BLUEGRASS BY THE BAY

The band WINDY HILL finds its place in the close-knit Bay Area bluegrass scene.
#11 Workshop Series by Harrell Remodeling

Planning a Whole House Remodel

For homeowners interested in learning more about how to approach a remodeling project, these interactive workshops promise to be informative and fun. Upfront planning will ensure a successful project!

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- Gain some color courage and learn how your home’s paint palette can transform even the smallest spaces inspire and energize, soothe and calm, or simply transform the ordinary into extraordinary.
- Get excited about your home remodel as our designers take you through a journey of ideas, photos, materials and product options available to transform your home today!

Saturday, September 24
Registration and light breakfast at 9:15 am
Workshop 9:30 am – 12:00 pm
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Call us or go online to register today. We will see you there!

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CITY OF MENLO PARK
ORDINANCE 974 SUMMARY
NOTICE OF ADOPTION

The City Council of Menlo Park adopted Ordinance No. 974 at its regular City Council meeting of August 23, 2011. The Ordinance was introduced on July 19, 2011, and adopted on August 23, 2011, by a 5-0 vote. The ordinance is effective thirty days after approval by the California Energy Commission, and is summarized as:

AN ORDINANCE AMENDING CHAPTER 12.18 [CALIFORNIA GREEN BUILDING STANDARDS CODE AMENDMENTS] OF TITLE 12 [BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION] OF THE MENLO PARK MUNICIPAL CODE TO ADOPT AMENDMENTS TO PART 11 OF THE 2010 CALIFORNIA BUILDING STANDARDS CODE KNOWN AS THE CALIFORNIA GREEN BUILDINGS STANDARDS CODE, specifically to require:

- All newly constructed residential and non-residential structures currently subject to the 2010 California Green Building Standards Code (Cal Green) regulations to exceed the minimum energy efficiency standards established in the 2010 California Energy Code (Energy Code) by 15 percent;
- All newly constructed residential and non-residential structures currently subject to Cal Green regulations to test heating and cooling ducts for leakage; and
- All newly constructed residential structures currently subject to Cal Green regulations to install cool roofs or use alternative methods and materials to achieve equivalent energy savings.

The full text of the ordinance and all exhibits are available at the Office of the City Clerk and/or may be viewed on the City of Menlo Park website at www.menlopark.org

Margaret S. Roberts, MMC
City Clerk
Dated: August 23, 2011

ALMANAC READERS CHOICE

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www.ladera.travel.com

HOME DÉCOR & FURNISHINGS
Flegels
870 Santa Cruz Avenue
Menlo Park, 94025
650.326.9661
www.flegels.com

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Guests will be able to stroll around the Roman pool at the Green Gables garden party.

Party raises funds for Garden Conservancy
Event will be held at Green Gables estate, observing 100th anniversary

By Kate Daly
Special to the Almanac

The public is invited to an old fashioned garden party, being held Sunday, Sept. 25, at the Green Gables estate in Woodside to raise money for the Garden Conservancy and its educational programs.

The 75-acre estate is celebrating its 100th anniversary since Charles Sumner Greene of Greene & Greene designed the country home in the Arts and Crafts style.

Mr. Greene also designed the landscaping that features gardens with an allee of Camperdown elms, a broad terrace and parterre, and a 300-foot Roman reflecting pool anchored by stone arches.

From 4 to 6:30 p.m., hors d’oeuvres and cocktails will be served in the gardens. A piano player will provide live music. One of the property’s owners, Delia Fleishhacker Erlich, will speak about her family’s multi-generational history at the estate.

The caretaker and master gardener, Dan Lurie, will act as a docent. Self-guided tours will also be available.

Green Gables is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In 2003, the Fleishhacker family established a conservation easement with the Garden Conservancy to ensure the gardens and landscaping are maintained and preserved intact.

The Garden Conservancy is a nonprofit organization that works to preserve significant gardens in North America for educational purposes and public enjoyment. The group hosts talks and workshops on landscape architecture, garden design, horticulture and preservation. The West Coast office is based in San Francisco.

Co-chairs of this event are Toni Hunter Breck and her husband, Peter, Susie Swinerton McBaine and her husband, Pat, and Betsy and Coby Everdell. Ms. Everdell has designed gardens in Atherton and Woodside. Both Ms. McBaine and Ms. Breck grew up in Woodside.

“Green Gables is a hidden treasure in Woodside, and an example of how the Garden Conservancy works, working with the Fleishhacker family to preserve the property for future generations to enjoy,” Ms. Breck says.

Tickets are $150 per person and can be ordered by contacting Emily Riley by Sept. 18 at (415) 441-4300 or eriley@gardenconservancy.com.
ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS
TOWN OF ATHERTON
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

HOOVER STREET CROSSWALK
PROJECT NO. 56011

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. SEPTEMBER 21, 2011, at which time they will be publicly opened and read, for performing the following work:

LAYOUT OF WORK, SHOULDER WIDENING, UPGRADE CONCRETE CURB RAMP, INSTALLATION OF SIGNING AND STRIPING, AND INSTALLATION OF IN-PAVEMENT LIGHTED CROSSWALK ON VALPARAISO AVENUE AT HOOVER STREET.

The UDBE Contract Goal is 1.0% (percent)

The Engineer's Estimate for the project is: $30,800

Per Section 6.01 of the Town of Atherton’s Standard Specifications, the General Contractor shall perform, with his own organization, work of a value amounting to not less than 50% of the total contract, excluding specialty items as indicated on the bid schedule.

Bids must be for the entire work, and shall be submitted in sealed envelopes clearly marked: “Bid of (Contractor) for HOOVER STREET CROSSWALK, Project No. 56011”, along with date and time of bid opening.

Plans and specifications may be obtained at the Town of Atherton’s website at www.ci.atherton.ca.us under Bid Solicitation at no cost. Additional important information is contained in Town of Atherton Standard Specifications, which are available online at www.ci.atherton.ca.us/publicworks.html. Contractor shall be responsible for any addendums that may be posted on the Town's website. No Planholders list shall be available.

Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the form of cash, a cashier’s or certified check or bid bond for not 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, The City, reserves the right to reject any or all bids; to make any awards or any rejections in what it alone considers to be in the best interest of the City, and waive any informalities or irregularities in the bids. The contract will be awarded, if at all, to the responsible bidder that submits the lowest responsive bid. (NOTE: If there are alternates in the bid, the City will need to state how the low bid will be determined, as required by PCC 201103.6.)

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 of 100% of the contract price.

Bidders are hereby notified that provisions of California Labor Code regarding prevailing wages and apprentices are applicable to the work to be performed under this contract. Pursuant to Section 1773 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 Contract Code.

All bidders shall be licensed under the provisions of the Business and Professions Code to do the type of work contemplated in the project. The City has determined that the Contractor shall possess a valid Class A license at the time the bid is submitted. Failure to possess the specified license shall render the bid non-responsive.

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 Huynh, Project Engineer, telephone: (650) 752-0555 or by written Requests for Information (RFI) to: Public Works Department, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, CA 94027, no later than ten (10) business days before bid opening. RFIs may be emailed to dhuynh@ci.atherton.ca.us or faxed to (650) 688-6539. Responses shall be posted on the Town’s website no later than five (5) days prior to bid opening.

By: Michael Kashiwagi, P.E., City Engineer
Date: __________________________
Developer agrees to reduced refund of road-impact fees

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor

The town of Atherton will pay a Menlo Park development firm $72,500 to settle a lawsuit over road-impact fees—a sum that is $225,500 less than the company originally sought last year when it launched its legal fight against the town.

The City Council voted on Aug. 17, in closed session, to accept the terms of a proposed agreement with Pacific Peninsula Group (PPG), but the town wouldn’t disclose those terms until PPG officially accepted them. That happened Sept. 8, when PPG principal Steve Ackley signed the document.

Each party will pay its own attorneys’ fees, according to the agreement.

Although the development company originally sought $298,000 from the town, that figure had been lowered to about $215,000 during the discovery phase of the litigation process, the town’s attorney for the case, Leah Castella, told The Almanac in March.

Pacific Peninsula Group, which has built numerous homes in Atherton over the years, sued the town after the council agreed to refund a portion of road-impact fees paid by builders before the town discontinued the fee in late 2009. That decision, which divided the council at the time, was based on controversy over the fee’s legality.

Road-impact fees are charged by many California cities to pay for damage to roads caused by heavy equipment used in home and commercial construction. The question of whether the fees are legal is yet to be resolved, but just weeks after the council’s July 2010 decision to partially refund them to builders meeting certain criteria, PPG sued to force the town to refund the fees it paid in their entirety.

The settlement agreement “should not and shall not be construed as an admission or concession of any liability, expressed or implied, or that any of the Parties have violated any laws or otherwise acted wrongfully in any manner or fashion,” the signed document says. “The Parties have entered into this (agreement) in order to achieve peace and to resolve and settle all disputes and potential disputes between them.”

Debate over Atherton library heats up

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor

Should the town of Atherton survey residents about where to rebuild the town’s library?

Despite the town’s multi-year discussion of the plan to build a new library—which included several presentations at City Council meetings and numerous open meetings of a citizen task force studying options for the project—a number of residents are protesting the task force’s advocacy of building the new facility in Holbrook-Palmer Park, and urging the council to survey residents.

The task force has narrowed its focus to two options: rebuilding the library at its current site in the Town Center, which would require a seismic retrofit and expansion of the 82-year-old, 4,790-square-foot building; or razing the Main House in the town’s only park, and building a new library of up to 11,000 square feet in its place.

Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

The Main House at Holbrook-Palmer Park would be razed if the town approves the option to rebuild the library in the park.

No evidence of problem

Three days after the Almanac repeatedly requested information about the incident from the city, Community Services Director Cherise Brandell responded, saying that a female swimmer requested medical aid and described a “gas bubble” rising from the pool. After staff determined that the pool was operating normally, Ms. Brandell said, they asked the plumbing contractor to examine the pool. The contractor arrived at the pool within hours, she said, and found no evidence of a leak or bubble or any other problem.

“City staff and the operator are confident that all the City’s pools are, and have been, operating normally and safely,” Ms. Brandell stated.

Still, the investigation continues. No update on the swimmer’s health status was available.

Previous problem fixed

This was potentially the third exposure incident at Burgess pool since 2006. Five years ago, eight children using the children’s pool experienced burning eyes and throat, shortness of breath, and violent coughing—all symptoms of low-level chlorine exposure, according to the American Association for Poison Control.

The city then waited six days before informing the public.

That incident resulted from an accidental shutdown and restart of the pool’s circulation pump, according to Mr. Sheeper. He told the Almanac that a contractor later added two mechanical safeguards to prevent a recurrence.

The American Association for Poison Control collected reports of 3,451 chlorine swimming pool exposures during the past eight years across the United States, nearly half for children under the age of 19 and requiring medical treatment.
Library debate heats up

Judging by a presentation made by the task force and San Mateo County Library staff at a Sept. 8 meeting in Holbrook-Palmer’s Pavilion, the favored option is a park location for a brand new facility.

Opponents of that plan come to their position from several directions. Some say they think a larger, upgraded library is needed, but it shouldn’t be built in the 22-acre park, which is heavily used for recreational walking and other low-impact activities, and a limited amount of youth sports. These opponents argue that a library, which would also be used as a community center, would increase traffic to an unacceptable level and destroy the park’s ambiance.

Most of the opponents say that upgrading and expanding the existing library would avoid degradation of the park, and would keep the library in a logical, convenient location — at a fraction of the cost of a park library.

But others say the existing library should be seismically retrofitted with no expansion, arguing that because of the growing popularity of electronic books and social networking, more space for book collections and community gathering areas isn’t necessary.

Needs and impacts

Members of a panel presenting an update on the library issue at last week’s meeting told some 65 to 75 attendees that the existing library doesn’t meet the needs of the public, and that library usage is growing, not diminishing, in spite of trends toward e-books and social networking.

Anne-Marie Despain, the county’s director of library services, stressed that national trends in library usage dictate that new facilities need more flexible space to adapt to a wider range of uses than traditional 20th century libraries had to accommodate. One modern-day need that libraries must accommodate, she said, is for public gathering spaces, which is required for a cohesive community but seems to be disappearing in modern times.

This is one reason, she noted, that libraries throughout the nation are getting larger: “People take up more space than a book shelf.”

Lisa Costa Sanders, the town’s deputy planner, said that if the existing library were renovated and expanded, two more parking spaces would be required in Town Center. The project would also have to be studied with a full-blown environmental impact report, she said, because the building is considered historic.

Building the library in the park would require no new parking, and the Main House could be torn down with no full EIR because it is not considered historic — an assertion challenged by former mayor Malcolm Dudley. Mr. Dudley is leading the charge to save the Main House, which was one of three structures in the park at the time the land was donated to the town.

Although parking would be adequate, traffic flow would be affected on nearby streets, Ms. Costa Sanders said. “There would be an impact at (the intersection of) Watkins and Middlefield” that the town would have to mitigate, she said.

The cost of an 11,000-square-foot library in the park is projected at about $8.2 million, according to the town’s finance director, Louise Ho. The town currently has about $5.6 million in a fund that must be spent on the library, and that fund is expected to grow to $8.3 million by 2015, she said.

Debate continues

The strong sentiments held by residents and officials who attended last week’s meeting were apparent immediately following the panelists’ presentation, with several residents arguing for a public comment period before moving from one display table to another to speak individually with library and town staff and task force members. They also pressed for a survey of residents before any decision about the library’s location is made.

Councilwoman Kathy McKeithen, who served on the library task force, forcefully debated several residents who challenged her defense of the park as the optimal library site. As Ms. McKeithen urged the residents to better inform themselves about the proposed project, former mayor Dudley, just a few feet away, spoke passionately with several residents about the need to preserve the Main House.

Meanwhile, task force member Sandy Crittenden told the Almanac that his decision to support a library in the park was difficult, but he believes it’s a good one. Mr. Crittenden, who grew up in Atherton and...
M-A celebrates life of Coach Parks

A celebration of the life of the legendary Coach Ben Parks will be held Saturday, Sept. 17, at Menlo-Atherton High School in Atherton, where he coached football and wrestling for many years. Marc Rogers of the M-A High class of 1975, who is helping organize the event, said there will be three venues.

From 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., a 23-minute documentary on Coach Parks will be shown in the Performing Arts Center on campus.

From 11:30 to 1 p.m., on Coach Parks Field at M-A, speakers will share their connections to Coach Parks. Among those scheduled to speak: NFL Hall of Famer Ronnie Lott, venture capitalist Steve Westly, and the Parks family. Former local sportscaster Jan Hutchins will be master of ceremonies.

From 1 p.m. on, people are encouraged to mingle and share memories in Ayers (main) gym on the campus. There will be slide shows, memorabilia, and an opportunity to share your stories on video.

Food and drinks will be sold by M-A student groups outside the gym. All proceeds will benefit the school.

M-A High is at 555 Middlefield Road in Atherton. Additional parking will be available across

Stanford Hospital probes medical data breach

By Chris Kenrick
Embassy Media

Stanford University Hospital said it is investigating a data breach reportedly involving records of 20,000 patients seen in the emergency room between March and August of 2009.

The patients' names, diagnosis codes and billing amounts — but not Social Security numbers or credit card information — were posted on a public website for nearly a year before being removed Aug. 22.

In a letter to the patients, Stanford apologized and offered free identity-protection services.

The Stanford breach was one of many such incidents in recent years as federal regulation of medical data security has stiffened and institutions work to ramp up their practices, an industry expert said.

In the 21-month period ending in June, hospitals and insurers reported 306 incidents involving 11.6 million medical records, according to Bryan Cline, vice-president of the HITRUST Alliance, a Texas-based industry consortium that has established a "common security framework" for health information.

Federal law requires public reporting within 90 days of breaches involving more than 500 individuals. Smaller breaches must be reported to the Secretary of Health and Human Services.

"The drive to improve (medical data) security is catching up with financial institutions, but it's a cost issue," he said.

"The health care industry is like an aircraft carrier. Even when you want to turn it around it takes a long time."

Much of the compromised data involved third parties, as in the Stanford case, Mr. Cline said.

The compromised data file was created by a subcontractor of an outside vendor, Multi Specialties Collection Service, Stanford said in a statement.

The hospital said it has suspended work with the vendor and is investigating how the data came to be posted on the web.

Multi Specialties Collection Services is conducting its own investigation into how its contractor caused the information to be posted, Stanford said.

Mr. Cline calculated that the size of the Stanford breach falls roughly in the median. In an analysis of publicly reported data, he said he counted 22 cases involving more than 50,000 patients, 16 involving more than 100,000, and three involving more than 1 million.

Coroner reports another Native American skull found

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

Another human skull believed to belong to a long-dead Native American has been found this time in the backyard of a home in the 1000 block of Croner Avenue in unincorporated West Menlo Park, authorities say.

A deputy from the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office called in the Coroner's Office, and a deputy coroner estimated that the skull was "very old and of Native American descent," according to a Sheriff's Office report.

The deputy coroner collected and took possession of the skull and other remains found with it, the report said.

In July, a worker found part of what the Coroner's Office considered an old Native American skull while digging a trench near a swimming pool in the 100 block of Aliso Way in the unincorporated community of Ladera, a few miles to the west of West Menlo Park.

In that case, investigators found no other remains, just the partial skull.

As George Mader, a consultant to Portola Valley's planning department, said in July, Native American remains are not uncommon near creeks. In the Ladera case, the Los Trancos Creek runs nearby; in West Menlo Park, San Francisquito Creek is within a mile of the most recent discovery.

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September 14, 2011  The Almanac  7
Funeral held for scientist killed in lab explosion

By Sandy Brundage
Almanac Staff Writer

Adrian Martin, the 56-year-old scientist killed in an explosion at Membrane Technology and Research Inc. in Menlo Park on Sept. 2, was quietly laid to rest last week.

According to the Lima & Capagna Mortuary, his family held a service in San Jose on Wednesday and attended the burial the following day. The family chose not to provide an obituary; Mr. Martin left behind a wife, Livia, and a 17-year-old daughter.

At the time of the explosion, Mr. Martin was preparing a pre-gas mixture involving methane, helium, and nitrogen, said Chief Harold Schapelhouman of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District. A woman standing near the door of the lab was thrown clear and survived, with some damage to her eardrum.

Responding to the lab at 1360 Willow Road, fire officials found a leaking methane cylinder, although it wasn’t clear if the cylinder was leaking before the explosion, or if the blast caused the leak.

Stargazing Friday in Portola Valley

Another in a series of dark nights with telescopes is coming to the Portola Valley Town Center at 7:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 16, when amateur astronomers will gather to share their equipment and knowledge with the public in observing stars, planets, moons and galaxies.

It may be chilly in the dark in open grass between the soccer and the baseball fields beneath coastal hills topped by clouds that generate cold winds, and stargazing involves plenty of standing around, so warm clothing is highly recommended.

Visitors with their own telescopes and questions on how to use them more effectively are encouraged to bring them along. Flashlights are fine if they are kept pointed toward the ground and the lenses are covered with red cellophane, according to a statement from the Nature & Science Committee, which is sponsoring the event.

Go to tinyurl.com/PV-stars for more information about this event.

Go to tinyurl.com/PV-stars2 for an Almanac story on a star party in the summer of 2009.
Honoring firefighters who died in 9/11 attacks

Jim Vanides of Menlo Park submitted this photo of the flags at the Menlo Park fire station on Middlefield Road, set there in honor of the firefighters who died as a result of the Sept. 11 attacks. The photograph was taken Saturday, Sept. 10.

Public invited to meetings, walking tour on Stanford’s proposed Alpine Road trail

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

A public meeting is set for 7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 15, at the Ladera Oaks Swim and Tennis Club as the community in Ladera and Stanford Weekend Acres consider the future of their hiking and biking trail. The trail, on the south side of Alpine Road, is inconsistent in width and quality as it runs from Ladera’s border with Portola Valley east to the intersection of Alpine and Junipero Serra Boulevard.

The Thursday meeting, organized by the San Mateo County manager’s office, will be the first of five. A walking tour is set for 9 a.m. Friday, Sept. 17, and another evening meeting for 7 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 20. The Ladera Oaks club is located at 3249 Alpine Road in Ladera.

Two evening meetings to report back to the community are set for Thursday, Sept. 29, and Tuesday, Oct. 4, also at Ladera Oaks.

The meetings will revisit a controversial topic: a proposal by Stanford University, first made in 2006, to spend $8.4 million to upgrade and repave the trail and shore up the bank of San Francisquito Creek. (In a related development, Stanford is well along in a $2.8 million project to repave and reroute the one-mile section of trail that continues into Portola Valley.)

The trail project is connected to the university’s plans to develop open space on the Santa Clara County side of the creek. If San Mateo County continues to reject the proposal, the $8.4 million will go to the Santa Clara County parks department.

An outside observer might find the trail’s Ladera/Weekend Acres section hard to love. It merges with the roadside in places. The paving is old, bumpy and cracked. There are holes as well as spots overlain by layers of dust. But a unanimous San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, echoing residents galvanized by the prospect of a “suburban sidewalk” through their semi-rural community, rejected the university’s offer in February 2008, and again in 2010.

Some community residents have spoken in favor of the project and Stanford’s offer is good until December of this year, according to a county chronology.

Write to alpinetrail@smgov.org to comment on the project.

Saturday, Sunday: Friends of Library book sale

Take a few books home from the library, this time for keeps — the annual Friends of the Menlo Park Library book fair happens on Saturday, Sept. 17, and Sunday, Sept. 18.

Running from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. both days at 800 Alma St., the fair offers more than 30,000 used books for sale, with most costing $2 or less. On Sunday, the books will be half price or $5 for a full bag.

The books cover a wide range of subjects, including fiction, mystery, science fiction, romance, children’s books, cookbooks, psychology, business, and computers.

The book fair will be held on the lawn at the main library at 800 Alma St., near the intersection of Ravenswood Avenue and Laurel Street in Menlo Park.

A sale of old and collective volumes will be held during the book fair in the Menlo Park City Council Chambers. Prices will range from $5 to $25.

All of the books on sale are donated to the library, and all proceeds go to support the programs and collections of the Menlo Park Library, including the Belle Haven branch.
An Intersection for Concerted Care: Stanford Brain Tumor Center Debuts

A few hours after Marjorie Paulsen learned that a tumor was growing in her brain, she told her husband she didn’t want to go to sleep that night. “I’m afraid I won’t wake up,” she said.

For a couple of years before her diagnosis, Paulsen, who was otherwise in good health, had been bothered by a weird and random phenomenon. “My hand would rise up in the air and move on its own,” she said, recalling a popular television show, “like the hand on The Addams Family. It would last for a few seconds and then get back to normal.”

Paulsen was a flight attendant for United Airlines. When that symptom struck while she did her job, perhaps as she served coffee, the unpredictable movement was more alarming. She thought it was probably a nerve in her neck acting up. The odd movements happened more and more often. Then another symptom emerged. Her left leg began to tingle “like I’d sat on it funny,” Paulsen said. The tingling lasted for hours until finally she called a doctor. He advised her to get help at her nearest emergency room.

As the doctor there looked at her test results, Paulsen could see the look on his face and she turned quickly to her husband. “Jerry, I think we’re in for something.”

A place to turn

Eight years later, Paulsen, now a patient at the newly-minted Stanford Brain Tumor Center, is a happy great-grandmother enjoying a happy retirement with her husband. This February, Griff Harsh, MD, director of the Center, took out a tumor in her brain that had regrown since its first removal in 2003.

The Center frames the hospital’s considerable corps of top-notch brain specialists into a treatment team driven by expertise, experience and compassion. The Center will not have its own building; it does reflect a collaboration-shaped structure and process designed to streamline diagnosis and treatment. The goal, Harsh said, “is to give patients the highest quality of care, delivered with a matching level of efficiency.”

“The nurse coordinator said, ‘We have a plan,’ and she was so positive I thought, ‘Okay, I’ll go along with that.’”

— Marjorie Paulsen, patient, Stanford Brain Tumor Center

“Using the word center implies a higher level of organization than just a few doctors running around,” said Stanford neurosurgeon Steven D. Chang, MD, Director of Stanford’s Neuromolecular Innovation Program, and a Center team physician. “Somewhere else you can patch together a surgeon, a radiation oncologist, etc., but are you going to get them in a room together to talk about you? Our patients can feel that not only are they being seen in a world-class medical center, but that they’re getting the expertise of all our physicians.”

That expertise translates into the most advanced care available. “If something cutting edge is going to be done, it’s likely to be done here at Stanford,” said Lawrence Recht, Director of Adult Neuro-Oncology, one of Paulsen’s physicians and part of the new Stanford Brain Tumor Center. “We have cut a wide swath for the Center, with virtually every possible discipline and specialty represented here.”

Tumors that originate in the brain are still rare, compared to many other health conditions, he said, “so it makes a difference if you are treated at a place where they know what they’re doing. We have a large body of accumulated experience and the coordinated experience of many specialists. That can make a big difference in results for patients.”

More than one view

At every step of Paulsen’s way, her care included a neuro-oncologist, neuroradiologist, neuropathologist, neurosurgeon and a seizure specialist, each contributing special knowledge to blend into a multidisciplinary treatment team. “From day one, the team care at Stanford has been so wonderful,” Paulsen said. “The level of care has been off the chart.”

What Paulsen noticed especially was a positive and supportive attitude. “I’ll never forget the day I found out my tumor was malignant,” she said. “That set me back a bit, but Lynn Adler, the nurse coordinator said, ‘We have a plan,’ and she was so positive I thought, ‘Okay, I’ll go along with that.’”

At Stanford, in addition to joint consultations between physicians, an interdisciplinary brain tumor board meets weekly to review and discuss patient treatment plans. More than 20 specialist physicians and nurses in neuropathology, neuroradiology, neurosurgery, neurology and neuro- oncology usually attend.

Within the Stanford Brain Tumor Center, Recht said, “We have a very strong group identity. We get along and we meet a lot. We really work well together; we respect each other’s expertise and we usually make our decisions by consensus.”

Another element in the Center’s care will be a group of nurses with special certification in neurological care and social workers experienced in the needs particular to tumor patients and their families, with access to resources in neuropsychology, rehabilitation and counseling.

Seeing the whole picture

“We are very hands-on with our patients,” said neurosurgeon Gordon Li, MD, who recently joined the team. “Patients might not be used to doctors actively calling them, making sure everything is going smoothly and wanting to know what’s going on. We think it’s our job to care of not just the medical issues, but the person and their family, too.”
The Basics of Brain Tumors

- Unlike the lungs or the abdomen, the brain is a closed box, so a tumor interferes with brain function by its sheer presence. It can also become part of the brain’s tissue and disrupt function directly.
- Brain tumors are relatively rare. About 210,000 people in the U.S. are diagnosed. Radiation can raise the risk of developing a brain tumor by 30 percent.
- There are more than 120 types of brain tumor.
- About one in three brain tumors develop because cancer has appeared in another part of the body, most often the lung or breast.
- About one in three brain tumors are independent, originating first in the brain. One in three of those primary tumors are malignant.

- A seizure can be the first sign of a tumor.
- Symptoms reflect the location of a tumor. If a tumor is near the eyes, then vision will be affected; tumors near the brain stem, at the base of the skull, can cause trouble with speech. A tumor near the pituitary gland can disrupt the appetite.
- Brain tumors can be large and slow-growing or small and fast-growing or vice versa.
- Tumors can vary in consistency from tough and gristly to soft and soupy.

For more information about the Stanford Brain Tumor Center, call the Stanford Cancer Center New Patient Coordinator at 650.736.7440 or the Neuroscience Clinic at 650.723.6469. Visit the Center’s Web site at stanfordmed.org/brain tumor.

Watch the new Stanford Hospital Health Notes television show on Comcast: channel 28 on Mondays at 8:30 p.m., Tuesdays at 3:30 p.m. and Fridays at 8:30 a.m.; channel 30 Saturdays at 10:30 p.m. It can also be viewed at youtube.com/stanfordhospital.

“...We have a heavy focus on counseling for patients. We really want to hear what they feel and we take the time to do that thoroughly,” said Seema Nagpal, MD, another new member of the Brain Tumor Center team. “We know a brain tumor is a tough diagnosis to deal with. A first visit to us includes time with a doctor, time with our nurses and sometimes with social work and other support services.”

“It makes a difference if you are treated at a place where they know what they’re doing.”

– Lawrence Recht, MD
Stanford Brain Tumor Center

The Center will also connect patients directly with clinical trials and research at Stanford, where investigations include brain cancer’s cellular biology, cell markers for early tumor detection and genomic structure.

Harsh, also director of Adult Surgical Neuro- oncology at Stanford, believes that medical research and clinical care at Stanford is endowed with a “tremendous structure.” He has practiced neurosurgery for more than 25 years and seen many advances in care. Like his colleagues at the Brain Tumor Center, Harsh has learned and applied innovations in minimally invasive brain tumor surgery and imaging technology. “As a team,” he said, “we build on each other’s expertise to improve what we can do for our patients. We are mutually enhancing in our ways of approach and thought.”

That new image technology he can now employ is as much about combining the available in new ways as about inventing new devices. Stanford’s Josef Parvizi, MD, PhD, another member of the Brain Tumor Center group, is a neurologist focused on human brain mapping. He has been part of Paulsen’s care team.

Parvizi and his research team combine information from functional MR, and electrophysiological recordings produced with grids and strips of electrodes overlaying the tumor area. The team electrically stimulates the cortex adjacent to the tumor to map the brain’s complex ordering of human behavior and perception. That map enables surgeons to operate within the curved, compact canyons of the brain knowing far more specifically what can be taken and what cannot. With a multidisciplinary team combining standard tools to expand the view of brain activity, “We have gone beyond the conventional,” Parvizi said.

Expanded options

The Center’s team also shares sensitivity to that fear that comes with any threat to the brain. “Brain cancer is one of the most difficult medical conditions to treat,” said Li. “The brain is a lot more mysterious than the heart or lungs. It’s who we are and what defines us. That raises the impact of a brain tumor diagnosis.”

After her 2003 surgery, Paulsen was treated with a drug that disrupts the DNA of tumor cells, stopping their growth. She was checked for tumor activity every three months, and then, as she tested clear, every six months. In 2008, one of her neuroradiologists thought he saw something and she was back to every three months as her team monitored the tumor closely. Finally, this winter, Paulsen had a seizure and it was again time for surgery.

“When I had my first surgery, they told me that my type of tumor had a 50/50 chance of growing back,” Paulsen said, “so when it did come back, I didn’t go ‘This is it!’ Dr. Recht said, ‘Well deal with it’ and Dr. Harsh said, ‘We’ll go get it again,’ like taking a wart off my fingers. It was all done with such ‘We can do this’ that I thought, ‘Yes, we can!’”

Attitude counts

Paulsen was struck by how much had changed since her first surgery. “My second was like drive-through. I was in and out in one day. I was doing so well they couldn’t see any reason for me to stay in the hospital, so off I went!”

“We think it’s our job to take care of not just the medical issues, but the person and their family, too.”

– Neurosurgeon Gordon Li
Stanford Brain Tumor Center

She’ll remain in close contact with her team at the Brain Tumor Center, although “they told me that Dr. Harsh had done his job very well. Now, I’m on what they call ‘watchful waiting,’” she said.

She and her husband like to travel, especially to visit the grandchildren and great-grandchild. She doesn’t think much about the tumor. “I try to be a very positive person. When I go for an MRI, I don’t think, ‘Is this the one where it shows that the tumor’s growing back?’ I don’t spend a lot of time thinking about it. I have the MRIs and in between I live my life!”

For almost three decades, Margie Paulsen was a flight attendant, good at keeping calm under any circumstances. Learning that she had a brain tumor shook her.

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Chili cook-off benefits fire district

A chili cook-off and barbecue is coming to the Runnymede Farm in Woodside on Sunday, Sept. 25, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m., when firefighter/cooks from the local fire protection district will square off against their cooking counterparts from local restaurants, including Alice’s Restaurant and The Village Pub.

The event benefits the Woodside-Portola Valley Fire Protection Foundation, a nonprofit that supplies the Woodside Fire Protection District with the latest equipment, facilities and training. Donations are tax-deductible.

The sponsors of the cook-off, so far, are Bianchini’s Market in Ladera, W.L. Butler Construction in Redwood City, Ginny and Joe Kavanagh of Coldwell Banker real estate, architect and Planning Commissioner Adolph Rosekrans and Mike Putterman, according to a statement from the fire foundation.

Children’s activities, a silent auction and a tour of the sculpture garden are included. Attendees choose the winner of the chili contest.

Visit FireDistrictFoundation.org for tickets and more information. Tickets are $25 for adults and $10 for children under 12. They are not tax-deductible.

Write to info@FireDistrictFoundation.org for more information, or call 851-1954.

Menlo Chamber names Golden Acorn Award winners

Businesses, organizations and individuals will be recognized for public service and business excellence on Thursday, Sept. 22, at the 39th Golden Acorn Awards banquet, sponsored by the Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce, and held at the Stanford Park Hotel in Menlo Park.

Selected by a committee of chamber members, the recipients will be honored in the fields of business excellence, community service, public service, and work by a nonprofit organization.

Rich Cline, mayor of Menlo Park, will give a state-of-the-city address at 5:15 p.m. and the banquet and silent auction will be held at 6:15 p.m.

And the winners are:

■ Business excellence. Cheeky Monkey Toys is a local, family-owned independent toy store, established in downtown Menlo Park in 1999. Cheeky Monkey offers a broad range of products for children of all ages.

■ Public service. Since 2007, Thomas Rogers, associate planner of the city of Menlo Park, has worked with consultants, staff, council and commissioners, as well as residents, businesses, property owners, and developers on the El Camino Real/downtown specific plan.

■ Nonprofit organization. Rebuilding Together Peninsula builds volunteer partnerships to rehabilitate homes and community facilities for low-income residents. With the help of nearly 79,000 volunteers, Rebuilding Together has restored 1,431 homes and community facilities with an estimated reconstruction value over $33 million.

■ Information

The 39th annual Golden Acorn Awards banquet will be held Thursday, Sept. 22, at the Stanford Park Hotel, 100 El Camino Real, in Menlo Park. Reservations are $100. Call 325-2818 for more information.

Author Cinda Williams Chima visits Menlo Park Library

Best-selling author Cinda Williams Chima will be at the Menlo Park Library for a signing for her latest book, “The Gray Wolf Throne,” from 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 22.

“The Gray Wolf Throne” is the third of four books in the Seven Realms series for readers ages 12 up. The book ($17.99) is available at Kepler’s Books.
Tractor salesman suspected in Woodside tractor theft

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

A salesman who worked for a regional tractor dealer is being sought in connection with the theft of a tractor and its attachments that the same salesman had earlier sold to a resident of Old La Honda Road in Woodside, according to a report from the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office.

The suspect, who authorities did not identify in the preliminary report, was until recently a salesman at Lampson Tractor in San Jose, Sheriff’s Office spokesman Lt. Ray Lunny said in a telephone interview.

According to the resident’s account, she told deputies that she bought the original tractor, a 2010 Kubota L3700 valued at $26,000, from the salesman and contacted him again after realizing that the L3700 was too small for her needs.

The salesman returned on Sept. 1 and loaded the tractor onto a truck with a promise to sell it on consignment back at the dealership, but the tractor never turned up at the dealership and the suspect has disappeared, Lt. Lunny said.

The dealership informed deputies that the salesman is now suspected of 14 other such incidents involving vehicle theft, though it was not clear that every incident involved a tractor or that all the vehicles involved the Lampson dealership.

A representative from the dealership told the victim that the suspect “was conducting a business on the side and was stealing from customers and from Lampson,” Lt. Lunny said.

The San Jose Police Department is also looking for the suspect, he added.

NCEFT celebrates 40th with gala

A Woodside institution, the National Center for Equine Facilitated Therapy, is celebrating its 40th anniversary with “Heroes & Horses, a Jewels & Jeans Gala” on Sept. 24.

The fundraiser will take place at NCEFT’s 12-acre facility at 880 Runnymede Road in Woodside. Cocktails will be available by the old dairy barn starting at 5:30 p.m. Dinner will be served in the riding arena, followed by dancing to the live band, California Cowboys.

The suggested attire is Western, jewels and jeans.

NCEFT is a nonprofit that uses horses to provide physical and occupational therapy for children and adults with special needs. The range of needs includes cognitive skill building and veterans’ rehabilitation.

“We raise money to fund therapy sessions for those who don’t have the ability to pay, to care for the amazing therapy horses we use, and many other aspects of running the Center,” says Nicole Buttitta, chair of the gala.

Visit nceft.org or call Ms. Buttitta at (408) 690-0424 for more information. Tickets are $200 per person and must be reserved by Sept. 16.

San Mateo County Community Meetings on the Lower Alpine

The Lower Alpine Trail extends from the Menlo Park border through unincorporated San Mateo County along Alpine Road to the Portola Valley border. The trail is used by pedestrians and bicyclists.

San Mateo County will host two community meetings to hear your opinion on the trail. The meetings will have the same agenda. You need only attend one.

The two meetings are intended to gather information regarding:

- The current conditions on the Lower Alpine Trail
- Concepts for improving the trail, including width and location, and moving Alpine Road
- Community support for improving the trail

San Mateo County staff will provide background information and attendees will have an opportunity to study concept maps. These materials can also be viewed on our website: http://www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/alpinetrail

Comment may also be sent to alpinetrail@smcgov.org

Report Back to the Community

Based on comments at the meetings and those delivered via e-mail, County staff will report back to the community with potential recommendations at two public meetings.

These meetings will be:
Thursday, September 29, 2011 from 7 to 9 p.m. and Tuesday, October 4, 2011 from 7 to 9 p.m.

Both meetings will be held at the Ladera Oaks Swim and Tennis Club 3249 Alpine Road Portola Valley, CA 94028

Walking Tour
San Mateo County will host a guided walking tour of the trail on September 17, 2011. Please park at the Ladera Professional Center located at the intersection of La Mesa Drive and Alpine Road. Please park facing Alpine Road. The tour will start at 9 a.m. in the Center’s parking lot.

For More Information
Contact Marshall Wilson, Communications Director, at (650) 363-4153 or alpinetrail@smcgov.org http://www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/alpinetrail
Downtown plan at council

On Tuesday, Sept. 13, the Menlo Park City Council returns to contemplate a subject near and dear to residents’ hearts, judging by the amount of email sent to the council during the past week — the downtown/El Camino Real specific plan.

Lest anyone think the council has nothing better to do, also on the agenda is a public input session on the selection of a new city manager at 6 p.m. and, an hour later during the regular meeting, a debate on whether the city should pay the state $3.5 million to keep its redevelop-ment agency open.

The regular meeting starts at 7 p.m. in council chambers at the Civic Center at 701 Laurel St.

Chamber mixer

The Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce is holding its September mixer at Left Bank, at 635 Santa Cruz Ave., on Wednesday, Sept. 14. The event runs from 5:30 to 7 p.m. and includes a drawing for prizes donated by Chamber members.
COMMUNITY

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

Residential burglary reports:
- Loss estimated at $500 after break-in through unlocked bedroom window and theft of two gold wedding bands, Hamilton Ave., Sept. 2.
- Unknown loss after break-in through side window and forcible opening of residential safe in which there was nothing of value, Monte Rosa Drive, Sept. 8.

Grand theft report: Unknown losses after checks were stolen from resident’s mailbox and five were cashed at check-cashing outlet, Windemere Ave., Sept. 2.

Fraud reports:
- Attempt to buy medicine with counterfeit $10 bill, Santa Cruz Ave., Sept. 2.
- Resident gave credit-card information to someone who called posing as FBI agent investigating scams, University Drive, Sept. 3.
- Collection notice received in the mail after unauthorized creation of account with phone company, Shasta Park Drive, Sept. 7.

Theft reports:
- Loss estimated at $450 in theft of gas-powered generator from driveway of home when residents were away, Santa Cruz Ave., Sept. 7.
- Loss estimated at $450 in theft from bike rack of locked bike and helmet, Elder Ave., Sept. 7.
- Loss estimated at $331 in theft of envelope with tickets inside and left under doormat for friend, White Oak Drive, Sept. 5.

WOODSIDE

Residential burglary report:
- Pet dog missing and believed stolen via unlocked rear sliding glass door, Summer Hill Lane, Sept. 6.

ATHERTON

Child Protective Services report:
- Middlefield Road and Watkins Ave., Sept. 7.

LIBRARY

continued from page 6
was married in the park, said he can be found walking in Holbrook-Palmer five days a week. He has been a member of the park foundation since 1994, and his mother, Barbara, was a co-founder of the Atherton Dames, which supports the park.

“It’s not like I’m trying to devalue the park,” he said.

Mr. Crittenden said that a key factor in the opposition to building a library there is people’s natural resistance to change.

“I would love to turn the clock back 40 years, too,” he said, but he has accepted the need for the change.

“The library’s going to make the park better, and the park is going to make the library better,” he said.

The issue goes before the town’s Parks and Recreation Commission in October, and may go before the council for approval of a site that month as well.

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Lyn Carlsmith
Social psychologist
Lyn K. Carlsmith, a resident of Ladera for more than 40 years, died peacefully, surrounded by her family, at Stanford Medical Center, Sept. 1. She was 79.

Born Karolyn Gai Kuckenberg in Portland, Oregon, she was one of the first women to earn a doctorate in social relations (psychology) at Harvard University.

Ms. Carlsmith enrolled in Stanford University in 1950. She joined the Stanford Dollies her freshman year and took part in many student activities. During her senior year, she met fellow student Merrill Carlsmith, her future husband.

After graduating in 1954, she enrolled in the university’s graduate program in psychology. Completing her master’s degree, she moved to New York City, where she worked for two years as a copy editor. In 1958 she joined Mr. Carlsmith as a graduate student at Harvard, studying child development.

After earning her doctorate from Harvard in 1963, the couple married in her hometown of Portland, Oregon. They moved to California in 1964 to join the psychology department at Stanford University. A devoted mother who postponed her scholarly ambitions in order to raise three children, she later became a senior lecturer at Stanford, say family members.

When her children were in school, she was active at Ladera School, La Entrada School, and Charles Armstrong School. She loved being home when her children returned with art projects, captured bugs and other souvenirs of school life, say family members. Even today, her house remains full of wood sculptures, mosaics, line drawings and other creative work done by her children, they say.

As a Stanford lecturer, Ms. Carlsmith specialized in organizing internships so students could take part in community organizations. She pushed her students to recognize the importance of giving back to those less fortunate, working closely with an organization called Social Advocates for Youth in the 1970s and 1980s.

Ms. Carlsmith is survived by her three children, Kim Sampson and Christopher and Kevin Carlsmith; six grandchildren; and one great-grandchild. Her husband, fellow psychologist and Stanford professor, J. Merrill Carlsmith, died in 1984. For nearly 25 years, she was the companion of social psychologist Garner Lindzey, director emeritus of the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences at Stanford University. Professor Lindzey died in 2008.

Cards and letters to the family may be sent to the Carlsmith family, 31 Berenda Way, Portola Valley, CA 94028. A memorial reception has been held at the Stanford Faculty Club.

Memorial donations may be sent to the Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences (CASBS), 75 Alta Road, Stanford, CA 94305; casbs.org; 736-0100.

Eleanore Burchett Perkins
Eleanore Burchett Perkins of Ashland, Oregon, who served as director of religious education at St. Denis Catholic Parish in Menlo Park for many years, died Aug. 26, two days before her 80th birthday. A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 22, at Our Lady of the Mountain Church in Ashland.

Ms. Perkins was born in 1931 in the Philippines, where her father was stationed with the U.S. Army. A year later, the family moved to Northern California, first to San Francisco, then to Menlo Park, where she spent most of her adult life.

Educated at Presentation High School in San Francisco and Dominican College in Marin County, Ms. Perkins earned a master’s degree at the University of California and a doctorate of ministry from the Graduate Theological Foundation, with some studies at Oxford University.

Ms. Perkins served for many years as director of religious education at St. Denis Catholic Parish and the affiliated Our Lady of the Wayside in Portola Valley. Earlier, she was principal of St. Gregory Elementary School in San Mateo. She also rose to a position of leadership in the organization of Lay Dominicans.

As an editor, she worked at Stanford Research Institute, Gulf South Research Institute, and Stanford University, followed by 13 years as co-editor of Consumer Reports Travel Letter.


Ms. Perkins was one of those people who brought out the best in everyone, say family members. On learning of her death, a former employee said, “The years we spent with her were the best years of our lives.”
Barbara Richards

Barbara Richards, a longtime Atherton resident, died at home Aug. 9. She was 90.

Born Barbara Jean Smith, in San Francisco, she attended Lowell High School and studied political science at Stanford University, where she made many lifelong friends, the family said. The “Whiskin’ Wabbits” (her college badminton-playing pals) gathered for reunions every year until recently.

She graduated from Stanford in 1942 and in September of that year joined the WAVES in Washington, D.C. She achieved the rank of lieutenant by the war’s end.

Upon leaving the Navy, she began working for the phone company where she established many lasting friendships. Enjoying all aspects of classical music, she delighted in her evenings spent at the opera, ballet and local choir concerts, a family member said. She performed with both the Stanford Chorale and the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church Chancel Choir for more than 20 years.

In fact, her singing teacher introduced her to her husband of 53 years, Jack Richards. She stayed at home to raise her children but was actively involved with the schools, PTAs and as a Girl Scout Leader. She also volunteered with the Stanford Music Guild and the South Peninsula Chapter of the San Francisco Opera Guild, where she was recently recognized for over 50 years of service, including two terms as chapter president.

She and her husband Jack were members of the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, where they actively participated in Bible Study groups and Couples Club. As the kids got older, she returned to the work force, this time at SRI, where she worked in the Ionospheric Dynamics Lab, the family said. After retirement, she and her husband enjoyed camping in California and once drove up to Alaska’s Kenai Peninsula.

She avidly followed Stanford women’s basketball games and attended games often, the family said.

Survivors include her children, Ruth Androwsky of Fremont and John Richards of Palo Alto.

Go to AlmanacNews.com/obituaries for more information and to leave remembrances. Obituaries are based on information from families and mortuaries.

Lyn K. Carlsmith

(1932 – 2011)

Social psychologist Lyn K. Carlsmith of Ladera died peacefully and surrounded by family at Stanford Hospital on 1 Sept. 2011. Born Karolyn Gai Kuckenberg in Portland, OR, she graduated from Stanford, earned a PhD at Harvard, and taught at Stanford for many years. A scholar, an artist, and a devoted mother, she was the widow of professor J. Merrill Carlsmith and long-time companion to Dr. Gardner Lindzey. As a resident of Ladera for more than forty years, she served on the LCA Board of Directors and volunteered at Ladera School. She is survived by her children, Chris Carlsmith of Arlington, MA; Kim Sampson of Orlando, FL; and Kevin Carlsmith of Hamilton, NY; and by grandchildren Hayley, Mickel, Abby, Julia, Margaret, Peter, and great-grandson Sean. A more complete obituary is available at almanacnews.com/obituaries.

Eleanore Perkins

Aug. 28, 1931-Aug. 26, 2001

Eleanore Burchett Perkins (1931-2011) Former Director of Religious Education, St Denis Parish, Menlo Park,

Eleanore passed away on August 26, just two days shy of her 80th birthday, after a long and fulfilling life. She was born in 1931 in the Philippines, where her father was stationed in the US Army. A year later, the family moved to Northern California, initially San Francisco, then Menlo Park, where she spent most of her adult life. She and her husband, Ed, were married in 1966, and they retired to Southern Oregon in 1998.

Eleanore was educated at Presentation High School, San Francisco; she earned a BA at Dominican College (now Dominican University), MA at University of California, and DMin at Graduate Theological Foundation, with some studies at Oxford.

Eleanore’s professional career encompassed both editorial work and religious education. Until illness sidelined her, she served many years as Director of Religious Education at St. Denis Parish in Menlo Park and the affiliated Our Lady of the Wayside in Portola Valley. Earlier, she was Principal of St Gregory’s elementary school in San Mateo. She also rose to a position of leadership in the organization of Lay Dominicans.

As an educator, she worked at Stanford Research Institute (now SRI International), Gulf South Research Institute, and Stanford University, followed by 13 years as co-editor (with husband Ed) of Consumer Reports Travel Letter. After retiring to Ashland, Oregon, in 1998, Eleanore immediately became involved with local American Association of University Women and League of Women Voters activities, where her intelligence, wit, leadership, and compassion quickly earned her a wide circle of great friends.

She is survived by her husband, Ed, nieces Carmel Windows of Ashland, nephew Thomas Savasta of Lakehead CA, and their families. Although she and Ed had no children of their own, they de-facto parented first Carmel and later her son, Jacques Gené, for extended periods.

Eleanore was one of those rare people who brought out the best in anyone she touched. On learning of her death, a former employee summed it up: “The years we spent with her were the best years of our lives.” That’s a pretty good epitaph.

September 22, Our Lady of the Mountain, Ashland Oregon, 11 am.
Public notification still city’s Achilles’ heel

An incident that went unreported for nearly a month at Menlo Park’s Burgess Pool again raises the issue of how the pool operator and the city handle such important information.

Only after an Almanac inquiry did Community Services Director Cherise Brandell address questions about an Aug. 12 incident when a swimmer reported encountering a gas bubble in the pool and was taken to hospital.

According to Ms. Brandell, an extensive investigation of the pool’s mechanical equipment within hours of the incident found no leaks. The engineering firm that designed the pool’s systems, which were replaced after a gas leak last year, said it would be virtually impossible for such a bubble to occur, she said.

But the pool operator, Menlo Swim and Sport, said the investigation is still ongoing. So in the end, it’s unclear what happened at the pool on Aug. 12.

What is clear is that neither the city nor the private operator had any intention of notifying the public about the incident. Ms. Brandell said “...we determined this was not a ‘newsworthy’ event.”

We couldn’t disagree more. In our view, the city and operator failed on several counts, including:

- Not following up with the victim to try and understand more about her condition and the incident.
- Stating that an oversight committee was participating in the ongoing investigation, without naming the members. Apparently it’s composed of city staff from the public works and community services department, as well as Menlo Swim and Sport employees.
- Not notifying the public, preferably the same day, with an explanation of what happened and the results of the equipment examination to say the pool was working properly and safe to use.

Every incident of this nature, whether with or without merit, should be shared with the public via a routine announcement, as should the existence and composition of any oversight committee participating in an investigation at a public facility.

Covering up an incident only foments misunderstanding and suspicion, a lesson the city has yet to learn despite repeated opportunities to do so. It will doubtless have the chance to do so again in the future.
**LETTERS**

Continued from previous page

**Sad to see sudden departure of official**

Editor:

I was incredibly sad to learn of Janet McDougall’s sudden departure from her position as Portola Valley’s assistant town manager. As a member of the Parks and Recreation Committee, I was fortunate to have worked closely with Janet and found her to be an intelligent, extremely organized and dedicated employee.

The town was fortunate to have such a skilled, productive and kind person working for us. I think that she had planned to be around for at least another year and had hoped to have her successor. Those who knew and worked with Janet will truly miss her sense of humor and calm competence under pressure. The town’s residents have lost a real friend in the Town Hall.

Wendi Haskell
Old Spanish Trail, Portola Valley

**Preserve the character of Menlo Park**

Editor:

My boyfriend and I have been residents of Menlo Park for one year and we have really enjoyed living here. Prior to this, my boyfriend has lived in the Palo Alto area for the last 25 years. We were just walking through Menlo Park one night and remarking about how beautiful the light posts are in the park. They have a certain classic feel. This same classic feel is found wherever we go in Menlo Park: at the farmers’ market, when we sit down for a beer at BBC, or when stopping at Feldman’s to find a book.

Over the course of living here, I’ve noticed that my shopping habit has been to stay increasingly more local. There are no parking meters and I don’t have to fight my way to the store. These attributes make it easy to shop. I’ve also noticed that elderly people are able to easily traverse the downtown Menlo Park area, which makes me smile. I love living in a community where people of all ages flock the streets.

I hope that the city will preserve the character of Menlo Park and its downtown area and not move toward the high density development plan, as described in the downtown specific plan. The zoning changes to build on the surface parking areas will make the downtown area more difficult to access. I feel this development plan will cause deterioration to the attributes that Menlo Park residents enjoy. Perhaps there is a less expansive and more pragmatic approach to improve the downtown area that would preserve the Menlo Park “feel” in tandem with the roll-out of the project. The scope of the changes, as presently found in the plan, simply seem too large to maintain the character and feel of Menlo Park.

John Kadvany is a member of the Menlo Park Planning Commission.

**Reducing traffic through reduced parking**

By John Kadvany

Problem: Too many cars. Solution: Fewer parking spaces.

Expecting thousands of hires over several years, Facebook plans to limit parking at their new Menlo Park headquarters to approximately one space for every two employees. On most days a near majority will arrive by public transit, shuttles, car pools, or bikes. It’s a little counter-intuitive, but by limiting parking, fewer car trips are generated because some trips are impractical.

A similar recommendation for reduced residential (not retail or commercial) parking in the “Station Area” was made by the Planning Commission in their review of the Downtown/El Camino Real Specific Plan. The City Council should now vote to reduce residential parking in all Specific Plan zones. That’s the most significant action Menlo Park can take to decrease traffic and greenhouse gases due to the Specific Plan. Reduced residential parking also provides an incentive for the right kind of new housing for Menlo Park.

The draft plan allows several hundred new housing units, most on El Camino and around the station, but also downtown, with new residents closer to transit, and to downtown retail and business. Business and retail still need plenty of convenient parking for Menlo Park shoppers and others. At the same time choices should be different for future residents of Menlo Park’s transit-oriented housing.

Many young families, couples, singles, and seniors are looking beyond the multi-car suburban model, and would trade parking for lower housing costs or extra space. Developers might be able to increase space devoted to building units or public space. Why not use that tradecoff to reduce the total cars needed for Specific Plan residential development?

We’re not there yet. The draft plan requires 1.85 spaces per residential unit, or 19 spaces for 10 units, while, in contrast, the Bay Area’s Metropolitan Transportation Commission, noted in the plan, suggests 1 to 1.5 spaces per residential unit. With a transit-oriented approach, cars are capped through limited residential parking, and residents are allowed to “unbundle” parking choices from their housing.

Critics of reduced parking raise fears of over-parked side streets. But Menlo Park allows most overnight street parking, and on east El Camino Real, street access is limited. So the fear is overstated, as long as retail and business parking are kept separate. Some say residents “demand” more parking. But many renters and buyers would happily enjoy one car along with Menlo Park’s benefits. Menlo Park’s Specific Plan area is the perfect candidate for reduced residential parking limits.

Details of one-car residential minimums still need to be worked out, including developer obligations and conditions for “unbundling” parking and housing, leasing spaces, and reduced-size garages — also discussed in the draft plan. Downtown is already implementing a parking strategy with sensible time limits, new pricing, and permit controls. El Camino Real and the Station Area need their own dedicated parking strategy as well. If Facebook can expand with limited parking and fewer cars, its new host city can too. Reduced residential parking in all 10 Specific Plan zones is the best next step toward achieving that goal.

John Kadvany is a member of the Menlo Park Planning Commission.

**Draft plan for downtown is ‘truly awful’**

By Roxie Rorapaugh

A crucial step has been ignored in the El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan process. In September of 2009, fliers were distributed citywide advertising a community workshop to be held on Sept. 17. The flier stated that, “The results of this workshop will set the foundation for the draft version of the Specific Plan.”

Please note the word “draft,” because as soon as the workshop was over, the meaning of the word draft was changed. In the Sept. 30, 2009, Almanac, a story reporting on the workshop also reported that “aided by input received at the meeting, a consultant will deliver a final plan, part of a $1.2 million project to revamp the area...” It seemed like a mistake by the reporter, to call it a final plan. Trying to get anything about the Draft Specific Plan altered has been impossible. Even before the plan was released at a City Council meeting on Oct. 13, 2009, 12 members of the public spoke about their concerns about building heights and parking. Nine of these specifically asked that the current parking plazas downtown be preserved instead of building multi-story and/ or mixed-use parking structures.

Then, once the “Draft El Camino Real/ Downtown Specific Plan” was released, the answer to every question raised to Thomas Rogers of the planning department was, “This was all vetted through community workshops.” Instead of listening to people, discussing ways to meet the needs of the community and improve the plan, the planning department decided to just stop and call it done. The draft plan is now the final plan in their eyes, as far as I can tell.

Those were community workshops, not a constitutional convention. I myself did not attend in part because I did not like the venue (being in a church meeting in part because I did not like the convention. I myself did not attend in part because I did not like the venue (being in a church meeting in part because I did not like the venue). I thought these were just workshops for a draft plan, I did not think it necessary to try to force my feelings about the venue on the rest of the city, but who knows how many other people might have felt the same way.

The draft plan as it stands is truly awful. The plan gives away developmental rights on public parking plazas to build large parking structures that are not needed. The city should listen to the business owners who have been here for decades: Draeger’s, Flegel’s and all the others who have signed up with the Menlo Park Alliance. I’m not a business owner, just a citizen, but I love our downtown.

This plan will kill businesses and people will lose their jobs. The planning department has been rude to the people who have built the downtown; the consultants even suggested removing the median of beautiful trees on Santa Cruz Avenue. Even Mr. Rodgers admits it took three meetings to get the planners to make space for the heritage oak in the proposed Chestnut Street Paseo. Really, if the city could not attribute the beginning to preserve one of the most beautiful heritage trees we have downtown, what were we paying them for?

Now is the time for the City Council to vote in opposition to the plan, as is, or its current form and begin discussing a process to use the information that has been gathered and the work that has been done to benefit the city and all of its citizens.

Roxie Rorapaugh lives on Sherman Avenue in Menlo Park.

**Shocked to hear that plan needs hotels**

Editor:

I have been following the discussion of Menlo Park’s downtown specific plan pretty closely. What a shock to hear the Planning Commission told the Planning Commission that the massive build-out plan was likely to run a deficit unless the city builds two hotels.

Part of the reason for this is that it is much more expensive to build concrete garages than to provide on-street parking lots. Who profits? Clearly property owners will profit if their zoning is changed to allow them to build in the area. This makes the property worth more and rents will rise. Real estate agents, bankers and brokers will profit from selling any condos that are built.

The city could run a deficit. This could be compensated by raising taxes and fees, says staff. What? Lots of residents are in favor of building on and improving the El Camino corridor. Since a massive build-out on the parking lots we all use is a different matter. It is time to rethink this ill-conceived plan.

Gail Sredanovic
Ashton Avenue, Menlo Park
Situated at the end of a cul de sac in the exclusive Mountain Home neighborhood, this elegant, three-level, Traditional home enjoys sweeping views of the Western Hills and an extensive private pond. A sunny deck runs the width of the house, taking advantage of the incomparable views, while an expansive lawn leads to a stable and a path to the Woodside trail system.

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