 11-14. For more information on any theatre, music or dance performance, call the NDNU Box Office at 508-3456, or go [ndnu.edu/the-arts](http://ndnu.edu/the-arts).

The 50-acre campus is home to a host of national and state historic buildings, the most prominent of which is Ralston Hall, which houses the university’s administrative offices and serves as a venue for many campus events. At the center of this 80-room estate is the grand ballroom, which is the site of many weddings, conferences and special events.

The academic, social, arts, athletic and service programs at NDNU are all designed to provide a synergy that advances the university’s partnership with the greater Belmont community and beyond. Its contributions to social and environmental awareness as well as its commitment to academic excellence and involvement in the community enhance Belmont’s standing as a “great college town.”

Notre Dame de Namur University is located at 1500 Ralston Hall in Belmont. For more information, visit [ndnu.edu](http://ndnu.edu).

## Unique Program Gives College Interns Municipal Government Experience

## Intern Opportunities at Belmont City Hall

### *A Perspective*

by Katie Lieberman, Notre Dame University Class of '02 and '08

I learned of the intern position while completing a Masters in Public Administration at Notre Dame de Namur University from Professor Capstone. My goal is to work in city government, only I was not sure as to what the actual inner-workings of city government involved. As I began the job hunt, I soon realized the importance of applying to a specific department within city government. This internship has allowed me to work closely with all the department heads and their teams. I have worked on several projects initializing from the Finance Department, the City Clerks Office, Parks & Recreation Department and directly with the City Manager.

Some projects that the city interns have managed include creating a functioning Media Plan, compiling the City of Belmont's Answer Book, researching the CalPERS enhancement, creating and formatting Handbooks for new Council Members and new Commissioners, partnering with the Parks & Recreation Department to develop a Donation Catalog, and writing high level research reports for City Council Members. These projects all required working closely with various employees to compile the necessary information.

Everyone has been so responsive to my questions and needs because they are used to supporting each other. I have learned valuable information from my short time here in Belmont City Hall that will prepare me to dive back into the job hunt with a clearer picture of how city officials ensure Belmont's success. I highly recommend any NDNU student interested in government to consider an internship with the City of Belmont.

### *City Clerk's Office*

For the past four years the City Clerk's office has been using the services of Notre Dame de Namur (NDNU) students who have qualified for a federal work study grant, for which they receive nominal remuneration for their efforts. Their role as "document imaging assistant" involves back-scanning of minutes and resolutions into a database that makes these documents searchable through the City's website. In addition, high school students have similar opportunities to fulfill their requirements for community service. Thanks to these interns, City Council minutes are fully indexed to 1965 (see "search council documents" on [www.belmont.gov](http://www.belmont.gov)).

### *The Police Department*

The Police Department has a long established relationship with the NDNU intern program. Students have enjoyed working side by side with our officers; some have been assigned to the Detective Bureau to organize case files and do crime analysis, while others have been assigned to the records division. Several of these students have gone on to careers in law enforcement, including one who was recently hired as a Belmont Police Officer, and will be attending the Police Academy this fall.

### *The Finance Department*

Thanks to an NDNU intern, the Finance Department has been able to collect inspection fees for the Belmont-San Carlos Fire Department (BSCFD). The intern sent out approximately 900 invoices on behalf of BSCFD for the past three fiscal years, including past due notices for 2006 and 2007. She has also assisted with researching and sorting data in coordination with BSCFD and processing adjustments.

For more information on City of Belmont intern opportunities, contact Joni Stallings in the Belmont City Manager's Office, at 595-7408.

## BELMONT'S YOUTH HAVE THEIR SAY

### Youth Advisory Board

This fall, the inaugural Belmont Youth Advisory Board (YAB) was created to facilitate the leadership and teambuilding skills that will help students in present and future leadership roles. The board consists of 13 seventh and eighth grade students that either reside in or attend school in the City of Belmont. The board meets once a month at the Belmont Library. Each meeting consists of fun and educational small and large group team building exercises. Later in the school year, the board will implement their new skills in fulfilling essential community needs, i.e. canned food drive. Twice during the year the board will have retreats to reward members for their progress and hard work. Already scheduled is a team building retreat to Planet Granite in the month of November. The Belmont Youth Advisory Board is led by Erica Spacher, Belmont Youth & Teen Specialist. For more information on YAB, contact Erica at 595-7447, or [espacher@belmont.gov](mailto:espacher@belmont.gov).

### Voices

For Belmont's high school students, VOICES (Volunteer Outreach Involvement in Community Events & Services) offers community service opportunities in Belmont, San Carlos and around the Bay Area. VOICES meets once a week to discuss and plan upcoming events and activities. Members can expect to participate in at least one volunteer activity per month in addition to weekly meetings. Events are usually scheduled during the weekends so as not to interfere with classes. In addition to volunteer events and weekly meetings, the group also has retreats for team building and to reward members for all of their hard work. Retreats have included white water rafting and snowboarding trips, as well as a overnights at the Teen Center.

**VOICES** accepts applications from freshmen, sophomores and juniors in the spring (incoming freshman and graduating seniors are not eligible). Once applicants are accepted, they remain active in the group until they graduate high school.

**VOICES & YAB** are Belmont Parks & Recreation Department programs supervised by Erica Spacher, Teen Specialist for the City of Belmont. For more information on VOICES or YAB, contact Erica at 595-7447, or [espacher@belmont.gov](mailto:espacher@belmont.gov).

## Economic Development / General Plan Update

Belmont continues to implement its comprehensive General Plan Update & Economic Development programs. The program includes targeting specific economic development sites (business recruitment, encouragement of mixed-use (residential/commercial) opportunities), and offering a host of services to the business community to encourage business retention and growth. The long-term goals for the Village Center, Firehouse Square, Belmont Station, and Shoreway Place sites (see City Website [www.belmont.gov](http://www.belmont.gov) for more details) envision high quality redevelopment with an attractive mix of commercial, hotel, office, residential, open space and public gathering opportunities.

On July 29, 2008, the Belmont City Council & Planning Commission conducted a joint study session on General Plan Update policy issues involved in revised zoning regulations for the "Downtown Village Areas", the above-described Economic Development Target Sites, and the Downtown Specific Plan Area (DTSP). This project will update the City's planning and regulatory documents to be consistent with goals for Belmont Village, including the three target sites. Draft zoning districts are being prepared to clarify, streamline, and update land use regulations, development standards, and design guidelines for the Belmont Village area. New development

standards and design guidelines will be added to existing regulations to achieve the desired quality and character in development projects.

The 7/29/08 Study Session was very well received by the City Council & Planning Commission (see the City Website [www.belmont.gov](http://www.belmont.gov) to view an archived webstream of this meeting). The City will conduct future neighborhood & community meetings prior to returning to the Planning Commission & City Council with amended zoning regulations for the Belmont Village.

A private development project has also been approved at 1300 El Camino Real (former Ross Lighting site). The three & four story mixed use project includes 5,500 sq. ft. of commercial space, nine condominium units, and a 14-space underground parking garage. The expansion will maximize parking spaces in the building and potentially connect to an adjacent conceptual underground parking garage (60+ spaces) that could serve the balance of future development within Firehouse Square. Project entitlement review is expected to be completed in early Fall 2008 and construction is expected to commence shortly thereafter.

# What's up with the Emmett House?

The Emmett House, relocated last winter from its original site on Ralston Avenue, is resting comfortably on its new permanent foundation on O'Neill Avenue near Twin Pines Park. The Planning Commission will be providing its final review and approval of the landscaping, exterior and interior design by November, 2008. The architect, Garavaglia and Associates will then complete the working drawings and the City will send out the project for bid by the second week in January. Bids will be opened in February and the contract will be awarded. The remodel construction should begin in March, 2009 and be completed no later than February, 2010. Once completed, the Emmett House will be a multi-unit dwelling.

## RED LIGHT RUNNERS BEWARE

The City of Belmont established the Red Light Photo Enforcement program in 2008 to address traffic safety issues. Traffic safety is a top concern of the residents of Belmont and the City's ultimate goal is to improve traffic safety and provide a higher quality of life for the community through educating the motoring public. Our strategy includes both education and enforcement, while maximizing our limited personnel resources. Drivers who run red lights are often the same drivers that are speeding through our neighborhoods and cause other traffic issues. The Red Light Photo Enforcement program allows the Belmont Police Department to provide a higher level of enforcement at our problematic intersections without additional costs and frees up officers to address traffic concerns at other locations. A one month trial period will give red light runners a "Mulligan" and in lieu of a ticket, they will receive a letter informing them that they were photographed running a red light.



Red Light Photo Enforcement cameras will be installed this winter at the following intersections:  
Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real (SR-82)  
Ralston Avenue and Old County Road

## RESIDENTS CAN NOW PUT "DIBS" ON MORE PICNIC AREAS

Thanks to new Parks and Recreation Department reservation policies, you no longer have to spend restless nights worrying about securing a picnic spot in Twin Pines Park, nor will you have to arrive at the park at sunrise to put your basket on the table to save your spot. Beginning in Spring, 2009, the Belmont Parks & Recreation Department will provide two additional picnic areas for reservation purposes. Currently, the Large Group Picnic Area located within Twin Pines Park, is the only picnic area available for reservation purposes in the entire City of Belmont. All other picnic areas are available on a first-come, first-serve basis only. These two additional picnic areas are also located within Twin Pines Park, and will provide an enhanced service to the community. You will have the ability to schedule and reserve one of these picnic areas and rest assured that it will be available to you. Please contact the Parks & Recreation Department at 595-7441 for further information.

## SLURRY SEAL SCHEDULED FOR '09

In 2009, Belmont residents can expect to see workers performing slurry seal application to City streets. Slurry sealing is that familiar operation where asphalt slurry is used to "paint" the street black. The difference will be that City Public Works Services Division crews will be performing the work instead of the work being done by private contractors. This new and innovative program, initiated by the Public Works Department in 2008, is planned to increase the number of streets receiving a slurry seal and make it an ongoing City maintenance activity. The completion of preventative maintenance activities such as slurry seal can protect and rehabilitate a roadway, and extend their life. This is a key element in reducing long term maintenance and improvement cost.

## Jonathan Gervais named Parks and Recreation Director

Belmont resident Jonathan Gervais has been named the city's new Parks and Recreation Director. "Jonathan has a unique Parks background, centered around environmental planning," said Crist. "He will be a 'green' parks and recreation visionary that will lead the City's department in an enlightened direction."

Jonathan has a BA from UC Santa Cruz. Since 2000, he has served the National Park Service in a variety of roles including an environmental planner, senior project manager, public affairs officer, construction program manager and interpretation division manager. Prior to that, he worked for an environmental consulting firm, as a project manager and team leader. Jonathan has also served the City of Belmont on our Parks & Recreation Commission as well as the Green Advisory Committee. After completing a rigorous recruitment process, he emerged as the ideal candidate and best fit for Belmont.

"Belmont is blessed with a small town ambiance, natural beauty, and a rich history," Gervais said. "To have the opportunity to manage the Belmont Parks and Recreation Department and live in the community is a great privilege. I look forward to working with the fine staff and dedicated park partners to improve the recreation programs and park facilities."

"Jonathan has an impressive depth of knowledge about many parks and recreation topics including landscape, park planning and facilities. These are skills that will be well utilized during the planning of Semeria and Davey Glen parks," said City Manager Jack Crist. Crist appointed Jonathan Gervais to the position effective August 11, 2008.

## Corazon Dino named Human Resources Director

Corazon M. Dino, M.P.A. was recently appointed as the City of Belmont's Human Resources Director. "I was very impressed with her experience and background, high standards and leadership qualities," said City Manager, Jack Crist. "We are very excited to have her join the City team and are confident she will make a positive contribution to Belmont."

Cora has 19 years of solid Human Resources experience, eleven years of which are in the government sector. She possesses a Masters of Public Administration degree from the University of San Francisco and a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration, emphasis in Human Resources Management from SFSU. She comes to the City of Belmont from the City and County of San Francisco, Airport Commission as Human Resources Manager where she managed the recruitment and selection; labor and employee relations; classification; compensation; and training and development functions for various divisions/sections.

The new director commented, "I am honored to have been selected to fill this important post; and am committed to working together with my esteemed colleagues, the City Manager, the City Council, and staff to ensure the City of Belmont continues to be a wonderful place to live and work. My aim is to make the City of Belmont known as an employer of choice."

# SEWER RATE UPDATE

Effective July 1, the City of Belmont implemented an 8.5% increase in sewer service charges for residences and businesses. In addition, the methodology to calculate the charge was revised to include both a fixed rate of \$238.16 as well as variable charge based on actual water usage for the months December through March. The new rate is reflected on the 2008/2009 property tax bill from the County. Residents and businesses should contact NBS at (800) 676-7516 if they have any questions regarding their bill.

The City of Belmont is in a joint powers authority known as South Bayside System Authority (SBSA), which provides sewage treatment to the City and three other agencies: San Carlos, Redwood City, and West Bay Sanitation District (Menlo Park). The SBSA sewage treatment plant as well as related infrastructure including the force main and pump station are in need of a complete renovation, with the City's share estimated at \$45 million. The City Council has elected to finance these costs by issuing debt that will be repaid with a new treatment charge. The City and its consultants are in the process of determining the proposed treatment rate, which will likely be a fixed charge. A public hearing is tentatively scheduled for January 2009 where the City Council will hear and consider all protests and objections concerning this matter and will consider and may approve the new charge.

## AT&T Project Lightspeed

Belmont residents and businesses may soon have a choice of communication service providers. AT&T Project Lightspeed, a provider of cable, telephone and Internet services, has approached the City of Belmont to provide these services. According to a new state law, cities may mold a plan for the time, place and manner in which AT&T may install equipment boxes and launch the new service. AT&T would be required to submit encroachment permits for each of the 43 equipment boxes, and they would also be required to work with the affected property owner (commercial and residential) prior to submitting the permit.

The Belmont City Council must approve each encroachment permit before work can begin. This is a lengthy process and the public will have several opportunities to provide input at public hearings. A study session was held in September to educate the public and City Council on the proposed project.

For more information, go to [www.belmont.gov](http://www.belmont.gov) and click on "Hot Topics."



## New Fire Engine in Belmont

Belmont-San Carlos Fire Department just took delivery of a new fire engine. It will be housed at Fire Station #14 in Belmont at 911 Granada Street. This engine has the capability to pump 1500 gallons of water per minute, carries 1000 feet of 5" hose, 800 feet of 2 1/2 in hose and several hundred feet of 1 1/2 in hose. In addition this engine has foam capability with a built in foam system to handle flammable liquid fires and the like. This is the first new fire engine purchased by your new fire department. Please come by fire station 14 to see our new fire engine.

## Fire Prevention/Holiday Tips:

### BELMONT-SAN CARLOS FIRE DEPARTMENT

#### **FIRE SAFETY TIPS FOR BABYSITTERS**

Will a babysitter know what to do if there's a fire in your home? Planning and prevention are the keys to fire safety. Protect your children while you are away by taking these simple precautions and to educate your babysitter prior to leaving.

#### **X NEVER LEAVE CHILDREN UNATTENDED**

##### **PLAN YOUR ESCAPE:**

Every household should have an escape plan. Discuss with your babysitter.

Have a meeting place outside where everyone gathers after escaping.

Discuss the escape plan and meeting place with the children.

Have an emergency information document with important phone numbers.

##### **PUT AWAY ALL MATCHES, LIGHTERS AND USE CARE WHILE COOKING:**

Make sure matches and lighters are locked up, or stored up high in cabinets.

Do not use the fireplace, or attempt to barbeque while babysitting.

Have a "kid-free zone" of at least three feet around cooking areas.

Turn pot handles in, pointing toward the center of the stove to prevent burns.

Never put anything into the microwave unless you are sure it is absolutely safe.

Keep children away from all items that are removed from the microwave. Escaping steam can cause severe burns and test food before serving to the children.

#### **X HEATING THE HOME**

Give all space heaters at least three feet of clearance from combustible items.

Do not use the fireplace for keeping the home warm during cold days.

Have the adults set the thermostat to the homes heating unit.

#### **X NEVER ADJUST IT!**

##### **IN CASE OF FIRE:**

**GET OUT AND STAY OUT!**

**STAY CALM** and exit through the safest exit.

If the main exit is blocked, use the second means of escape.

If you must escape through the smoke, crawl on the hands and knees with the children until exiting completed. The air is easy to breath while staying low to the ground and visibility is much better. Keep your head 12" to 24" above the floor.

Make sure the children go first, and then follow close behind.

If the children's clothing catches fire, "STOP-DROP & ROLL" must be used to smother the flames. **DO NOT REMOVE THE CHILDS CLOTHING!**

If a child becomes burned, after dialing 9-1-1, cool the area with running cool water for 10-15 minutes. Do not remove the clothing.

##### **CALLING THE FIRE DEPARTMENT:**

Go to a neighbor's home and call the fire department. (9-1-1) Stay on the phone until directed by the fire department to hang up.

Do not re-enter the home and keep the children with you at all times.

If you are unable to get the children out, go to a neighbor's house and call the fire department giving all information as to where the children may be located.

Please contact your local fire department should you have any questions regarding these important fire safety tips. [www.smcfireservice.org](http://www.smcfireservice.org) and [www.bscfd.org](http://www.bscfd.org)

# THE HISTORIAN: Denny Lawhern

*“All history is but the lengthened shadow of a great man.”*

*- Ralph Waldo Emerson*

**I**t can be said that historians are not born, but are made by the events, the circumstances, the experiences that mold their lives and the lives of those that came before them. For Denny Lawhern, it was a stack of old photographs that swayed him into the unofficial role of Belmont’s pre-eminent historian. The photos, some dating back to the 1930s, were images of some of Belmont’s earliest police and fire officials. One, entitled “UFO on Roof,” depicted a police officer investigating an unusual object that landed on the roof of a home (it was later discovered to be a pontoon that had fallen off a plane overhead).

Denny, an auto technician, has worked at Superior Auto Body on Industrial Road, for the past 43 years. The Lawhern Family moved to Belmont from Turlock, Calif. in 1965. After renting for three years, they settled into the home in which Denny currently resides on Hiller Street. Denny explains, “History was one of my better subjects. And when I moved to Belmont, I became interested in the local history, especially when we lost our first historic building, the ‘Old Landmark Hotel’ and the adjacent red barn on Old County Road. It was time for the city to take a look at its historic stock and to set policy on how to deal with historic preservation.”

By the 1970s, historic preservation, and preservation of open space began to seep into the consciences of the citizens of Belmont, but it wasn’t until the 1990s when the City did a survey to review buildings built prior to 1940 that an ordinance was set forth regarding the destruction, removal or altering of a building. Belmont and San Carlos then developed a list of landmarks and historic resources and the process was in place to take a good look at preservation projects such as the Emmett House.

The Emmett House became something of a mission for Denny. The project, which ultimately resulted in the historic home being moved from its original location near the corner of Ralston Avenue and El Camino Real to a lot at the corner of Sixth and O’Neill avenues, took almost 11 years and over 125 meetings to complete. “My goal was historic preservation of the home, but also to have the property generate some income for the City.” The house will ultimately be remodeled into a two-family dwelling that the City will make available as low-moderate income housing. Denny’s deep involvement in the Emmett House project stemmed from his belief that the legacy of one of Belmont’s most legendary residents and merchandisers, Walter Emmett, be honored. Emmett was an influential business owner in the 1860s who owned quite a few buildings in what is now considered downtown Belmont, including the “Pink Building,” which was torn down several years ago to make way for the new Caltrain Station. The Emmett House will be restored to as much of its original design as possible, including its correct orientation on the street and the wrap-around porch.



As any good historian will tell you, the artifacts, information, and legends you collect are meaningless unless shared with the community. So Denny spends much of his time sharing his knowledge of mid-Peninsula history with schools and scout troops. His hands-on approach captures kids’ interest and imaginations. “I allow them to hold objects originally used by the Ohlone Indians, the original settlers of Belmont. As they hold the object, such as a mortar and pestle, I tell them to dream about what that object might have been useful for 1000 years ago.” He also enthralled kids with stories of the original Ohlone campgrounds and burial sites. “The Indians walked along the creek just like you and I do today,” he reminds them.

Denny works tirelessly maintaining the large collection of artifacts, photographs, furnishings, documents and other assorted memorabilia of Belmont’s past in the safe haven of the Belmont History Room, located in the Manor Building in Twin Pines Park. One of his most interesting acquisitions was that of an intact wagon, used during the turn of the century by Walter Emmett to take orders for goods from residents and businesses in Belmont and San Carlos. The wagon, clearly marked with the words, “Country Store, Belmont California,” was found in a barn in Woodside. A pragmatist, Denny continuously collects things for the museum, explaining that things that are relatively current will eventually become historic to future generations. He has a team of dedicated volunteers, many of whom spend hours going through photo albums and old newspaper clippings and meticulously marinating the integrity and historic value of every item.

Of course, historians are also full of great stories and legends, and Denny is especially fond of the remarkable congruities of lives of the original settlers and those of its current residents. For instance, the windswept gulley we know as Ralston Avenue was originally termed “La Canada del Diablo,” or “canyon of the haunted,” for the gusty west-east airstream that pummels us each spring. And when the Indians wanted to keep the Mexicans and explorers from invading their land, they let it be known that the land was inhabited by fleas, thus Alameda de las Pulgas (Avenue of the Fleas) was termed.

In addition to his historic preservation endeavors, Denny is also a renowned photographer, known for his “road trip” slide shows that he brings to convalescent homes, senior centers and nursing facilities. Explains Denny, sometimes with older folks words don’t stimulate them, but a photograph will.

On Denny’s wish list for his Belmont History Room collection is a photograph of Belmont’s first mayor, Thomas Pennington who served from 1926-1930. He has a bound book of every mayor who has served from 1930 to the present, but is missing Mr. Pennington.

As Denny looks out from his small desk in the Belmont History Room to the surrounding Twin Pines Park, he explains that this very spot was the center of activity in Belmont in the mid to late 1800s. Special trains from San Francisco and San Jose would deliver thousands of visitors at a time for gatherings in what was then known as Janke’s Park, or Belmont Beer Garden (now Twin Pines Park). The Ralston Mansion, located on the campus of Notre Dame de Namur University, was also a hub of activity.

The Belmont History Room is a meticulously organized, beautifully displayed window into our City’s past. Residents and visitors alike should take advantage of the rich descriptions, colorful narrations, interesting artifacts and heartfelt memoirs that Denny has assembled over his 40 years as Belmont’s historian. For History Room hours, call 593-4213, or email [belmontcahistory@aol.com](mailto:belmontcahistory@aol.com).

*“I claim not to have controlled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me.”*  
*- Abraham Lincoln*

## HOLIDAY CRAFT FAIRE

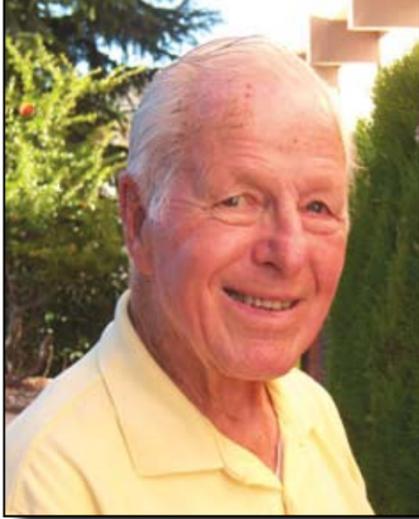
One of the holiday season’s most anticipated events, the Twin Pines Holiday Crafts Faire will take its traditional spot on the calendar the weekend preceding Thanksgiving. This year’s Faire will be held November 22-23 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m., and will feature a wide selection of handmade gifts and decorations. The woody atmosphere of Twin Pines Park lends a special charm to this annual event. The Faire will be held in the Twin Pines Park located at 20 Twin Pines Lane. For more information, call 595-7441.

# “GO FOR THE GOLD: THE PENINSULA’S BEST”

Essay by Bart Oxley

*This past summer, Belmont resident Bart Oxley received first prize in the San Mateo County Fair essay contest for his entry about life in Belmont.*

*The writing contest theme, “Go for the Gold,” coincided with the 2008 Beijing Olympics.*



**I**t is the theme of this year’s San Mateo County Fair, and it recalls a period in history when hundreds of thousands of people throughout the world came to California to “Go for the Gold.” It also echoes the call for hundreds of athletes from countries around the world today who will be “Going for the Gold” this summer at the Olympics in Beijing, China.

Looking back, I can relate this theme to the challenge my wife and I faced when I was transferred by my company from Los Angeles to San Mateo in 1977. Excited with the opportunity to live on the San Francisco Peninsula after the smog-infested community of Sierra Madre at the foot of Mt. Wilson in Southern California, we began the search for a home in a new environment.

In our minds, we were “Going for the Gold, and the Peninsula’s Best.” In this respect, we visited several communities on the Peninsula during the weeks that followed my transfer. One of them was Belmont. We liked the weather, the natural air conditioning of high fog rolling in periodically from the ocean in contrast to the hot, sultry, and polluted atmosphere we had experienced in the past. In a very short time we thought Belmont had everything to offer: good climate, hillside bay views, homeowner associations, a four-year college of Notre Dame, new homes in the western hills as well as acres of open space preserve, including four miles of cross country jogging trails. Being a jogger for many years, this was an added benefit for me. So we built a two- storied home in Belmont Heights in the spring of 1977.

In 1983, I retired from my company after 40 years service. We had already decided we were going to avoid a retirement community, and spend our sunset years in our home in Belmont. To remain active in retirement, I volunteered as a docent at Angel Island, a California State Park. Angel Island is the largest island in San Francisco Bay, and I drove from Belmont to Tiburon each weekend, taking a ferry across the Raccoon Straits to Ayala Cove where I was welcomed by groups of adults and children to lead tours.

After four years of directing tours and serving as a spokesman for the Angel Island Association, I volunteered as a docent at the Moss Beach tide pools, only 13 miles from my Belmont home, and joined other docents at the Fitzgerald Marine Reserve tide pools. For the next 18 years I spent my weekends (and many weekdays) escorting children over moss-covered sandstone and tide pools where marine animals fight for survival in a 24-hour struggle with changing tides and lurking predators in a living museum.

Observing the children’s fascination with hermit crabs, I wrote stories about a hermit crab and its adventures in the tide pool world, and read these to children before a tour.

Today, we continue to enjoy the many gifts the Peninsula has given us. Driving down the San Mateo Coast at sunset, with a stop at Pescadero and dinner at Duarte’s, or a visit the Moss Beach tide pools and dinner at the Distillery Restaurant, makes for a beautiful day. I will occasionally visit that historical monument, Angel Island, where I recall my days conducting tours of Civil War barracks and the Immigration Center that once incarcerated hundreds of Chinese nationals waiting for legal entry to the United States of America. I have visited the lofty heights of Pigeon Point to observe the migration of thousands of gray whales swimming off shore in the fall of the year, making their way on a 5000-mile trek from Alaska to Baja where the females give birth to their young in the warm waters of the Sea of Cortez.

I am lured each year to Sam MacDonald’s Park, and its stately redwood trees and good hiking trails, the Stanford Art Gallery, or a train ride from Belmont’s station to a baseball game in San Francisco. These are some of the gold nuggets of the Peninsula that we have claimed since coming to Northern California.

But unlike most of the gold seekers in the rush of 1849, or of those looking for gold at the Olympic Games this year, we went for the Gold in 1977 and found it in Belmont: “The Peninsula’s Best.”

## City of Belmont Adopts 2008-2009 Budget

In the midst of uncertain financial times, the City’s 2008-2009 budget implements City Council’s priorities while maintaining a reasonable financial position. Fund balances are up, costs are under control and, in general, the City fares well financially in comparison to some of its neighbors. While the City predicts modest financial improvement, there are a number of threats that the City continues to be aware of in forecasting for the future, such as adverse State Budget impacts, cost escalations and a volatile economy. These issues necessitate the City’s continued focus to make fiscally sound decisions to maintain budget policy requirements. The budget is balanced in both the near and long term with the projected fund balance well within policy guidelines.

The budget addresses City Council’s priorities as established through the Priority Calendar process. For instance, the budget includes focused efforts on infrastructure, a General Plan update, Economic Development priorities and redevelopment of the Emmett House. As reported in the spring issue of the Belmont City News, the City has established a Green Advisory Committee that has been divided into 5 subcommittees. The City has also, by resolution, been authorized to issue Belmont residents a \$250 voucher for City services/programs to encourage purchases of Partial Zero Emission Vehicles (PZEV) and Zero Emission Vehicles (ZEV). Implementation of hybrids, plug-ins, clean diesel, budgeted funds to attend Tree City U.S.A. and a new Fleet Conversion Plan are examples of other efforts to make Belmont a Green City.

The coming fiscal year will include a very high rate of capital spending, reflecting the construction of a wide variety of projects for the community. Major projects for the upcoming year are highlighted below:

- \$2.0 million for Redevelopment Agency projects, such as Utility Undergrounding, Artway and Facade Improvements, and other street improvements
- \$3.5 million for Emmett House, Fire House Square, home buyer assistance and other Low to Moderate Income projects
- \$2.0 million for Highway 101 Bike/Pedestrian Bridge
- \$0.5 million for Technology Master Plan and Comcast PEG Program
- \$1.0 million for variety of street improvements and traffic control upgrade
- \$1.4 million for Ralston/South Rd Roundabout and Holly Road Improvements

For more information on the City’s 2008-2009 budget, contact the Finance Department at 595-7433.

## Smoking Ordinance Update

The first part of Belmont’s new smoking ordinance has been in effect for one year. The second part which prohibits smoking in multi-unit dwellings will take effect on January 9, 2009. At that time, smoking will be prohibited in individual units and the patio/yard areas of multi-unit, multi-story residences (apartments, condominiums, and townhouses) that share common floors and/or ceilings with at least one other such unit.

Landlords will be required to insert no-smoking provisions in any new or renewed residential leases; the California Apartment Association has provided an approved form for this purpose.

Landlords may designate outdoor smoking areas if they are more than 20’ away from operable doors or windows used by the public. Smoking in indoor common areas of multi-unit residences was prohibited by a prior ordinance, and the new ordinance continues that prohibition.

## Movie Night in the Park

The Belmont Parks & Recreation Department hosted the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Movie Night in the Park featuring the movie “Arctic Tale” on Friday, August 15<sup>th</sup>. As we all know, going to the movies has become an expensive proposition for a family these days. This free special event provides an opportunity for community families to come together and enjoy a movie under the stars in beautiful Twin Pines Park.

The event theme was centered on global warming and energy conservation education. Allied Waste Services was on hand with one of their newest recycling trucks. Mid Peninsula Water passed out water bottles and provided information on water conservation. The Belmont Police Department had their Mobile Command Unit on site and provided opportunities to tour the unit. They also had information available for disaster preparedness and CERT. The Belmont-San Carlos Fire Department also participated in the event with one of their fire engines available for viewing.

There were approximately 250 community members in attendance, which doubled the attendance of last year’s Movie Night event. The event also included family activities and refreshments provided by the VOICES teen program.

Be sure to look for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Movie Night in the Park events in the 2009 Summer Activity Guide.

The event was sponsored by Allied Waste, Bay Area Tree Company, and the San Carlos- Belmont Mother’s Club.



# Quality of Life in Belmont:

PLEASE TAKE A MOMENT TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY

As citizens of this community we want to enjoy life with as little stress and worry as possible. However, not everyone in the community has the same expectations or agrees on the same definition of “quality of life.” For most residents of Belmont, quality of life means living in a healthy, safe, diverse community with justice and equality for all. The responsibility of maintaining a community with a good quality of life falls, for the most part, on the city government. Of course, every city has its share of problems such as crime, traffic, blighted properties, noise pollution, etc., but together, the city staff, city council, and members of the community continue to work hard to make Belmont a desirable place to live and work and attend school. But the City must also continually ask itself, “How can we make Belmont even better?”

In an effort to define quality of life issues, and determine how things can be improved, the City of Belmont invites citizens to complete the short survey found at the end of this newsletter (or take the survey on the web at [www.belmont.gov](http://www.belmont.gov)).

Most quality of life issues are not criminal in nature, but are more of a nuisance. For example, a neighbor who is not maintaining his/her property, or a homeowner who starts a remodeling project at 7 a.m. on Saturday morning. It also may be the old rusted pick-up truck that has been parked in your neighborhood for months. These types of nuisances are dealt with a city ordinance making it a violation of the City of Belmont Municipal Code/Civil Law. A Code Enforcement Violation is enforced through the Administrative Citation process. Belmont Municipal Codes can be viewed on the City of Belmont’s web site.

The City also has a team of proactive employees who look for long-term solutions to ongoing quality of life issues. The team is made up of members of the five City Departments and is called the Administrative Code Enforcement Team (ACET). They use a form of strategic problem solving to correct violations. They find creative ways to identify root problems and work with the stakeholders to identify long-term solutions.

This simple survey lists a total of 20 potential quality of life issues. Please choose the 10 from this list that you see as having a negative impact on our community. It is important for you to rank the top 10 in numerical order (1-10) with 1 having the most negative impact. In order for us to identify the location where these issues are occurring, please indicate the street that you live on or where your business is located. Please do not add any specific address. Please drop off your completed survey in the box in the City Hall lobby; or mail to Belmont Police Department, Attention: Community Survey, One Twins Lane, Belmont, CA 94002. If you would like to complete your survey online, go to [www.belmont.gov](http://www.belmont.gov).

Please rank (1-10) from most negative impact to least:

- Blighted properties
- Garbage accumulation
- Overgrown vegetation
- Garbage cans left out
- Sign Violations on buildings
- Signs on the public right of way
- Home based businesses
- Unkempt businesses
- Loud music from businesses
- Business hours of operation
- Time zone parking violations
- Vehicles parked the wrong way
- Abandoned Vehicles
- Oversized trucks & RV parking
- Noise (motor & power tools)
- Other Noise (schools and neighborhood)
- Graffiti
- Skateboarding
- Smoking violations
- Loitering

YOUR STREET:: \_\_\_\_\_  
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## Important Telephone numbers

### EMERGENCY SERVICES:

Police or Fire Emergency 9-1-1

### CITY OFFICES:

City Council Offices 595-7413  
 City Manager’s Office 595-7408  
 City Clerk 595-7413  
 City Treasurer 637-2961  
 Community Development 595-7417  
 Finance/Admin Services 637-2907  
 Human Resources 637-2988  
 Parks and Recreation Administration 595-7441  
 Permit Center 595-7416  
 Police Administration 595-7404  
 Police Business 595-7400  
 Public Works 595-7425  
 Belmont/San Carlos Fire Department 802-4255

### CITY SERVICES:

Abandoned Vehicles 595-7455  
 Banner information 595-7427  
 Building Permits 595-7422  
 Business Licenses 595-7436  
 Code Enforcement 637-2968  
 Construction Hotline 610-5715  
 Graffiti Hotline 595-7455  
 Job Hotline 595-7438  
 Library 591-8286  
 Permit Center 595-7416  
 Senior & Community Center 595-7444  
 Sewer Back-up (after hours) 595-7400  
 Trails Maintenance 595-7470  
 Tree Maintenance 595-7470

### OTHER AGENCIES:

Allied Waste (Garbage) 592-2411  
 Bay Area Air Quality Control 771-6000  
 Caltrans Maintenance 358-4129  
 Child Protective Services 595-7922  
 Health Department (County) 363-4305  
 Mid Peninsula Water District 591-8941  
 Mosquito Abatement 344-8592  
 Peninsula Humane Society 340-8200  
 Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center 373-3490  
 PG&E 24-hour help line 1-800-743-5000  
 Post Office 1-800-275-8777

### School Districts

Belmont- Redwood Shores 637-4800  
 Sequoia Union High School 369-1411

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