

COLLEAGUES, ACQUAINTANCES SUSPECT MARK ZUCKERBERG IS A MASKED VIGILANTE

by Sam Ferree

Palo Alto — Mayor Patrick Burt has ordered an investigation to discover the identity of and arrest the local vigilante known popularly as "the Faceless." Since 2004, the Faceless, has been fighting crime on the streets of the once crime-ridden Palo Alto to the vexation of elected officials whose attempts to enforce the rule of law and arrest the vigilante have been unsuccessful for close to six years. Though no public accusations have been made, many residents seem to believe that the Faceless is none other than the CEO and founder of Facebook, multi-millionaire playboy Mark Zuckerberg.

To residents of Palo Alto the city was, until quite recently, a den of fear and violence. By day, the city is just another dirty American urban area filled with abandoned and burned out shells of buildings and suffering from a weak government's inability to maintain necessary infrastructure. At night, Palo Alto is a war zone. The under-equipped, woefully under-staffed Palo Alto police force used to have the highest mortality rate in the country. Fire fights, arson, car jacking, rape, murder and burglary were all common up until six years ago.

In 2004 residents reported seeing a man who "moved like a ninja and swore like a pirate," dressed in a white, featureless outfit,

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intervening in crimes as they took place. Arrests skyrocketed as bludgeoned would-be offenders were found on the steps of the police station bound and gagged with incriminating evidence on their persons. The appearance of the vigilante, who local papers christened the Faceless, coincided — coincidentally, those involved maintain — with Facebook and Mr. Zuckerberg's relocation to Palo Alto.

"He loves Palo Alto, no matter how much of a dump and a haven to miscreants it is," fellow founder and share holder, Dustin Masowitz said. "When we first moved here, we saw this guy get mugged right outside our house. He took it really badly and wouldn't stop muttering about somebody who raised him getting shot and how it was all his fault." In the interview, Mr. Masowitz seemed to lose himself in silent reverie for a moment and then continued, "But he couldn't be the Faceless. I mean, you saw *The Social Network*. He's a sociopath."

Indeed a great deal of public disgust has been directed at Mr. Zuckerberg in the wake of the blockbuster *The Social Network*, which critics are calling a "defining film" of a generation. Sheryl Sandberg, Facebook's chief operating officer said, "You could tell it really hurt him, to be villainized like that. But, you know, it's funny. I was walking by his office late one night a few years ago and I thought I heard him say on the phone, 'Mr. Mezrich, I want you to write a book.' After that movie came out I saw him on the street looking at one of the posters and I could have sworn I heard him say something like, 'This is my burden' and then he started quoting *The Iliad*." She added, "He does that, sometimes."

Acquaintances of Mr. Zuckerberg have reported similar strange incidents and capricious behavior. Many say he is a skilled martial artist and frequently makes pilgrimages to Japan, China and Tibet to receive training, but he always publicly dismisses these excursions as business trips. Though his affairs with super models and actresses are famous, Mr. Maskovitz said he has often heard Mr. Zuckerberg longingly whispering "Diaspora," the name of a local super-villainess. Eduardo Saverin, another of Facebook's co-

founders, said in an interview that he believes he that Mr. Zuckerberg never sleeps, though "He naps through board meetings, he never seems to go home except when he's throwing some party." Friends have said that as much as Mr. Zuckerberg is dedicated to Facebook, he has a passionate, though muted obsession with justice. His library is filled with Greek and Latin classics, in addition to comic books, Sir Conan Doyle, Edgar Allen Poe and social philosophy.

Most peculiar of all is Mr. Zuckerberg's tendency to disappear suddenly when the ":((" beacon flashes in the sky. "I was sitting in his office late talking to him about the ConnectU lawsuit," Mr. Saverin said, "and I looked away for a moment. When I looked back he was gone. The window was open, but his office is ten stories up..." The beacon, popularly known as "the frowny face," is mounted on the Palo Alto police station. Chief of police Dennis Burns, who has often been accused of being lax in his efforts to arrest the vigilante, has refused to comment on the Faceless or the beacon.

Attempts to reach Mr. Zuckerberg for an interview were unsuccessful. This reporter went to the Zuckerberg mansion, a sprawling, gaudy estate, and was told by Zuckerberg's butler that the owner was at a tennis tournament. After leaving the grounds night fell and the "frowny face" could be seen against the cloudy sky. This reporter saw a blurry, faceless figure leap across the rooftops, going in same direction toward the city.

