INSIDE THIS ISSUE:
Spring Real Estate

Waste Not
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Section 2
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BUFFET TO BESTOR: LET’S SHARE THE PAIN IF THE GOV GETS TOUGH ON PROPOSITION 13

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor

J

Jennifer Bestor didn’t know what to expect last month when she mailed a rather whimsical letter to billionaire Warren Buffett about her research on how Proposition 13 has shifted the state’s property tax burden away from commercial land owners. His subsequent response, though, has left the Menlo Park mother of a school-age son smiling — and energized.

Ms. Bestor was featured in a March 17 Almanac article that detailed her research and her quest to raise public awareness of the “incredible windfall” Proposition 13 has provided to commercial property owners — and the adverse consequences of that windfall to schools, towns and other public entities.

In her letter, Ms. Bestor urged Mr. Buffett to again take up an issue he had abruptly dropped in 2003, when he was serving as candidate Arnold Schwarzenegger’s economic adviser during the gubernatorial race. At the time, Mr. Buffett opined that Proposition 13, the 1978 property tax measure considered to be the “third rail” in California politics, needed to be repealed or changed because of the economic damage it had caused the state.

Eager to squelch the public outcry over the statement, Mr. Schwarzenegger told his adviser never to mention Proposition 13 again or he would be forced to do 500 sit-ups.

Motivated by what she discovered after reviewing the tax collector rolls for Santa Cruz Avenue commercial properties in Menlo Park, Ms. Bestor wrote in her open letter to Mr. Buffett: “Please let me know how I can help you with the sit-ups. We desperately need some energy from that third rail.”

In her mailbox recently, Ms. Bestor found a letter from Omaha, where Mr. Buffett lives. It reads:

“Dear Jennifer: I’m going to be 80 in August. 500 sit-ups are out of the question. If you get me in trouble promise me that you will do at least half of them. Sincerely, Warren E. Buffett.”

Although she claims she’s “not an activist, in any sense of the word” — including on an exercise mat — Ms. Bestor wasn’t about to pass up an opportunity. If Mr. Buffett proves willing to be a liaison to the governor’s office, and if sit-ups are the required admission, she’s going to be prepared. She’s been working on her crunches with determination, she says.

Much of Ms. Bestor’s motivation springs from her involvement as a parent volunteer in the Menlo Park City School District, where her son goes to school.

Sitting up for the schools

Meanwhile, when Ms. Bestor wrote to “The Oracle of Omaha” to ask if The Almanac could reprint his letter, he wrote back: “If you publicize my first letter, maybe we’ll even get 498 volunteers. School districts contribute one sit-up and thereby bring our requirement to a manageable level. Best wishes, Warren.”

She wasn’t going to wait for the letter to be published. By last week, Ms. Bestor had tapped into her network of friends and acquaintances in the school community to find a committed group of about 20 who eagerly agreed to perform sit-ups for the cause.

Ever the numbers cruncher, Ms. Bestor came up with a formula that, given the ages of the volunteers, would produce a total of 500 sit-ups. In an e-mail, she explains: “The subscription formula is 80 (sit-ups) minus one’s age. Thus, Warren will have to do one ... and the rest of us somewhat more.”

“I’ve resisted anyone under 18 for fear of the child labor laws, though my son informs me that it’s harder to watch me do 30 than to do 70 himself. I am not amused.”

She’s not sure what will happen next, but she hopes that the ball she’s dropped in Mr. Buffett’s court will be used to gain the attention of the governor and Sacramento lawmakers. She and her firm-bellied troops are ready and willing, she says.

Ms. Bestor has also met with assessors in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, and a San Francisco assessor who contacted her after reading The Almanac’s article, to talk about ideas to change the commercial property provisions of Proposition 13, which are the same as homeowner provisions. Since the proposition was passed in 1978, the tax rate on all property has been capped at 1 percent of loss from the Lehman Brothers collapse.

See BESTOR, page 20

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THE ALMANAC (ISSN 1097-3095 and USPS 459370) is published every Wednesday by Embarcadero Media, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558. Periodicals Postage Paid at Menlo Park, CA and at additional mailing offices. Adjudicated a newspaper of general circulation for San Mateo County, The Almanac is delivered free to homes in Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside. Subscriptions for $60 per year or $125 per 2 years are welcome. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Almanac, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558. Copyright ©2010 by Embarcadero Media, All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited.
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Menlo Park men launch broad-based lawsuit against state high-speed rail agency

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park resident Mike Brady is representing his friend Morris Brown in a broad-based lawsuit against the agency charged with carrying out the California high-speed-rail project.

The suit, filed in Sacramento County Superior Court on Thursday, April 15, asks the court to make several rulings about the way the California High-Speed Rail Authority can legally use bond funds, and funds from the federal government.

If successful, the suit would prevent the rail agency from beginning construction on the system, including the Bay Area section, until the agency secures more funding. It would also prevent the state from guaranteeing revenue to private investors in the rail system.

The suit touches on several of the men’s longstanding allegations against the rail agency. Both have been outspoken opponents of the plan for high-speed rail since before California voters in 2008 passed a bond measure for $9.95 billion to fund the system. The men ran a Web site called Derail HSR prior to the election.

Mr. Brown has sent several letters to the rail agency, arguing that the agency cannot begin construction on any segment of the system until it secures more funding. The men have also run a Web site called Derail HSR.

Child care supervisor arrested

Police have arrested the supervisor of Menlo Park’s child development center in the Belle Haven neighborhood, after the man allegedly gave unwanted letters and presents to a minor.

Jose Adalberto Lopez, 55, of San Mateo, was arrested by Menlo Park police on Tuesday, April 13. Police were called to the child development center on Ivy Drive that afternoon after receiving information from city staff, according to Nicole Acker, spokeswoman for the police department.

Mr. Lopez was charged with annoying and harassing a minor, and was booked into San Mateo County jail that night, Ms. Acker said. She said the minor was 13 years old.

Mr. Lopez has been placed on administrative leave, “pending the results of an internal investigation currently in progress,” Glen Kramer, the city’s personnel director, wrote in a letter to parents of children at the center, dated April 14.

Mr. Kramer told parents that the city “does not believe that any current or former students in the program” are involved in the investigation.

Mr. Kramer began working with the city as a teacher in 2001, and was promoted in 2006 to his current position, according to Mr. Kramer.

Green advocates aim to cross country on electric bikes

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

There are many means of locomotion from Palo Alto to Washington, D.C. What you pick may depend on your age, health, finances, and urgency.

Brother and sister Oliver and Catherine Bock, 55 and 61 respectively, and both residents of Woodside, are choosing bicycles, recumbent electric bicycles with memory-foam seats. They’re leaving from Palo Alto on Earth Day, April 22.

They’re not concerned about cost, they’re giving themselves a couple of months, they’re in decent physical shape, and it’s a chance to talk with people along the way.

Shades of green is the color scheme for Woodside resident Oliver Bock, who plans to travel with his sister Catherine from Palo Alto to Washington, D.C., on recumbent electric bicycles. Their purpose, they say, is to prove the long-distance viability of electric bicycles.

See BICYCLES, page 8

See HIGH-SPEED RAIL, page 8
Your Child’s Health University

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- In Spanish for Girls: Saturday, May 15: 3:30 – 5:30 pm

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Facing $1.3 million deficit, city looks for cuts, fee hikes

By Sean Howell

Menlo Park is facing a $1.3 million deficit for the fiscal year that begins July 1, and cuts to city services could be on the way.

With employee expenses rising, and with city revenue taking longer than expected to bounce back to its pre-recession level, the city is eyeing service cuts as it tries to reduce the deficit, including severe cuts in the Belle Haven neighborhood.

The entire regular City Council meeting on Tuesday, April 20, will be given over to a discussion of the budget, beginning at 7 p.m. in the council chambers. The city is projecting that revenue will grow to $37.6 million — $1.1 million over what it expects in the current fiscal year, but still $900,000 below revenue in fiscal year 2007-08. Anticipating an early recovery from the recession, the city has said that it initially over-estimated revenue by $1.3 million in the current fiscal year.

The city expects expenses to rise by $1.3 million, to $38.9 million, mostly due to significant wage and benefit hikes to police officers and sergeants.

Mary Smith drops appeal in death of her husband

Mary Smith of Portola Valley has paid approximately $100,000 in expenses and fees totaling $280, pay a $75 monthly probation fee, and submit DNA samples. They are not allowed to contact the victims.

A jury rejected Ms. Smith’s claim in a 9-3 decision in December 2009 after a 10-day trial, and Superior Court Judge Carol Mittlesteadt, one of two “complex litigation” judges in the county, ordered her to pay restitution to Mr. Rose in the amount of $107,225 for the costs of expert witnesses.

Cholakan of Cholakian & Associates in South San Francisco.

The case hinged on whether Mr. Smith, 67, had turned his eastbound bike into the path of Mr. Rose’s eastbound car, or whether Mr. Rose, 87, turned his car into the bike lane and struck Mr. Smith.

The expenses, Mr. Cholakan told The Almanac, represent the costs of hiring expert witnesses to reconstruct the accident using an identical car and bicycle and analyze the damage to both vehicles.

Jail terms ahead for Menlo College students

Prosecutors asked for two-year prison terms for two Menlo College students who assaulted two other Menlo College students in January 2009, but the judge sentenced them April 16 to terms in San Mateo County jail and three years of supervised probation.

Superior Court Judge Susan Etezadi sentenced Benjamin Kain-Williams, 21, of Atherton, to a year in jail, and Darrell Allen Willis, 25, of Wheatland, California, to six months in jail, according to Chief Deputy District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe.

During probation, police may search the defendants’ homes and vehicles with or without probable cause, and will not need a warrant to seize evidence of probation violations, prosecutors said. Their plea bargains also require that they abstain from alcohol and drugs, undergo counseling, pay fines and fees totaling $280, pay a $75 monthly probation fee, and submit DNA samples. They are not allowed to contact the victims.

Before sentencing, both defendants apologized for their conduct, prosecutors said.

In the incident that led to the injuries, prosecutors said the defendants got into a loud argument with the victims after driving to Menlo Park restaurant, then met again a couple of hours later at the intersection of Glenwood and Garwood avenues, where the argument continued and the fight ensued.

Mr. Kain-Williams, a football player for the college, subsequently withdrew from the school.

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Mary Smith drops appeal in death of her husband

Mary Smith of Portola Valley has paid approximately $100,000 to compensate Woodside resident Anthony Rose, a former superintendent of the Portola Valley School District, for his attorney fees, Mr. Rose’s attorney said in an e-mail to The Almanac.

Ms. Smith had sued Mr. Rose for $7 million to $8 million in damages over what she claimed was the wrongful death of her husband Rodney Smith, the former chief executive of San Jose-based Altera Corp. who died in January 2009, but the defendants got into a loud argument with the victims after driving to Menlo Park restaurant, then met again a couple of hours later at the intersection of Glenwood and Garwood avenues, where the argument continued and the fight ensued.

Mr. Kain-Williams, a football player for the college, subsequently withdrew from the school.
Mark Fiore, Priory graduate, wins Pulitzer

Mark Fiore, a former Portola Valley resident and graduate of Woodside Priory, shown with his computer and a sample of his work that won him the 2010 Pulitzer Prize for editorial cartooning.

Photo courtesy of Marin Independent Journal

Mark Fiore, a former Portola Valley resident and graduate of Woodside Priory, wins Pulitzer Prize for editorial cartooning.

As noted in the prize citation, Mr. Fiore’s “biting wit, extensive research and ability to distill complex issues,” set a high standard for an emerging form of commentary.”

Mr. Fiore’s $10,000 prize sets a precedent in that it is the first cartooning prize to be awarded for work that appears exclusively online, according to a Chronicle story. His cartoons include animations.

His work also appears on the Web sites of Slate, CBS News, Mother Jones magazine and National Public Radio, with political animations on sites including CNN, Frontline and Bill Moyers Journal, according to an online biography. The Wall Street Journal called Mr. Fiore “the undisputed guru” of animated political cartoons.

In a Princeton, New Jersey, school, science teacher Paul Trudelle recalls that Mr. Fiore, of the class of 1987, had a habit of producing drawings that “were always pointed and humorous.” Some were confessedly political, Mr. Trudelle added.

Mr. Fiore’s career includes a major in political science at Colorado College, where he received his diploma under the approving gaze of commencement speaker Dick Cheney, his bio said. A youth spent in California and the Idaho backwoods “shaped him politically,” he said.

He is also the recipient of the Robert F. Kennedy Journalism Award, two Online Journalism Awards, and awards from the National Cartoonists Society and the Society of Professional Journalists.

Bicycles continued from page 5

about the green lifestyle — a passion for both of them.

Electric-bike technology is at a point where the trip should be doable, Mr. Bock said. They’ll be accompanied by a van with a bicycle mechanic behind the wheel. And, Mr. Bock added in an interview, this adventure, to his knowledge, has not yet been done.

“It’s not a low-carbon voyage, unfortunately,” he added, commenting on the necessity for the van. Nevertheless, their purpose is to demonstrate the viability of electric bikes as alternatives to fossil-fuel-powered transportation.

They hope to meet generous, like-minded people. With a plan to make 80 miles a day, they will likely be in small towns as the sun goes down. In seeking accommodations, Mr. Bock said he will ask around for residents who’ve installed solar panels.

Sleeping in or near the van will be an alternative. They hope to recharge the bikes’ batteries with the van when electric outlets are unavailable.

Another hope: that at the end of their adventure, President Barack Obama will have lunch with them and talk about their trip and interactions.

There are pre-arranged visits, including to a Navajo drum circle in Arizona and a stop in Durango, Colorado, where the public transit system is “fabulous,” the bike trails are “excellent,” and the bike community is “huge,” Mr. Bock said.

“The people I’ve been contactting I really want to know,” he said. “Sustainability is a spiritual quest. It creates a sort of different way of being in the world. It’s me trying to be in a community with whom ever I meet.”

“The story behind sustainability is that we want a planet for our kids,” he added. “This is a pretty cool planet to be on. I can’t think of a better planet.”

Historic route

With bike lanes rare and that pesky Continental Divide insisting on being steep, the siblings are hedging their bets by heading to Barstow and Route 66, a 2,400-mile cross-country path that dates from the 19th century, avoids mountains and, according to Jennifer Avila, vice-president of the California Historic Route 66 Association, is still two lanes.

Route 66 was once well-traveled. Is it now a lonely place? The stretch through the Mojave Desert can indeed be lonely, Ms. Avila said, but she noted that east of the desert, spaces between towns are not so great that loneliness would be a problem.

Asked for his route to Barstow, Mr. Bock replied: “Circuitously, as indirectly as possible.”

Bock said that she and her brother have spoken with “bicycle coordinators” in the various states to find routes that avoid heavy traffic.

“It’s cross-country and it’s scary,” Mr. Bock said, but the point, he added, is to prove that an electric bike can make the trip.

And encounters with pickup-truck drivers and gun-toting “bicycle despisers,” rednecks? “Obviously, we’re going to (meet) people who think we’re nuts,” Mr. Bock said.

The plan is to appeal to their motor-head tendencies by engaging them with the mechanical challenge of a cross-country trip on an electric bike.

“Will they be wearing or flying the U.S. flag?” Mr. Bock asked. “They are considering it and has more than once compared his trip to the fateful one in the 1969 movie ‘Easy Riders.’

“Hi, Mr. Bock said. “That’s part of the story, to see what happens,” the Bock family has always been "real active," he said. “This is kind of stretching the limit a little.”

Ms. Bock said she was “a little worried” about the toll on her body. “The bikes are impossible to sit on for more than an hour at a time,” she said, referring to the mesh seat-back, to which they’re added.

The only thing that might cause them to turn back, they said, would be their 89-year-old mother, who inspired them to live greener, becoming seriously ill.

She is apparently not behind them this time. “She keeps saying, ‘You’re not really doing this stupid bike trip, are you?’” Ms. Bock said.

What if it rains? “We’ll get wet,” Mr. Bock said.

Storms in Kansas are a breed apart from storms in California. What about them? “We just hope they come with a tailwind, not a headwind,” Mr. Bock said.

The electric motors on their bikes give them three to four miles of travel per amp, and these bikes have dual batteries for a total of 32 amps.

Pedaling up a hill with an electric boost is like pedaling off the flat, Mr. Bock said. “I’m going to be getting way, way behind him,” Ms. Bock said.

Go to www.thegreenriders.blogspot.com to follow them online.

For more, go to www.thegreenriders.org.

HIGH-SPEED RAIL

continued from page 5

the rail line until it has enough money to complete that segment. In stating that it intends to begin construction on several segments of high-speed rail, Brady also contends that the language in the bond issue precludes the state from using revenue bonds to fund the high-speed rail project.

California was awarded $2.34 billion through the federal stimulus bill to fund the high-speed rail project. The rail agency has stated that it intends to match that money with bond funding, and to apply it to several different segments of the rail system.

Jeff Barker, director of communications for the rail authority, said in an e-mail that the agency is aware of the suit, but has not yet reviewed it. The state is “committed to building this project right and in a way that is consistent with the letter of the law,” he wrote.

In the complaint, Mr. Brown and Mr. Brady also contend that the rail agency has vastly underestimated the cost of constructing the rail system, and that Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's promise to match any federal stimulus funds for the rail system was illegal.

"It may be appropriate for the federal government to reconsider the propriety of granting federal funding at all to the authority," Mr. Brady writes.

The men also take issue with a suggestion in a rail agency business plan that the state may have to guarantee a return on any private investment in the high-speed-rail system, saying that the language in the bond issue precludes the state from subsidizing the operation of the system. They ask the court to declare that the state cannot guarantee revenue to investors.

This is the second pro bono lawsuit Mr. Brady has filed against the rail agency. In the first suit, filed on behalf of Menlo Park resident Russ Peterson, he asked the court to declare that the rail agency could not begin work on the Peninsula portion of the high-speed-rail project without the consent of Union Pacific, which has ownership rights over the Caltrain corridor. That suit is still pending.

Mr. Brown and Mr. Brady were profiled in the March 31 issue of the Almanac for their high-speed-rail advocacy efforts.

KENT SHIELDS

Post your views and comments on TownSquare: www.TheAlmanacOnline.com
Barbara (‘Barrie’) Sebastian
1925–2010

Barrie Sebastian, a resident of Palo Alto, Menlo Park, and Atherton for nearly 70 years, died peacefully at home on 15 April 2010.

Born in England, Barrie attended school there and in the Philippines where her father ran a thriving business. She attended Brent International School in her beloved Baguio but left in her senior year several weeks before Pearl Harbor and sailed to join her ill father in San Francisco on the SS President Coolidge, the last passenger ship to leave the Far East before the war.

After arrival in the United States she finished her senior year at Palo Alto High School and then attended Stanford where she majored in Far Eastern Studies and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. After graduation she worked at the predecessor of the Palo Alto Medical Foundation for ten years where she rose to become manager of the lay staff at Stanford Student Heath services and developed an uncanny skill for pre-diagnosing ailments in family and friends.

In 1947 Barrie met Frank Sebastian, a student at the Stanford Graduate School of Business, and they married in 1950. She retired from the health service in 1952 to raise a family. She was active for 35 years in the PTA, becoming head of the San Mateo County district in 1981 while commuting back and forth from New York City, where Frank was on a temporary assignment for Envirotech Corp. Barrie loved flowers and served two terms as president of the Atherton Garden Guild where she earned Blue Ribbons in flower arranging. She also loved gardening, swimming, art museums, and travel. Frank and Barrie visited over 70 countries and she was especially attached to England, Asia, and the Philippines.

Barrie leaves behind her loving husband of nearly 60 years, her children Alex and Sheilaugh and their spouses, three grandchildren, and many friends around the world.

A celebration of her life will be held for family and friends at a later date.

In lieu of flowers please send any donations to the World Wildlife Fund, the Stanford School of Humanities and Sciences for the benefit of Art and Art History, or an environmental organization.

Sister papers

The Almanac’s sister paper, the Palo Alto Weekly, picked up seven first-place awards, including for “general excellence” and best Web site for Palo Alto Online. The Weekly also won for local-news coverage, sports coverage, editorial comment, layout/design, and feature photo. The Mountain View Voice, also a sister paper, won a second-place award for public service.

Almanac recognized for ‘general excellence’

The Almanac took second place in the “general excellence” category of the state-wide Better Newspaper Contest, sponsored by the California Newspaper Publishers Association.

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Nereida Angulo is a swirl of blue and white skirts as she performs with Ballet Folklorico Alma de Mexico at Encinal School in Atherton. The performance was part of the school’s cultural arts day on May 15, 2009. The photo won a first-place award in the state-wide Better Newspapers Contest, sponsored by the California Newspaper Publishers Association.
SUPPORT your CHILDREN’S HOSPITAL

Join us for the second annual Dine Out for Packard day. On Thursday, April 29, participating restaurants throughout Palo Alto, Menlo Park, and Los Altos will donate a percentage of total sales to Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital.

For more information, please visit DineOutForPackard.org.

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- University Avenue
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Pizza My Heart
Poolside Grill
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Cedro Ristorante
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Celia’s Mexican Restaurant
Marquis in Menlo
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Rubio’s
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LOS ALTOS:
Baskin Robbins
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The Cravery
Woodside death investigated as homicide

Deputies from the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office are investigating the April 13 death of Parina Parineh, 56, of Woodside as a homicide, according to a report from the Sheriff’s Office.

She lived with her husband and two adult children on Fox Hill Road in the Woodside hills, according to Lt. Ray Lunney of the Sheriff’s Office.

Upon arriving home around 4 p.m. Tuesday, April 13, Pooroushab (Peter) Parineh, Ms. Parineh’s husband, discovered his wife’s body in a bedroom and called 911 to report that she had shot herself, Lt. Lunney said.

Medics from the Woodside Fire Protection District declared Ms. Parineh dead.

After investigating the evidence and conducting an autopsy, authorities concluded that “the injury suffered by the victim was not self-inflicted,” and are treating the case as a homicide, Lt. Lunney said.

There were no signs of forced entry nor were there indications that the suspect is a stranger, deputies said. Detectives are attempting to interview all of the members of the family but they are not being cooperative, deputies said.

Deputies are asking that anyone with information call Detective Hector Acosta or Detective Saul Lopez at the Sheriff’s Office at 363-4911, or call the anonymous witness line at 800-547-2700.

Atherton asks D.A. to investigate police misconduct charge

By Renee Batti

The town of Atherton has asked the San Mateo County District Attorney’s Office to investigate “the allegation of falsifying a police report” detailing the 2008 arrest of Atherton resident Jon Buckheit. The falsification charge was brought to light by a police officer during a court case earlier this year in which Mr. Buckheit won a declaration of factual innocence in the case.

Mr. Buckheit and several other residents have been demanding an investigation of the matter.

Atherton officials first mentioned the investigation April 14 on the town’s blog in a two-sentence statement that didn’t mention who would be conducting the investigation, nor did it mention that the matter pertained to the Buckheit case.

Later that day, Assistant City Manager Eileen Wilkerson said in a prepared statement, “The town is following its current process and due to the potential perception of conflict of interest the allegation of falsifying a police report has been referred to the San Mateo County District Attorney.”

Stephen Wagstaffe, chief deputy district attorney, said last week that his office had received the request to investigate around the end of March.

When he learned that the town has asked the district attorney to investigate the falsification charge, Mr. Buckheit said the request is “totally inappropriate.”

Because his lawsuit names the county, the district attorney shouldn’t be involved in the investigation, Mr. Wagstaffe said, “If we had a legal conflict, we would withdraw.” Opinions issued by the state attorney general support the involvement of the district attorney under the circumstances, he added.

Mr. Buckheit also took issue with the town’s characterization of the issue as an “allegation.” “It’s very important to (understand that) the police report being altered is not an allegation — it is the sworn testimony of an Atherton police officer,” he said.

The police report and court records have been sealed by the court, but Mr. Buckheit, who may release information if he chooses, provided The Almanac with pages from the court transcript that describe some of the court testimony of an Atherton police officer, whom Mr. Buckheit identifies as Tony Dennis.

Asked by Mr. Buckheit’s attorney whether he believed “that someone changed your report or added this into the report,” the officer responded, “That appears to be what happened, that appears to be what has (sic) happened, yes, because I do not remember putting that in there, nor was that my intention.”

Mr. Buckheit was arrested during a domestic violence incident at his home. He said that although he was the victim, and had the injuries to prove it, the police arrested him instead of the woman who he said assaulted him.

The district attorney did not file charges, but the town refused to turn over the police report to Mr. Buckheit for months. He finally obtained it last June, along with his attorney’s fees.

Mr. Buckheit filed a lawsuit in federal court last October over the arrest and its aftermath. In it, he names the town of Atherton, San Mateo County, and three police officers.

Alex Sepkus and Pedro Boregaard

Friday, April 30, 12-6 and Saturday, May 1, 11-4

THE STANFORD BARN 700 Welch Road-Suite 102
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Eleanor Walker has played golf since she was in her 70s. She had no idea of the power of technology and diagnostics.  

Then about six months ago, a clot formed inside her brain, causing a stroke that had her in the hospital for several weeks. She was not able to play golf for about six months. She has since recovered and is back to playing golf. She attributes her recovery to the work of the stroke team at Stanford Hospital and Clinics, and the use of cutting-edge technology to treat her stroke.

At Stanford, her team of physicians were able to use imaging technology to create special images that showed how much blood was flowing to the artery in her brain and how long it took to get there. That information, along with the most important questions about Walker’s condition, was how much of her brain had already been damaged and how much would be damaged without treatment.

The catheter carried a tiny, corkscrew-like wire inside its narrow tubing. Once Marcie saw the catheter was at the clot, she could grab hold of it and remove it. On the video, he could see the blood flow again fully through the artery.

A couple of days after Walker’s stroke, she was back home. A couple weeks later, she was out playing golf again. “I asked my doctor if I could play golf—and she said, ‘Sure you can!’” Walker said. “I used to be able to do everything so fast. I’m a little slower now. I just have to practice. Maybe I’ll play even better.”

More and more, almost every step of medical care is enhanced by imaging technology. Stanford’s imaging physicians use advanced imaging technology to plot and thinner and more precisely targeted radiation. In order to treat lung cancer, difficult because tumors move with each breath a patient takes. The CyberKnife also makes it possible to treat the brain without damaging surrounding tissues.

And when surgeons choose to treat patients with small tumors or minimally invasive surgery in the intestines, they use imaging technology to help guide them.

Newer technologies, including 3D printing and artificial intelligence, are being developed to automate the information processing and decision-making that come with controlling complex systems.

“Roughly 75 percent of our brain is wired for vision, so images are a powerful tool,” said — Gary Glazer, MD, Chair, Department of Radiology.

At Stanford’s Department of Radiology, where clinical diagnosis and surgical planning are often immediately communicated to patients, what physicians do not see on their computer screens is often the most important. In the case of research, what physicians do not see on the computer screen is often the motivation for further research.

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Freyberg among artists at Open Studios
Five award-winning Peninsula artists — Marcia Enns, Frances Freyberg, Kim Holl, Julia Munder Seelos and Alice Weil — will exhibit paintings and fine art photography at 856 Partridge Ave. in Menlo Park during the annual Silicon Valley Open Studios the weekends of May 8-9 and May 15-16. Hours are 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Johns signs lawsuit settlement; council OKS pact on 3-2 vote
John Johns, the former finance director of Atherton who sued the town over his firing, has signed a settlement agreement awarding him $225,000, an agreement approved by a 3-2 vote of the council at a March 29 closed session meeting, according to the town.

Seniors can apply for parcel tax exemption
Senior citizens who own property in the Las Lomitas School District have until June 1 to apply for an exemption from the $311 parcel tax passed by voters in 2007.

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Pension poll hints at marketing campaign

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park residents reported receiving phone calls last week in an apparent marketing poll concerning a “pension reform” initiative that a group of residents has launched.

Based on reports from residents, the poll seems designed to shape a marketing campaign against the initiative effort, which would scale back pension payments to future non-police municipal employees. It provides a glimpse into the tactics that might be employed in such a campaign, such as linking the initiative to former council members Lee Duboc and Mickie Winkler, and noting that it would reduce pensions for librarians.

The company conducting the poll did not say who had paid for it, according to people who were surveyed.

Sharon McAleavy, a spokeswoman for the union that represents the city’s middle management employees, said that her union is not connected to the poll. A call to a representative of Service Employees International, the city’s largest employee union, was not returned.

The initiative would reduce pension payments to public employees from four-fifths to three-fifths of their annual salary, would increase the retirement age from 55 to 60, and would require a popular vote for any future increase in pension benefits.

Henry Riggs, one of the leaders of the initiative drive, said the group had expected resistance from employees unions from the beginning. “To be honest, so far this looks to me pretty light,” he said. “I’m expecting more drama, not less. ... We’ve talked about it, and have been prepared (for resistance) since the time we said, ‘OK, we’re gonna do this.’”

The group is in the process of gathering signatures to qualify the initiative for the November ballot. It’s on target for its goal of 2,400 signatures by its deadline of early May, according to Mr. Riggs.

He said that his group plans to campaign in support of the initiative until November, assuming it makes the ballot.

“There’s no 15-word blurb that addresses what we’re trying to do,” Mr. Riggs said. “The alternative points of view will be disseminated thoroughly, whereas we will be lucky to knock on the doors of 20 percent of voters.”

The fact that the poll is being conducted could be a boon to proponents of the initiative, some of whom have sought to cast themselves as grassroots advocates standing up to well-funded special interests. In an e-mail to supporters, Ms. Duboc said that she anticipated a “shoot the messenger” campaign from opponents of the initiative drive. She is involved in the effort, but is not its public face.

“The unions will spare no effort or expense in attempting to derail” the pension initiative, she wrote in a January e-mail.

John Kadavy, a member of Menlo Park’s Planning Commission, provided The Almanac with detailed notes he took when contacted in the survey. According to Mr. Kadavy, the caller asked several times whether he would support the initiative, testing the effectiveness of various arguments in favor of and in opposition to it.

It asked for respondents’ reaction several times, including those of Ms. Duboc and Ms. Winkler, the “pension reform” group, the Tea Party movement, CalPERS (the state pension fund), and SEIU (the employee union). According to Mr. Kadavy, the interlocutor asked whether he would support the initiative if he knew it would apply to road workers and librarians, and if he knew that public employees do not receive Social Security. He was also asked whether he would be persuaded by arguments that the city needs to stand up to the unions, and that the initiative drive represents a mean-spirited attack by Tea Party activists.

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April 21, 2010 ■ The Almanac ■ 15
Menlo Park, Atherton reaffirm objections to California high-speed-rail review

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park and Atherton are poised to reaffirm their objections to the environmental review of the California high-speed rail project, as the cities gear up for a possible second round in the battle over the state-mandated review process.

The California High-Speed Rail Authority, the agency charged with overseeing the project, is working to re-certify the “project-level” environmental impact report for the Bay Area at the request of a Superior Court judge, following a lawsuit joined by Atherton and Menlo Park.

The cities are commenting on that document for a second time through that process.

In draft letters, both jurisdictions reiterate most of their complaints about the original environmental review. While the rail agency asked that comments focus only on the sections of the document that were revised as a result of the lawsuit, mostly in areas south of Gilroy, Atherton and Menlo Park both ask the rail agency to revisit the analysis of how high-speed trains would run along the Caltrain corridor.

In Atherton’s letter, penned by Public Works Director Duncan Jones, the town argues that the new document does not completely address the court ruling, because it doesn’t adequately analyze potential eminent domain takings on the Peninsula, and does not adequately address vibration impacts.

The town calls the document’s treatment of land-use impacts “half-hearted,” asking for more detail. In its letter, Menlo Park asks for an analysis of impacts to properties outside the 50-foot radius considered in the environmental review.

Atherton also attached to its letter detailed studies of alternatives to the Caltrain route, asking that the rail agency reconsider those alternatives.

Meanwhile, the town plans to join in re-filing the lawsuit that prompted the rail agency to revise the environmental impact report, citing new information about the way in which the agency conducted its ridership study.

Menlo Park’s City Council will discuss whether the city will join the lawsuit at its meeting Tuesday, April 20. The council could approve the letter to the rail agency at the same meeting.

Atherton’s City Council will consider the town’s letter to the rail agency at its meeting Wednesday, April 21. At its March 17 meeting, the council unanimously voted to retain a lobbyist who is also advocating for Menlo Park and Palo Alto on high-speed rail issues.

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The calendar cooperated with the Woodside community and Woodside School this year, allowing the annual May Day Parade and Carnival to be celebrated on the day itself: Saturday, May 1.

The parade begins at 10 a.m., with registration beginning at 9 a.m. at Woodside School, 3195 Woodside Road. Registration forms are available in advance at the school office, or by e-mailing kstenson@olivesmart.com or kassia@decovrm.com.

The annual Fun Run will precede the parade; it begins at 7:30 a.m.

A pancake breakfast sponsored by the Rotary Club will be served from 8 to 10 a.m. at Woodside Village Church, and a barbecue lunch will be available at Woodside School from noon to 2 p.m.

The May Pole Dance and recognition ceremony begin at 11:15 a.m., and carnival games and crafts will be on the agenda from noon to 3 p.m. at the school.

Contact vedayonehiro@yahoo.com for more information.

‘Drive Less Challenge’ begins April 22

A friendly competition sponsored by a Menlo Park group, encouraging people to spend less time in their cars, will run from Thursday, April 22, to May 5.

Sponsored by the Green Ribbon Citizens’ Committee, the contest is in its second year. Mountain View, Palo Alto and Burlingame have joined the roll of sponsoring cities, according to the group’s Web site.

After compiling a voluminous list of methods for reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Menlo Park in 2007, the annual “challenge” is now the group’s main focus. The goal is to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and to encourage people to reduce their “carbon footprint.”

Visit drivelcsschallenge.com for more information, and to sign up.

Man convicted of murder in shooting of taxi driver

Jurors convicted a Menlo Park man April 13 of first-degree murder for the fatal shooting of a taxi driver in Redwood City early on a Saturday morning in 2003.

Lousa Mataele, 37, of Menlo Park, sat quietly at the defense table as the verdict was read in San Mateo County Superior Court.

The cab driver, 21-year-old Davinder Singh, was shot to death on Sept. 13, 2003.

Mr. Mataele was initially found incompetent to stand trial in 2005 and was placed at Napa State Hospital. But in April 2008, the California Department of Mental Health found that his competency had been restored and a judge reinstated criminal proceedings.

In addition to murder, Mr. Mataele was found guilty of fatally shooting Mr. Singh in the commission of a robbery and of attempting to rob Mr. Singh before he killed him.

Jurors also convicted him of attempted murder for shooting another man in the taxi, Jaime Torres, but found him not guilty of attempting to rob Mr. Torres.

— Bay City News Service

Free wildflower walks at Edgewood Park

Free wildflower walks at Edgewood County Park in Redwood City are offered from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. every Saturday and Sunday through May.

Edgewood Park and Natural Preserve, 10 Old Stage Coach Road, Redwood City.

Go to friendsofedgewood.org or call 866-463-3439 for more information on the docent-led walks.

Get local news updates FREE in your e-mail inbox daily.

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Thoughts and memories from the past year — Bay City News Service

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Dr. William Tevis dies at 87

Dr. William Wade Tevis, who served on the staffs of Sequoia Hospital and Stanford Medical Center, died quietly April 11 at his home in Atherton. Dr. Tevis, who suffered from Parkinson's Disease, was 87.

Born in St Louis, Missouri, he was raised in Wichita, Kansas, where he attended public schools and Wichita State University. From 1944 to 1947, he served in the U.S. Navy and studied medicine at Washington University in St Louis. He completed his internal medicine residency at the Veterans Hospital in McKinney, Texas. He was recalled to active duty during the Korean War and served as a captain in the Air Force, heading the medical department at Reese Air Force Base in Lubbock, Texas.

Dr. Tevis practiced privately in Palo Alto for 30 years, where he served on the staffs of Stanford and Sequoia hospitals. The last 14 years of his career were with the Menlo Park and Palo Alto veterans hospitals. He was a Mason, a member of the Menlo Park Rotary Club, and a regular visitor to the Rotary Club in Dillon, Montana.

A few years ago, Dr. Tevis and his wife of 34 years, Dr. Cynthia Lacy Tevis (also a physician), began ranching in Montana. He was an avid hunter and fisherman. He also enjoyed visiting garage sales and collecting antiques, say family members.

In addition to Dr. Cynthia Lacy Tevis, he is survived by his first wife, Susan Moreton Tevis of Atherton and their children, Melinda, Robert and Martha; daughter Susan Moreton Tevis of Atherton; and brother Daniel Tevis of Wichita, Kansas.

According to Dr. Tevis’ wishes, no service is planned, but there will be private memorial gatherings in California and Montana. The family prefers memorials be made to Washington University at St Louis School of Medicine, Campus Box 1193, One Brookings Drive, St Louis, MO 63130, or the Parkinson’s Institute, 675 Almanor Drive, St Louis, MO 63130, or the Parkinson’s Institute, 3154 Woodside Road, in Woodside.

Barbara Heine
Former NCEFT executive director

Barbara Heine, a former executive director of the National Center for Equine Facilitated Therapy (NCEFT) in Woodside, died March 30 at her home in Australia. Ms. Heine and her husband, John, moved to Woodside from Australia in 1988. An excellent horsewoman and physical therapist, she began volunteering at NCEFT, eventually becoming executive director, then board president.

During her tenure at NCEFT, she oversaw the growth of the program from four to six patients a week to almost 80, and established the center as a nationally recognized therapy and educational center. She joined the board of the American Hippotherapy Association and in 1997 became president, a position she held for three years.

The Heines returned to Australia in 2000, where Ms. Heine continued her involvement in the field of hippotherapy, along with such philanthropic ventures as providing college scholarships to at-risk youth, say family members.

Jack Newcome
Longtime Woodside resident

A memorial service will be held for Jack Newcome at 2 p.m. Sunday, April 25, at Woodside Village Church, 3154 Woodside Road, in Woodside. Mr. Newcome died March 6, following a brief illness. He was 89.

Mr. Newcome was born in Princeton, Indiana. He joined the U.S. Marine Corps at age 19 and served on Peleliu Island in the South Pacific as a technical sergeant during World War II. He received the Navy Unit Commendation Ribbon for outstanding heroism.

After the war, he joined his father in the building trades in Oakland. In 1947 he married Betty Rae Buchanan. They moved to Woodside in 1960 when Mr. Newcome went to work for his father-in-law as a supervisor with the Wellmade Company in Redwood City. Mr. Newcome retired in the mid-1980s and began his second career as a member of the gate guard crew at Filoli, finally retiring in 2009 at age 89.

Mr. Newcome was a member of the bass section of the Woodside Village Church choir and sang with the Woodside men’s quartet known as the Quacketeers. He and his wife participated for many years in the Woodside community productions directed by George Sellman. One of his favorite roles was as a member of the quartet in “The Music Man.” He also loved golf and playing tennis with his wife, say family members.

He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Betty, of Woodside; son Wayne Newcome of Bend, Oregon; and sister Ada Fry of Boise, Idaho. Memorial donations may be made to the Woodside Village Church.
What should I do?

People with severely compromised immune systems, infants, and some elderly may be at increased risk. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from EPA's Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1 (800) 426-4791.

What does this mean?

This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. Coliform bacteria are generally not harmful to themselves. Coliforms are bacteria which are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially-harmful, bacteria may be present. Coliforms were found in more samples than allowed and this was a warning of potential problems.

Usually, coliforms are a sign that there could be a problem with the treatment or distribution system (pipes). Whenever we detect coliform bacteria in any sample, we do follow-up testing to see if other bacteria of greater concern, such as fecal coliform or E. coli, are present. We did not find any of these bacteria in our subsequent testing, and further testing shows that this problem has been resolved.

What happened? What was done?

Upon determination that the bacteriological standard was not met, the O'Connor Tract Co-Operative Water Company took the following steps to correct the violation:

- Within 24 hours of notification, tested at the original and four nearby sites on April 8. The original site again tested positive and the four other sites were negative.
- Chlorinated the water in the system on April 10. Retested all 5 sites on April 12, and all the sites were negative.

For more information, please contact Ana Pedreiro, Secretary-Treasurer, at 650-321-2723.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

- SCHOOLS: Must notify school employees, students, and parents (if the students are minors).
- RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY OWNERS OR MANAGERS (including nursing homes and care facilities): Must notify tenants.
- BUSINESS PROPERTY OWNERS, MANAGERS, OR OPERATORS: Must notify employees of businesses located on the property.

This notice is being sent to you by the O'Connor Tract Co-Operative Water Company.

State Water System ID#: 411/0019. Date distributed: April 14, 2010
Huge jump in building fees? Council seeks more data

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

If the length of a discussion indicates its seriousness, the question of how many thousands of dollars in fees Woodside property owners should pay to reimburse the town for staff time spent on building and remodeling projects is a serious matter.

The Town Council discussed the topic at length at its March 23 meeting, requested more data from staff, and talked about it again on April 13. After raising more questions than answers, the council formed a three-person committee to continue looking into it before bringing it back for more discussion and, eventually, a public hearing. A recent report indicates that, contrary to the town’s policy, the town is not recovering specified staff costs, a situation that could lead to some fees rising dramatically, perhaps as much as 300 percent.

Financial management policy No. 4, on Page ii of the town budget, states that development services — planning and building services performed by Town Hall staff — should be self-supporting, including appropriate overhead costs.

But Woodside has been subsidizing development services costs. In the 2008-09 budget year, for example, the town paid out $447,600 for planning services and $239,200 for building services, according to an analysis presented to the council on March 23 by San Jose-based Management Partners Corp.

Woodside’s fee structure is out of date, said Management Partners analyst Lynn Dantzker, whose report says the fees were last changed 14 years ago and are now much lower than in neighboring towns. For example, a Woodside resident pays about $2,200 for a building permit for a new two-story home, versus $8,300 in Portola Valley, $9,000 in Hillsborough, and $12,400 in Los Altos Hills.

“The most municipalities are not too interested in subsidizing services,” Ms. Dantzker told the council.

As for the residents, she said, they tend to want answers to three questions: What do I owe, when will I get the go-ahead, and what is my path to success?

In determining individual project fees, Ms. Dantzker recommended that the town adopt an across-the-board use of a project’s total value rather than its square footage. The current system uses valuation for alterations and remodels, but square footage for new construction and additions.

The analysis includes a building-permit-valuation table with proposed fees as well as automatic minimums that would kick in if the valuation, as reported, is lower than a set cost per square foot. The town’s building official could reset a valuation for a new home to a minimum of $250 per square foot, for example, if the reported valuation worked out to be less than that.

“Don’t think we have a good track record of knowing what a project really costs,” (but) new construction is definitely more than $230 per square foot,” said Councilman Peter Mason, an architect.

Councilman Dave Tanner, a builder, mentioned situations in which a client may claim it’s a $3 million project, “and I know they spent $25 million.”

To go is gd/bozFZ and turn to Page 54 for more on the valuation table.

For the next round of discussions, the council’s requests of staff include sample projects under current and new fee structures; more on Woodside’s rates as compared with other communities; and an estimate of how many residents per year might feel the impact of higher fees.

Advertisement for Bids

TOWN OF ATHERTON
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

MIDDLEFIELD ROAD AT ENCINEL AVENUE
INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS
PROJECT NO. 56009

Notice is hereby given that SEALED BIDS will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, California 94027, until 3:00 p.m. MAY 12, 2010, at which time they will be publicly opened and read, for performing the following work:

ROADWAY WIDENING ON MIDDLEFIELD ROAD, AND ENCINEL AVENUE; REMOVAL AND RELOCATION OF EXISTING FEATURES; INSTALLATION OF STORM DRAIN FACILITIES; CONSTRUCTION OF CONCRETE CURB, GUTTER, SIDEWALK AND CURB RAMPS; CONSTRUCTION OF A DRAINAGE SWALE; MODIFICATIONS TO PERMANENT ROADWAY STRIPING; REMOVAL OF AN EXISTING PEDESTRIAN CROSSWALK TRAFFIC SIGNAL; AND INSTALLATION OF A NEW TRAFFIC SIGNAL AT THE INTERSECTION OF MIDDLEFIELD ROAD AND ENCINEL AVENUE.

The Engineer’s Estimate for the project is: $408,000

Bids must be for the entire work, and shall be submitted in sealed envelopes clearly marked: “Bid of (Contractor) for MIDDLEFIELD ROAD AT ENCINEL AVENUE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS, Project No. 56009”, along with date and time of bid opening.

Plans and specifications may be obtained at the Town of Atherton Public Works Department, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton CA 94027, for a non-refundable fee of $40.00. Additional important information is contained in Town of Atherton Standard Specifications, which are available for an additional $20.00. If shipping is requested, there will be an additional charge of $20.00.

Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the form of cash, a cashier’s or certified check or bid bond not for less than ten percent (10%) of the amount of the bid, as a guarantee that the bidder, if awarded the Contract, will fulfill the terms of the bid. The Town of Atherton reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and/or to waive any irregularities therein.

Bidders are hereby notified that, pursuant to California Civil Code Sections 3247 and 3248 and Standard Specifications Section 3.02, the successful bidder will be required to provide payment and performance bonds in the amounts stated in Section 3.02 of the Standard Specifications.

Bidders are hereby notified that provisions of California Labor Code regarding prevailing wages are applicable to the work to be performed under this contract. Pursuant to Section 1775 et seq., the general prevailing wage rates have been determined by the Director of the California Department of Industrial Relations and appear in the California Prevailing Wage Rates. Copies are on file at the office of the City Engineer and are available to interested parties upon request. The successful bidder shall post a copy of the wage rates at the job site.

The Contractor may elect to receive 100 percent of payments due under the contract, without retention of any portion of the payment by the Town of Atherton, by depositing securities of equivalent value to the retention amount in accordance with the provisions of Section 22300 of the California Public Contracts Code.

The successful bidder must be licensed under the provisions of Chapter 9, Division 3, of the California Business and Professions Code to do the type of work contemplated in the project at the time the contract is awarded and shall be skilled and regularly engaged in the general class or type of work called for under the Contract. Failure of the bidder to obtain proper and adequate licensing for an award of the contract shall constitute a failure to execute the contract and result in the forfeiture of the bidder’s bid security.

Each bidder shall submit with this bid a statement setting forth his/her/its experience and qualifications. The statement shall be made on the forms provided by the Town and must accompany each bid. The three lowest bidders will be required to submit subcontractor’s experience and qualifications statements within 48 hours of the bid opening, on forms provided by the Town.

By submitting a bid in response to this advertisement for bids, the bidder shall be conclusively deemed to have read, understood and agreed with all of the information and materials contained in the bid documents, including but not limited to the construction contract, the standard specifications, the special provisions, the required nature and amount of insurance and the documentation evidencing said insurance.

Any questions regarding the project should be directed to David Hyuhn, Project Engineer, telephone: (650) 752-0555 or by written Requests for Information (RFI) to: Public Works Department, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, CA 94027, preferably no later than five days before bid opening. RFIs may be emailed to dahyunh@ci.atherton.ca.us or faxed to (650) 688-8539.

For information on obtaining Plans and Specifications, Standard Specifications or obtaining a Plan Holders list, please call Judy Bellmont at (650) 752-0570.

By: Duncan L. Jones, P.E., City Engineer

Date:________

April 21, 2010 ■ The Almanac ■ 19
WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT 2009-2010

Sealed proposals for the CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT 2009-2010 will be received at the West Bay Sanitary District, 500 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, California 94025 until 2:00 pm on Wednesday, May 5, 2010 at which time they will be publicly opened and read. Bids shall be labeled “West Bay Sanitary District, Proposal for "CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROJECT 2009-2010."

The Work will include the furnishing of all labor, materials and equipment, and other appurtenances for replacement of sanitary sewer mains by open-trench and trenchless construction and installation of storm drainage facilities by open-trench construction, as indicated on the plans.

The contract documents may be inspected at the office of the West Bay Sanitary District, San Francisco Builders Exchange, 850 So. Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, California 94110, Reed Construction Data, Attn: Customer Care, 30 Technology Parkway South, Suite 100, Norcross, Georgia 30092; Peninsula Builders Exchange, 735 Industrial Road, Suite 100, San Carlos, California 94070; Santa Clara Builders Exchange, 400 Reed Street, Santa Clara, California 95050; Builders Exchange of Alameda, 3055 Alvarado Street, San Leandro, California 94577; Construction Board, Incorporated, Attn: Michael Schaffer, 4420 Hotel Circle South, Suite 215, San Diego, California 92128; McGraw-Hill Construction Dodge, 11875 Dublin Blvd., Suite A-118, Dublin, California 94568; and, Contra Costa Builders Exchange, 2440 Stanwell Drive, Suite B, Concord, California 94520. Copies of the Contract Documents may be obtained at the office of the West Bay Sanitary District upon payment of a check or money order in the amount of $40.00 for each set. The check or money order must be issued to the West Bay Sanitary District. All payments are nonrefundable.

A pre-bid meeting will be held at 10:00 am on Tuesday, April 20, 2010 at the West Bay Sanitary District Office in Menlo Park, California. Each bid proposal shall be accompanied by a certified or cashier’s check or a proposal guaranty bond payable to the order of the West Bay Sanitary District in an amount not less than ten percent (10%) of the amount of the bid as a guaranty that the bidder will execute the contract if it be awarded to him in conformity with the proposal. The successful bidder will be required to furnish a performance bond in an amount not less than one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price and a labor and material bond in an amount equal to one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price.

The District (“Owner”) reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to determine which proposal is, in the judgment of the District, the lowest responsible bid of a responsible bidder or group of bidders and which proposal should be accepted in the best interest of the District. The District also reserves the right to waive any informalities in any proposal or bid.

Bid proposals received after the time announced for the opening will not be considered. No bidder may withdraw his proposal after the time announced for the opening, or before award and execution of the contract, unless the award is delayed for a period exceeding forty-five (45) days.

Pursuant to the provisions of Public Contract Code Section 22200, and upon the request and at the expense of the Contractor, securities equivalent to the amount withheld by the District to insure performance under the Contract may be deposited with the District, or with a state or federally chartered bank as escrow agent who shall deliver such securities to the Contractor upon satisfactory completion of the contract. Only those securities listed in Government Code Section 16430 or other securities approved by the District are eligible for deposit. The deposit of securities with an escrow agent or the District shall be made in the form and on such terms and conditions as the District may require to protect the interest of the District in the event of the Contractor’s default. The Contractor shall be the beneficial owner of any securities that are deposited and shall receive any interest thereon.

Pertaining to Sections 1770, 1773, and 1773.1 of the California Labor Code, the successful bidder shall pay not less than the prevailing rate of per diem wages as determined by the Director of the California Department of Industrial Relations. Copies of such prevailing rates are on file at the District office of the West Bay Sanitary District and which copies shall be made available to any interested party on request. The successful bidder shall post a copy of such determinations at each job site.

In accordance with the provisions of California Public Contract Code Section 3300, the District has determined that the Contractor shall possess a valid Class A License or a combination of the Class C licenses at the time that the contract is awarded. Failure to possess the specified license(s) shall render the bid as non-responsive and shall act as a bar to award of the contract to any bidder not possessing said license(s) at the time of award.

F O R  T H E  R E C O R D

POLICE CALLS

This information is from the Atherton and Menlo Park police departments and the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office. Under the law, people charged with offenses are considered innocent until convicted.

MENLO PARK

Robbery report: Woman robbed of purse, Carlton Ave. and Newbridge St., April 13.
Auto burglary report: Stereo speakers stolen, 300 block of Ivy Drive, April 13.
Sexual assault report: 600 block of Santa Cruz Ave., April 10.
Elder abuse report: 1200 block of Crane St., April 11.
Child protective services report: Reported at main police station at 700 Laurel St., April 15.
Fraud reports:
- Possible identity theft, 1500 block of San Antonio St., April 15.
- Unauthorized use of Social Security number, 100 block of Bay Road, April 14.

PORTOLA VALLEY

Theft report: Two rings valued at $5,500 stolen. The Sequoias retirement community at 501 Portola Road, April 7.
Illegal drug incident report: Two juveniles under suspicion after deputies stopped their speeding vehicle and found glass pipe and eight “banana bread frost products” suspected of containing marijuana. Bow Way and Westridge Drive, April 10.

LADERA

Theft report: Two surveillance cameras stolen for loss estimated at $1,000. Shell service station at 201 La Cuesta Drive, April 7.

BIRTHS

Menlo Park
- Witney McKiernan and David Zwer-ner, a son, March 16, Sequoia Hospital.
- Maryam Sanglaji and Ali Zadeh, a son, March 29, Sequoia Hospital.
- Ailisa and Chris Francis, a daughter, March 25, Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital.

EMERALD HILLS
- Laura Metz and Paul Chapuis, a son, March 26, Sequoia Hospital.

BEST continued from page 3

assessed value, and that value can be increased by no more than 2 percent annually. The property’s value is kept in place under that formula until the property is sold, and over the years, the tax burden has become significantly greater on homeowners.

Education Foundation
Ms. Bestor also turned her energy toward the Menlo Park Atherton Education Foundation, a nonprofit group of volunteers that raises money for programs in the Menlo Park City School District. Last month she met with foundation co-president Scott Lohmann to discuss her unusual fundraising idea: a campaign to solicit donations for the schools from commercial property owners in the district who benefit from lower tax rates, thanks to Proposition 13.

The idea was floated among the foundation’s leadership, and this week, a letter seeking donations is scheduled to go out to about 50 commercial property owners with low tax rates, Ms. Bestor says.

EXPRESS

Get local news updates FREE in your e-mail inbox daily.
Sign up today at TheAlmanacOnline.com

TENNIS TENNIS TENNIS
Champion Tennis Camps
July 26 - August 13, 2010
ages 4-14
@ Atherton Tennis Center
650-752-0540
www.alanmargot-tennis.net
Lee, and the Fuller Theological Seminary, to mention a few. Our community was enriched through your efforts to bring the first Windrider Film Forum to the Bay Area. We look forward to its return next year.

Our Menlo-Atherton Performing Arts Center is truly a jewel. Don’t miss an opportunity to experience it for yourself.

Judy Hyrne and Kayla Skidmore Hobart Street, Menlo Park

**LETTERS**

continued from page 23

our city’s economic security.

Andy Cohen
City Council member

Cheers for pension reform effort

Editor:

Congratulations to those citizens who are working hard to promote pension reform in Menlo Park, and shame on the unions who are out to intimidate them and the voters.

The unions, of course, have no concern about the well-being of our city. They are only out to protect the overpaid, over-benefited public employees.

While unions once played a positive role in our society, like typewriters, that time has passed. Whether it is GM, the U.S. Postal Service, or Menlo Park, the unions are dragging down our country with their bloated salaries, benefits, and pensions.

It is time that public employees were paid according to their equivalent worth in the private sector. There simply should be no $100,000-plus salaries and $40,000 in overtime for firemen. We are the fools if we let this continue. Let them all go, and see how many qualified men and women apply for their positions at half the current salaries. And the same goes for the rest of the city workers.

If the unions won’t respect the new financial realities of Menlo Park and are going to intimidate our citizens and fight our city, then our elected leaders have an obligation to fight back with all their might.

Sloane Citron Laurel Street, Menlo Park

**Film forum at M-A theater was first rate**

Editor:

What a gem we have in our backyard! A couple of weeks ago the new Menlo-Atherton Performing Arts Center hosted the inaugural Windrider Film Forum, featuring three days of Sundance Film Festival, award-winning, independent films. The showings were followed by conversations with the actors, writers, directors and producers in intimate question and answer sessions.

“Windrider Forums are all about community, connecting and creating space for conversation,” said John Pridy, co-founder of the forum. We certainly felt engaged with thought-provoking films such as; After the Storm, Sympathy for Delicious and, the heart wrenching, Short Term 12.

Each film was enhanced and illuminated with the ‘back stories’ shared by the filmmakers. Many thanks to the organizers: Curt Longacre, Terri Bullock, the Pridy Brothers, Will Stoller-

**Academic Camps**

iD Tech Camps and iD Teen Academies Stanford

Experience North America’s #1 Tech Camp — 4 Bay Area Locations! Ages 7-18 create video games, websites, movies, iPhone & Facebook® apps, robots and more during this weeklong, day and overnight summer tech program. Teen Programs also available at Stanford. Save with code CAU22. www.iDTeccamps.com 1-888-709-TECH (8324)

Stratford School - Camp Socrates Bay Area

Academic enrichment infused with traditional summer camp fun— that’s what your child will experience at Camp Socrates. Sessions begin on June 28 and end on August 13 with the option for students to attend for all seven weeks or the first four weeks (June 28–July 23). Full or half-time morning or afternoon program are available to fit your schedule. 12 locations.

www.stratfordschools.com 650-493-1151

Spring Down Camp Equestrian Center Portola Valley

Spring Down camp teaches basic to advanced horsemanship skills. All ages welcome. Daily informative lecture, riding lesson, supervised hands-on skill practice, tacking/un-tacking of own camp horse, and fun horse arts and crafts.

www.springdown.com 650-851-1114

Stanford Baseball Camps Stanford

All Day or Half-Day Baseball Camps at beautiful Sunken Diamond. For ages 7-12, Stanford Baseball camps feature personalized baseball instruction, fun activities and drills, and exciting Baseball games. Camps for beginner and advanced players. Camps for older players also available. Camp availability from June 14-22

www.StanfordBaseballCamp.com 650-723-4528

Stanford Water Polo Camps Stanford

Summer and/or afternoon water polo sessions at Avery Aquatic Center. June 14-17 for ages 8-14. Beginners welcome. Fun water skill instruction, activities and games. Camps for more advanced players available too. www gösterfand.com/camps/waterpolo-camp.html 650-725-9016

**Sports Camps**

Player Capital/Plan Toys Tennis Camp Palo Alto

Player Capital Tennis and Plan Toys summer camp provide the perfect balance for your child’s physical, educational, and social development. Join us Mon - Fri 9am-12am. (Age 3.5 - 9)

www.playercapital.com 650-968-4783

Guides to 2010 Summer Camps for Kids

For more information about these camps, see our online directory of camps at PaloAltoOnline.com/biz/summercamps

To advertise in a weekly directory, contact 650-326-8219

**TechKnowHow Computer & LEGO® Camps Peninsula**

Fun and enriching technology classes for students, ages 6-14! Courses include LEGO and K’NEX Projects with Motors, Robotics, and Game Design. Many locations, including Palo Alto, Menlo Park, and Sunnyvale. Half and all day options.

www.techknowhowskids.com 650-474-0400

**ISTP Language Immersion**

Palo Alto

International School of the Peninsula camps offered in French, Chinese, Spanish or ESL for students in Nursery through Middle School. Three 2-week sessions, each with different theme. Students are grouped according to both grade level and language proficiency.

www.istp.org 650-251-8519

**Amazing Science Camp! Mountain View**

Check out this terrific new hands-on science camp designed to bring STEM (Science, Engineering, Technology, and Mathematics) to students in a way that engages both mind and body. Two Great Programs— One for 1-3 graders (1 or 2 weeks 9:00am-12:00pm) – the other for 4-6 graders! (This is a 2-week course 1:00-4:00 pm) Both camps are July 26th-Aug 6th.

Email: AmazingSciClass@AOL.com 650-279-7013

**India Community Center Camps Palo Alto & Milpitas**

Explore the rich heritage of India through the India Community Center’s Cultural Immersion, Hindi Language, Bollywood Dance & Crafts of India Camps. Over 14 different camps all through the summer for ages 4-18. These unique camps will immerse children in Yoga, Indian Dance & Music, Sports & lots more!

www.indiacc.org/culturalcamps 408-416-0215

**Art and Music Camps**

Summer Rock Camp Palo Alto/Redwood City Ages 7-18. SRC provides the training needed to play rock music with others. Learn about music theory, rhythm, tricks, and tone. Play popular songs or originals on stage at the Friday night concert. Learn a lot while having tons of fun.

www.summerrockcamp.com 650-772-1581, 650-856-3757

**Community School of Music & Arts (CSMA)**

Mtn. View

50+ creative camps for all ages. Drawing, Painting, Ceramics, Collage, Comics, Jewelry, Digital Arts, Musical Theater, American Idol Workshop, more! Two week sessions; full and half-day extension. Extended care available. Financial aid offered. Early registration discount (May 15).

www.arts4all.org 650-917-6800 ext.0

**Kite Day**

COME FLY A KITE WITH US AT BEDMILL-BAYFRONT PARK!

For $6 you will receive a kite, hot dog, and drink, all ages are welcome!

See you there!

Sunday, April 25th
Noon-4:00pm BEDELL-BAYFRONT PARK IS LOCATED AT MARSY ROAD AND BAYFRONT EXPRESSWAY.

www.menlopark.org
Gradual change in downtown plan

T

here is a tendency for some people, including many downtown
Menlo Park property owners, to promote the idea that
the minute the city’s recently released plan for downtown
and El Camino Real is approved by the City Council, bulldozers
will show up to begin ripping up parking plazas and digging foun-
dations for five-story buildings on El Camino Real.

Of course, nothing could be further from the truth about the
city’s ambitious design to remake the downtown, which is sorely
in need of a facelift. The plan is just that — a plan or vision — for
what downtown could become, if property owners take advantage
of new planning and zoning that permit such development and
the city is able to raise the funds to do its part.

Without such a blueprint, the
City Council and Planning Com-
mission would be like a ship without a rudder, forced to approve
projects on a case-by-case basis, which is not a good idea for some
of the community’s most visible and valuable properties. For several
decades, Menlo Park has struggled to write a new downtown plan,
but every effort failed before it was even brought to the council. So
by advancing to the public hearing stage, the 2010 plan has sur-
passed all prior efforts and is by far the best opportunity the city has
ever had to approve a guideline for future development.

The plan covers three areas, and so far, it appears that the vision for
downtown is the most controversial, particularly the plans to
build parking garages and mixed-use buildings on portions of some
parking plazas. But while some property owners fear losing flat-lot
parking, planners see opportunity wasted in acres of asphalt in the
downtown core that could be much more than a resting place for
automobiles. By building garages, parking can be stacked without los-
ing capacity, freeing up spaces for higher and better uses.

One example of this transition is to convert some parking spaces
into a small, open air marketplace and delineate walking lanes in
some remaining plazas. Planners believe that these amenities
would attract more shoppers to the downtown, and space for the
popular farmers’ market would be retained.

The vision extends to the spaces around the Caltrain station, where
mixed-use buildings of up to 60 feet high would be permitted on the
east side of Alma Street. On the west side of the tracks, a grassy plaza
would be installed at Santa Cruz Avenue and Merrill Street and wide
sidewalks and crosswalks would invite pedestrians to stroll from the
train station to the Civic Center or Santa Cruz Avenue.

On the east side of El Camino, planners worked hard to reduce the
mass of five-story buildings by stepping upper floors back from the
street and interposing open space to reduce the feeling that a huge
wall has been erected along the street.

No one, including the city’s planners, knows exactly how long it
will take to implement any of these ideas, but the plan does set some
short-term goals (five years) for building a garage on Parking Plaza 3,
widening Santa Cruz Avenue sidewalks, and building the paseo
on Chestnut Street South. When work begins in the El Camino cor-
rider, it will be up to private developers to decide if they can work
with the new guidelines and make a profit.

The plan offers details on numerous options to finance various
public projects, from parking garages to streetscape improvements.
Some costs would be shared by property owners, with the city
and user fees contributing a share as well. Projects could be
built on a pay-as-you-go basis or more quickly, using bonds paid
off over a longer time frame.

The 2010 Vision Plan is a dramatic and well-designed first step to
move Menlo Park’s commercial areas into the 21st century. Its
designs take into account hundreds of comments from a widely
attended series of public meetings about the plan. Property owners
should know that the plan’s primary purpose is to provide a more
attractive and engaging downtown core that is much more than a
convenient parking plaza.

As discussion of the plan continues, we hope the downtown busi-

ness community will take into account how the plan will advance the
longtime viability of Menlo Park as a shopping destination. Ultimat-
ely, the City Council will decide. We encourage members to consider
valid criticism of the plan, but we urge them to go forward and adopt
this vision, which will enable the downtown and El Camino corridor
to remain attractive to residents and shoppers for years to come.
Support pours in for Measure C

Math teacher, parent urges a ‘yes’ vote

Editor:

I am writing to encourage all members of our community to vote yes on Measure C, the parcel tax for the Menlo Park City School District. I am a math teacher and boys’ lacrosse coach at Menlo-Atherton High School. I have a daughter who is a freshman in high school and two young boys who will be attending Oak Knoll in just a few years. I have taught and coached over a thousand high school students in the past 14 years. Many of these students are well prepared for high school due to their experiences in elementary and middle school. Unfortunately, some are not well prepared. The students who come unprepared for the rigors of a high school like Menlo-Atherton will face an uphill battle to succeed. A strong elementary and middle school education plays an integral role in a student’s success in high school, college and beyond. Without the passage of Measure C, our schools — Laurel, Encinal, Oak Knoll and Hillview — will be under-funded. We cannot let that happen.

Steven Kryger
Doris Lane, Menlo Park

Board president explains the need for Measure C

Editor:

The city of Menlo Park is known for its award-winning schools, which have achieved national and state recognition because of the tremendous support of teachers, administrators, parents and community members.

We need Measure C to preserve our schools, which we have worked so hard to develop. The Menlo Park City School District faces a $2 million budget deficit next year due to growing enrollment and reduced state funding. Currently, we spend 87 percent of the budget on teachers and other essential staff. Future cuts will come at the expense of teachers.

In March, the school board issued 14 preliminary layoff notices to teachers that will be finalized if Measure C does not pass. Those layoffs mean more students will be added to each class, teacher preparation time will be reduced, programs will be cut, and students’ classroom experience will be compromised.

I am voting “yes” on Measure C to give our district the resources it needs to maintain the quality of our children’s education.

S. Child, president
Menlo Park City School District Board of Trustees

Ballots must be in by May 4

Mail-in ballots for parcel taxes in Menlo Park and Portola Valley must be received by the county registrar by 8 p.m., Tuesday, May 4, to be counted.

This community has a history of offering support in times of need. By 2017, enrollment in our four schools is expected to have increased 44 percent over what it was in 2000, and because we are a “basic aid” district we receive no additional funding for each new student.

This month we are being asked to step up again by passing Measure C. As parents and grandparents of three boys at Oak Knoll, we are frightened that we may lose some of the very important educational programs that our schools have been able to offer, including art, PE, music, and a full-time librarian.

Please join us in voting for Measure C.

Phil, Maureen, Robert and Diana Ekedahl
Bay Laurel Drive and Chateau Drive, Menlo Park

Pediatricians urge a yes vote on ‘C’

Editor:

As pediatricians with children in the Menlo Park City School District, we support the passage of Measure C.

Without Measure C funding, enrichment programs and teachers, including our physical education specialists, will be cut. Physical activity is known to improve academic achievement and positively influence concentration, memory and classroom behavior, as well as improve overall health and well-being.

Our current skilled physical education specialists provide an enjoyable, organized introduction to physical activities, including individual and team sports, promoting core skills, and fostering an enjoyment of physical activity that extends beyond the school day.

Please join us in supporting measure C to keep our children active and healthy.

Kathrin Burlinson and Laurie Chang, M.D.s
Community pediatricians and district parents

How the deal was made for Prop 13

By Douglas Dupen

The recent Almanac story I saw published in the Palo Alto Weekly recounting Jennifer Bostor’s research into Proposition 13 triggered many recollections of the events surrounding Menlo Park and that measure. I would like to illustrate those recollections with a few anecdotes.

When Prop 13 was being widely debated in town, I was serving as president of the Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce. A member of that board urged the chamber to take a public position on the proposition. (He was recommending endorsement.) The board decided to look into the matter and assigned one of the members to research the proposition. He did so and reported back as follows:

The Legislature in Sacramento was nearly unanimous on desiring to launch the proposition to cap property assessments for private citizens, especially seniors. The leading advocates, Paul Gann and How ard Jarvis, were furious that assessment capping was being proposed only for residences. They believed that totally unfair.

If assessment capping was appropriate for residences, which they agreed was so, it was equally just and right that the same capping take place on assessments of commercial and industrial property. They convinced the Republicans in the Legislature to introduce this expansion in the proposition.

The Democrats in the Legislature, by and large, would have none of that, feeling the proposition was for homeowners’ relief. They were unwilling to approve Proposition 13 if commercial and industrial property were added. The Republicans, on the other hand, were equally unwilling to approve Proposition 13 unless commercial and industrial property were included.

This resulted in a long and bitter standoff since neither party could approve the proposition alone. Finally, desiring to have the homeowner benefit adopted with dispatch, the Democrats caved, accepted the expansion designed by Mr. Jarvis and Mr. Gann, and sent Proposition 13 to the public.

The chamber board digested this report and overwhelmingly voted to endorse. There were two “no” votes: mine and that of Jeanne-Betty Zumpier, Jeanne-Betty had been the proprietor of the Welcome Wagon service in Menlo Park; her husband was a teacher in Menlo Park schools.

The very next day after the passage of Proposition 13, I was telephoned by the chief executive of a large publishing firm in Menlo Park. He knew me from business contacts and had read that I had recently been re-elected to the Menlo Park City Council. He asked me to make a delivery for him to the city. He handed me a check for $10,000 (in 1976 dollars) made out to the city of Menlo Park, and asked me to deliver it to the city.

I expressed some wonder. He explained, “Do you realize how much money the passage of Proposition 13 will end up saving my firm?” By comparison, $10,000 is a pittance. However, much Menlo Park will be affected by the passage of Proposition 13.”

After delivering the check, I went home and wrote a letter to the editor, complaining that “the citizens of California have raped themselves.”

Douglas Dupen, a former Menlo Park resident, now lives at Stanford.
Property Showcase by Hugh Cornish

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For more information on this property and others, please visit my Web site at:
WWW.HUGHCORNISH.COM

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