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Exuberance for education

New Foothill College President Judy Miner sets positive tone, noble goals

By Traci Newell
Town Crier Staff Writer

When Judy Miner graduated from high school, her parents and siblings could not understand her desire to attend college.

"When I first went to college, there was a certain amount of suspicion and concern," Miner said. "I was a burden on the family, living at home and not contributing by working full time."

Miner, 55, became the first person in her family to earn a college degree. That trailblazing experience sparked a passion for higher education. Miner's enthusiasm – sprinkled with healthful doses of ambition, talent and intelligence – has marked her ascendancy through the ranks to her current, new role: president of Foothill College.

The road to Foothill

Miner's journey to Foothill's top administrative post is a testament to her ability to capitalize on the opportunities that came her way.

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Judy Miner assumed the role of Foothill College's new president last month.

JOE HU/TOWN CRIER

Los Altos police warn of burglars posing as workers

By Eliza Ridgeway
Town Crier Staff Writer

Los Altos police are advising residents, particularly older residents, to be on the alert for burglars posing as utility workers.

A burglary scam that had been making the rounds of Mountain View struck in Los Altos July 30. A man, who appeared to work for a water company, distracted an elderly couple while his accomplice sneaked into their home and stole approximately \$50,000 in jewelry and cash.

The criminals are approaching homes in broad daylight, Los Altos Police Sgt. Paul Epley reported. The July 30 robbery occurred at approximately noon in the West Portola area of the city.

"This is a scam that's been going on for a while," Epley said. "They are targeting the elderly population."

Typically, one or more individuals knock on an elderly person's door while holding a water sample and wearing an official-looking uniform. The imposter claims that a water main was ruptured nearby, and that he must check the house's water to see if it is clear.

While he occupies the residents at the front door, an accomplice enters the house unobserved through a

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More marijuana gardens discovered in foothills

By Eliza Ridgeway
Town Crier Staff Writer

The marijuana garden discovered in Hidden Villa's outer reaches last week was just the tip of the iceberg, according to the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Department.

Since deputies cut down approximately 32,000 marijuana plants in a canyon in Hidden Villa's backcountry, they have discovered several other illegal gardens in the foothills, according to Sgt. Edward Wise.

Wise confirmed that deputies have found another garden on private property in Los Altos Hills, and Sgt. Sandra Brown of the Palo Alto Police Department said that deputies

had discovered 15,000 plants in Palo Alto's Foothills Park Aug. 7.

"The growers have found a weakness – it's very rural," Wise said. He reported that the county has been evaluating the area from a tactical standpoint and eradicating the gardens as they are discovered. Wise said cleanup efforts at Hidden Villa and elsewhere have been delayed as deputies seek out and destroy new gardens before the plants have a chance to bud.

"(Cleanup) is something that we would like to get done as soon as reasonably possible, but right now we're in the middle of prime growing season," he said.

Hidden Villa Development Direc-

tor Anna Alioto said the non-profit is awaiting the go-ahead from deputies before beginning cleanup of the marijuana site.

The illicit growers at Hidden Villa had tapped into the west portion of Adobe Creek to irrigate approximately 10 acres of marijuana, and the ultimate ecological impacts of their operation remain to be seen. Some illegal growers in the region have been known to add chemicals directly to the water source, affecting downstream communities. Pesticides, fertilizer and rat poison have been identified at the Hidden Villa marijuana garden. The Sheriff's Department speculated that the growers had been sneaking onto the property via Page Mill Road.



COURTESY OF SANTA CLARA COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

The Santa Clara County Sheriff's Department continues to find marijuana in the foothills of Los Altos Hills and Palo Alto after discovering a plantation on Hidden Villa land Aug. 2.