

M-A HIGH scales back performing arts center in face of global construction materials inflation. Page 5

The Almanac

THE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER FOR MENLO PARK, ATHERTON, PORTOLA VALLEY AND WOODSIDE

MAY 24, 2006

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Menlo's Dick Gould inducted into college tennis Hall of Fame. [Page 5]

WHICH WAY?

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See Voter Guide, Section 2.



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Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

FIRST SHOT



The Almanac/Marjan Sandoughi

Run with the otters

Runners in the recently organized Oak Knoll Otters Track Club are getting ready for the 12th annual Otter Run on June 4 in Menlo Park. Oak Knoll teacher Michelle Tom is shown here in the lead. There's still time for kids, moms, dads and community members to sign up for this run and walk event, a 1.5-mile loop or a 5K double loop. See story on **Page 14**.

Atherton

■ A change in town rules governing use of athletic fields could kill off local Pop Warner football league, officials say. **Page 9**

Menlo Park

■ Veteran Menlo Park police officer Bruce Goitia is named chief. **Page 5**
 ■ Call for privatizing child care programs moves forward. **Page 8**

Schools

■ M-A High scales back performing arts center due to inflation in construction materials cost. **Page 5**

Also Inside

Calendar	37
Editorial	26
Letters	27
Obituaries	22
Police Calls	22

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Sports

■ Menlo Park's Dick Gould inducted into college tennis Hall of Fame. **Page 5**
 ■ Woodside's Max Kreig helps hockey team win national title. **Page 19**

People

■ Tyler MacNiven and partner win \$1 million on "Amazing Race" **Page 7**

Viewpoint

■ Pros and cons on school bond measure. **Page 27**

On the cover

Students Sara Altman, left, and Sarah Collins depart Hillview Middle School campus. The school is at the center of a June 6 ballot proposition to raise \$91 million in bond issues to build new facilities on the four campuses of the Menlo Park City School District. See Voter Guide, Section 2, starting on **Page 29**.

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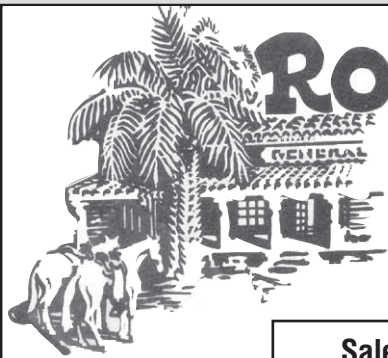
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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Bruce Goitia named new police chief

By Rory Brown
Almanac Staff Writer

For the second time in four years, Menlo Park has tapped from within its own ranks in naming a new police chief.



Bruce Goitia

Bruce Goitia, the department's acting chief and administration program commander, was named police chief Monday afternoon, May 22, by City Manager David Boesch.

Mr. Goitia has been with the department for 24 years. As a commander, he supervised personnel, training, hiring, media relations, records, communications and administrative support.

He joined the department in 1982 as a reserve officer, and served in several divisions before being promoted to sergeant. He was promoted to commander in 2002.

"Bruce is a top-notch chief, and there's no doubt he'll lead us effectively," said Mr. Boesch.

Chief Goitia was chosen from a field of 40 candidates, 20 of whom were from outside California, said Mr. Boesch. He added that the decision was particularly tough because the other finalist is also a member of the Menlo Park force — Commander Terri Molakides.

Chris Boyd, the department chief from 2002 to 2005, was also hired from within the department. His tenure was marked by a high number of resignations of officers, some longtime veterans.

Chief Goitia will undergo a six-month review process, and will receive a pay raise "assuming all goes well," said Mr. Boesch. He said Chief Goitia now earns about \$145,000 a year, a figure that will increase to about \$157,000 a year after his probationary period.

The new chief's top priority will be to fill the commander position left vacant due to his promotion to chief, said Mr. Boesch.

Chief Goitia could not be reached for comment. ■

Menlo's Dick Gould inducted into college tennis Hall of Fame

By Keith Peters
Palo Alto Weekly

Former Stanford men's tennis coach Dick Gould of Menlo Park — widely regarded as not only the top collegiate tennis coach of all time, but among the best in any college sport — will be inducted into the Intercollegiate Tennis Association's Hall of Fame on Wednesday, May 24, during the NCAA Division I Men's and Women's Tennis Championships at Stanford.



Gonzalesphoto.com

In addition to Gould, the nine-member class of inductees consists of former Cardinal players Dan Goldie, Matt Mitchell and Jared Palmer.

Gould highlights this year's ceremonies, which will take place Wednesday evening at Stanford's Arrillaga Family Sports Center.

He guided the Cardinal to a record 17 NCAA team championships while coaching 10 NCAA singles champions and seven doubles champs during his 38 years at the helm.

Gould twice was named Wil-

son/ITA National Coach of the Decade for the 1980s and 1990s.

Gould retired from coaching in 2004 with a career record of 776-148 and was an amazing 88-11 (.888) in NCAA tournament matches.

He is currently director of tennis at Stanford and is tournament director for this month's NCAA Division I Men's and Women's Championships.

Stanford's Goldie, Mitchell and Palmer are the 13th, 14th and 15th Cardinal players to be inducted into the ITA Hall of Fame.

Goldie played on two NCAA championship teams in 1983 and

1986 and earned ITA All-American honors three times from 1984-86. He also captured the 1985 ITA National Indoor and 1986 NCAA singles crowns.

Mitchell won the 1977 NCAA singles title and helped the Cardinal to NCAA back-to-back team titles in 1977-78. He was also a three-time ITA All-American.

Palmer captured the 1991 NCAA singles title. He went on to win two Grand Slam doubles titles (and

M-A High scales back performing arts center

■ Global demand for construction materials hits home.

By David Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

The dramatic exterior lines of the performing arts center planned for Menlo-Atherton High School may make it a stylish addition to Atherton and Menlo Park for high school plays, community theater and cultural events when it opens its doors in early 2009, but the impacts of global trends will be a part of its story.

Worldwide demand for construction materials, combined

with escalating labor and transportation costs in California, have cut some 30 percent out of the purchasing power of the \$70 million in bond funds that voters approved in November 2004, said assistant superintendent Ed LaVigne, the financial officer for the Sequoia Union High School District.

Cost inflation over the 30 months between the 2004 election and ground-breaking will cut the \$70 million down to about \$49 million, said Mr. LaVigne. The \$70 million bond measure was intended to complete district modernizing efforts begun in 1996 and continued in 2001 with bond



The Almanac/Marjan Sadoughi

Making a splash

Nicholas Gearing, 4, left, and Saoirse Kane enjoy the children's pool at Menlo Park's new Burgess Aquatics Center. Several hundred people braved cloudy, threatening skies to attend the center's grand opening Saturday.

two mixed), reach No. 1 in the ATP doubles rankings and play for the U.S. Davis Cup team several times over an eight-year span.

Players are eligible for elec-

tion to the ITA Hall of Fame 15 years after their last collegiate match and coaches are eligible

See GOULD, page 8

measures of \$45 million and \$88 million, respectively.

The trends mean a tighter budget for the new arts center at M-A and some scaling back, said Mr. LaVigne. There will be 482 seats instead of 500, a slot for one semi-tractor-trailer at the loading dock instead of two, a stage not quite as deep as planned, and a smaller vestibule out front.

Unlike the computer-controlled rigging at Woodside High's new theater, a change in a scenic backdrop at M-A's theater will need ropes, weights and elbow grease.

"It will be a stark performing arts center in contrast to Woodside's (and made with) durable materials that cost more than

they used to," said Mr. LaVigne glumly. And despite the cuts, the project cost is expected to rise to \$21 million from the original \$18.5 million, he said.

Woodside High's theater opened a year ago and cost the Sequoia district \$16.9 million.

The estimates for M-A's theater include funding from the city of Menlo Park, which has a memorandum of understanding "potentially committing the city to pay up to \$2.6 million" toward a shared use of the theater, said Menlo Park Finance Director Carol Augustine.

Cost escalation is normal,

See THEATER, page 8



Winners of "The Amazing Race 9" were Tyler MacNiven, right, who grew up in Woodside, and BJ Averell.

Tyler MacNiven and partner win \$1 million on 'Amazing Race'

By Jane Knoerle
Almanac Staff Writer

Tyler MacNiven, 25, who grew up in Woodside, and partner BJ Averell finished in first place in the May 17 season finale of CBS' round-the-world competition, "The Amazing Race."

Their challenges included skydiving, bungee jumping, scaling a building, and building a Greek statue, to say nothing of gulping down bowls of stir-fried grasshoppers and panhandling in Australia.

The prize? \$1 million dollars.

In the final event Tyler and BJ, who lives in Los Angeles, found themselves going against rivals Eric Sanchez and Jeremy Ryan on a snow-covered field in Colorado. One member of each team had to run through a field with 285 flags and find the flags of the nine countries they traveled to on the 59,000-mile race. Then, that member had to line up the flags in the order they visited the countries.

Eric and Jeremy, who were dubbed the "frat boys," were well ahead of Tyler and BJ, but couldn't get the order right.

BJ cracked it on his first attempt and he and Tyler raced first to the finish.

Tyler knew he had won the prize last December, but couldn't share the news until last week when he and other contestants were flown to New York City for the season finale. His mother, Margaret, older brother Dylan, grandmother, aunt, and girlfriend, Ayumi Meegan, were there to, hopefully, help him celebrate. Ayumi's mother even flew out from Japan.

Tyler's dad, Buck's restaurateur Jamis MacNiven, stayed home. "Someone had to stay to feed the dog," he says. Mr. MacNiven, who doesn't own a television, watched the show at a neighbor's.

After attending CBS' celebration party, Tyler and BJ were up early to make the rounds of the talk shows, appearing on "The Early Show" and "Regis and Kelly." When we talked to Tyler Friday, he was hoarse from three hours of radio interviews.

Tyler and BJ, known of the show as the "hip-

pies," garnered lots of fans. Blogs called them "funny and quirky," "hilarious and entertaining to watch," "intelligent and courteous," and "true gentlemen." Some bloggers dissented, however, calling them "attention-grabbing" and "pretentious prima donnas."

Many pitched the idea of the boys appearing on a travel show, such as "Globe Trekker" on PBS.

Tyler and BJ met four years ago during a Semester at Sea program, where they shared the experience of sailing around the world.

Tyler graduated from UC Santa Cruz after completing two semesters abroad, one in Hungary, the other in South Africa. BJ is a graduate of Harvard University. Both have traveled the world and speak several languages. After his stint in the local spotlight in 1998 while campaigning to get into Stanford, Tyler became a bit of a celebrity in 2004 in Japan when he walked the length of the country. He covered about 2,000 miles in the 145-day trip.

Tyler took video footage during his adventure in Japan and made a documentary recounting his experiences.

He identifies himself as a film-

maker and already has a future project in the works ... a documentary entitled "Kissing Castro." He intends to walk the length of Cuba culminating in a visit to Fidel Castro's office, where he hopes to plant a kiss on the Cuban leader's cheek.

Meanwhile, he and BJ are going to spend the next few months "exploring media opportunities" and are meeting with agents in Los Angeles.

His future will definitely be involved with travel. He's already been to every continent, except Anarctica. "This is an amazing world and I want to show it to America," he says.

While Tyler pursues his career, his brothers have plans of their own. Rowan is moving to Tahiti and older brother, Dylan, is opening a new restaurant, the Woodhouse Fish Co., at Market and 14th Street in San Francisco with his dad as partner. "We're going to specialize in fast-food lobster," says Mr. MacNiven. ■

'This is an amazing world and I want to show it to America.'

TYLER MACNIVEN,
ABOUT HIS INTEREST IN TRAVEL AND FILM

9th Earl Spencer to visit Flegel's in Menlo Park

Charles Edward Maurice Spencer, brother of the late Princess Diana, will appear at Flegel's Home Furnishings for a champagne reception from 6 to 8 p.m. Thursday, May 25, at 870 Santa Cruz Ave. in Menlo Park.

The evening is a preview of his new line of furniture, featuring original designs and reproductions of the stately furniture and accessories that furnish Althorp, the family estate in the English countryside.

As children, the 9th Earl Spencer and Diana, Princess of Wales, spent time at the estate, where he maintains a Princess Diana museum today.

To attend the reception, call Flegel's at 326-9661 to RSVP.

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Gloria Darke



Tenant-occupied house can be a difficult sale!

Q. We've decided to sell one of our rental properties in Menlo Park. Are there possible problems we need to know, before we inform the tenants?

—E. Taylor

A. Sometimes, your once cooperative tenant can suddenly turn into your worst enemy after they learn about your intentions to sell "their" house. A difficult tenant can make a home sale drag on far beyond your expectations.

Problems arise when a tenant makes showing difficult, by not cooperating with real estate agents. Also, unkind remarks about their landlord (you) and the property don't help the situation either. To make matters worse, the tenant can suddenly let the property run

down. The bar has been set high in the way a property is presented to the market in our area. A home is painted, carpet's replaced, professionally cleaned and usually staged. Tenants probably will not allow this to be done.

Keep in mind tenants have their rights too, they can usually demand a 24 hour notice before the property is shown. The best strategy is to offer your tenants an incentive for their inconveniences and their cooperation.

You can gain tenants' help by offering a rent reduction, while the property is on the market. Another strategy is to offer a bonus at the close of escrow, based on the number of showings. The more showings the tenant cooperates with, the bigger the bonus.

For answers to any questions you may have on real estate, you may e-mail me at gdarke@apr.com or call 462-1111, Alain Pinel Realtors. I also offer a free market analysis of your property.

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Call for privatizing child care programs moves forward

■ Council divided on timeline that could have private operator taking over in January.

By **Rory Brown**

Almanac Staff Writer

As if the question of whether to privatize Menlo Park's child care programs isn't divisive enough, City Council members last week argued about the process they should use in deciding the issue.

At the council's May 16 meeting, council members Kelly Fergusson and Andy Cohen called for the city to delay any move toward privatization until the city determines the exact costs of the current child care programs, but council members Nicholas Jellins, Mickie Winkler and Lee Duboc voted against the request.

Ms. Fergusson and Mr. Cohen said they are dissatisfied with the fast-track process outlined by Assistant City Manager Audrey Seymour to seek and review bids from operators interested in taking over the city's toddler, preschool and school-age child care programs based at the city's new Menlo Children's Center.

In April, staff had said the process for studying proposals, conducting hearings and, potentially, putting the program in private hands, would take eight to 16 months.

But at last week's meeting, Ms. Seymour introduced a timeline that sped up the bidding and decision-making processes, making it possible for the current council to decide on privatizing the programs before the November 7 elections.

According to the new timeline, the city will submit a request for proposals by June 14, and the council could greenlight negotiations with a private operator by September 21.

City Manager David Boesch said the programs could be transferred to a private operator by January.

The November elections could change the makeup — and

■ MENLO PARK

the political leaning — of the council. The terms of Mayor Jellins, Ms. Winkler and Ms. Duboc, who usually vote together on major issues on the consistently divided council, expire in December. They have not announced whether they will run for re-election.

Earlier this year after only a month of discussion, the council majority voted to privatize the city's new \$6.8 million aquatics center — a 3-2 decision that angered many in the community and has made privatization a hot-button issue in town.

'Limited pie'

Ms. Winkler and Ms. Duboc said the city shouldn't be covering the costs of programs that serve a small percentage of Menlo Park families. The two Burgess-based programs serve a combined 160 children.

"There's a limited pie, and there's only so many ways we can share it," Ms. Duboc said.

Both council members questioned the wide time frame given to the process of privatizing the programs presented at the council's April 19 meeting, but applauded the new timeline.

Ms. Duboc said the new timeline shows voters — who may be asked to vote on a tax measure November 7 — that the city is working quickly to save money by considering privatization.

She also said the city will cut employee costs within the program and at the administrative level if the programs are privatized.

Undefined costs

Ms. Fergusson and Mr. Cohen told the Almanac that the city is yet to determine the benefits of privatizing the programs, but Ms. Winkler and Ms. Duboc

want to "rush" the process so that an agreement to privatize can be made before the election.

"We leap to solutions without defining what the problem is," Ms. Fergusson said. "We need to have the budget numbers before we know what the problem is."

Ms. Fergusson said the city should wait for the results of a cost-allocation study that will begin in July, and assess how efficiently the city's programs run.

The estimated net cost of the programs — what the city pays after revenues are recovered — has shifted in recent weeks. Newly revealed savings and fee increases are expected to reduce the costs more than \$200,000 a year.

The previous estimated net cost was \$444,000 a year. Ms. Seymour said she doesn't know the latest estimated costs.

A 10-person volunteer committee of parents, child care specialists, appointed officials and Ms. Seymour will determine if a rental payment to occupy the new children's center is an important factor in choosing a potential operator.

The same committee will create the request for proposals and evaluate the potential operators. The city will also submit a bid to continue running the programs.

Union is watching

Representatives from the Service Employees International Union Local 715, which represents the city's 20 child care employees, is watching the privatization debate "very carefully," according to SEIU Worksite Organizer Sascha Eisner.

In April, Mr. Eisner said the union would actively campaign against council members who support privatization and are running for re-election.

"Some council members have made it pretty clear they want to privatize city services," Mr. Eisner said. "Some people just believe in the private sector model, and I

pre-buy construction materials," said Mr. LaVigne. "Where am I going to store \$5 million worth of building materials? ... In construction, you live in today's moment, and today's moment means today's costs."

Cement shortage

At this moment, California is vulnerable to shortages in cement, in part because of the state's demanding permitting process for building new



The Almanac/Marjan Sadoughi

Standing on deck

Tim Sheeper, head of Menlo Swim and Sport LLC, poses next to the 25-meter by 25-yard lap pool at the Burgess Aquatics Center. For information about the programs offered at the center by Mr. Sheeper's company, go to MenloSwim.com.

don't think they should be governing the public sector."

The council devoted a substantial portion of its debate to whether to even vote on the new timeline. Ms. Duboc moved to approve the timeline, but Mayor Jellins and Ms. Winkler said there was no need to vote on the matter.

Ms. Duboc withdrew her motion, but Ms. Fergusson moved to stop further exploration of privatizing the child care programs. Mr. Cohen supported Ms. Fergusson, even though in April, he said he was willing to consider privatization as a means to cut the city's costs. ■

GOULD

continued from page 5

following retirement. The main criteria for election are college accomplishments as well as honors earned after college.

The ITA Men's Tennis Hall of Fame inducted its first class in 1983 and has inducted more than 160 players, coaches and contributors since then. Members include the late Arthur Ashe (UCLA), Jimmy Connors (UCLA), John McEnroe (Stanford) and Stan Smith (USC). ■

— Keith Peters is sports editor of the Palo Alto Weekly.

THEATER

continued from page 5

rising from 5 percent to 10 percent a year, said Mr. LaVigne; adjusting to economic realities is an ongoing conversation. "The question is how to move forward and at full speed and still do value engineering," he added, referring to the term of art for achieving the desired function and performance but at the lowest cost.

Another way to stretch dollars is to find another source of money.

The original plans for M-A's theater project called for bond funds to pay for landscaping and improvements to parking lots and traffic circulation. Instead, the district will use funds from the state earmarked for maintenance, said Mr. LaVigne.

Could the district avoid cost escalations by spending money on materials now? "You can't

cement plants, said Ed Sullivan, chief economist for the Chicago-based Portland Cement Association.

As a coastal state, California is somewhat dependent on foreign sources for the raw materials that go into making cement, he said. The explosive growth in construction in China and India and the competition for ships around the Pacific Rim is not helping, he added.

"If China is using all the ships

and we don't have enough, we can't bring (the raw materials) over," he said.

Demand for cement is unusually high nationwide and is likely to stay high "for the next couple of years," said Mr. Sullivan. If mortgage rates rise and residential construction cools off, demand could ease but California may be left on the short end anyway given its particular situation, he added. ■

Pop Warner football dealt late hit

By Andrea Gemmet
Almanac Staff Writer

The roar of the crowd, the trill of the whistles, the crunch of tiny football helmets ... neighbors of Menlo-Atherton High School have had their fill of noisy pee-wee football games.

A change in the town of Atherton's rules governing private groups' use of athletic fields at public schools could end up killing off the seven-year-old Pop Warner football league that practices and plays games at Menlo-Atherton, league officials said.

Under the rubric of the special events ordinance adopted by the City Council in September, fields can't be used after 7 p.m. on weekdays, 6 p.m. on Saturdays or 5 p.m. on Sundays without a permit. Pop Warner officials said they weren't notified in September and only recently realized that the ordinance would affect their program.

Being restricted to those hours would signal the death-knell of the Menlo-Atherton Vikings Pop Warner teams, said Greg Baty, a coach and former NFL player who lives in Atherton.

About 150 kids on six teams participate in the local Menlo-

Atherton Vikings Pop Warner league, he said.

The teams practice and play games on the high school's artificial turf football field after M-A's teams get finished, he told the City Council at its May 17 meeting. On weekdays, the high school teams don't finish practice until 6:30 p.m. and the Vikings practice sessions last as long as the daylight holds out, as late as 8:30 p.m. he said.

"With these guidelines, you're basically shutting down this field to any other outside use," Mr. Baty said.

The Vikings aren't allowed to use any of the high school's grass fields, he said.

Pop Warner officials asked the council to give them a permit that would allow them to use the football field outside of the permitted hours, something the city manager is empowered to decide.

"The most important thing to us is to not kill this program," said Mr. Baty. "In my experience, this is the only place where kids meet other kids from all different socioeconomic circumstances. I know my sons have benefited greatly."

At a packed council meeting held May 17, with many neighbors sporting stickers with the

word "exceptions" circled with a slash through it, City Manager Jim Robinson said his recommendation was to not grant the permit.

"I don't think anyone here opposes Pop Warner," said Oak Grove Avenue resident Carol Smith. "The sound of children having fun is an awesome sound. The problem is the sound of children 24/7."

Residents need to know that they will have some quiet time so they can plan a barbecue or an outdoor wedding, she told the council, and said that granting an exception would have a dramatic impact on residents' quality of life.

Council members encouraged Pop Warner officials to seek out creative solutions and alternate playing sites that would allow them to keep the program alive while obeying the time limits set in the town's ordinance.

"It's with a heavy heart I feel you have got to work within the strictures (of the ordinance)," said Councilwoman Kathy McKeithen.

Since the issue is not technically a council decision, the council, by consensus, directed the city manager to deny Pop Warner's permit request. ■

Bayfront Park advocate to run for council

By Rory Brown
Almanac Staff Writer

MENLO PARK

Menlo Park resident Elizabeth Lasensky is no stranger to speaking out against members of the City Council, but now she wants to fill one of their seats.

Ms. Lasensky, a 15-year resident and one of the most outspoken critics of the council's push to build a golf course and playing fields at Bayfront Park, said she intends to run for one of three council seats up for grabs in November.

Those seats are currently filled by council members Nicholas Jellins, Lee Duboc and Mickie Winkler, who often vote together on major issues. So far, they haven't publicly announced whether they will run for re-election.

Ms. Lasensky, a member of the Housing Commission since August, is the third resident to announce her candidacy. Parks and Recreation Commissioner Richard Cline and former Councilman Steve Schmidt say they also will run.

Ms. Lasensky has worked for the dean of research at Stanford University for 19 years.

She and Mr. Schmidt were driving forces behind the creation last year of Friends of Bayfront Park,

a resident group that gathered the signatures of more than 2,000 people against the plans to build a golf course and three playing fields at the 160-acre park off Marsh Road. Ms. Lasensky served as the group's president until recently.

Mr. Jellins, Ms. Winkler and Ms. Duboc authorized negotiations to develop the park, but the developer eventually withdrew the proposal, citing public opposition.

Ms. Lasensky has also voiced frustration over the council's privatization of the city's aquatics center and a recent push to privatize the city's child care programs, calling "the privatization of public facilities a breach of public trust."

"I'm really upset with the quality of the decision making," she said. "I want the council to return to open, honest and respectful deliberations."

Unlike Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Cline, Ms. Lasensky is a relatively

fresh face on the city's divisive political scene.

"I don't come with a lot of baggage ... and I think that's a good thing," Ms. Lasensky said. "The council should be cooperative and get things done. There needs to be some change."

On the oft-divided council, Mayor Jellins, Ms. Winkler and Ms. Duboc garner more support from business and real estate interests than the other side. Council members Andy Cohen and Kelly Fergusson often receive support from residents opposed to increased development.

Ms. Lasensky said she often agrees with Mr. Cohen and Ms. Fergusson, but is yet to decide whether to align herself with anyone before the election, including Mr. Schmidt, whom she worked with through the Friends group.

Ms. Lasensky said her other goals include: maintaining a "diverse housing pool" through the construction of affordable rental units; promoting business development on El Camino Real and the city's downtown corridor; improving the city's transit system; researching sites for more playing fields; and encouraging "green technology companies" to move to the city. ■

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Charters' impact grows on Sequoia budget

Cuts likely in non-teaching staff

By David Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

As has happened in the previous nine school years, the Sequoia Union High School District is likely to see a seven-figure increase in its property tax revenues for 2006-07. All of this new money will be spent on district students, but most of those students are likely to be attending two charter schools in Redwood City.

The Sequoia district — which includes Woodside and Menlo-Atherton high schools — has an \$85 million budget for 2006-07 and is expecting an upward bump of \$3.4 million in revenues due to an expected 5.75 percent increase in assessed property values, said assistant superintendent Ed LaVigne.

But Sequoia's legal obligation to pay operating expenses of \$6,200 per student for local charter schools may reach a total of \$3.9 million, a gap between new income and new expenses

■ SCHOOLS

of \$500,000.

To bridge that gap and cover additional costs for routine staff pay increases and health care premiums for retirees, the district will likely cut \$1.5 million in spending on non-teaching staff, said Mr. LaVigne.

"There are no new monies remaining," said Mr. LaVigne. "(And) the mantra of every educator is to keep the effects away from the classroom when times are tough."

The influx of charter school students is behind the new expense. Enrollment at High Tech High Bayshore is expected to rise to 250 from 151 this year, boosting the district's annual outlay for the school to about \$1.6 million from \$939,000 in 2005-06, said Mr. LaVigne.

Adding 375 students in four grades from Summit Preparatory High School will add another \$2.3 million to the district's expense column for the first time. (Summit's first charter was with a state-funded school



Norbert von der Groeben/Palo Alto Weekly

Reason to celebrate

Dr. Marc Pelletier chats with Jen Judas of Menlo Park as she holds her daughter Sarah Judas during a May 17 reunion party at Stanford Hospital for heart and lung transplant patients and their families. Jen's husband, Andreas Judas, received a new heart five years ago, and Dr. Pelletier performed the operation.

district in Tuolumne County.) While the governor recently proposed adding \$2.3 billion to the state budget for K-12 education in 2006-07, any additional money

for the Sequoia district would be earmarked for purposes such as school maintenance. The district relies on property tax revenues for discretionary spending.

worry about given its popularity and its respectable score for the 2005 statewide academic performance tests.

Ms. Tavenner said she prefers a charter with Sequoia, though she would not elaborate on the difference between a charter from the district and one from the county. The Sequoia district must pay Summit's per-student operating expenses for students who live in the district.

Ms. Tavenner noted that the state paid Summit's expenses for three years, an arrangement that removed these students from Sequoia's rolls and increased the funding available per student in the district.

Sequoia officials have countered that Sequoia's economies of scale are such that, while the district must pay for each student who goes to a charter school — \$6,200 for 2006-07 — the savings of not having to educate that student are less than what the district pays to charter schools. ■

Summit Prep's welcome

Summit Prep is three years old this year and enrolls 86 students from the Almanac's circulation area. The first class of seniors will graduate in June 2007.

Summit has petitioned for a charter from either the Sequoia district or the San Mateo County Board of Education, said Summit's executive director Diane Tavenner. The Sequoia board is likely to vote on a charter at its Wednesday, May 31, meeting.

State law requires that a district justify denying a charter. The state Legislative Analyst's Office notes that most denials cite "an unsound educational program" or concern that a school is "demonstrably unlikely to succeed."

Summit should have little to

School musicians win jazz fest awards

Three students from Woodside High School came away with awards at the recent Reno Jazz Festival, attended this year by musicians from some 330 middle schools, high schools and community and four-year colleges.

Awards for musicianship at the April 28-29 festival were given to Woodside drummer Ben Bressler, trombonist Ray Torres and pianist Bennett Roth-Newell, said Woodside band spokesman Bill Newell.

Big bands from both Woodside and Menlo-Atherton high schools performed. A schools' band and/or jazz combo performs for about 30 minutes, then receives feedback in a clinic following the performance.

Along with the competition, the festival included concerts and clinics on playing individual instruments. The festival is sponsored by the University of Nevada at Reno and is one of the nation's oldest and largest music education festivals.

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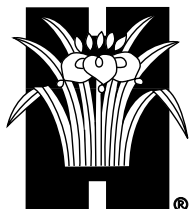
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Atherton rethinks solar energy fees

By Andrea Gemmet
Almanac Staff Writer

It's going to be cheaper to go green in Atherton. The permit fees for installing solar energy-producing photovoltaic systems will drop to \$250, thanks to a May 17 decision by the City Council.

Kurt Newick of the Sierra Club's Loma Prieta chapter asked the council to consider lowering or waiving its fees, saying that a recent study by the organization showed that Atherton had the eighth highest permit fees out of 40 jurisdictions surveyed.

"Solar fees are way out of whack," Mr. Newick said, adding that a \$200-\$300 fee should cover the actual cost of reviewing plans and inspecting photovoltaic systems.

Atherton bases its fees on the value of the project, said Building Official Mike Hood. For \$27,000 photovoltaic system, Atherton was charging \$970 in fees, he said.

In the past year, there were only two applications for grid-tied solar energy systems in Atherton, Mr. Hood said. Up until recently, most solar permits were for systems designed to heat swimming pools, he said.

Mayor Charles Marsala and Councilman Jim Janz advocated

eliminating the solar permit fee altogether, but failed to get a majority of council members' support.

Councilwoman Kathy McKeithen argued that since it costs the town several hours of staff time to process the permits and inspect the photovoltaic systems, it would be unfair to eliminate the fee.

"The cost should not be borne by other people," she said. "The fee should be minimal, and in direct relation to the actual cost to the town."

The decision to set a flat fee of \$250 passed on a 5-0 vote.

Other towns

While several municipalities, including Los Altos Hills, offer free solar power permits, Portola Valley has the lowest permit fee — \$50 — on a Sierra Club cost-comparison list.

However, Woodside's fee is actually lower, said Town Manager Susan George. It's only \$30, and it has been since 1995, she told the Town Council at its May 9 meeting.

The Woodside fee on the Sierra Club list — \$700 — is actually the town's roofing permit fee, she said.

The Sierra Club study is at <http://lomaprieta.sierraclub.org>.

Grade separations at Willow, Marsh roads?

■ MENLO WATCH

As regional transportation bodies plan a public transportation project that will connect Menlo Park with the East Bay, at least one Menlo Park council member has a major concern.

Councilwoman Mickie Winkler says the Dumbarton Rail, the commuter train being planned to connect Menlo Park and Redwood City with Union City via the Dumbarton railroad bridge, will likely jam traffic when it crosses Willow and Marsh roads.

Ms. Winkler says regional transportation bodies planning the project, such as the Cities and Counties Association of Governments (CCAG), should consider funding grade separations — projects that would separate the tracks from roadways — where the tracks intersect Marsh and Willow roads.

Ms. Winkler drafted a letter to CCAG, requesting grade separations are funded and implemented before trains are operational in 2010, and will ask the council to sign off on it at a future meeting.

The project is funded by trans-

portation authorities in San Mateo, Santa Clara and Alameda counties and a measure passed by Bay Area voters in 2004. Trains are expected to serve about 4,800 passengers a day.

Stanford hotel

Stanford's proposal to build a hotel-office complex on Sand Hill Road near Interstate 280 is scheduled to go before the Menlo Park City Council June 20.

The project includes 100,000 square feet of office space, a 120-room hotel, a restaurant and a spa/fitness center.

The hotel would generate \$1.3 million for the city when it opens in 2008 and \$1.9 million by 2011, according to a recent financial study.

The Planning Commission is scheduled to consider the proposal May 22, after the Almanac's deadline. Check Almanac-News.com for a news update.



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Community

NEWS OF LOCAL PEOPLE AND EVENTS IN THE COMMUNITY

'Otter Run' takes off June 4 from Oak Knoll School

About 1,200 runners, joggers and walkers are expected to hit the pavement on Sunday, June 5, when the 12th annual "Otter Run" takes off from Oak Knoll School, 1895 Oak Knoll Lane in Menlo Park.

Getting a head start on conditioning for the race are the 140 members — students from first through fifth grades, teachers and moms — of the new Oak Knoll Otters Track Club. They've been working out since April 18 every Tuesday and Friday after school.

Organized by a small group of Oak Knoll parents 12 years ago, the run has become a popular

See picture on Page 3.

community event for all ages and continues as a benefit for Oak Knoll School.

Funds from the run this year and next will go toward building a jogging path at the K-5 school, said event co-chairs Dana Hayse, Katie Ferguson and Sydney Wachhorst.

Warm-ups begin at 8 a.m. Sunday at the school. The run starts at 8:30 a.m. along a 1.5-mile loop through the residential streets in the Oak Knoll neighborhood. For the more serious runners and walkers, there's a 5K (double

loop) event. No bikes, skaters or dogs are permitted.

All participants, age 12 and under, will receive ribbons. Medals will be awarded to winners in age categories.

Participants may pick up registration forms at the Oak Knoll School office or by going online to www.active.com. Early registration deadline is Friday, May 26, and the fees are \$20 for adults and \$10 for students, age 18 and under. After the early deadline,

fees go up \$5 for each category.

Registration fee also includes an Otter Run T-shirt. A smorgasbord of post-race treats will be waiting at the finish line.

Sponsors include: Laurel Homes, CIBC World Markets, Trammell Crow Co., Sutter Hill Ventures, Whitman Capital, Redpoint Venture, The Carlyle Group, Electromatic Inc., Regis Management Co., Atria Genetic, Menlo Park POA, Gene Lentz/Coldwell Banker, David Crouch

Custom Homes, Cody/Brock General Contractors, Trident Capital, Pacific Peninsula Custom Group, 24 Lost Soles, Diamondhead Ventures, Ferguson Family, Coldwell Banker, II Mechanical, PEI, Saunders-Ruiz Family and Vais Family. Twenty more families have signed on as supporters and 13 local businesses are contributing in-kind donations.

For information, call the race hotline at 322-6263.

Triple challenge to runners under 18

The 24 Lost Soles, a Menlo Park running club of moms and dads, and the Runners High sports shoe shop in Menlo Park are sponsoring the Triple Feat — a challenging to boys and girls under 18 to get on their feet, put on running shoes and finish three upcoming races.

Anyone can win an award, say the organizers, if they register and complete the three runs:

■ The 5K Big Bear Run on Sunday, May 21, at Menlo-

Atherton High School.

■ Otter Run on Sunday, June 4, the 1.5 mile or 5K courses from Oak Knoll School in Menlo Park.

■ Olivia's Miles, a 5K certified run/walk on Saturday, June 10, from Menlo Park's Fremont Park that benefit's research for Krabbe Disease and other leukodystrophies.

Runners may register online at www.active.com or pick up forms at the schools or the Run-

ners High shop.

After completing all three races, runners must bring their three race bibs into the Runners High, 859 Santa Cruz Ave. in Menlo Park to win an award. They will receive a full-size beach towel imprinted with race logos and selected goodies to help in future races.

For more information and answers to questions, call Jeff Child at 325-1989 or Tom Hayse at 233-6263.

Do you experience unpleasant pulling, painful, creeping, crawling, or tingling sensations in your legs that are worse at rest or at bedtime and interfere with your ability to fall asleep? If so, you may have Restless Legs Syndrome, or RLS.

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You must be at least 18 years of age, not pregnant and not nursing, and in good health.

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Say so long to Mary Ann Somerville

Parents, teachers, staff and community members from the Las Lomas Elementary School District are invited to

a get-together to say goodbye to Superintendent Mary Ann Somerville, who is retiring after 10 years leading the district and

a 40-year career in education.

The event, hosted by the La Entrada PTA, is scheduled for 2:15 p.m. on Wednesday, June 7, in the La Entrada Middle School library. The annual "appreciation tea" for staff and volunteers will follow.

La Entrada Middle School is located at 2200 Sharon Road in west Menlo Park. For more information, write to PTA co-president Angela Sherry at ZZBS@aol.com.

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Correction

An Almanac story in the May 17 issue, "Political pandemonium in Menlo Park," was incorrect in reporting that Menlo Park resident Hank Lawrence spoke against Councilwoman Kelly Fergusson's home-remodel project at the council's May 9 meeting. Mr. Lawrence did not speak against the project; he donated time to resident Sam Sinnott, who spoke against the project.

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MARGOT LOCKWOOD



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Locals win Toastmaster communication awards

Margaret Winterburn of Menlo Park was recently named "Toastmaster of the Year" by the SRI Organon Toastmasters club at its 26th anniversary luncheon at SRI International in Menlo Park.

Two others were honored:

■ Menlo Park Councilwoman Kelly Ferguson received the Communication & Achievement Award, given to a local leader who is not a Toastmaster and who has used communication skills to serve the community.

PEOPLE

Ms. Fergusson was recognized for her efforts to organize community support for the reopening of Kepler's bookstore.

■ Hal Huntley of Los Gatos received, for the second time, the Karl Lind award for exceptional service to the club. He previously won it in 1990.

Ms. Winterburn was recognized for winning five "best speaker" awards and for demon-

strating gifts as a storyteller, said Aldora Lee, a club vice president. Ms. Winterburn's talks included memories of growing up in England during World War II and coming to America as a young nurse.

Toastmasters is an international organization that helps people develop public speaking and leadership skills. The club meets Tuesdays at SRI, from 11:45 a.m. to 1 p.m., in the Building G conference room on Laurel St. in Menlo Park.

Visitors and new members are invited. For information, go to www.sriorganon.com, or call Douglas Bell at 859-3126.

Students win art awards

Graduating seniors Danielle Morin of Woodside High School and Kelly Morton of Menlo-Atherton High School have won Menlo Art League scholarships for outstanding students in the arts. Each stu-

dent will receive \$500. Staffs of the respective schools made the awards.

Danielle lives in Redwood City and will attend UC Berkeley in the fall. Kelly, who lives in Menlo Park, will attend UC Santa Barbara.

Menlo Art League, which is affiliated with the city of Menlo Park Community Services Division, has given awards to outstanding seniors in the arts at the two schools since 1997. For more information about Menlo Art League, call Beverly Balanis, 323-9935.

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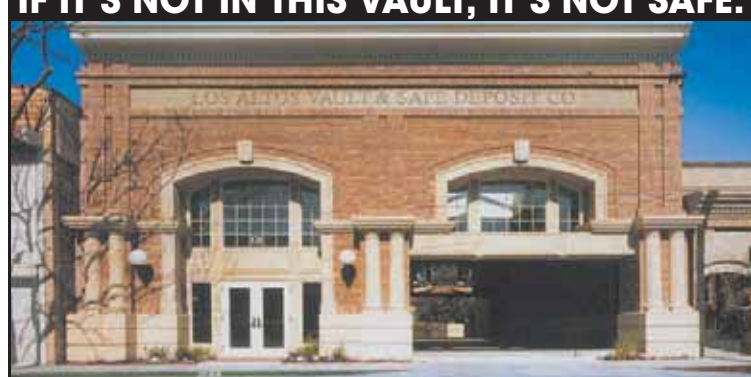
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EARLY DEADLINE

The Almanac will be **CLOSED** MEMORIAL DAY, May 29th

ADVERTISING SPACE RESERVATIONS **DEADLINE** for May 31st Edition will be **NOON, May 24th**

The Almanac

Three Menlo Park youths reach Eagle Scout rank

Three Menlo Park Boy Scouts with Troop 222 have attained the rank of Eagle Scout. On May 20, the troop, sponsored by the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, will hold an Eagle Scout Court of Honor for David Gleason Merrill, Thomas Duncan Kozlowski and Andrew Ross Holmgren.

The three began scouting with Cub Pack 222 in Menlo Park and joined the scout troop in 2000.

To receive the Eagle Scout rank, scouts must earn at least 21 merit badges; serve six months in a position of troop responsibility; and organize a service project helpful to the community, a school, or a religious institution.

David Merrill

David, a junior at Menlo-Atherton High School, is captain of the varsity lacrosse team. Last year, he was chosen for the Nor-Cal All-Star lacrosse team that represented California in a national tournament in Vail, Colorado.

On the honor roll throughout high school, David is a member of the school's Leadership Team and

has been on the Freshman Transition Team for two years.

The son of Joanne and Roger Merrill, he has been selected to attend the highly competitive Naval Academy seminar this summer. He plans to apply to the U.S. Naval Academy next year.

For his service project, he led a team of scouts and adults to repair, clean and upgrade picnic benches and grills in Flood Park on Bay Road in Menlo Park.

Tom Kozlowski

Tom, also a junior at M-A, has been on the honor roll throughout high school. He participated in the junior varsity football team and the varsity badminton team. He is a member of the National Honor Society and the California Scholarship Federation.

As a sophomore, Tom was selected M-A's outstanding chemistry student for an annual Rotary Club award. He is a member of the M-A Finance Club and the M-A Quiz Bowl Team, which participates in matches hosted by a local TV station. He plans to pursue



New Eagle Scouts, from left, Tom Kozlowski, David Merrill and Andrew Holmgren.

engineering or mathematics in college.

His service project involved building a riparian corridor at the Hidden Villa farm and nature preserve in Los Altos Hills. The project, designed to allow deer and other wildlife to cross the increasingly active preserve, involved 365 service hours by Troop 222 members.

The son of Lanette and John Kozlowski, he has a brother, Daniel, who is a Star Scout in Troop 222.

Andrew Holmgren

A junior at M-A, Andrew played midfield on the JV lacrosse team in his sophomore and junior years. He is a member of the high school Republican Club and has participated in youth ministries with the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church. He is considering studying civil engineering in college.

His service project involved leading a team of scouts and adults in repairing and remediation of the drainage systems for seven drinking fountains in Flood Park

in Menlo Park. The project, completed in February, involved more than 200 hours of community service.

He is the son of Pamela Von Wiegand and Robert Holmgren.

■ INFORMATION

Troop 222 has 42 active scouts and meets Tuesdays at the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church. For more information, go to bsa-troop222.com or call troop chairman Marty Estkowski at 327-3518.

Catie's efforts bring clean water to Sudanese village



Catie Hagman

Catie Hagman of Menlo Park took on as a personal project raising funds to build a well in Lughu, a large village in Kadugli County in Sudan that's in desperate need of clean water.

A senior at Notre Dame High School in Belmont and the daughter of Libby and Roger Hagman of Menlo Park, she reached her goal of raising \$7,000 with the support of family and friends. That's enough to build a well for 500 people.

A talk two years ago at Notre Dame High by Bishop Macram Gassis from southern Sudan "profoundly affected me and motivated me," she said.

Catie was recently honored by the California Interscholastic Federation and the Central Coast Section for being a varsity

athlete who has maintained a cumulative unweighted grade-point average of 3.5 or better through seven semesters of high school. Catie is on the cross country team at Notre Dame.

■ AROUND TOWN

Oil under Silicon Valley?

"What Lies Beneath?" will be the topic of geologist Richard G. Stanley's public lecture at the U.S. Geological Survey on Thursday, May 25, at 7 p.m. in Building 3 at 345 Middlefield Road, in Menlo Park.

When Silicon Valley was orchards, there were already a few

oil wells; about 100 years ago, Los Gatos even had an "oil boom." Dr. Stanley will explain historical records and modern studies that show sedimentary basins and oil hidden under today's computers, chips, and subdivisions.

For information call 329-5000.

Police give to Boys & Girls Club

The Menlo Park Police Officers

Association made a \$5,000 contribution to the Boys and Girls Club of the Peninsula, the association announced May 16.

The association made its contribution at an event hosted by the Boys and Girls Club May 13.

"The Boys and Girls Club does so much for this community," said William Dixon, president of the association. "We just wanted to be a part of it and help them out in some way."

■ BIRTHS

Menlo Park

■ Stacy and Michael Deksheniks, a daughter, April 27, at Sequoia Hospital.

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Humane Society hosts talk on exotic pets

Creating a comfortable habitat for a pet reptile or amphibian may not be the most intuitive of arts. The animals need housing that fits their needs, healthy diets and pet owners need to know how to safely handle them, detect illness and obtain medical care.

People who either have or are thinking about having pets like these may want to attend an upcoming talk by veterinar-

NOTEBOOK

ian Dr. Chris Sanders of the Wildwood Veterinary Clinic in Portola Valley.

Dr. Sanders will present "Exotic Reptile & Amphibian Care" from 6:30 to 8 p.m. on Tuesday, May 23, at the Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA at 12 Airport Boulevard in San Mateo.

The talk will be held in the Humane Society's auditorium and is part of the Creature Feature series. The suggested donation is \$5 at the door. For more information call 340-7022, ext. 369.

The Humane Society regularly finds homes for exotic pets that people discard. Adoption fees vary. For a list, go to peninsulahumanesociety.org, click on the "Adopt an Animal" link,

then on the "Available Other Animals" link.

Seniors can apply for tax exemption

It's parcel-tax-exemption reminder time again for older homeowners who live on their own property in the Las Lomas Elementary School District. The district covers west Menlo Park, and parts of Atherton and unincorporated San Mateo County.

The school district's \$196

annual parcel tax, passed by voters in November 2001, is used to maintain small class sizes and to support instructional and technology programs in the district's two schools.

To avoid paying the tax for the 2006-07 school year, qualifying residents who are 65 or older as of July 1, 2006, can apply for the exemption by calling 854-6311 on or before Thursday, June 1, or visiting the office at 1011 Altschul Ave. in Menlo Park.

M-A teacher wins \$1,000 for school

Mike Molieri, a teacher at Menlo-Atherton High School, was chosen as a local winner in Wal-Mart's annual Teacher of the Year program.

Parents of students being taught by Mr. Molieri chose him for the award because of his "excellent teaching skills and his belief in his students' ability to succeed," said Susan Berghouse, spokeswoman for the Sequoia Union High School District.

The award includes a \$1,000 gift from Wal-Mart to the school and entry into the company's national Teacher of the Year competition.

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Early CCS exits for M-A baseball, Menlo softball

By Keith Peters

Palo Alto Weekly

Two solid and successful seasons came to an end on May 17 in the opening round of Central Coast Section postseason play.

In the CCS Division I baseball playoffs, Menlo-Atherton closed its season with a 14-11 record following a 5-0 loss to host Valley Christian.

In the CCS Division III softball playoffs, Menlo School wrapped up a 16-6 campaign following its 10-0 loss to Carmel at the Salinas Sports Complex.

Both losses brought an end to a number of careers.

For No. 12-seeded Menlo-Atherton, the loss marked the conclusion of head coach Joe Fontana's era. After six years with the Bears, Fontana is moving his family to Ft. Collins, Colo., where he's taking a teaching job and will be closer to other family members. Fontana lived in Colorado for 20 years before coming to M-A.

Valley Christian ace right hander Kevin Miller closed Fontana's career after allowing just three

singles while striking out nine.

Menlo-Atherton had battled its way into the playoffs by winning 10 of its last 16 contests and by capturing nine one-run games.

Fifth-seeded Valley Christian, which improved its overall record to 24-8-1, seems to have M-A's number in the regional playoffs. In 2003, the last time the Bears qualified for the section tournament, they were defeated 4-3 by Valley Christian.

The Bears could not solve the hard-throwing Miller, who continuously fired first-pitch strikes and kept M-A batters off-balance. Menlo-Atherton could only muster singles by D.J. Johnston (fourth inning), Doug Rose (sixth), and Tyler Finley (seventh) against Miller. When Finley stole second after legging out an infield hit, he was the only M-A player to get into scoring position in the game.

Bears' starter Corey Zirbes did well to hold the heavy-hitting Warriors to only four earned runs. The Bears made four errors, but only one figured in any scoring.

Senior first baseman Skylar Brewer, in his last at-bat for the Bears in the seventh, smashed a

Boy helps team win national title

Max Krieg of Woodside, only 11, helped ice the National AA Ice Hockey Championship for his team, when the Santa Clara Blackhawks AA PeeWees played in the national championships last month in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

The Blackhawks earned a spot to compete in the state regionals in Las Vegas, and then moved on to the nationals.

The team once again proved that California kids do play hockey when the Blackhawks dominated the hometown favorites, the Indianapolis Racers, and took the national championship with a 4-0 win.

Max, the son of Tish and Franz Krieg, started playing hockey when he was 6 with



Max Krieg of Woodside, who plays for the Santa Clara Blackhawks PeeWee AA Tier Team, gets a breakaway during the National AA Hockey Championships in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

an in-house team at Ice Oasis Ice Skating Rink in Redwood City and moved up to a travel team. He is a fifth-grader at St. Joseph's School in Atherton.

Playing for the Blackhawks takes serious training and commitment. The team practices three times a week for three hours each night, including one hour of dryland work.

Some would think that the grueling practice schedule, travel and expense would burn the kids out. Not so, says Max's mom. The group is close, the families have a great time together, and the traveling is so much fun that it parlays into the kids enjoying themselves and playing without pressure, said Tish King.

long fly ball to the left-centerfield fence that appeared to be a home run, but Warriors' outfielder Tony Hall reached up over the top of the fence and hauled it in.

Along with Brewer, other M-A seniors playing their final game included Rose, Finley, Zirbes, Jon Abramson and Andrew Preimesberger.

Menlo softball

In the CCS softball playoffs, Menlo senior pitcher Ali Lycette saw her prep career come to an end in the loss to No. 6 Carmel (20-5).

The Knights fell victim to an attack of nerves as they committed eight errors in six innings after averaging fewer than two errors per game this season.

It also didn't help that Menlo failed to get a hit.

Menlo coach Ladd Yager, who guided his team into the postseason for the first time following a six-year absence, said his team was just too tight.

Lycette did what she could, striking out six and not allowing a walk.



Len Tillem Esq.

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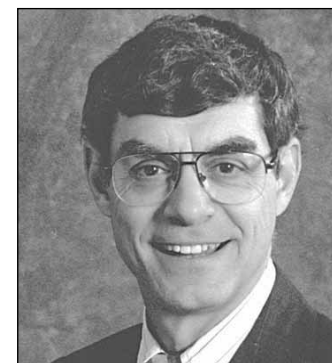
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Peninsula Ball committee welcomes debutantes

Thirty-seven debutantes were introduced at the Peninsula Ball tea held recently at the home of Lynne Olson in Atherton. The young women invited their mothers, grandmothers and special guests to the tea, where they greeted committee members and other guests in a formal receiving line.

The Peninsula Ball is a 46-year tradition of support for Family and Children Services, a non-profit agency providing families with counseling, education and prevention programs. The Peninsula Ball has raised more than \$3 million for the agency. The deb will be presented at the Peninsula Ball in June.

Sue Davison and Anne Englert are ball co-chairmen with Dorothy Cartan as honorary chairman.

The debts by town of residence are:

■ **Atherton:** Galen Avery, Brooke Badger, Rachel Bolten, Katie Bouret, Becca Carr, Rebecca Child, Christie Clark, Mattie Goldman, Jen Machlin, Layne Marr, Tori Patton.

■ **Menlo Park:** Ryan McCann.

■ **Portola Valley:** Ashley Carlisle, Lauren Evans, Melissa Mordell and Molly Troedson.

■ **Woodside:** Lexi Boutacoff, Michelle Bradford, Jessie Foley, Melissa Irvine and Sarah King.

■ **Palo Alto:** Brittany Brown, Kristie Flatley and Kathryn Molitor.

■ **Hillsborough:** Sarah Montgomery, Erica Swanson, Megan Teixeira and Carmen-Rosa Wis-



Photos by Chris Moser

Deb Katie Bouret and her mother, Lori Bouret of Atherton, attended the March tea held at the home of Lynne Olson.



Carmen-Rosa Wishart, left, and Brooke Badger share a moment at this spring's deb tea.

hart.

■ **Los Gatos:** Avantika Chitre and Caroline Hurley.

■ **Los Altos:** Cait Lighthouse and Molly Magnuson.

■ **Los Altos Hills:** Nisha Dixit.

■ **San Carlos:** Ali Lycette.

■ **Redwood City:** Shayne McGanney, Molly Doran and Chelsea Ono Horn.

■ **Lake Forest, Illinois:** Lisa Ferch.

Balsa wood team heads for finals

By David Boyce

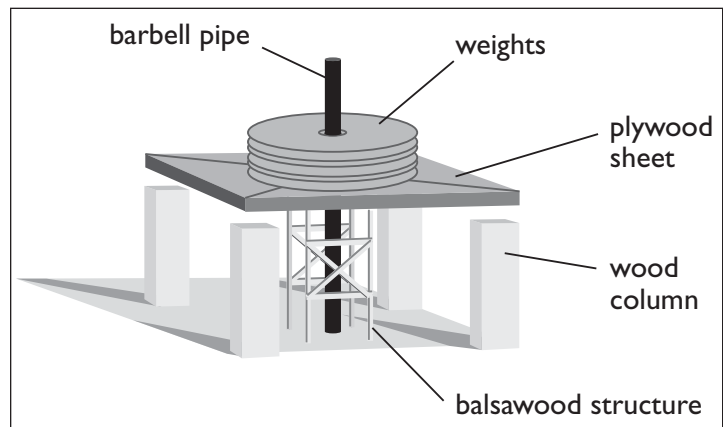
Almanac Staff Writer

There's nothing like a real-world experiment with a half-ounce of balsa wood and 420 pounds of weight to make the principles of mechanical engineering come alive.

"There were many cracks before it actually collapsed," said Atherton resident and eighth-grader Sarah Winters of the balsa-wood structure she helped design. "There was so much force being put on the structure," she said. "You could see the pieces flying. It just exploded."

The experiment, by the team called "Linoleum Blownapart," took second place at the "Destination Imagination" state tournament held at Elk Grove on April 9. Sarah and Menlo Park resident Claire Uschersohn are team members with Natalie Morin, Blake Tacklind and Marc Slakey of Palo Alto and Matthew Colford of Los Altos at the International School of the Peninsula in Palo Alto.

The team is now headed to



Drawing by Gail Thoreson

In this test of the load-bearing principles, when the weight becomes too much to bear, the balsa-wood structure supporting the plywood sheet collapses and plywood sheet comes to rest on the wooden columns.

the finals, set for May 23-28 at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville.

Linoleum Blownapart's device, all of balsa wood, included an open-sided box measuring about a foot per side and topped by a panel about an inch thick. Wedged under the center of the top panel was a delicate half-ounce wooden structure of triangles and cross members to

strengthen the panel where it is weakest.

Barbell weights of about 45 pounds each were progressively stacked at the reinforced center spot. The structure collapsed under 420 pounds of weight.

The team has been together since the second grade, Sarah said. This was their third project that tested weight-bearing characteristics. ■

NOTEBOOK

Eshoo joins effort to require warrants

Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Atherton, joined 12 of her Democratic colleagues in the House of Representatives in co-sponsoring a bill that would require the National Security Agency to obtain court warrants before listening in on

or collecting phone and e-mail records of American citizens on U.S. soil.

The Lawful Intelligence and Surveillance of Terrorists in an Emergency by NSA (LISTEN) Act would also "streamline" the procedures to expedite emergency warrant applications, said Ms. Eshoo. The bill has no Republican sponsors.

The act refutes the assertion by

President George W. Bush that Congress authorized electronic surveillance of Americans on U.S. soil when it authorized the use of military force in Afghanistan on September 14, 2001.

"Through his domestic spying program, the President is offering the American people a false choice between their security and the protection of the law for all Americans," said Ms. Eshoo. "I refuse to believe that we must be forced to sacrifice one for the other, and the LISTEN Act will give the intelligence community additional resources to protect the American people, while ensuring their personal freedoms are fully protected."

Sun Micro's workforce may grow in Menlo

The number of employees in the Menlo Park offices of Santa Clara-based Sun Microsystems may soon grow with the company's announcement of plans to sell its 10-building, 1.4-million-square-foot office complex in Newark.

About 2,300 employees in Newark will relocate to the west side of the bay as part of the company's strategy to return to profitability, said spokeswoman Stephanie Hess in a May 11 San Francisco Chronicle story.

The computer server and software maker has lost money for three consecutive years due to competition from lower-cost computer chips and software, the story said.

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Sacred Heart names water polo coach

Jon Burke is the new Sacred Heart Prep women's water polo coach. He will also become the aquatic director at St. Joseph's School on the Atherton campus.

For the past four years, Burke has served as assistant coach for the UC Davis men's and women's water polo programs. He has coached the Aggies to a 128-97 overall record, one NCAA championships appearance, one Western Water Polo Association title, and one WWPA runner-up finish.

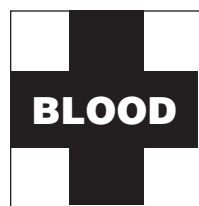
The appointment was announced by Dr. Joseph Ciancaglini, director of Sacred Heart Schools.

PV council looks at reimbursement

The Portola Valley Town Council may approve a program to reimburse members of the council and the town's two commissions — planning and architectural & site control — for expenses on out-of-town business.

The council is also set to vote on whether to use a general contractor for the new Town Center complex or, as recommended by town staff, have the town seek bids from separate contractors for each trade and hire a construction manager to coordinate the project.

The meeting begins at 8 p.m. Wednesday, May 24, at the Historic Schoolhouse at 765 Portola Road.



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Sixth grade All Net team

The sixth grade Redwood National Junior Basketball All Net team recently returned from Los Angeles where it competed for a second straight year for the NJB national championship.

The team, which won the fifth-grade national title last year, lost by one point, to the Fairfield All Net team. Redwood team members shown here are, kneeling in front, from left, Ricki Hoffer, Miles Weiss and Jesse Perkins; and standing, from left, Christian Perkins, James Shaw, Zac Thomas, Richard Harris, Cole McConnell, Coach King Christian and Sam Carver.



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■ OBITUARIES

Gisela Roizen

Native of Germany

Gisela "Doris" Roizen, a Menlo Park resident until last year, died May 5 at Mountain Valley Care and Rehabilitation in Kellogg, Idaho. She was 86.

Ms. Roizen was born in Cologne, Germany, in 1919. In 1930, she and her mother joined her father in Montreal, Canada. During World War II, while in Candada, her father was detained for many months because of his German nationality. Ms. Roizen worked

long hours as an embroiderer to support her family and had to cut short her formal education.

During the war she met and married Joseph Roizen. The young couple moved to the San Fernando Valley in 1950 and to Palo Alto in 1956. After the couple divorced in 1969, Ms. Roizen moved to Lake Tahoe, returning to the Bay Area in 1971.

She worked for the Union School District in San Jose then took a job at T/Maker Co., an early personal software maker in Mountain View, which was started and developed by her son and daughter, Peter and Heidi Roizen.

At this time she also moved to Menlo Park.

Ms. Roizen enrolled in DeAnza Community College when she was past 60, receiving an associate of arts degree. She retired in 1992. In October, 2005, she moved to Idaho to be nearer her son, Ron.

Ms. Roizen is survived by her three children, Ron of Wallace, Idaho, Peter of Los Gatos, and Heidi Roizen of Atherton; sister Susan Gill of Victoria, B.C.; brother Manfred Holl of Carmel Valley; and seven grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her ex-husband Joseph Roizen and brother Fred Holl.

she was a Brownie and Girl Scout leader and a nurse for Girl Scout camp. She was active in the local Order of Eastern Star, First Congregational Church in Palo Alto, the PTA, a bridge group and folk dancing.

She is survived by her daughter, Alice Y. Miller of Modesto; stepchildren Dr. John E. Hendry of Fair Oaks and Jacqueline Smith of San Jose; and two grandchild-

dren. Her first husband, Joseph O. Yount, and second husband, Col. John E. Hendry, preceded her in death.

A private gathering was held for family and friends. Memorials may be made to Wailuku Union Church, 327 High St., Wailuku, HI 96793; or Clan Sinclair Charitable Trust, c/o Mary Selver, 89 Sentry Way, Merrimack, NH 03054, for Sinclair Castle restoration.

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Isabelle Yount Hendry

Former Menlo Park resident

Isabelle Yount Hendry, whose husband, the late Joseph O. (Jack) Yount was a Menlo Park chief of police in the 1940s, died May 3 in Modesto. She was 97.

Ms. Henry was a native of Maui, Hawaii, and had resided in Modesto for the past five years. She lived in Menlo Park from 1943 to 1967. She attended Pomona College and graduated from Stanford University with a degree in nursing.

While a resident of Menlo Park,

■ 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.

ATHERTON

Grand theft reports:

■ Personal electronic device, camera, jeans, sunglasses and DVD stolen from dorm room, Menlo College at 1000 El Camino Real, May 3.

■ Jewelry and watch stolen from bedroom, Bergesen Court, May 17.

Burglary reports:

■ Construction tools stolen, 200 block of Atherton Avenue, May 10.

■ Cottage apparently ransacked, first block of Stockbridge Avenue, May 11.

MENLO PARK

Burglary reports:

■ Copper pipe stolen and compressor damaged, Bay Associates Electrical Wire Products at 150 Jefferson Drive, May 8.

■ Police arrested Justin Wallace, 18, of Menlo Park on burglary and stolen-property charges related to DVD thefts, Menlo Park Public Library at 800 Alma St., May 9.

■ Residence ransacked, 200 block of

Hedge Road, May 11.

■ Property stolen from two dormitory rooms, St. Patrick's Seminary at 320 Middlefield Road, May 15.

■ Shower head stolen from vacant home, 600 block of Woodland Avenue, May 16.

Robbery report: Man robbed of wallet at gunpoint, Ringwood Avenue pedestrian overpass, May 16.

Grand theft reports:

■ CDs stolen from residence, 200 block of Terminal Avenue, May 6.

■ Laptop computer stolen, Opportunities Industrialization Center West at 1200 O'Brien Drive, May 12.

■ Four mud-going tires and rims stolen, 200 block of Waverley Street, May 13.

■ Unattended purse stolen, Safeway Supermarket at 525 El Camino Real, May 15.

■ Bicycle stolen from carport, 400 block of Ravenswood Avenue, May 16.

■ Bicycle stolen, 1000 block of Noel Drive, May 16.

Auto burglary reports:

■ Ice skates and personal items stolen after window smashed, first block of Willow Road, May 7.

■ Car stereo stolen, 300 block of El Camino Real, May 12.

■ Car stereo and CDs stolen, 600 block of Willow Road, May 17.

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22 ■ The Almanac ■ May 24, 2006

Continued from previous page

Theft reports:

- Pressure washer stolen from truck, 800 block of Arnold Way, May 10.
- Marie Shawana, 41, of East Palo Alto arrested on shoplifting charges, Draeger's Supermarket at 1010 University Drive, May 18.

Child protective services reports: Two on May 12 and one on May 16.

Adult protective services report: 1300 block of Hollyburne Avenue, May 16.

Spousal abuse reports:

- 1300 block of Modoc Avenue, May 10.
- 700 block of El Camino Real, May 13.
- 1100 block of Berkeley Avenue, May 17.

Fraud reports:

- Credit card fraud, Kaiser Family Foundation at 2400 Sand Hill Road, May 9.
- Resident received counterfeit check, 400 block of Ivy Drive, May 10.
- Credit card fraud, 400 block of Laurel Avenue, May 12.
- Identity theft, 1300 block of Bay Laurel Drive, May 15.
- Identity theft, 1300 block of Madera Avenue, May 16.
- Credit card fraud, 400 block of Laurel Avenue, May 17.
- Forged signature on checks, 1300 block of Almanor Avenue, May 18.

WOODSIDE

Auto burglary report: Stereo faceplate stolen after window smashed, Canada College at 4200 Farm Hill Boulevard, May 6.

PORTOLA VALLEY

Vandalism report: Vehicle window smashed, 200 block of Shawnee Pass, May 4.

WEST MENLO PARK

Theft reports:

- Cell phone stolen from unlocked vehicle, 2000 block of Camino A Los Cerros, May 9.
- Bicycle stolen, Dutch Goose restaurant at

Schools honor their stars

People who have made outstanding contributions to the Menlo Park City School District's four schools will be honored at a "Pillars of the Community" celebration on Thursday, June 1.

The annual event will be held at Jennings Pavilion in Holbrook Palmer Park in Atherton from 3 to 5 p.m.

Hosting the reception are the Menlo Park Parent Teacher Organization (PTO) Council and the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation.

More information about the people being honored will be published in the May 31 issue of The Almanac.

Canada College commencement

San Mateo County Superior Court Judge Marta S. Diaz will be guest speaker at Canada College's 38th annual commencement on Friday, May 26, starting at 7 p.m. in the school's main theater, 4200 Farm Hill Blvd., Woodside. Ms. Diaz has been the county's pre-

3576 Alameda de las Pulgas, May 9.

■ Pieces of car side molding stolen, 2000 block of Sterling Avenue, May 10.

■ Boxes stolen from carport, 3600 block of Alameda de las Pulgas, May 15.

■ NOTES

siding juvenile court judge since 2000.

Valedictorian is Andrea Griffin, 29, a former eighth-grade dropout who returned to school to earn straight As and finish at the top of her science classes. She plans to study nursing in the Sequoia Hospital/ San Francisco State University nursing program at Canada's University Center.

A majority of Canada's 250 graduates are either the first in their families to earn a college degree or are re-entry students who have returned to school after raising children or starting their careers.

Founded in 1968, Canada College has more than 6,000 students. It was the first community college in California to offer university courses and programs onsite through its University Center.

Men robbed in parking lot

A little after midnight on Saturday, May 20, three men in their late teens to early 20s reportedly used a handgun to hold up a man and a woman in a parking lot in the Flood Triangle neighborhood of Menlo Park, said Sgt. Jim Simpson of the Menlo Park Police Department.

No one was injured and the robbers got away with \$30 to \$50, police said.

Officer Kevin Paugh spotted a car matching the description

given by the victims about 25 minutes later in an East Palo Alto gas station and attempted to detain the occupants, police said.

The driver was arrested on robbery charges, but the others got away on foot, said Sgt. Simpson. Police would not release the name of the driver.

At the time of the robbery, the suspects were all wearing dark clothing. Anyone with information should call 330-6300.

Obituary policy

The Almanac publishes obituaries about people who lived in Atherton, Menlo Park, Portola Valley and Woodside, or played a prominent role in these communities. These are news stories and may not include all the information a family wishes. Some families choose to write their own memorial announcements, and purchase space to publish them in the Almanac. For information about that, e-mail Blanca Yoc in the Advertising Department at byoc@paweekly.com, or call 326-8210, ext. 239.

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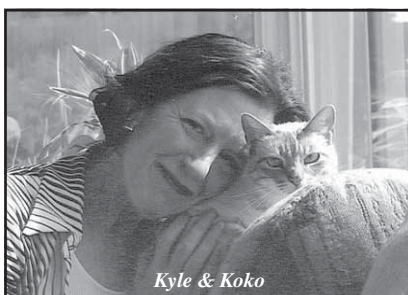
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Sequoia should approve charter

By Diane Tavenner

On May 31, families in the Sequoia Union High School District will learn whether an outstanding educational option will become part of the district's offerings. That's the night that the Sequoia school board votes whether to grant a charter to Summit Preparatory Charter High School.

Since the 2003-2004 school year, Summit has compiled a striking record of academic success while demonstrating the value of its unique educational philosophy. Until now, it has done this with a charter from the Summerville Union High School District in Tuolumne County.

Now, Sequoia has the chance to embrace this remarkable program as its own. The signs are positive: Summit meets all the state criteria for school charters — academically, organizationally, and financially. Summit received its original charter in 2001, but a recently amended state law requires Summit to apply for a new charter in the district where the school is physically located. Because Summit's charter is now up for renewal and the school is located in downtown Redwood City, the Sequoia district must grant the new charter.

Here is an overview of what Summit can add to the Sequoia district: Sum-

mit is one of the top 30 high schools in all of California, according to the 2005 California Academic Performance Index (API). Scores for the California Standards Exams and High School Exit Exam, which comprise the API, show that Summit students are excelling scholastically.

For example, 84 percent of Summit's sophomores scored "proficient" or "advanced" on the 10th grade World History exam, compared to only 34 percent of total students in the state. For the 2004-005 school year, 92 percent of Summit 10th graders passed the California High School Exit Exam on their first attempt. This is much better than the state average of 76 percent.

Summit serves its diverse student body well. Its API scores for its Hispanic students were among the top 15 in the state. The excellent scores turned in by Summit students reflect benefits of the school's personalized learning approach. Each student helps create his/her academic plan and goals, with guidance

and support from parents and a mentor who stays with the student for all four of his/her years at Summit.

Summit provides every single student with the coursework and programs to prepare for college, rather than "tracking" students into different level programs as most public schools do. There has been

overwhelming public support for Summit to receive the charter, as evidenced by the scores of people who attended a public hearing this month.

But one or two attendees expressed concerns that granting a charter to Summit would drain resources from other public schools. These fears are based on misinformation about charter schools in general and Summit in particular.

First, the state already allots funds to educate all the students in the district. So the district has already received money to educate Summit's students.

Second, following the start-up period, Summit has committed to teach students

for no more than the state per-student allotment. This commitment is not a stretch for Summit, which has provided the same quality of education at increasingly lower cost per student for every year of its existence.

Third, Summit has raised some \$2.2 million over the previous three years. The money has been used to create the school, educate students, and otherwise fund ongoing operations. If the school board grants the charter, the district will get full benefit of this investment without having had to pay for it.

Fourth, Summit's excellent financial track record includes two "clean" financial audits.

Fifth, even if for some reason Summit did create a negative financial impact on the district — which again, it does not — that impact would not be legitimate legal grounds for rejecting its charter application, as acknowledged by Sequoia Superintendent Pat Gemma.

In just a few more weeks, the Sequoia district should be able to boast of educational opportunities that few districts anywhere in the state can match. This is not just a gain for Sequoia families and students. The entire community will benefit, for years to come, as Summit graduates take their place in its daily life.

GUEST OPINION



Diane Tavenner is executive director of Summit Preparatory High School.

LETTERS

continued from page 27

I was coming from the place of being somewhat negative about a number of aspects of the Town Center plans, and now I can see that there is significant support for the project.

Most residents believe that the project will become a vital and necessary addition to our community. I am personally more satisfied with the significantly scaled back plan that should provide more attractive, functional and self-sustaining green buildings.

We are truly involved with a decision that will influence many generations to come. As a result of all these discussions, here are the key points that I can see with the current plan:

- 12 percent reduction in the building footprint from its original proposed design;
- 20 percent reduction in the impervious surfaces compared to the current structures;
- Green building design and lower maintenance costs;
- Buildings that are more congruent with the center's intended purpose;
- More earthquake-safe features in the buildings to protect staff and visitors;
- A more expansive, free flowing activity area that is not interrupted with black top;
- Future opportunity to restore the creek, although there is no

tie-in at this point;

- Inclusion of a voter validation by way of a possible bond measure;
- Potential positive impact on our home values by having a more attractive center of activity;
- Potential positive impact on our way of life in town by having a more attractive center of activity.

Given how far down the path we are with this current plan, it is now very hard to criticize the final decisions that have now been made in light of the myriad of committee, Town Hall and Town Council meetings that have taken place over such a great period of time.

I am very interested in anyone's open comments on this and have established a Web site: www.sd-dd.com/pvtowncenter to establish a place where, we, as citizens, can share our opinions.

Stephen Dunne
Canyon Drive, Portola Valley

Child care parents paying big for overhead

Editor:

Like many other Menlo Park budget issues, child care has now been polarized to the extent neither side really listens to the other.

What's been lost in this whole debate is what brought up the issue in the first place: money. Specifically, it's the size of the "subsidy" that the city supposedly pays over and above what parents who use the service pay.

We were led to believe, through the "Your City / Your Decision" process, that the amount of this subsidy was \$444,000. Looks pretty dispassionate, doesn't it?

Yet, despite how "objective" we believe numbers are in general, they are still crunched by human beings. In this case, human beings are crunching the bane of all managerial cost accounting numbers: **indirect overhead. Indirect overhead matters in this debate because it represents over half** of the subsidy, approximately \$260,000 I'm told.

In an absolute sense, that \$260,000 represents a portion of the overall "indirect" city administrative costs (city manager salaries, and so forth) that can't be directly attributed to any one program. The true litmus test of how to determine indirect overhead is whether the "incremental" assigned amount of overhead goes away as a result of shutting down the program it was assigned to. In the case of child care, will that \$260,000 overhead go away if child care was privatized? I don't think so.

Now that we parents will pay higher fees and the cost of the two childcare programs have been lowered with one less supervisor and one less leased modular building, the extent of the "subsidy" will go down to the point where the parents of both programs will effectively carry **all of the direct costs.**

Unfortunately, the quarter million dollar indirect overhead remains as an albatross. It has little to do with direct child care and I doubt any child care program of similar size elsewhere, be it public or private, carries that much overhead (over 20 percent). After paying all the direct costs, parents should not be expected to pay the city's indirect administrative overhead as well.

If parents are asked to pay that much overhead, then it is truly the parents who are subsidizing the city. No other city program even comes close to paying its own costs. Only gymnastics and child care carry their direct costs (sense a theme there?). I'm a Menlo Park landowner who pays his share of taxes — taxes that support the central city administration. Asking me as a parent to pay twice for that central administration is effectively double taxation.

Paul Roberts
Menlo Park parent and resident

Irony in Fergusson's remodel appeal

Editor:

Recently, known political opponents of City Council Member Kelly Fergusson appealed a use permit and variance for Ms. Fergusson's remodel granted by the Planning Commission.

All immediate neighbors sup-

ported the project.

The appellants and their supporters are, variously, ideological property rights advocates, supporters for the rescinded zoning Ordinance 926, campaign insiders for candidates defeated by Ms. Fergusson, residential developers, and political operatives for the council majority faction that includes Mayor Nicholas Jellins. All phrases describe architect/builder Sam Sinnott, who appears at the heart of this operation.

Ironically, these appellants have publicly called to restrict jurisdiction in the appeal process, citing as potential abuse that an appeal could be raised by someone who lives nowhere near the applicant. And yet, they all live miles from Kelly Fergusson.

Mayor Jellins abstained, later explaining his non-vote with planning legalese. For at least a decade, the Menlo Park City Council hasn't denied a variance, and Mr. Jellins, a real estate attorney and property rights advocate, never opposed or scrutinized one. If he applied any standard of review besides his usual laissez-faire stamp of approval, it would constitute political abuse, "as-applied" discrimination against a political opponent, not principle.

To sin by silence when they should protest make cowards of men. Fortunately, the remodel was approved by most, including courageous property rights partisans on the Planning Commission and

City Council, notably Lee Duboc, Henry Riggs, and Lou Deziel, who upheld their standards granting equal protection to the property rights of their common political opponent Kelly Fergusson.

Paul Collacchi
Redwood City

A successful Bike Day at Encinal School

Editor:

Last week was bicycle week at Encinal School with two days of bike safety programs followed by the first bike-to-school day on May 18.

Normally, approximately 60 children go to school by bicycle. On bike-to-school day, 260 energetic kids rode to school by bike, which represents about two-thirds of the students at Encinal. The first 50 riders to arrive that morning received a Bike-to-School bag donated by the city of Menlo Park.

School starts at 8 but things were already hopping at 7 a.m. when the first riders came through the gates to get their bike bags. This was a huge success and the students all felt a community spirit that was plain to see on their faces! The only problems we had were not enough bike racks and an over-staffed carpool lane, which in my mind are good problems to have.

Keep on riding, Encinal, and let's all work together to make the bike routes to our schools safer.

Mary Fischer
A proud Encinal Mom

Reader sees plenty of red-light runners

Editor:

I don't know what city Brian Schar is referring to in his May 17 letter when he claims "red light running isn't a problem in Menlo Park," but it sure isn't the Menlo Park I live in.

Just to check, I went down to an El Camino intersection near my house and watched red lights being run twice in the first five minutes. I have often seen two and sometimes three cars zoom through after my light is visibly green, so I know their light has been red for quite awhile.

Mr. Schar's assertion that Menlo Park would be liable for accidents caused by the traffic cameras (presumably because drivers might actually stop at a red light) is hilarious. If someone rams another car from behind because the car in front stopped for a light, then the car in back is driving too fast and too close. He would be liable, not the city.

I barely escaped being rammed by a red light runner one time when I had two toddlers in the back seat. And state Senator Jackie Speier lost her husband to

Stanford's trail offer a bad deal

On Tuesday, May 23, from 4-7 p.m., at Woodland School in Ladera, Supervisors Jerry Hill and Rich Gordon will solicit community reaction to Stanford's proposed expansion of the existing sidewalk/trail along Alpine Road.

On behalf of Committee for Green Foothills, I urge San Mateo County and Portola Valley to decline Stanford's "offer" of \$11.2 million to expand our perfectly usable Alpine sidewalk/trail. An expanded sidewalk does not repay the debt Stanford owes to the community from its expansive development, and foisting new impacts on our creeks and communities to solve Stanford's problems cannot be allowed.

As mitigation for the increased need for recreational opportunities resulting from the five million square feet of housing and academic development allowed by its general use permit, Stanford agreed to **dedicate, construct, and maintain a trail** crossing Stanford lands

on the Santa Clara side of Los Trancos/San Francisquito Creeks (the "C-1" Trail).

Last December, the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors (Liz Kniss dissenting) capitulated to Stanford's intense lobbying and punted the "C-1" Trail out of Santa Clara County and onto the Alpine Road sidewalk-trail. This facility is not on Stanford lands, is already constructed, and there is no funding proposed by Stanford for maintenance.

Instead of being a **bona fide** mitigation, the proposed urban sidewalk would cause significant new adverse environmental and community impacts.

Specifically, the so-called "improvements" would intrude into sensitive creek and riparian habitats, armor the creek banks with engineered walls in 10 locations, require major cutting into the hillside opposite Bishop Lane, remove trees that screen Ladera Oaks tennis lights and noise

from Ladera neighbors, and cross many private driveways at Stanford Weekend Acres.

Spending an astronomical \$11.2 million to expand a three-mile long existing trail in Portola Valley and San Mateo County is not only wasteful, but is inconsistent with Alpine Road's scenic corridor policies and numerous county, state, and federal watershed protection mandates.

Stanford has said that San Mateo and Portola Valley can modify the plans. But Stanford will not agree to any relocation of the trail away from busy Alpine Road, onto Stanford lands, or across the creek into Santa Clara County.

San Mateo County and Portola Valley should reject Stanford's attempt to fulfill its mitigation obligations with an unsafe, environmentally harmful, and unnecessary project. Redirecting the \$11.2 million back to Santa Clara County will provide far greater public recreational benefits to Stanford and its neighboring communities.

Lennie Roberts is the legislative advocate for the Committee for Green Foothills. She lives in Ladera.



a red-light runner.

People who are doing this create a menace that needs to be controlled. Bravo Menlo Park for considering installing the cameras. It's been a long time coming.

Diane Walter
Mills Court, Menlo Park

Cost not out of line for Caltrain fencing

Editor:

Clearly, Caltrain has turned a cold shoulder to full corridor fencing.

Caltrain's spokesman Jonah Weinberg has been quoted as saying that fencing would cost "millions and millions and

millions." Chuck Harvey, CEO of Caltrain, states that fencing would cost \$100 per foot. He also calls it "Gaza" fencing.

Actually, if you call a commercial fence company (I called several, including the Chainlink Fence Manufacturers Institute), they will tell you that \$30 per foot will buy you a security-grade eight foot high chain-link fence with barbed wire on top, installed.

Were Caltrain to put such a fence out for bid, they should be able to get it for less. At \$30 per foot, the total cost would be \$22,176,000. That's both sides of the full 70 miles of rail corridor. Now, a lot of the corridor is

already fenced. However, critical areas would need more expensive damage-resistant sections.

Fence experts tell me that there are several chain-link solutions that deter cutting. People have been cutting fences to get through, so not build-

ing more fencing is Caltrain's solution to that problem. In any case, \$22 million seems like a reasonable first estimate. That is not "millions and millions and millions."

Martin Engel
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Almanac endorsements

Yes on Measure U school bonds

For the parents of the 2,134 students in the Menlo Park City School District, approval of Measure U, the \$91.1 million bond issue on the June 6 ballot, is a no-brainer.

They have good reason. Over the last 10 years and even before, Hillview School in Menlo Park City has been one of the best middle schools in the state, earning California Distinguished School status not once, not twice, but seven times. In addition,

the school won a national Blue Ribbon Award, an incredibly prestigious ranking.

Under Principal Mike Moore for the past 20 years, Hillview has grown in stature and so has the size of its student body. It is that growth, that comes from expanded enrollment at Hillview's three elementary schools — Encinal, Laurel and Oak Knoll — that has made it mandatory for the district's school board to

promote a bond issue now to accommodate what is expected to be an increase of 329 students district-wide in five years, and another 115 by 2015.

That bulge is already showing up in kindergarten classes, which means more portable classrooms will likely have to be added to the 40 already in use at the four campuses. District superintendent Ken Ranella points out that the bond issue, which is huge for an elementary school district, will pay for new classrooms to house the students already using portables now, plus the nearly 450 new students expected by 2015.

We believe the numbers provided by Mr. Ranella and the school board speak for themselves. With the state's class size reduction program in place, grade K-3 classes must be 20 or fewer students to receive state funds. And Menlo Park parents are accustomed to seeing their children in classes of approximately 24 students per classroom in the higher grades.

That means the district will need 20 new classrooms just to handle enrollment growth, plus 40 others to close out the portables. At Hillview alone, the school board estimates that another 16 classrooms will be needed. Rough plans for the other campuses call for bringing more students to Encinal, which has the largest site, and lower or hold-the-line enrollment at Laurel and Oak Knoll schools.

Without a doubt, the toughest issue for the district is the Hillview site, which gained several new classrooms, a new multipurpose room and some upgrades from a \$22 million district-wide bond issue passed in 1995. Hillview's share, \$8 million, including some state modernization funds, was used for a new multi-use room, several new classrooms, various renovations, including conversion of the old gym to a library.

Under one plan on the table for Hillview, an entirely new set of two-story classroom buildings would be built on what is now the playing fields, while use of the present campus would continue. When students move to the new campus, the old buildings would be leveled and a new, four-acre playing field would emerge, twice the size of the present field.

Other options at Hillview would cost less, but leave much of the student body housed in classrooms built in the late 1940s and early 1950s. It will be a tough choice, but in the end, we

believe the best course for the district is to start over again at Hillview, rather than try to piece together a solution that would not last long term. Besides, construction costs are skyrocketing, and even though today's rates are high, imagine what they would be 10 years from now.

The annual cost for residents of the district to pay off the bonds will be substantial, but not exorbitant, considering the huge run-up in real property values in the last 10 years. District officials estimate that the 35-year bond will cost \$28 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation, with the owner of a home assessed at the district's median of \$560,000, paying \$157 per year. (Interest on the bonds could total \$196 million over the 35 years, bringing the total cost of the package to just over \$287 million.)

District homeowners already pay \$511 in annual school parcel taxes and an average of \$118 a year (\$21 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation) on the 1995 bond issue. There is no exemption for

seniors on school bonds although they can opt out of paying parcel taxes.

In part, the district's enrollment bulge comes from the success of the schools, which are a magnet for the young homeowners who are moving into Menlo Park, and keep property values moving upward. In addition, there are several housing projects near approval in Linfield Oaks and several others proposed along El Camino Real that are likely to add even more students to the district's enrollment.

When the Menlo Park City school board suddenly proposed this bond issue just a few months ago, we questioned the strategy, especially the Hillview solution to tear down the entire campus and build

another on the site. But since then, we have toured the sites and seen for ourselves the rows of portable classrooms squeezed on the extremely cramped sites at Hillview, Oak Knoll and Laurel. There is simply not room to accommodate 100 more students, let alone 450 more.

We urge Menlo Park voters to visit the schools and see for themselves, and then vote yes on Measure U.

Nevin for State Senate

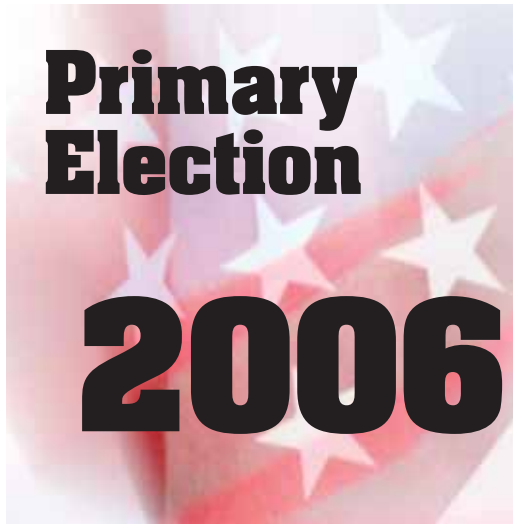
Former county supervisor Mike Nevin is our choice in a close race for the 8th district state Senate seat being vacated by Jackie Speier, who is termed out and now is running for lieutenant governor.

Mr. Nevin, of Daly City, is up against Assemblyman Leland Yee of San Francisco and former Assemblyman Lou Papan of Millbrae. The district covers Portola Valley, Woodside, most of northern San Mateo County and about half of San Francisco County.

We like Mr. Nevin's promises to work for education, universal health care and housing linked to transportation. He has won many prominent endorsements, including the state's top Democrats: senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, representatives Anna Eshoo and Tom Lantos, and state Sen. Jackie Speier and Assemblyman Ira Ruskin.

We believe he will work hard for the district in Sacramento. We urge Woodside and Portola Valley Democrats to vote for Mike Nevin in the 8th District Senate race.

EDITORIAL
The opinion of The Almanac



WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

All views must include a home address and contact phone number. Published letters will also appear on the Almanac web site: www.AlmanacNews.com

EMAIL your views to letters@AlmanacNews.com. Indicate if it is a letter to be published.

FAX to Editor at 854-0677.

MAIL or deliver to: Editor at the Almanac, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

CALL the Viewpoint desk at 854-2626, ext. 222.

Pros and cons of Measure U school bond

Huge jump in enrollment forced bond

By Laura Rich

As a member of the school board, I would like to share some facts about Measure U, the important local bond proposal before district voters June 6.

Additional students are arriving this year, as predicted by the demographic studies recently completed by the district. At the last school board meeting, Superintendent Ken Ranella reported that 311 kindergartners have registered. Next year, Laurel will have 508 students. If anything, our demographic report was conservative and predicted Laurel would reach 498 students in five years. These are not imaginary children. They are living in our community today and ready to attend school.

The project needs are clear. The board has identified clear goals of what needs to be accomplished at each of our schools. The specifics are still to be determined with significant comment from parents, staff, neighbors and the community, but we are clear on what we need.

We need to replace the portable classrooms at all four campuses; we need new multi-purpose facilities at Encinal and Oak Knoll schools; we need to modernize existing classrooms to improve operational costs and functionality (such as changing single-pane windows to double-pane); and we need to increase classroom space for the children who are joining our district.

All specific architectural designs and decisions will involve the community. We hired an architect to help us identify the needs, the scope of the project and its projected costs. It would have been imprudent to spend money intended for students' education on architectural plans before we know we have the support of the community to proceed.

The term of the bond shares the burden with future families. It would be inappropriate to ask current community residents to shoulder the total financial burden of increased school facilities. For the next 35 years, students will be using the buildings that are constructed by Measure U and it is fitting that their families help support the cost of these facilities.

State funding may be available. With the

recent announcement of a state bond on the November ballot, there may be some state money available for our district. We will apply for all state funding for which we qualify, but the history of state funding makes it clear that those funds will require local matching funds. State money will not be available to our district without Measure U dollars.

PRO

Schools facilities are a valuable community resource. This community clearly enjoys and supports a wide variety of activities for both adults and children. The district is proud to be able to share our fields and multi-

Neighbor outraged over Hillview proposal

By Charles Bourne

I urge a NO vote on the Measure U bond issue on the June 6 ballot.

I say this as a 48-year Hillview school neighbor, and a witness to the Menlo Park City School District during that period. Consider:

This school board has no credibility. The board is asking for \$91 million for facility upgrades. A \$22 million construction bond issue was passed for the district in 1995; language used then essentially said, "Trust us. Give

be demolished without replacement.

The Hillview alternatives include a larger playground (a 110-yard soccer field). No sixth grader needs a 110-yard soccer field. Board members noted, "It was something that some of our parents said they'd like to see."

CON

This is an attempt to transform a neighborhood schoolyard into "Burgess-West" to gain the votes of advocates for more Menlo playing fields. Hillview plans also include a large new performing arts theatre for community use (read a new Burgess Theatre).

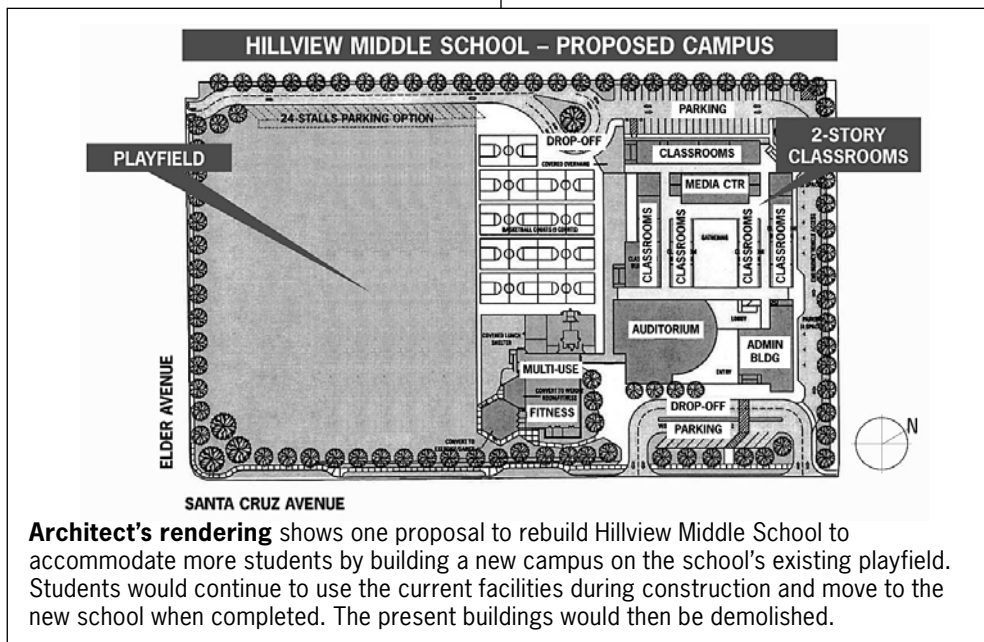
This is a stealthy attempt to transform a small neighborhood school site into an active community recreation facility, along with the attendant adverse impacts on the neighborhood, and all done without review and due process with the neighborhood.

Two of the \$41.1 million Hillview plans would build an entirely new school on the existing playground, then scrape all of the existing campus (except for the multi-purpose building).

All this for a predicted increase of 198 students between now and 2015, at a cost of up to \$416,000 (with interest charges) for each predicted new student. There is no exemption for seniors on this bond issue.

This means that several new buildings, and extensions to existing buildings, all built recently, would be demolished. Homeowners will still be paying the bonds off for those scraped buildings for the next 18 years.

Charles Bourne lives at 1619 Santa Cruz Ave. in Menlo Park.



Architect's rendering shows one proposal to rebuild Hillview Middle School to accommodate more students by building a new campus on the school's existing playfield. Students would continue to use the current facilities during construction and move to the new school when completed. The present buildings would then be demolished.

purpose space with the neighborhood and would like to make our facilities as flexible and community friendly as possible.

Our growth demonstrates that parents are willing to pay a premium for their children to attend our schools. The support our community has given to the school district over the years has resulted in schools we can all be proud of. Let's provide the classrooms and facilities for all our children that support the wonderful program our schools offer.

Laura Rich is board president of the Menlo Park City Elementary School District.

us the money and we'll work out the details later." That didn't work. Now they're back, and with essentially the same message.

In my opinion, the district should seek funding from the \$5.7 billion state bond for school construction projects on the fall ballot for this project instead of the proposed 35 years of local homeowner payments.

Destruction of existing neighborhood facilities is called for in the Hillview alternatives, including the Tinker Playground and public tennis courts on Santa Cruz Avenue, which would

LETTERS

Our readers write

Election year politics in Menlo Park

Editor:

This must be an election year: the fractious issue of residential zoning in Menlo Park is making a comeback.

Last week's letter titled "Do we want design by neighbors" is misinformed when it uses City Council member Kelly Fergusson's remodel project to repeat a timeworn line that remains untrue no matter how often and how disingenuously

pro-development factions trot it out.

Myth: "The power of neighbor input to remodel or rebuild a project has become the rule by which we live."

Fact: We? About 60 percent of Menlo Parks' lots require no neighbor notification and receive no Planning Commission review. The overwhelming majority of West Menlo lots are "standard lots" that are never reviewed by anyone except building department staff.

However, the author's appar-

ent call for adherence to setback rules gave me heart. Some among us have long advocated compliance with setback rules, including for chimneys, fireboxes, balconies, basement egress stairs, above-ground bay windows and other features — utilitarian or decorative — that reduce the space between houses and make a mockery of setback rules. The current ordinance gives that space away for free, just as the reviled ordinance No. 926 did in 2004 (approved by the current council majority

and subsequently rescinded following a popular uprising).

Because Ms. Fergusson's project, on a non-conforming lot, receives Planning Commission review, her neighbors are able to agree to, object to, or comment on intrusions into the buffer zones known as setbacks. On my standard lot, I could sock it to my neighbors on all sides, and there isn't a thing they could do about it. Is that the community Menlo Park wants to be?

Alternatively, shouldn't the city's building rules foster

dialogue, restraint, and compromise, for all? Imagine the possibilities.

Catherine McMillan
San Mateo Drive, Menlo Park

Town Center plans look better to former critic

Editor:

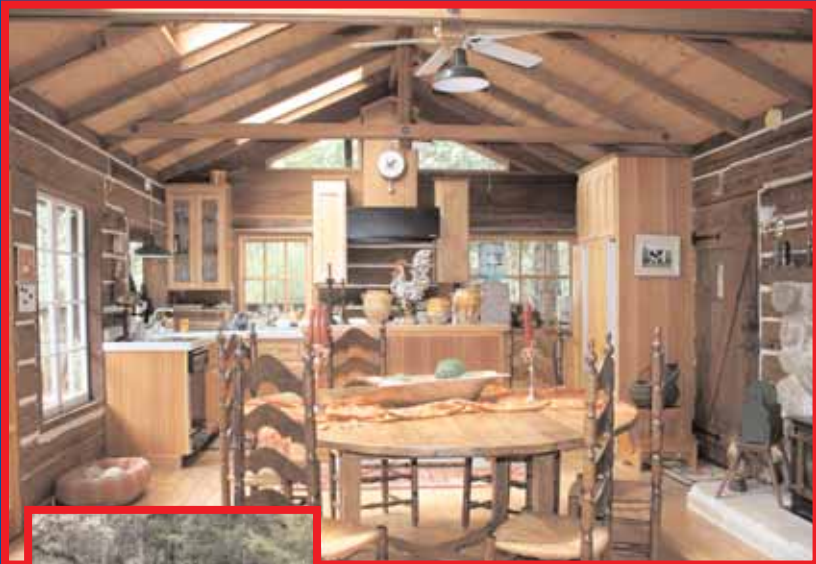
In the past several months, I have discussed the Town Center development with many local residents.

See **LETTERS**, page 24



See the
**VOTER
GUIDE**
in **Section 2**
page 29

Ed Kahl presents from charming to grand...



WOODSIDE – Tucked in the trees just off Sky-line Blvd is a 3BR 3BA Craftsman-style home . Approx one-half acre. Vlt'd ceil'gs, woodbrn'g fireplc, separate garage w/space over. Portola Valley Schools. (Adjacent half-acre (approx) lot for sale separately - \$325,000) \$1,375,000



WOODSIDE – Enter a world of luxury behind high brick walls in this incredible landmark estate on 5 sunny, level acres. Unbelievably spacious, w/ large, elegant main rooms, turreted, paneled office, amazing kitchen, circular glassed-in breakfast room, 7 bedrooms and so much more. Indoor pool, tennis court, guest house, historic barn, Woodside Elem. School. \$16,998,000

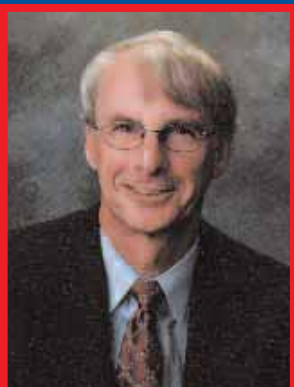


PALO ALTO HILLS – Exhilarating views from San Francisco to Silicon Valley. This remarkable estate offers cutting-edge construction and sophisticated design. Adjacent to hundreds of green acres of *Open Space*. The ultimate in exclusivity, privacy, and a lifestyle of luxury living. \$26,000,000



3.4-acre estate that offers privacy & ever-blooming gardens. Main house has 4BR 3.5BA, office, 3 fireplaces, vaulted ceilings. Guest house is spacious, stylish with 1+BR. Sunny pool w/vpatios, garden retreat; tennis court hidden beyond the lawns; room for horses. Woodside Elem. School. \$6,200,000

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