

Stanford's hotel/office complex wins
Planning Commission's OK. Page 5

The Almanac

THE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER FOR MENLO PARK

ATHERTON, PORTOLA VALLEY AND WOODSIDE

MAY 31, 2006

www.AlmanacNews.com | VOL. 41 NO. 39

Preschool for all?

Prop 82 aims
to start kids off
on the right foot

[Page 14]



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\$2,250,000



Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

FIRST SHOT



The Almanac/Marjan Sadoughi

Pipe dreams

Eventually, drivers can look forward to a smoother, quieter ride down Valparaiso Avenue. This summer, however, it's going to get worse before it gets better. From now through the end of June, workers for the California Water Service Co. are installing a new 12-inch water main under Valparaiso Avenue between El Camino Real and North Lemon Avenue. Once Cal Water finishes up, major repaving work will get started on the pothole-pocked thoroughfare.

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On the cover

Preschooler Annie Bisconti jumps through hoops during a P.E. class at Phillips Brooks School in Menlo Park. Locals tell the Almanac their opinions of Proposition 82 on the June 6 ballot, an initiative that would entitle every 4-year-old in the state to a year of free preschool. Photo by Marjan Sadoughi. Stories begin on **Page 14**.

CALLING ON THE ALMANAC

The Almanac offices are at **3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025**.

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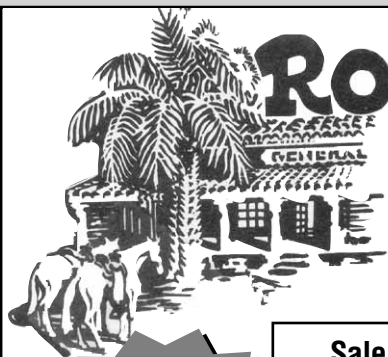
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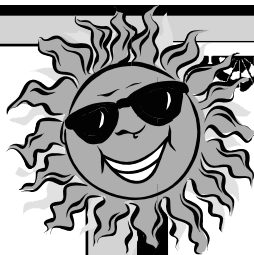
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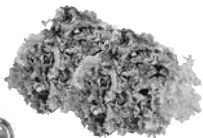
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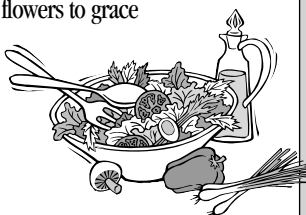
\$2.99 lb.

Summer Salads

The simplicity of summer salads makes them the perfect choice for lunch or dinner on steamy days. When fruits and vegetables peak, they create endless options for chefs to expand their summer menus. Your side garden salad quickly becomes a meal when topped with protein. Ask for turkey, tuna, grilled chicken, steak, or your favorite bean. Dressings create variety as well, but how about a unique topping? Fresh corn and berries are excellent options, and toasted pecans, walnuts, or pine nuts add a flavorful punch. And don't be afraid to go lettuce-less. Greek salads made with tomato wedges, cucumber slices, onion, olive, pepper and feta are fabulous, as is Insalata Caprese, with tomato slices, mozzarella, and basil leaves.

Breads are more than simple staples. Breads offer great variety and can compliment most meals. Check out our great fresh breads when you are here to pick up all the rest of the ingredients you need for that special meal. With the outstanding fresh products we carry every meal can be special. We even carry fresh cut flowers to grace your table. Customers prefer to shop here because of our quality products and our attention to service.

HINT: A middle Eastern salad offers bulgur wheat mixed with cucumber, tomato, green onion, fresh mint, and parsley.



EMMA - DELI

WINE

2005 Rosé, Part I

IT'S THAT TIME AGAIN! The first wave of 2005 Rosés are in. This is a banner vintage that surpasses the fine '04's with fresh flavors, aromas and crisp acidity. Classic!

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(The above wines assort for a 10% case discount.)

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New champ same as old champ

Atherton police Chief Bob Brennan is nothing if not a good sport. After being trounced at chess last year by a 9-year-old, the chief gamely played the same boy, the winner of this year's May 13 children's chess tournament at the Atherton library.

And once again, the chief reports, he was trounced, although the game lasted longer than last year's.

"My strategy was to go much more slowly, so I probably lost in the same number of moves, but it took longer," he said.

Disaster meeting a big success

Everyone loves a freebie. At a recent Atherton Civic Interest League annual meeting not only were experts discussing emergency preparedness, but residents were given family disaster supply kits to take home.

Atherton resident John Rugeiro said it was standing-room only at the Pavilion in Holbrook-Palmer Park on May 18, and estimated that about 300 people came to the meeting, more than he's seen in years.

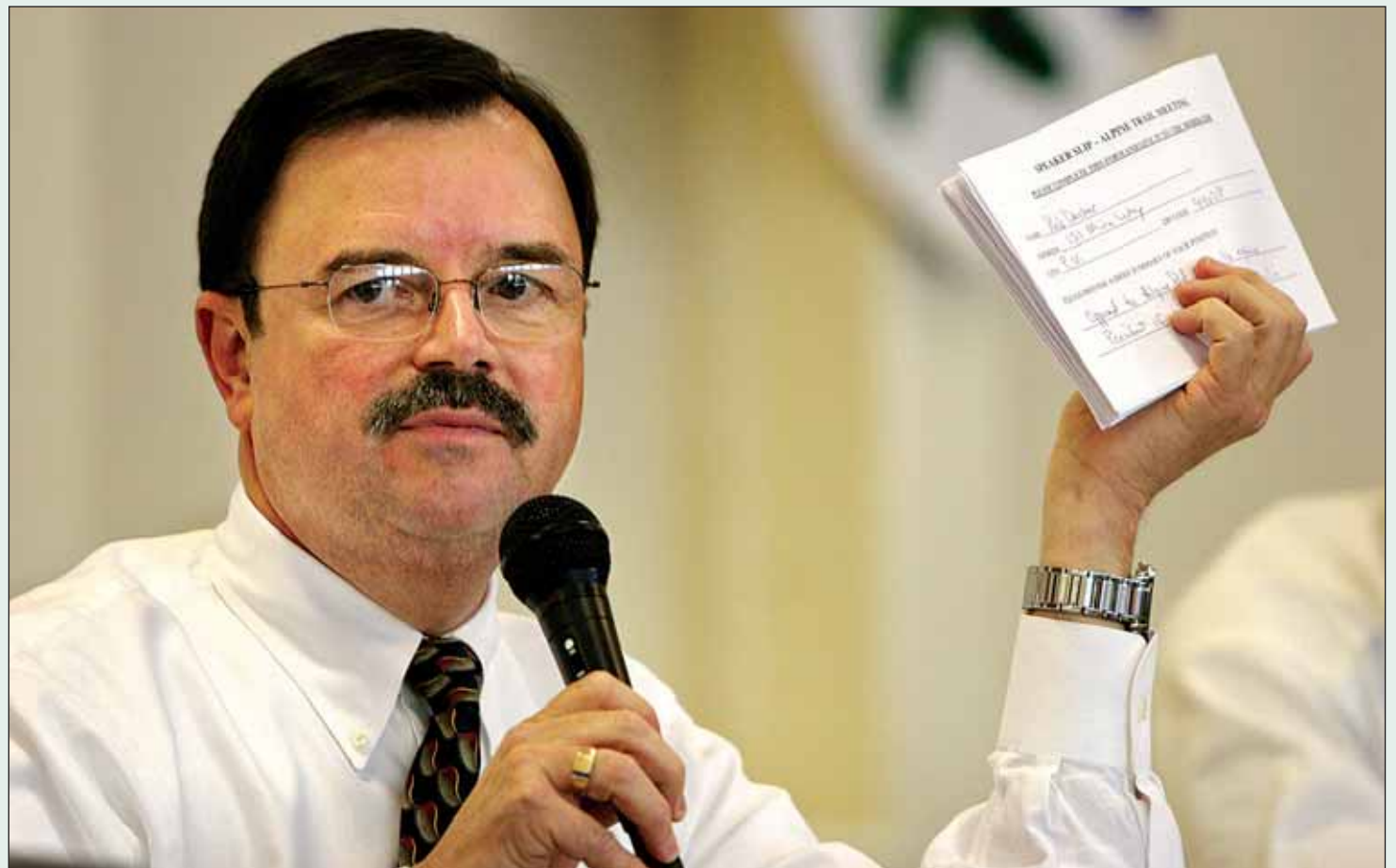
The disaster kits, worth \$80 and containing supplies for a family of four, were the brainchild of ACIL President Richard Moore. All 125 were given away, with rain checks for families that left empty-handed.

Square dancing at The Sequoias

If you can walk, you can square dance. That's the motto of the energetic seniors at The Sequoias retirement complex in Portola Valley.

Anyone in the community who would like to join the promenading seniors in the Sequoia Squares is invited to a square dancing open house on Monday nights, June 5 and 12, at 7 p.m., at Hanson Hall, at 501 Portola Road.

Popular caller Jim Osborne leads the experienced and inexperienced through the moves in Mainstream Western Square Dancing. Couple and singles are welcome. For information, call Jennifer Harris at 424-4427.



The Almanac/Marjan Sadoughi

Supervisor Rich Gordon of San Mateo County held speakers cards aloft during a standing-room-only May 23 meeting seeking opinion from residents of Ladera and Stanford Weekend Acres on a Stanford University proposal to pay for trail improvements along Alpine Road.

Residents urge rejection of trail

■ Stanford offers \$11.2 million to county and Portola Valley to build Alpine Road trail.

By David Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

Residents along Alpine Road in San Mateo County sent a resoundingly negative message last week to county supervisors regarding a proposal from Stanford University to pay for a well-defined trail along the road as it passes through Ladera and Stanford Weekend Acres.

The trail proposal is part of an agreement between Stanford and Santa Clara County to allow the

university to meet its general use permit obligations while mitigating the recreational impact of its expansion plans.

Rather than build trails on its own land on the south side of San Francisquito Creek, Stanford is willing to pay up to \$11.2 million — \$8.4 million to San Mateo County and \$2.8 to Portola Valley — to "improve" about 3 miles of existing but inconsistent paths and trails across the county line. Plans for the two trails are independent

and subject to approval by Santa Clara County and the local jurisdiction.

Opponents of a new trail have gathered 1,500 signatures, said Rob Decker, president of the Ladera Community Association. Mr. Decker spoke at a community meeting at Woodland School in Ladera on Tuesday, May 23, and moderated by county supervisors Rich Gordon and Jerry Hill.

Ladera residents' concerns, said Mr. Decker, include an increase in trail and vehicle traffic on an already busy road and the non-recreational character

of a new trail on complex terrain that includes a creek bank.

If the supervisors were to go ahead with trail improvements, Santa Clara County's "political quagmire (with Stanford over this issue) will become yours," added Mr. Becker. "This group is not going to go away."

A quick decision is unnecessary, said Stanford spokesman Larry Horton. The two offers from Stanford are good until the year 2011 with one two-year extension possible. The offers will also be indexed for inflation

See **TRAIL**, page 8

Stanford's hotel/office complex wins commission OK

By Rory Brown
Almanac Staff Writer

Stanford University's plans to build a 120-room luxury hotel and 100,000 square feet of office space at a Menlo Park site received a boost of support from the city's Planning Commission.

The commission voted 6-0 at its May 22 meeting to recom-

mend the City Council approve the project, planned for a 21-acre site near the intersection of I-280 and Sand Hill Road.

The council is scheduled to consider the project June 13.

Stanford is teaming up with Dallas-based Rosewood Hotels and Resorts to propose the hotel, five extended-stay villas, a restaurant, a health spa and four office buildings on the site. The proposed

hotel is 165,000 square feet.

"I'm enthusiastic for what [the complex] will do for the west end of the city," said Commissioner Henry Riggs after the meeting. "It's going to be a benefit to the west-side users — venture capitalism and think-tank oriented groups."

Commission Chairman Harry Bims said the architecture and design of the complex is "aesthetically pleasing," and the

plans are superior to a hotel planned for the same site by Westin Hotels and Resorts in the late 1980s.

If approved by the council, the hotel would generate \$1.3 million for the city when it opens in 2008 and \$1.9 million by 2011, according to a financial study. The bulk of those revenues would

See **STANFORD HOTEL**, page 8



She May Be Small But She Plays a Big Role in Her Health Care.

Living most of her life with a rare kidney cancer, Madison has very real opinions about her health care. And good for her. At Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, our commitment to family-centered care creates an environment where patients, families and hospital staff work in partnership to make decisions that reflect the unique needs of every child. Listening to kids is what we do.

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Read more about Madison and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at www.lpch.org.



New John Rain thriller debuts Thursday at Kepler's event

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor

My my, don't kids complicate life?

You work hard all day, bumping off a powerful businessman, or an influential diplomat — or maybe that guy who's been tailing you since last week, making it obvious you've got to get him before he gets you.

And all you've ever had to worry about is saving your own behind. Until now. Because you've just found out that you recently fathered a son during a brief affair with a Japanese jazz pianist, and now that child's life is in danger because of your deeds and misdeeds.

So what's a paid assassin to do? Patience. The answer will be revealed June 1, when Menlo Park author Barry Eisler's latest John Rain thriller, "The Last Assassin," is released — the fifth in a series.

Keeping with tradition, Mr. Eisler is launching the book on its release date, this Thursday, at Kepler's bookstore in Menlo Park, where he will present a free reading and sign books beginning at 7:30 p.m.

A longtime fan and supporter of Kepler's, the author is also sponsoring two contests to attract people to the store, which closed last August because of financial difficulties only to reopen after the community rallied to support it.

For the first contest, Mr. Eisler has promised to name a character in the next Rain book after the person who spends the most money on Kepler's merchandise between May 26 and 9:30 p.m. June 1, the night of the book-launching event.

Second, anyone buying "The

Last Assassin" at Kepler's June 1 can enter a contest to win a complete set of the five hardcover first-edition John Rain books, signed by the author. The drawing will take place after the book-signing.

Also keeping with tradition, those who buy a copy of the new book and have it signed by the author can bring the book to Cafe Borrone, next to Kepler's,



Photo by Naomi Brookner

Menlo Park author Barry Eisler will read from his latest book, "The Last Assassin."

after the event and get a free glass of wine.

The Kepler's event will kick off a book tour that will take Mr. Eisler all over the country, as well as to Spain, Japan, and possibly Italy.

Following Rain

The series' main character is John Rain, a half-American, half-Japanese former U.S. military man who is now a freelance assassin. The first book was "Rain Fall," followed by "Hard

Rain," "Rain Storm," and, last year, "Killing Rain."

Describing a central theme of his Rain books as "the inevitability of the continuing consequences of violence," Mr. Eisler says "The Last Assassin" bumps up the stakes for Rain, who now has the life of his newly discovered son to worry about in addition to his own. And that life is at great risk.

"My interest in those stakes and what a parent would do if forced to play for them became first the backbone, and finally the heart of the new book," Mr. Eisler writes in an e-mail to the Almanac.

The new novel is set in Barcelona, New York and, in Japan, Tokyo and Wajima. Mr. Eisler visits all locations he writes about in his books — "anything for my art, you know," he writes.

At the beginning of the new book, John Rain reconnoiters Barcelona before meeting his lover there. Rain says, "Barcelona was unfamiliar, but the real territory I was trying to navigate isn't marked on any map."

"That new territory," Mr. Eisler explains, "and Rain's attempt to find his way safely through it, is the story of 'The Last Assassin.'" ■

■ INFORMATION

Barry Eisler will read from his just-released book, "The Last Assassin," and sign copies on Thursday, June 1, beginning at 7:30 p.m. at Kepler's bookstore, 1010 El Camino Real in Menlo Park. The event is free. Call 324-4321.

Child care committee to meet May 31

A process that could end in turning over Menlo Park's city-operated child care programs to a private operator will get under way this week.

A 10-person review committee of parents, appointed officials and child care specialists will meet Wednesday, May 31, to review a draft request for proposals for private companies interested in taking over the programs.

The committee will meet at 6:30 p.m. in the Burgess Rec-

reation Center at 700 Alma St.

Once the proposals come in, the committee will review them — and one submitted by the city — then make a recommendation to the City Council. The council has not yet decided to privatize the programs, but at least two members are strong advocates of doing so.

The council could authorize negotiations with a private operator by September 21, and the programs could be in private hands by Janu-

ary — a fast-track timeline compared with the eight- to 16-month process originally recommended by city staff.

Assistant City Manager Audrey Seymour was responsible for appointing most of the review committee members, but their identities had not been made public by the Almanac's press time.

The meeting announcement was released at about 3:30 p.m. Friday, May 26, when City Hall was closed.

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Menlo Park School Bond Issue On June 6 Ballot

Q: Will passing a school bond issue have any affect on real estate values in this district? What is your opinion?

A: On June 6 the voters in the Menlo Park School District will be given an opportunity to vote on Measure U, a \$91.1 million bond issue to build approximately 60 new permanent classrooms (to replace the many substandard portable classrooms currently being used on each campus), and to upgrade the school buildings that were built in the 1950s. These expenditures are not only necessary if Menlo Park students are going to have safe, decent schools, but reliable estimates show that student enrollment will increase in the next decade and

the present classrooms will not be able to accommodate these new students.

In the past, residents and parents of the Menlo Park School District have shown that they care deeply about the schools and have supported them with their time and money. This support has helped make Menlo Park's excellent school system a major draw to new residents and a key factor in maintaining Menlo Park's high real estate values year after year. Passing Measure U will help to modernize and improve this important asset. There is no single factor that more affects the value of residential real estate in a community than the quality of the local schools.

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

Greg Munks for County Sheriff

A PLAN TO KEEP SAN MATEO COUNTY SAFE

Public Safety

- Ensure the Sheriff's Department is fully staffed, trained, and equipped to protect the residents and businesses we serve.
- Improve response times to emergency calls.
- Reduce gang violence and eliminate gang organizations.

Family and Domestic Violence

- Improve programs to prevent troubled youth from becoming adult criminals.
- Treat family and domestic violence as serious crimes and expand programs to rehabilitate violent offenders.
- Expand programs like homework centers and recreation programs to keep kids engaged and safe.

Disaster Preparedness

- Rebuild the County's Office of Emergency Services facility.
- Ensure all first responder agencies are trained to handle major emergencies.
- Further develop inter-agency communication plans to ensure police, fire and paramedic personnel can coordinate during major emergencies.

About Greg Munks

- San Mateo County Undersheriff, 1993 to Present
- Palo Alto Police Department, 1981 to 1990
- San Mateo County Sheriff's Department, 1977 to 1981
- Board Member, San Mateo County History Museum

- Board Member, Youth and Family Enrichment Services (YFES)
- Greg and his wife Brenda have raised their four children in San Mateo County



Vote June 6th

Greg Munks for Sheriff, 20 Park Road, Suite E, Burlingame, CA 94010, FPPC#1268838

Residents call for rejection of trail

TRAIL

Continued from page 5

in construction prices.

If either community refuses Stanford's offer, their share of the money goes to Santa Clara County for recreational purposes. If either community uses some but not all of the money, Stanford gets to keep the remainder, said Mr. Gordon.

"Part of my analysis has been to look at how to maximize the funding contribution that Stanford has said they are willing to pay and the maximum amount that Santa Clara County has required them to pay for the public good," Mr. Gordon told the Almanac.

The two supervisors will take comments and recommendations back to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors for possible action this summer, he said.

A steamy session

About 100 people, mostly from Ladera and Stanford Weekend Acres, gathered at Woodland School to let off steam about a new trail.

Several speakers advised the supervisors to reject the proposal on the grounds that the transfer of \$8.4 million from Stanford to the parks department in Santa Clara County could work to the region's overall recreational benefit.

Others had harsh words for Stanford.

"I'm shocked and outraged and horrified at what my university is doing by weaseling out of its obligations and promises and I urge you not to help them here," said

Ladera resident, Stanford alumnus and former Stanford employee Eva Blum.

"The idea that (Stanford) can foist their mitigation on me is outrageous," said Weekend Acres resident Rick Voreck. "It doesn't belong on my land. It belongs on Stanford land."

"We need to throw this smelly red herring back over the creek," said Mr. Decker. "It smells of entitlement, it smells of failed promises, it smells of a lack of consideration for the community."

Scattered support

Not everyone opposed a new trail. "I think that Stanford has been a fairly good neighbor over the years," said resident Lauren Schoenthaler, a staff attorney for Stanford's General Counsel. She said she would like to bike to work on a trail with a dotted yellow line down the middle.

Larry Gibbs, an associate vice provost at Stanford and a Ladera resident, said he supports trail improvements in part out of concern for the stability of the creek bank.

Although the meeting's purpose did not concern Portola Valley, residents Lynne Davis and Susan Gold of the town's

Trails and Paths Committee spoke positively about Stanford's offer of \$2.4 million.

"We're excited about the possibilities that may occur in Portola Valley," said Ms. Davis.

Portola Valley resident Bill Lane defended Stanford's reputation and appealed to residents all along Alpine Road to work together.

help relieve traffic.

The commission also recommended the city implement adaptive signal timing along Sand Hill Road to reduce congestion. The project would cost about \$1.3 million.

About \$432,000 of the project could be funded by the traffic impact fee Stanford must pay to build its proposed project, and the balance could be covered by revenue from the hotel tax, according to the commission.

Commissioner John O'Malley was absent from the commission's meeting.



The Almanac/Marjan Sadoughi

Supervisor Jerry Hill helped moderate the community meeting.

STANFORD HOTEL

Continued from page 5

come from the city's hotel tax.

Although the hotel would add funds to the city's coffers, some people, including Portola Valley Town Planner George Mader, have voiced concern about the extra traffic the complex would draw.

Mr. Bims and Mr. Riggs said they kept traffic in mind when considering the proposal, and noted the addition of a right-turn lane from northbound I-280 to eastbound Sand Hill Road will



M-A co-teachers Kristin Broussard (English) and Keith Brasel (special ed).

Integrating special-ed kids into mainstream classes

At M-A, 'co-teaching' brings two teachers into classrooms.

By Simone Rick-Kennel

Special to the Almanac

Today, educators are asking, "What's so 'special' about Special Education?" After all, special-ed kids represent about 10 percent of students in many high schools.

Students with learning disabilities are often very intelligent, yet have academic and processing deficits. They may have attention deficits, poor auditory processing, or reading, writing or math disabilities.

At Menlo-Atherton High School and other Bay Area campuses, students in special education are integrated into mainstream classes.

These classes use "co-teaching" — meaning there are two teachers, one with a background in special education.

Students who need special attention, such as help with vocabulary or one-on-one review of material, get that help, while the main course work is under way.

When students with learning problems are pulled out of mainstream classes and taught separately, they bear a social stigma.

"Kids feel singled out and marked in the standard special-ed classroom," said M-A instructor Andy Stuart. "It's not

MY TURN

About the author: Simone Rick-Kennel is chair of the Special-Education Department at Menlo-Atherton High School.

the ideal psychological environment, and students don't have the best peer role models."

That's why we are so enthusiastic about co-teaching.

Remember, special-ed kids are often highly intelligent and ambitious. Part of what officially defines "learning-disabled" is the gap between abilities and achievement. This often translates into high intelligence scores and low academic scores.

Learning-disabled students benefit from the right kind of classroom setting — exactly what co-teaching offers.

Traditionally, special-needs kids learn in "resource classrooms" of 15 to 20 students. They get to work at their own pace — and that pace, everyone agrees, is slow. What's worse, conventional special-education classroom behavior can be less than exemplary.

In a heterogeneous environment, kids have a better chance of seeing others participate fully in class activities and display good study skills.

World studies instructor Gwen Schneider said that co-

teaching easily enables her class to keep pace with a standard curriculum. In her courses, with special-needs kids mixed in, classroom participation is high.

"Almost 95 percent of kids are fully engaged," she said. "In a mixed setting, participation goes up for everyone. Learning-disabled kids who are normally afraid to speak up, get more enthusiastic and actively take part in class."

Ms. Schneider said teachers can give special attention, such as administering tests for kids who need more time to finish. "A teacher can check on each student," she said. "We can ask 'do you really understand this?'"

Grades tell part of the story. At M-A, we've seen close-to-failing students move toward the honor roll. The "qualitative" results look even better — in a mixed, co-teaching classroom kids' confidence and self-esteem noticeably improve.

As for the cost of co-teaching, schools can spend special-ed funds as they choose. This year, M-A's Foundation for the Future underwrote some of our planning costs. As kids continue to benefit, co-teaching will continue to win supporters.

Bayfront Park first option for fields

■ Staff to study other sites, but Bayfront ballot measure is the top priority.

By Rory Brown
Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park voters may get the opportunity to say whether they want playing fields at Bayfront Park, but the feasibility of building fields at the 160-acre park may still be undetermined when the November 7 election rolls around.

Council members Nicholas Jellins, Mickie Winkler and Lee Duboc reiterated support at the May 23 council meeting for exploring an advisory ballot measure that would ask voters whether they want playing fields at Bayfront Park.

The council will decide whether to authorize the ballot measure at a meeting in July, when staff will present information on the financial and geological feasibility of building fields at the park off Marsh Road, which sits on capped landfill.

But what officials from regulatory agencies — including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers — think of putting fields at the park won't be known before the council decides whether to proceed with a ballot measure.

The city doesn't have the time or staff to contact the agencies before July, but they will be contacted if the ballot measure is approved and passed, City Manager David Boesch said.

Putting an advisory measure on the November ballot would cost the city about \$20,000, he said.

Because the park is adjacent to the Bay, surrounded by a wild-

life refuge, and built on a landfill, there are environmental concerns with any development there, and the city would have to win approvals for the plan from various agencies.

Ms. Winkler, who originally floated the idea of a ballot measure in April, said the city is more likely to garner support from environmental agencies if voters support the plan.

Legal hurdles

Lennie Roberts, the San Mateo County legislative advocate for the Committee for Green Foothills, said public support would play no role in winning permits or exemptions to laws that restrict development at the park.

Even if voters say they want fields at the park, environmental hurdles, high costs and difficulties with re-engineering the landfill could prevent development.

"There's a huge number of questions voters wouldn't have a clue about," Ms. Roberts said. "An advisory ballot measure wouldn't give the city any mandate in changing restrictions at the park."

She added that several laws, including the Endangered Species Act and Migratory Bird Act, could restrict building fields in certain portions of the park.

Permitting hurdles and public opposition played a large part in a developer's decision several months ago to withdraw a proposal to build a golf course and three playing fields at the park,

Task force report

Councilwoman Kelly Ferguson said the city should not

consider Bayfront Park a viable site for playing fields.

"Politically and in the courts, I think fields at Bayfront Park [don't] have a snowball's chance in hell for success," she said.

Ms. Ferguson said the city should pursue recommendations in a report given to the council by a task force of parks and recreation commissioners and residents that studied the city's playing field shortage.

The report says the city should modify fields at Kelly and Burgess parks to accommodate more users, and consider building a field on an empty lot off Hamilton Avenue.


Other suggestions include encouraging teams to use underutilized fields in the Belle Haven neighborhood and resurfacing existing fields with artificial turf.

Councilman Andy Cohen said putting fields at Bayfront Park may be a "pie in the sky solution," and that it would be a mistake not to explore other options.

Mr. Boesch said when the city hires consultants to look at the feasibility of building fields at Bayfront, they will also study Kelly and Burgess fields and the Hamilton Avenue site.

Resident Nancy Borgeson said the council should try to implement the task force's recommendations as soon as possible, but noted that because of the current focus on Bayfront Park, the recommendations may not "be taken seriously."

Resident John Posthauer said the report is already "out of date" as the local Pop Warner football league will likely lose field space at Menlo-Atherton High School, adding to the field shortage. He urged the council to take steps to build fields at Bayfront Park. ■



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The Almanac/Marjan Sadoughi

Regal reception

Charles, the 9th Earl Spencer, autographs a decorative tabletop box May 25 at Flegel's Furniture in Menlo Park. Mr. Spencer, brother of the late Princess Diana, was in town to promote the 300-piece Althorp Living History Collection, based on items from his family's lavish estate in the English countryside. More than 200 guests attended the champagne reception.

Let Us Hear From You

Letters to the editor and guest columns are welcome.

Mail your comments to
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The Almanac

Menlo schools honor volunteers, teachers

The Menlo Park City School District is honoring more than 50 volunteers and teachers who have made significant contributions to the schools.

They will be honored Thursday, June 1, from 3 to 5 p.m. during an awards ceremony and reception at Jennings Pavilion in Holbrook-Palmer Park in Atherton.

The Golden Oak Award, the highest honor, will be given to four retiring teachers and four community volunteers.

Teachers

The organizing committee gave these reasons for recognizing these teachers:

■ Robin Allen, kindergarten teacher at Laurel School for 16 years, has creatively set the stage for younger learners to love school.

■ Marilyn Wong has helped make readers out of her first-graders and has pioneered elementary science education.

■ Karen Ehman, a student teacher in the district who then taught 39 years in the district, mostly at Encinal School, has been steadfast in her support of

students.

■ Marianne Walters, who is retiring after 15 years at Oak Knoll School as a fifth-grade teacher and vice principal for the last 10 years, helped build a sense of community among students and parents.

Volunteers

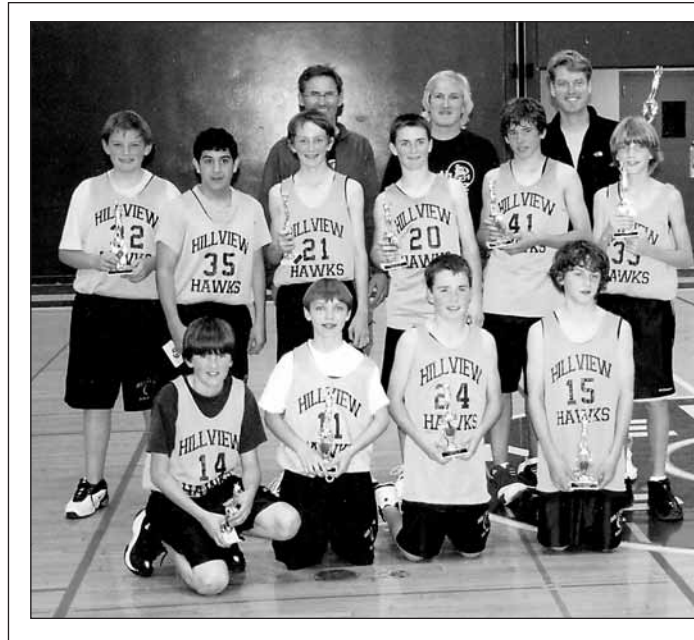
The Parent Teacher Organization Council gave these reasons for recognizing these volunteers:

■ Nancy Serrurier, district trustee for eight years, is a former president of the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation and co-chair of the district's first bond oversight committee.

■ Carol Orton, a district trustee for the past four years, has served in many capacities in the classrooms and in leadership roles for the foundation and PTOs.

■ June Flora has been a major force in setting up the endowment fund for the foundation and served as foundation president and on the Laurel PTO board.

■ Carol Fields, now foundation co-president, has taken on major fundraising tasks, includ-



Middle school champs

Winners of the Burgess Middle School League were these players from Hillview Middle School in Menlo Park. They are, front row, from left, Alex Fioretti, James Blawie, Casey Eason and Trent Bastian; middle row, from left, Brian Little, Farzon Niemi, Evan Weiner, Jonny Halprin, Colin Kelley and Chris Thygesen; back row, from left, coaches Stephen Fioretti, Allen Weiner and Allan Thygesen.

ing handling databases and helping launch an endowment fund.

Service awards

Those receiving honorary service awards, grouped by the granting organization, are:

■ Laurel School: Andy Belk, Ora Chaiken, Angie Holman, Kristen Owen, Andrea Palmer, Elizabeth Shane and Shari Conrad.

■ Encinal School: Liz Balena, Rebecca Bloom, Efen Gonzales, Dave Liggett, Nancy McMahon,

Officer Bruce Potts and Janet Perez.

■ Oak Knoll School: Joann Arneson, Johanna Becker, Marsha Brock, Brownwyn Dobberstein, Audrey Kemp, Jan McKenzie, Nancy Ryde, Julie Gaston and Carey Pickus.

■ Hillview Middle School: Mike Doroquez, Bob Gumerlock, Lexy Keller, Cindy Newton, Harry Bell, Betsy Bowersox, Cindy Marty, Stacy Frederickson, Teri O'Neel and Cindie White.

■ Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation: Lisa Deal, Katie Hadrovic, Barb Windham, Stasia Grose, Jill Parker, Lynne Young and Peggy Propp.

■ PTO Council: Susan Young. Teachers who received Jeanie Ritchie grants this year will also be honored. The grants fund classroom projects proposed by the teachers.

Information for this article was submitted by Janet Perez, Encinal PTO president.



Len Tillem Esq.

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Host of KGO's "Legaltalk"

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Getting ready to sell coffee for a fundraiser are members of the Alpine Menlo Pumas. See names in the story.

Girls soccer team to tour Europe

The Alpine Menlo Pumas under-13 girls soccer team heads to Europe this summer. They will play in Holland and Germany and see a World Cup second-round game before competing in the Pitea Summer Games in Sweden.

This year the Pumas were Clovis Challenge Cup champions, Wine Country Classic finalists as well as semi-finalists in the Nor-Cal State Cup (silver division).

The team is part of the

Alpine Menlo Soccer Club, which includes teams for boys and girls from U9-U15 as well as an academy for younger players. For information, see alpinemenlosoccer.com.

In the photo, from left, are Cynthia Garcia, Charlotte Geaghan-Breiner, coach Christina Bell Gilmore, Emily Mosbacher, Evie Browne, Justine Dhollande, Lizzie Browne, Mackenzie Adamis, coach Cris

Gilmore and Brianna Furner.

The touring team also includes (not shown): Sparky Barkmann, Lauren Espeseth, Taylor Grose-close, Sophie Koontz, Allison May, Hannah Norman, Rachel Rosensweig, Alex Schnabel, Darrah Shields and Stephanie Terpening.

Players are from Menlo Park, Portola Valley, Woodside, Los Altos, Sunnyvale, San Carlos, Redwood City and Palo Alto.

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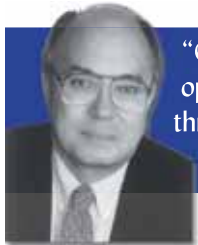
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"For the parents of the 2,134 students in the Menlo Park City School District, approval of Measure U, the \$91.1 million bond issue on the June 6 ballot, is a no-brainer... We urge Menlo Park voters to visit the schools and see for themselves, and then vote yes on Measure U."

The Almanac, May 23

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"In my sixteen years at Laurel School, we have seen significant enrollment growth. When I started, there were only 5 kindergarten classrooms; now there are 9 and that number will increase. There are 12 portables already on campus and not enough space for kids to play. I support Measure U because we need new facilities for our kids."

— Robin Allen, Kindergarten Teacher, Laurel School



to learn more and view the full text of newspaper endorsements, visit www.BuildforFuture.org

As our schools become overcrowded, we're running out of classroom and playground space. Thankfully, our school board is working hard to find ways to accommodate more students while better utilizing campus acreage. My wife, Laura, and I support Measure U as a responsible solution for updating our facilities to better serve our kids."

John Foster, Longtime Coach, Youth Sports; Managing Director, Broadreach Capital Partners



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"As a pediatrician, I'm interested in a child's overall well-being. Our schools need to provide diverse opportunities for mental and social stimulation, as well as ample fields and gyms for physical play in a safe environment. That's why I strongly support Measure U."

Dr. Julia Hallee, Pediatrician and District Parent

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Portables are hardly an ideal place to teach kids — not to mention they eat up valuable play and parking space. We support the district's bond measure and see it as a necessary measure to continue the kind of quality education that has been the hallmark of the Menlo Park district.

San Mateo County Times, May 19

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Sam Sinnott
Patrick Smith
R.L. Smith
Jill & Steve Smith
Marcos Solache
Joan Solari
Kim Sommer
Elena Stallings
Annarosa Tomasi & Richard Stark
Cindy Stead

"While the new school facilities will cost the community more money, we urge voters to make this investment in the education of our local young people."

Palo Alto Daily, May 24

Alison & Rob Leupold
Emily & David Liggett
Lisa Lindquist
Kerry & Chris Lindsey
Katherine Lipps
Robie & John Livingstone
Sue Lockwood
Watson Lohmann
Carole & Mark Louie
Dave Lowell
Leslie Luff
Andrea Luskin
Kristi Lutge
Carolyn Lynch
Jackie & Bob Macdonald
James Mackenzie
Margie & Bruce Madding
Pam & Steve Madeira
Remy Malan
Mary Liz Maletis
Hermine Mante
Susan & Mike Marianacci
Diane Marica
Michelle & Paul Marini
Sidney & Doug Marks
Kathy & Mark Martella
Kim & David Martin
Maira Cullen Martin
Kelly & Woodson Martin
Cindy & Alan Marty
Linda & John Mathews
Leslie Mayerson
Margo McAuliffe
Diana & Jeff McColloch
Kristin & John L. McDonnell III
Thomas McKay

Susan & Marshall Mohr
Karla Mohrman
Linda & John Montgomery
Barrett Moore
Laura Moore
Kevyn Allard & Scott Mosher
Kim Young & John Moragne
Jill Morgan
Margaret A. Morgan
Anne & Richard Morrissey
Robin Mouat
Ellen & Marvin Mouchawar
Alexis & Matt Murphy
Jackie & Nick Naclerio
Sandy Napel
Cheri & Kevin Nason
Cindy & Peter Nathan
Cindy Newton
Angela Ng-Quinn
Kristina & Ethan Nicholls
Stephanie & Jim Nisbet
Cyndi & Tony Nolasco
Dr. Richard Novak
Lynn & John Ohara
Sue & Craig Olson
Jill & Eric Olson
Kristen Olson
Mira Olson
Teri & John O'Neil



I'm confident Measure U will pass. Menlo Park residents know that it makes sense to improve our school facilities to better serve current students, and to prepare for growing enrollment. I'm proud to live in a community that makes our schools a top priority—and always has."

Helen Hausman, Trustee, San Mateo Community College and Former Trustee of Sequoia Union High School Board

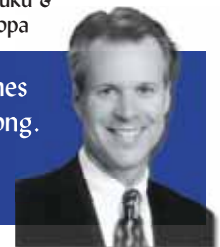
Leslie Rehlaender
Mark Rich
Tyler Rich
Cynthia Ridley
Debi & Doug Rice
Terri Richards
Cathy Ricke
Jill & Doug Robertson
Heyward Robinson
Sally & John Robinson
Wendy Rohn
Lisa & David Roise
Kristy Roos-Taylor
Anne & Rico Rosales

Susan Stieglitz
Honor Fullerton Stone
Dana & Robert Stone
Ann & Michael Stoner
Pamela Stoner
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Maureen & Jim Swartz
Edward Syrett
Cynthia Harris & Daniel Sze
Nancy & Bob Talbott
Gloria Tam
Connie Tamaddon
Stefan Tamme
Rachel Tasch

Kathy Wright
Sarah Wright
Janet & Danny Yeh
Melanie Yennadhiou
May Yick
Noel & Andrew Young
Susan & David Young
Lynne W. Young
Jill & Steve Zanolli
Anna Zara
Robert Zeien
Noel Zelaya
Leah Shimabuku & Andrew Zolopa

"In my real estate practice, I see a growing number of young families moving into our community, buying homes from older residents who are downsizing or moving on. Families are drawn here because our schools are so strong. When our schools are exceptional, property values remain strong and our entire community prospers."

Tom LeMieux, Realtor and District Parent



Preschool for all?

Locals debate the merits, complexities of a ballot measure that would provide free preschool with a tax on the rich

Finger-paints and sandboxes, circle-time and silly songs. Preschool may look idyllic from the outside, but there's a whole lot of important social and cognitive development work happening in those playful preschool classrooms.

Bringing the benefits of a preschool education to every child in California is the goal of Proposition 82 on the June 6 ballot. To be funded by a tax on the wealthiest Californians, Preschool for All would be an investment in early childhood education that supporters say will save the state money and improve children's educational performance long after they've left their finger-paints behind.

It's the details of the Preschool for All initiative that some locals are finding troublesome. Almanac reporters talked to local public officials, private preschool directors and public school teachers and administrators about Proposition 82 to get a sense of the initiative's pros and cons, and to find out how its passage might affect Midpeninsula families.

Cover Story by Almanac Staff Writers: **Andrea Gemmet, Marion Sofitky, Majorie Mader and David Boyce**
Photos by Almanac Staff Photographer **Marjan Sadoughi**



Proposition 82: lots of questions and answers

Proposition 82 promises to provide a free year of preschool for all 4-year-olds in California by adopting a new tax on the incomes of individuals making over \$400,000 a year, and of couples earning over \$800,000 a year. Children would be able to attend half-day programs five days a week during the school year.

Q: What if I don't want to send my child to preschool?

A: The program would be voluntary, and no one would be forced to attend.

Q: Can I choose a preschool for my child?

A: Yes. Parents could select from participating private preschools or public preschool programs.

Q: So my preschool of choice might not participate?

A: That's possible. Participating preschools would have to meet state standards for curriculum, teacher qualifications and staff salaries, among other things.

Q: What kind of curriculum?

A: That's a very big question mark.

Proposition 82 says that the state superintendent of public education would come up with curriculum standards based on what is developmentally and age-appropriate and the academic content that is taught in kindergarten through grade 3 classrooms.

Q: Will this go into effect in time for my 2-year-old to take advantage of it?

A: Probably not. It would be phased in, with free preschool guaranteed for children born on or after June 6, 2006. Some preschool programs in some areas may be available before the 2010 school year.

Q: I thought the state was broke. Who's going to pay for this?

A: The state would impose a new tax of 1.7 percent on incomes over \$400,000 a year for individuals, and over \$800,000 for couples, beginning in 2007. For example, an individual with income of \$700,000 a year would pay \$5,100. The tax is estimated to affect less than 1 percent of the population, and is projected to raise \$2.1 billion in the 2007-08 fiscal year, its first year.

Q: Is all that money going to be spent on preschool tuition?

A: No. Most of it would, with Proposition 82 providing an estimated \$6,000 annually per child, but some money would also be used to purchase or build preschool facilities, and to provide financial aid for college courses needed to meet the higher educational requirements for teachers and aides.

Q: How much higher are the educational requirements for teachers?

A: By July 2016, a preschool teacher would have to have a bachelor's degree and a new early childhood education credential, requiring about 5 years of college to complete. Currently, teachers in licensed preschools must have completed 12 units of early childhood education courses, or about one-half a year of college.

Q: I heard that most of the 4-year-old children in California already go to preschool and that Proposition 82 would only increase that number by a small percentage.

A: Opponents cite a RAND Corp. study that says about 65 percent of California's preschool-age children already attend preschool, and Proposition 82 would only increase that number to 70 percent. Proponents say that the study is counting children in daycare and babysitting situations. According to California teachers cited by Proposition 82 supporters, only 20 percent of 4-year-olds are in quality preschools with credentialed teachers.

Q: We want to send our child to preschool, but we need full-time daycare while we're at work. Will full-time daycare/preschool programs be funded by Proposition 82?

A: The text of Proposition 82 says only that preschool programs must be offered for at least three hours a day, 180 days a year. There are no provisions for "wrap-around" child care, although it's hard to imagine that some participating preschool programs wouldn't seize the opportunity to offer extended hours for a fee.

Find out more online

Information about Proposition 82 is available at these Web sites:

- League of Women Voters, SmartVoter.org
- San Mateo County Elections Office, ShapeTheFuture.org
- Backers of the initiative, YesOn82.com
- Opponents of the initiative, NoProp82.org
- To find out whose donations are financing all those TV and radio ads, go to the California secretary of state's Web site, <http://cal-access.ss.ca.gov>, click on "Campaign finance activity" and then click "Propositions & Ballot Measures" to get to Proposition 82 listed under the 2006 primary election.





Key player: county schools superintendent

Jean Holbrook, San Mateo County's new superintendent of schools, will play a key role in implementing the Preschool for All initiative in the county if California voters

This is an opportunity that may not come again soon, says county school superintendent Jean Holbrook.



approve Proposition 82 on the June 6 ballot.

She and the San Mateo County Board of Education have endorsed the ballot measure.

"Creating a quality preschool program that's available to everyone is a giant step toward building a pathway for students' success in school and in life," she said.

Appointed county superintendent last January, Ms. Holbrook faces no opposition in the June primary election. Her career in the San Mateo County Office of Education spans 30 years.

For the past five years, she has worked with the First Five Commission in the county to provide preschool opportunities for 3- and 4-year-olds. This program serves about 600 children from areas in the Redwood City and Ravenswood City school districts.

Proposition 82 has an 18-month ramp-up process that will provide opportunities for local input and a smooth transition, she said.

This is an opportunity, she added, that may not come along again for quite some time.

Michelle Espino and her friends decide what kind of dress-up game to play at Family Connections, a parent-participation preschool in Belle Haven.

Public school teachers, principals wrestle with Prop 82

The Almanac interviewed several public school teachers and principals to get their views on Proposition 82. While all agreed that preschool is highly beneficial, some question the specific program that the ballot measure would put into place.

Views from the classroom

The idea of universal preschool has strong support among the three elementary school teachers interviewed for this story. It makes their jobs much easier, they said, because it familiarizes kids with school routines.

"It basically helps teachers with management because kids have an understanding of how to behave in a civilized setting and know what the purpose of school is," said Richard Tashman, a first-grade teacher at Belle Haven Elementary School in Menlo Park who is in his first year of teaching.

Mr. Tashman said most of his students have not been to preschool. As a result, he said, they can have problems with self-discipline, respect for themselves and others, and the ability to cooperate. Kids without preschool "are not going to learn as well as everybody else, and they'll fall behind," he said.

The question may be an abstract one for a kindergarten teacher in the Menlo Park City School District who preferred anonymity because her comments, she said, were not representative of all teachers. Virtually all of her students have attended preschool, as has always been the case in her career so far. She would not give an opinion on Proposition 82.

"If I taught in a school in a different location, I would imagine I would experience different needs in a kindergarten classroom," she said, noting that preschool is "incredibly valuable" because it catches kids in a period of important growth.

Another Menlo Park kindergarten teacher chose anonymity to avoid backlash for voicing an opinion that might be unpopular in a community of many families who would be taxed if 82 passes.

She said she once taught in a poorer school district. Kids who

have preschool, she said, "are able to function on their own and make decisions and take responsibility for their own actions."

This teacher said she would vote for Proposition 82, but is of two minds on it. On the one hand, universal preschool would create a smarter work force and every \$2 spent would save \$4 in law enforcement costs, she said.

At the same time, she said, the proposition as written is "not as well-defined as we might like" on a topic that "unfortunately, needs a lot more research." Better that it address all high-risk children first, for example, and perhaps charge tuition based on ability to pay, she said.

All three teachers agreed that college-level certification for preschool teachers — a provision of Proposition 82 — may be a bit much.

That provision echoes the uniformity of the federal No Child

Left Behind Act, said one kindergarten teacher. "I think the state or the government could find out if a teacher is highly qualified in other ways than the few avenues that they've laid out for people."

Mr. Tashman believes that a preschool teacher needs leadership skills and a background in working with children — abilities often found in camp counselors. "In my opinion, the skills you learn in college are not relevant to the skills you need to be a teacher in preschool," he said.

Views from principals

Woodside School District is one of the few elementary school districts in the area that already offers an on-campus preschool on a fee-for-service basis. It's already fully subscribed next year.

"We run a successful, wonderful, popular program" for 65 preschoolers, said Dan Vinson, the district's superintendent/principal. He said 99 percent of all the preschoolers in the district program go on to kindergarten at Woodside School.

But Mr. Vinson said he's not sure what Proposition 82 would do to the program if it passes.

Would the district be required to offer another program? Where would it be housed? What would be the curriculum focus?

Woodside's preschool program offers children from 2 years, 9 months to age 5 a wealth of experiences and time for discovery, he said. Two credentialed teachers work full-time with three instructional assistants.

Children who live in the Woodside school district have first priority for admission to the preschool. Next priority is to those who live in the Woodside community, and then it's open to other preschoolers.

Nancy Hendry, principal of the K-2 Laurel School in the Menlo Park City School District and an early childhood education specialist, supports preschool for all kids.

"In a perfect world, it would be a great experience for all, providing it didn't take funding away from the K-12 mandated programs," she said. "I don't know in the long run if preschool is the determining factor in a child's success in school, although it absolutely

See **PRINCIPALS**, page 17

Curriculum, not salary, worries local private preschools

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

Preschool directors, as you might expect, love the idea of preschool for all children. It's the fine print of Proposition 82 that is causing them some concern. Surprisingly, local preschool directors say they aren't too worried about Proposition 82 causing increased competition for students or dramatically raising teachers' salaries.

When the Almanac spoke with officials from five local private preschools to gauge their opinions on Proposition 82, a common theme emerged — they're in favor of improving teacher salaries, but they are wary of what curriculum standards imposed by the state might look like.

As to whether their preschools would participate in the program, it was a mixed bag. Two said they probably would, one said probably not, and the other two say it depends on details that have yet to be worked out.

It's safe to say that no one ever got rich on a preschool teacher's salary. Besides providing free preschool to all 4-year-olds, Proposition 82 would raise the salaries of preschool teachers so that they would be on par with public elementary school teachers.

According to the state legislative analyst, preschool teachers earn an average of \$27,000 a year. If Proposition 82 passes, participating preschools, even private preschools, would have to raise salaries to reflect the pay scale at local public schools.

The statewide average for public school teachers is around \$60,000, more than twice as much. If you add in benefits, the full compensation package currently hovers around \$76,000 a year, according to the state analyst.

Trinity School

"I like that they are pushing for wage increases, and pushing more education for the teachers," said Pam Harris, the program coordinator of Trinity School's preschool in Menlo Park.

However, she has a wait-and-see approach when it comes to the curriculum.

Proposition 82 would allow parents to choose from public or private preschools, provided that they



Time to play outside! Annie Bisconti and Morgan Wyatt head to the field for P.E., followed by the rest of their preschool classmates at Phillips Brooks School in Menlo Park.

meet various standards, including those for teacher education, salaries and curriculum.

The state superintendent of schools is charged with setting a "developmentally appropriate" curriculum based on the "academic content" taught in kindergarten through grade 3 classrooms.

Trinity's preschool philosophy, Ms. Harris said, is firmly in the "whole child" camp, where children engage in dramatic play and learn skills through play activities. The school emphasizes teaching children to socialize with each other.

"We definitely are determined not to turn our early childhood program into an academic program that's not developmentally appropriate," Ms. Harris said. "It interests me that the people I've seen behind this are not early childhood trained, they are elementary education trained, and there's a big difference."

The \$6,000 per child that would be provided by Proposition 82 is half of what Trinity charges, and the preschool probably would not participate, she says.

Phillips Brooks

Jon Kulhanek, the director of Phillips Brooks School's preschool program, says that the Menlo Park-based private school already has high educational requirements for teachers and pays salaries based on their elementary teacher salaries. He said he is very curious to see what

a state-mandated curriculum would look like.

"As you can imagine, there's a part of the population that believes in a tremendous push in academics from the earliest age," Mr. Kulhanek said. "But social, creative learning is the best thing

The mistake is thinking that a preschooler's cognitive skills aren't being developed because it looks like they are playing, not doing academics, says Jon Kulhanek, director of Phillips Brooks' preschool.

we can provide for young children. There is a window, particularly for creativity, that can be missed."

He said the school gets this point across through "very careful, thoughtful" parent education to help them understand that flashcards and drills are not the best way for young children to learn.

"The phenomenon of stepping-down curriculum has been around for years," Mr. Kulhanek said. "What used to be taught in first grade is now taught in kindergarten. We've really been battling to let children be children for as long as possible."

The mistake is thinking that a preschooler's cognitive skills aren't being developed because it looks like they are playing, not doing academics, he said.

"We have bright kids; a number of them leave our program reading," Mr. Kulhanek said. "It's like walking; if a child's developmentally ready, that's great. But just as you can't force a 4-month-old to walk, you can't force a child who's not ready to read to read."

Tuition for the five-day week program for 4-year-olds at Phillips Brooks is \$13,800, he said. He didn't think Phillips Brooks would participate if it required the school to "sell out" to a state-mandated curriculum that goes against the school's philosophy.

Ladera Preschool

Pam Krug, the director of Ladera Preschool, said that the curriculum is one of many unknowns that concern her. She said she's worried that the higher educational requirements will eliminate some segments of the teaching population.

"Older people, who are absolutely wonderful teachers, may not want to go out and get bachelor's degrees in their 50s," she said.

Ms. Krug said that Proposition 82 doesn't provide for children who need an additional year of preschool before they start kindergarten. Some children, particularly

those with fall birthdays who may start preschool while they are still 3, may not be socially and emotionally ready for kindergarten after just one year of pre-

school, she said.

"It's so important to have preschool before they go on to kindergarten, because it really makes it or breaks it for them," she said. "Everybody is in favor of every child attending preschool, especially those (children) speaking English as a second language."

With so much still unknown, she said she did not know if Ladera would be interested in participating.

Family Connections

Family Connections, a free parent-participation preschool for low-income families in Belle Haven, is one of the programs currently trying to fill the gap for families that can't afford to send their kids to preschool. It offers multi-age preschool classes that parents attend with their children.

The program pays for itself through adult school tuition, county funding, foundation grants, donors and fundraising, said Ruth Pinkus-Resnik, the education coordinator.

If Proposition 82 passes, Family Connections might lose some of its 4-year-olds, she said.

"Or, what could happen is that children will stay in our (morning) program, but will have access to an afternoon program only for 4-year-olds," Ms. Pinkus-Resnik said. "Then we won't have to struggle with the situation we have right now, where (children) don't qualify for Head Start because the income-bracket is so low," but their families don't make enough to send them to private preschools.

Overall, she said she is in favor of Proposition 82, and Family Connections would try to participate.

"We are very hopeful it passes," said Ms. Pinkus-Resnik.

Creative Children centers

Ty Durekas is the CEO of Sunnyvale-based Children's Creative Learning Centers, which operates day care, preschool and afterschool programs nationwide, including programs at the Las Lomas School campus in Atherton.

"It will infuse more funding into the system for families to have access to quality programming. I think there are going to be a lot of benefits in that," Mr. Durekas said.

Along with the preschool programs, CCLC would offer before- and after-care, he said. It's just a question of how they would juggle the use of classrooms to accommodate two groups of children in half-day programs, rather than one group in a full-day program, Mr. Durekas said.

The state funding that CCLC would receive for holding two half-day preschool classes per day would be more than they currently receive for eight hours of pre-kindergarten programming, he said.

"From that perspective, it's actually a boon to the industry. Many people lose sight of that, because they are not astute enough to see the benefits, financially speaking."

He's not wholeheartedly in favor of Proposition 82, however. He said he doesn't think it will increase preschool enrollment much in the Bay Area, and he's worried that with state involvement, it will become too bureaucratic.

"It wouldn't have been my approach, but it will fill an important need in the state," Mr. Durekas said. "There's state-wide benefits, but less local benefits." ■



Javier Barrera focuses on filling containers with sand at Family Connections preschool.



The letter **E** is tricky. A Phillips Brooks preschooler gets help writing his name.

Local politicos like Proposition 82 — with reservations

By Marion Softky

Almanac Staff Writer

Local political leaders take a nuanced view of Proposition 82, the “Preschool for All” initiative.

No one is against giving all 4-year-olds a head start on their learning path, but some have reservations about whether Proposition 82 is the right way to do the job.

“I like the concept of universal preschool and a lower age at which children start into the educational arena. But the devil is in the details,” said San Mateo County Supervisor Rich Gordon, who is still struggling with the issue. “I wonder if we should lock a program like this into the Constitution.”

Also still undecided are state Sen. Joe Simitian, D-Palo Alto, and the League of Women Voters of California.

“I think the benefits of universal preschool are clear,” Sen. Simitian told *The Almanac*. “What’s less clear to me is whether Proposition 82 is the best way to get it done.”

A survey of local officials found strong support for Proposition 82 from Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Atherton; state Sen. Jackie Speier, D-Hillsborough; Assemblyman Ira Ruskin, D-Redwood City; and former assemblyman Ted Lempert.

“The earlier children learn, the more success they will have in their later life,”

Mr. Ruskin said. “It’s a worthwhile investment.”

San Mateo County Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson, who represents Menlo Park, East Palo Alto and Redwood City on the board, also supports it. “This is a one-time opportunity, so we have to seize the moment,” she said. “It’s up to us to make sure we get the benefits in all our communities.”

Sen. Speier acknowledges the measure has problems. “It has hiccups,” she said. “I think we can fix the hiccups.”

Ted Lempert

Mr. Lempert, who has focused on education since leaving the Assembly in 2000, is working hard to pass Proposition 82. He is president of Children Now, a national child-advocacy organization.

“Prop 82 will expand access to kids not in preschool, and will improve quality across the board,” he said.

Mr. Lempert responded to some of the arguments against Proposition 82:

■ It is difficult to change provisions of the measure that are locked into the constitution.

Mr. Lempert noted the state Legislature can modify the rules as long as it doesn’t undermine the intent of the measure. “The Legislature needs a two-thirds vote to make changes,” he said.

■ The measure will drive current

operators out of business if they don’t want to meet state requirements.

Mr. Lempert said the measure is carefully drafted so that current and non-profit providers can qualify, but have to meet some requirements. While teachers will have to have a bachelor’s degree by 2014, the initiative includes money for teacher training.

■ Some people don’t want the state writing standards and tests for preschoolers.

“The state is doing that anyway,” Mr. Lempert responded. “They will be doing this regardless.”

■ Some people argue the measure should be targeted at people in need and not be universal.

“Being universal is key,” Mr. Lempert said. “That’s how you can put dollars into teacher training, facilities, and increasing the pay.”

Other views

Mr. Gordon still had reservations based on San Mateo County’s experience in creating a preschool-for-all program in East Palo Alto and Redwood City.

“We are finding issues around facilities, teacher qualifications, and parent participation,” Mr. Gordon said. “These are issues that need to be tweaked as we move to implement the measure. I am concerned that details in the constitu-

tion might be hard to tweak.”

Mr. Gordon also worried about the allocation of money, since Proposition 82 calls for a single dollar-per-child allocation statewide. “In a high-cost area like ours, facilities are more expensive and salary expectations higher,” he said. “I’m not sure how the math will work out.”

The three candidates fighting to succeed Sen. Speier, who leaves the state Senate because of term limits, take three views of Proposition 82.

Former San Mateo County Supervisor Mike Nevin supports it. “In the American family today both parents are working,” he said. “We do need to support the kids as much as possible.”

Assemblyman Leland Yee of San Francisco, a professional educator and child psychologist, has taken no position. “It troubles me that you are using public dollars to subsidize some rich kid’s child care,” he said. “There is no means test. A Beverly Hills kid gets the same subsidy as one from East Palo Alto.”

Former Assemblyman Lou Papan worried about building a new bureaucracy. “I support the thrust of Proposition 82, but I don’t know if 82 is the answer,” he said. “We should work with the existing bureaucracy, and put money into education.”

PRINCIPALS

continued from page 15

gives them an advantage in kindergarten.”

Ms. Hendry is concerned about whether the preschool curriculum to be developed if Proposition 82 passes would be the best for all kids. With the state-mandated curriculum and account-

ability standards, kindergarten now seems to be more like first grade than preschool, she said.

She believes young children should be given opportunities to learn social skills, understand being part of a group environment, and build and understand concepts that form a solid base for future learning.

About 95 percent of the kin-

dergartners at Laurel School had attended preschool.

Principal Jerry Traynor of the K-3 Las Lomas School said that, in theory, he would always support the concept of early childhood education and the provision of programs for preschoolers.

“Anything we can do for young families and children, I’m for it,” he said. “However, I think there

are flaws in the Preschool For All program, proposed in the Proposition 82 initiative.”

Mr. Traynor said he thinks the preschool program would cost more than projected. “Funding for our K-12 public schools is fragile,” he said. “Down the line it could worsen” if the preschool program is put in place.

California already provides

preschool programs, designed primarily for children from low-income families, Mr. Traynor said, adding that those programs cost \$360 million annually.

A good 90 percent of the kindergartners at Las Lomas School in Atherton have gone to preschool.

Reporting by Marjorie Mader and David Boyce

Connie Rhodes to celebrate 100th birthday

Connie Rhodes, a longtime resident of Menlo Park, turns 100 on June 8, her granddaughter Coleen Duncan has informed the Almanac.

The family plans to celebrate at a gathering of family and friends.

Ms. Rhodes was born in San Francisco two months after the great earthquake in 1906, says Ms. Duncan.

Her family lived across the street from Ocean Beach, close by what is now the zoo. She

and her family lived in a tent behind their house while it and the city were rebuilt, says Ms. Duncan.

Ms. Rhodes moved to the Peninsula in 1940 and has lived here ever since.

A resident of Menlo Park for 45 years (she still lives in her own apartment), Ms. Rhodes has always been active in the community, says Ms. Duncan. She is an active member at Little House, plays bingo weekly, is in the book club, and chaired the

sewing group for many years.

Married for more than 50 years to Dusty Rhodes (who has died), she has one daughter, Sylvia Duncan, who lives locally; four grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren, most of whom live locally as well.



Connie Rhodes has lived in Menlo Park for 45 years.

Post office location in limbo

By David Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

Things are not going swimmingly in the effort to relocate the tiny satellite post office in Portola Valley from John's Valley Foods grocery store to either Portola Valley Hardware or Portola Cafe Deli.

The town informed the Postal Service weeks ago of the urgency of the matter and the willingness of the two retail candidates to find a place for the post office under their roofs. Planning Manager Leslie Lambert said she was expecting formal application forms from the Postal Service, but so far, nothing.

In an echo of 2001, when plans stalled in moving the post office from the now-departed pharmacy into John's Valley Foods, Ms. Lambert said she is ready once again to call Rep. Anna Eshoo to help get the ball rolling.

One complicating factor is that the town did not have enough advance notice, said Ms. Lambert. John Meany, the soon-to-be-retired owner of John's Valley Foods, told Ms. Lambert in early May that he planned to sell the store by June 12.

A new location or owner requires a new application to the Postal Service to house and operate a post office and a federal background check, said Mr. Meany. Moving the post office was thought to be quicker than waiting for the grocery store's new owner to approve of keeping it and then re-applying.

Could Portola Valley be without a post office? "I don't know," said Ms. Lambert. "It wouldn't surprise me. I would hate to see that."

If the town were a couple of months without a post office, mail delivery would be uninterrupted but residents would have no location to buy stamps or mail packages, said Ms. Lambert.

Stamps would be available for purchase from the letter carrier, said Ms. Lambert, and they can be bought online at shop.usps.com. A mailbox is located at Town Hall. ▀

Win a Diamond & Save Up to 50% on All Jewelry & Most Watches

Gleim the Jeweler is celebrating its historic 75th anniversary with a very special event. Now through June 11, all jewelry and most watches will be on sale for up to 50% off at all three Gleim locations. And, as a "thank you" to our customers, Gleim's is giving away a spectacular diamond and other fabulous prizes. No purchase is necessary. So come in, take advantage of a once in a lifetime sale, and register to win a 75 point diamond.

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Open house this weekend at USGS

Want to know more about earthquakes, fossils, water, volcanoes, or mines?

They will all be on display at the U.S. Geological Survey's open house Saturday and Sunday, June 3-4, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 345 Middlefield Road.

This year's open house will focus on "The Science of Natural Hazards." Scientists will show off new products, maps, research findings and demonstrations outside a tented area called "Earthquake Country."

Earthquake Country will also feature materials, exhibits and handouts from the many agencies that partner with the USGS in preparing for hazards. These include the California Geological Survey, the San Mateo County Office of Emergency Services, FEMA

AROUND TOWN

(Department of Homeland Security), the American Red Cross, and the Pacific Gas & Electric Co.

The open house will formally mark the beginning of a new partnership with the California Geological Survey. The two agencies already share a "one stop shop" for publications from both agencies, located in the former map sales office in Building 3 by the flagpole. The popular earthquake hazards maps will be available, as well as the preparedness handbook, "Putting Down Roots in Earthquake Country." CGS publications will be on sale at 10 percent off.

For more information, go to openhouse.wr.usgs.gov.

'Da Vinci Code' questions examined

A discussion on questions raised by Dan Brown's "The Da Vinci Code" book and movie will be held at the Hiller Aviation Museum at the San Carlos Airport on Sunday, June 4, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

The public is invited to this free program, called "Let Your Questions Fly," sponsored by an organization called New Hope Peninsula Church, said spokesperson Kathleen O'Rourke.

A children's program called "Flights of Fancy" will include a movie, model airplane contest and games, she said.

The Hiller museum is at 601 Skyway Road. For information, call sponsoring pastors Ben and Christy Pierce at 579-7815 or go to NewHopePeninsula.org.



Mike and Martha Renner are shown after zip lining in Maui last November.

Martha & Mike Renner celebrate 50th anniversary

Mike and Martha Renner celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a party for 150 guests at their Atherton home in April.

Family and friends pitched in to help with the food and floral arrangements, and a dance band added to the festivities.

Their three daughters — Heidi Renner of Redwood City, MaryLu Lehman of Foster City, and Janet Renner of Maui — were all in attendance, as were their three grandchildren. The Renner girls all graduated from Menlo-Atherton High School.

Martha Renner grew up in the Los Angeles area and Mike

Renner was raised in Mountain View. They met in 1952 when both were attending classes in court reporting in San Francisco.

They were married in San Marino on April 21, 1956. The Renners lived in Millbrae before moving to Atherton 35 years ago.

Mr. Renner was a freelance deposition reporter in San Francisco for 45 years before retiring. Ms. Renner was a teacher at the Charles Armstrong School in Menlo Park and, later, in Belmont. She is still active on the local and national level in the field of dyslexia.

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

**If you are interested in this study, please call
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Help us shape the evening with your questions. Email them to DaVinci@NewHopePeninsula.org

For more information, call 650.579.7815



Undefeated

The Alpine Menlo Contenders boys under 10 team go undefeated at the Stanford Cup soccer tournament May 7. In the photo are, front row, from left, Gabriel McLarnan and Justin Weisbloom; back row, from left, coach Rob Koeten, Nate Koeten, Henry Solomon, Connor Quilici and Terry McLarnan. The Contenders are coached by Adam Clarke and Trevor Mutch. For more information, check alpinemenlosoccer.com.

Alpine Menlo sets soccer clinic

The Alpine Menlo Soccer Academy will hold a free clinic for prospective players, ages 6-8, at 10 a.m. Sunday, June 4, at Corte Madera Middle School in Portola Valley.

Coaches teach soccer fundamentals. For more information contact Cris Gilmore at successthroughsoccer@yahoo.com for girls, or Paul Stanley at pstanley@kidzlovesoccer.com for boys.

■ BRIEFS

Soccer tryout for boys under 9

The Alpine Menlo Soccer Club is forming a new boys under-9 team for fall 2006. Tryouts will be held at 11 a.m. Sunday, June 4, at Corte Madera Middle School in Portola Valley.

Boys born August 1, 1996, or later are eligible to try out. The team will be part of the Alpine Menlo Soccer Club, which includes teams for boys and girls from under-9 to under-15, and an academy for younger players.

For information, see alpinemenlosoccer.com or call Cris Gilmore at 408-768-8821 or successthroughsoccer@yahoo.com.

Tryouts for girls under 11

The Alpine Menlo Soccer Club's Girls Under 11 team, the Grizzlies, is holding tryouts for the fall 2006 season. The team is looking for strong soccer players born after August 1, 1995.

The team is coached by Cris Gilmore and Marie McCann and practices in Portola Valley. If you are interested in trying out, contact the team manager at 888-6550.



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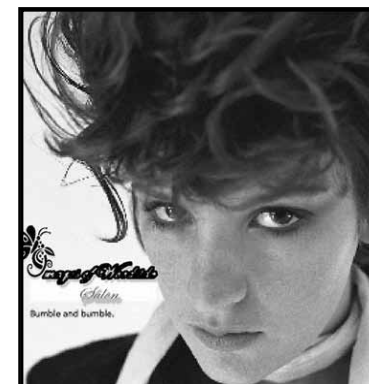
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'Rake's Progress' updated in West Bay's intriguing, well-performed staging

By Mort Levine
Special to the Almanac

Is the road to hell just as slippery a slope in the 1970s as it was 200 years earlier? Indeed it is, West Bay Opera's current production of Igor Stravinsky's only opera tells us in this fable of a young man's get-rich-quick life in the fast lane.

The Rake's Progress (ever downward) goes forth at the Lucie Stern Theatre in Palo Alto for five performances through Sunday, June 4. It's a satisfying work that has stood the test of time since its 1951 premiere under the composer's baton in Venice.

The original opera is the pure invention of the coming together of some world class talents: Stravinsky, now acknowledged as one of the greatest composers of the 20th century, joined forces with poet

REVIEW

W. H. Auden and Chester Kallman, whose libretto was spun from taking the tale so acidly portrayed in eight cartoons by 18th century London satirist William Hogarth.

West Bay's creative team decided that there is just as much validity to the tale in 1970s

The story line is based on 'the simple parable that gaining an unearned and undeserved fortune can lead to ruin, madness and death. At least in opera.'

London's scenes of excess and venality. Director Jonathon Field found lots of parallels to human nature then and now. His vision is brought to life by a cast of talented young singers and a strongly supportive orchestral contingent led by WBO's Music Director Mary Chun.

Maestra Chun gave the score just enough of an off-beat contemporary musical flavor, making the Mozart-like overtones just a bit discordant and atonal. The music also gave some strange reshaping to the poetry. There was, however, no disguising the simple parable that gaining an unearned and undeserved fortune can lead

to ruin, madness and death. At least in opera.

Making successful debuts at West Bay are Rhoslyn Jones, with a big, buttery soprano voice, and tenor Gerald Seminatore, whose English accents

must have been honed in his apprentice years at Glyndebourne and Aldeborough. He has a crystalline high range, especially in the second and third acts.

Ms. Jones portrayed Anne Trulove, the trusting, faithful girl left behind in the country. Mr. Seminatore's Tom Rakewell starts out also as a bit of a naive country bumpkin. He dreams however of getting rich without the nuisance of a steady job, which bothers Anne's father, performed by veteran baritone Douglas Nagel as the rustic English copy of the farmer in Grant Wood's American Gothic.

Along comes Nick Shadow, the devil's henchman, sung elegantly by Kirk Eichelberger in a powerful bass-baritone. Shadow enlists as Rakewell's guide to fortune and debauchery as his unpaid servant for a year and a day. A bow to Gounod's Faust and Mephistopheles as well as Mozart's Don Giovanni and Leporello. Doom comes on apace.

The action then moves to a London brothel as Mother Goose, performed by Ariela



Cast members include, from left, Kirk Eichelberger as Nick Shadow, Gerald Seminatore as Tom Rakewell, and Rhoslyn Jones as Anne Trulove.

INFORMATION

"The Rake's Progress" by Igor Stravinsky will be performed at 8 p.m. Friday and Saturday, June 2 and 3; and 2 p.m. Sunday, June 4, at the Lucie Stern Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road in Palo Alto. For tickets, call 424-9999; or order online at wbo.org.

Morgenstern looking like the star of the bordello rather than its madam, introduces Tom to pleasures of the flesh. Here the WBO team comes up with a staging gimmick. After the lovers are tucked in bed, the scene reverts to the country again and the virginal bed of the faithful Anne, who vows to rescue her man.

A bored and rich Tom is then convinced to marry a dazzling freak show personality called Baba the Turk. As played by mezzo Carla Lopez-Speziale, Baba is a haughty and wealthy celebrity who browbeats the bewildered Tom.

In other productions, Baba turns out to be the circus bearded lady. She seems to have only half of a small moustache in this one. Tom's gambling addiction brings financial ruin and all of the palatial possessions go under the hammer of Sellem, the auctioneer, a role over-played by WBO veteran Michael Mendelsohn.

Nick Shadow prepares Tom's grave but our hero escapes this fate by correctly guessing three cards sportingly offered by Nick. The Queen of Hearts reminds Tom of Anne and the

hope that a good woman can rescue any fallen man. That love saves his soul from the devil but can't save his life. His ultimate end is in a mental institution, where he gets electroshock to purge him of the notion that he is Adonis to Anne's Venus. Alas, he perishes from the treatments.

An epilogue, also in the mode of Mozart, brings all of the characters back to opine: "For idle hands and hearts and minds, the Devil finds a work to do."

Overall, the Rake's Progress is an intriguing work to experience. It is hard to inject the kind of pathos and emotional empathy one might expect in such a tale. Nonetheless it is well worth the three-plus hours invested by the audience. ■

Shakespeare festival opens this weekend in Menlo Park

The Menlo Players Guild launches its summer Mid-Peninsula Shakespeare Festival this weekend with performances of "The Comedy of Errors" outdoors at Mid-Peninsula School in Menlo Park.

The festival will also include "Hamlet" and James Goldman's "The Lion in Winter." All performances are free and begin at 8 p.m.

The "Comedy of Errors," directed by Bruce De Les Dernier, will be staged this Saturday and Sunday, June 3 and 4; Sunday, June 11; and

Sunday, June 25.

Mr. De Les Dernier also directs "Hamlet." Performances are Friday and Saturday, June 16 and 17; and Saturday, June 24.

The "Lion in Winter" is directed by Amy Himes. Performances are Friday and Saturday, June 9 and 10; Sunday, June 18; and Friday, June 23.

Mid-Peninsula School is at 1340 Willow Road. Playgoers are encouraged to dress warmly, and perhaps bring along a blanket, as the night air can turn chill.

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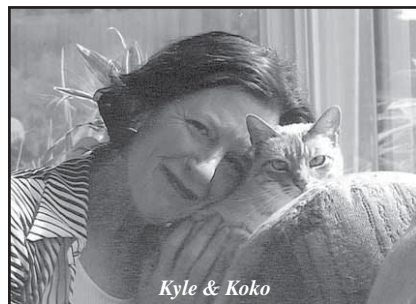
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OBITUARIES

Sue Verdi Becker

Longtime Menlo Park resident

Sue Verdi Becker, who lived on Pope Street in Menlo Park for almost 50 years, died May 19 at Pacific Coast Manor in Capitola. She was 94.

She was born in New York City on April 28, 1912, to Carlo and Domenica Verdi, the third of 11 children.

Her parents emigrated from Sicily in the early 1900s.

Sue worked most of her life, starting at age 13 when she lied about her age and took a job at the Coates and Clark Cotton Thread Factory and then at General Electric making light bulbs. Over the years, she



Sue Verdi Becker

worked at Western Electric and RCA, helped out in her family's fish business, and worked part-time in retail businesses in Nutley, New Jersey.

In 1953, she left New Jersey and moved to Menlo Park with her husband, John Becker, and daughter Harriet.

She worked at Pacific Bell Telephone Co. as an information operator for a while. She started her favorite job in 1959 at Stanford Research Institute in Menlo Park, where she worked for more than 25 years as a receptionist and secretary.

An avid seamstress and knitter, she made beautiful afghans and could create doll clothes from a few scraps of fabric for any size doll, say family members.

Family members say she cooked for family and friends and loved music; she enjoyed playing her chord organ as she sang along, especially songs in

Italian or Sicilian. Above all, she loved chocolate, they say.

In Menlo Park, she was a good friend to her neighbors. At age 88, she moved to Oak Tree Villa in Scotts Valley to be closer to her daughter; then to Sunshine Villa in Santa Cruz after a stroke left her less able to care for herself. Since July 2005, she has lived at Pacific Coast Manor.

She is survived by her daughter Harriet of Aptos; a grandson and two great-grandchildren; sisters Agnes Negra, Rose Lombarski and Pauline Criscuoli; and brothers Pat, John and Joe Verdi, who live in New Jersey with their families.

Her remains will be cremated and placed at Alta Mesa Cemetery in Palo Alto at a memorial celebration at a later date. The family prefers memorial contributions to a favorite charity, or the "Pacific Coast Manor Auxiliary Patio Project," 1935 Wharf Road, Capitola, CA 95010.

Sarah Frances Morgan

Owned Morgan Pre-School

Services will be held Saturday, June 3, for Sarah Frances Morgan, who died May 22 at her daughter's home in Fremont. She was 87. The services will start at 3 p.m. at Christ Episcopal Church, 815 Portola Road in Portola Valley.



Sarah Frances Morgan

Mrs. Morgan owned and operate Morgan Pre-School in Menlo Park from 1983 to 2000. The school was located behind her residence on Mills Avenue in Menlo Park. She continued working as a teacher at the school into the year she turned 80. Two of her daughters — Sally Morgan and Kaethe Morgan Langs — were also teachers at the preschool.

She was born June 11, 1918, in San Mateo.

Just prior to and during World War II, she was an executive secretary to the secretary of war. In 1941, she was present in the secretary of war's office when the news of an attack on Pearl Harbor was disclosed to the War Department.

Following World War II, she married Albert F. Morgan of Burlingame. They raised three children — Kaethe, Sally and John — in Los Altos.

Mrs. Morgan pioneered programs in special education and speech pathology at the China Lake Naval Weapons Center at Ridgecrest, California, say family members.

As a lifelong learner, she continued teaching and studying into her 80s.

Her husband preceded her in death.

Survivors include her children, John Morgan of Fremont, Sally Morgan of Fremont, and Kaethe Morgan Langs of Menlo Park; two granddaughters and one great granddaughter.

The family prefers memorial donations to a library or educational program of the donor's choice.

See OBITUARIES, next page



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OBITUARIES

continued from previous page

Louise Baer

Longtime Menlo Park resident

Louise Baer, who lived in Menlo Park since 1962, died May 20 at the age of 76.

Born in Oakland, she attended area schools, including San Jose State University. She raised three sons, and the community service she performed through the years included volunteer work with the Menlo Park school district.

Ms. Baer married Richard J. Baer in 1951. She enjoyed traveling extensively with her husband, attending sporting events, and spending time with her two granddaughters, family and friends, according to her family.

Mr. Baer preceded her in death. She is survived by her sons, Alan, Michael and Bruce Baer; a sister, Martha Parish; and two granddaughters.

Graveside services were held. Arrangements were made by Crosby-N. Gray & Co. in Burlingame.

Dr. Wayne Lyman Chan

Dermatologist

Dr. Wayne Lyman Chan, a San Jose dermatologist who grew up in Menlo Park, died May 21 at his home in Los Alto. He was 67.

A native of San Francisco, he attended Fremont and Central elementary schools, and was a member of the Menlo-Atherton High School class of 1956. He graduated from Stanford University in 1960, and received his medical degree from George Washington University in 1967. He completed his internship at Santa Clara Valley Medical Center in San Jose. Then he entered the U.S. Air Force, and achieved the rank of captain. After his service, Dr. Chan was a resident in dermatology at the Stanford University School of Medicine.

In 1973 he began his dermatology practice in San Jose. He was affiliated with Alexian Brothers Hospital and its successor institution, San Jose Regional Medical Center.

A man of even disposition with an analytical mind, Dr. Chan always placed the welfare of his patients first, say family members.

He is survived by his wife, Elizabeth Chan; daughter Lisa, son Christopher Chan, and brother Loren Singh.

A memorial service was held May 28 in Palo Alto. The family prefers memorial gifts to a charity of the donor's choice or to On Lok Senior Health Services, 1333 Bush St., San Francisco, CA 94109.

Rita Joan Emerson

Former chanteuse

A funeral Mass will be celebrated

Friday, June 2, for Rita Joan Emerson, a 51-year-resident of Portola Valley who died May 21.

The Mass will start at 10:30 a.m. at Our Lady of the Wayside Church, 930 Portola Road in Portola Valley.

A native of Oglesby, Illinois, she was a professional chanteuse, performing in Chicago with big bands in night clubs and on special occasions, said her husband Richard Emerson.

Her professional name was Rita Marque. Among her charitable benefit performances, she sang in Fred Waring's Pennsylvanians group.

She married Richard Emerson in 1950 and moved to California.

For 22 years, until her retirement, she was an employee relations personnel adviser for Beckman Instruments Inc.

For 17 years, she was with the Los Amigos mariachi group, singing Spanish works. She also was a member for many years of the choir at Our Lady of the Wayside Church in Portola Valley.

She was a charter member of the Palo Alto Hills Country Club 18 Hole Ladies Group. In addition to golf, her hobbies included gardening, traveling, horse-back riding, water and snow skiing, biking, reading and cooking.

In addition to her husband, she is survived by three nephews.

The family prefers memorial contributions to the Padua Dining Room in Redwood City, or to a charity of the donor's choice.

William D. Heaton Jr.

Longtime Menlo Park resident

William D. Heaton Jr., a longtime resident of Menlo Park,

died May 14 of Alzheimer's disease. He was 74.

He was born in Seattle to Helen and Dean Heaton. In 1948, his family moved to Burlingame, where he attended Burlingame

High School, graduating in 1954.

After serving in the U.S. Army during the Korean War, he completed his education at San Francisco State.

He entered the business world,

joining Lawrence Systems, a company that specialized in inventory and receivables control, working in conjunction with banks to

See OBITUARIES, next page

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OBITUARIES

continued from previous page

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In 1960, he transferred to Honolulu, where he opened and headed a branch office for three and a half years before returning to the San Francisco home office as vice president of sales. His love of the Hawaiian Islands, and friends he made there, lasted throughout his life, say family members.

With marriage, he settled in Menlo Park, where he raised his family.

The world of sports always beckoned him. He was a basketball player in high school, an avid fly fisherman with yearly trips to the Rogue River, and a devoted football fan.

He supported the San Francisco Symphony, and collected ethnic and contemporary art. He was talented in woodworking, construction and engineering, say family members.

Mr. Heaton is survived by his wife Jean; daughters Jennifer Heaton of San Mateo and Stephanie Heaton of Los Angeles; and brothers Michael Heaton of San Francisco and Thomas Heaton of San Mateo.

The family suggests memorial contributions to the Alzheimer's Association, attn: Genny, 1528

Chapala St., No. 204, Santa Barbara, CA 93101; Rosener House, Adult Day Services, 500 Arbor Road, Menlo Park, CA 94025; or the VA Hospice Care Center, 3801 Miranda Ave., Building 100, Ward 2C, Palo Alto, CA 94304.

Larry Ross Thomas

Woodside resident

Larry Ross Thomas of Woodside died May 15 while vacationing in London. He was 57.

A memorial celebration of his life is planned for June 11, from 1 to 5 p.m. at the Kings Mountain Community Center and Firehouse, 13889 Skyline Blvd. in Woodside. Hawaiian shirts are optional.

He was born in San Francisco on September 24, 1948, to Charlotte and John Thomas.

For the last 23 years he owed MB Garage in San Mateo, where he is a real fixture, friends said. His customer base is huge and he will be missed by so many, they said.

He is survived by his son, Larry Thomas; daughter, Lily Anne Mullet-Thomas; mother Charlotte Thomas; sisters Nancy Segroves, Gail Ferraris and Anne Thomas; loving companion Dee Sharp; and numerous nephews and nieces.

The family prefers donations to the American Cancer Society or the American Heart Association.

Fifth-grade champs

The La Entrada fifth-grade boys basketball team went undefeated (8-0) this year to win the Menlo Park League championship. Pictured are: back row, from left, Adam Bonham, Evan Perkins, James Tedesco, Dominic Kaufer, Chris Scherm and Coach Jeff Tedesco; front row, from left, Jack Tedesco (ballboy), Nobuki Harata, Alex Lopez, Zach Moore and Steven Shimbo. Not pictured: assistant coaches David Moore and Carlos Lopez.



■ 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

Fraud reports:

■ Credit card fraud for \$1,900, Amador Avenue, May 19.

■ Checks cashed without authorization, Karen Way, May 22.

Mountain lion sighting report: Lion seen in back yard, 300 block of Atherton Avenue, 8:30 p.m. on May 22.

School incident reports:

■ Student punched classroom window after teacher expelled him from class-

room, Menlo-Atherton High School at 555 Middlefield Road, May 19.

■ Cash and cell phone taken from backpacks, Menlo-Atherton High School at 555 Middlefield Road, May 19.

MENLO PARK

Burglary report: Computer and necklace stolen from residence, 1200 block of Carlton Avenue, May 19.

Auto burglary reports:

■ Stereo stolen, 1900 block of Euclid Avenue, May 22.

■ Stereo stolen, 1900 block of Euclid Avenue, May 23.

■ Break-in, 1900 block of Euclid Avenue, May 23.

■ Stereo stolen, 800 block of Coleman

Avenue, May 24.

■ Break-in, 800 block of Coleman Avenue, May 24.

■ Stereo stolen, 700 block of Coleman Avenue, May 24.

Grand theft report: Bike stolen, Caltrain station on Merrill Street, May 23.

Brandishing weapon report: Police arrested Charles Scurlock, 70, of Redwood City on charges of threatening people with knife, 1200 block of Laurel Street, May 23.

Child protective services report: 300 block of Willow Road, May 21.

Spousal abuse report: 300 block of Willow Road, May 25.

Fraud reports:

■ Bad check, Hudson Shell service station at 495 El Camino Real, May 19.

■ Forged check, 1100 block of Chestnut Street, May 22.

■ Credit card fraud, East Palo Alto High School at 475 Pope St., May 23.

■ Credit card fraud, 500 block of Glenwood Avenue, May 24.

WOODSIDE

Indecent exposure report: Man exposed himself in front of student, Canada College at 4200 Farm Hill Boulevard, May 17.

PORTOLA VALLEY

Burglary report: Tools worth \$2,570 stolen from construction site storage container, 1000 block of Westridge Drive, May 22.

Bright fundraiser

A different idea for a fundraiser has beneficiaries smiling brightly at the National Center for Equine Facilitated Therapy in Woodside. Kenneth Hovden, a dentist and 25-year Woodside resident, is donating his teeth-whitening services as a benefit for NCEFT's programs.

Through June, for a \$200 donation to Smiles for Life, Dr. Hovden will provide customized tooth-whitening kits. Half the proceeds go to NCEFT and the other half to Garth Brooks' Teammates for Kids Foundation.

Appointments are available at Dr. Hovden's office in Daly City, or at NCEFT on Friday, June 2. Call 755-6000 for Daly City appointments, or contact NCEFT at 851-2271, extension 3#, for appointments at NCEFT.

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Meet journalist **Susan Casey**, author of *The Devil's Teeth*, Casey's experience of how she joined the scientists who follow the great white sharks of the Farrallones.

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LETTERS

continued from page 27

that the water was causing the rashes, welts, chapping, blistering, cracking of skin, severe asthma-like respiratory reactions, coughing and congestion, and the IBS-like digestive symptoms.

Doctors can't make the connection between the symptoms and the water because there are no health studies to back up their claims. There is still tremendous denial among those who should know better.

It all boils down to the fact that the public officials have not done their homework, dug deep enough, and conducted the necessary health studies. Meanwhile, the people are suffering.

We are thankful that Assembly member Ira Ruskin has paid attention to their plight and introduced AB 2402 to address the problems and that he will persevere whatever the outcome. Please write Ira Ruskin in support of the bill and call Citizens Concerned About Chloramine at 650-328-0424 to report symptoms or concerns.

Lillian Lieberman
Kingsley Avenue, Palo Alto

No vendetta against council member

Editor:

My participation in the recent appeal of City Council member Kelly Fergusson's six variances is the latest in my 16 years of monitoring the Menlo Park Planning Commission. It is not a personal vendetta.

Ms. Fergusson asked for and received a variance, among others, to construct a second story addition 10 feet into her required 20-foot front yard. The addition was unnecessary as evidenced by a conforming alternative that was presented to the council that met her needs for a five-bedroom house plus a music studio. As such, her project becomes a precedent for other applicants in the future.

Please imagine looking down almost any street in Menlo Park and seeing two story homes encroach half way into everyone's front yard. Alarming, isn't it.

This was the issue. Paul Collacchi's attacks on Mayor Nicholas Jellins and myself in his recent letter to the editor obscure these facts, falling into an all too familiar pattern of politics over responsible decision-making.

The purpose of the zoning ordinance is to impose uniform standards of construction in the city and to avoid special privilege. I've witnessed many applicants' projects denied for much less egregious requests than Council member Fergusson's.

The irony here is that Ms. Fer-

gusson campaigned to protect neighborhoods and has ended up receiving privileges far beyond what her neighbors could get.

Sam Sinnott
Rose Avenue, Menlo Park

Only union angry over changes at pool

Editor:

A recent Almanac article by Rory Brown carried the rather incredible statement that the City Council's decision to lease Burgess pool "angered many in the community" when it authorized Tim Sheeper to operate the pool.

In fact, the city decision for Mr. Sheeper to operate the pool was well-received by the general Menlo Park community and exceedingly popular with local swimmers. Mr. Sheeper has been known for many years in Menlo Park to run an inclusive, high quality masters swim program at a reasonable cost. As far as I know the only group angered by the city pool decision was the public employees union.

Last fall, the city staff cost analysis showed that city employee union labor would require large subsidies to operate the pool. Then, Mr. Sheeper stepped up with his offer to operate the pool without being subsidized. It is not surprising that the public employees union is angry about this. But it is incorrect to say that the union's anger about Mr. Sheeper's pool operation is shared by very many in the community who want to have a place to swim.

Dave Gildea
Hermosa Way, Menlo Park

Bike lane problem at Alpine, Sand Hill

Editor:

Suicide corners, that's what we call it. Stanford's Larry Horton calls it a good job.

He says to trust him on the next one. You crazy? Can you imagine anything more stupid than a brick sidewalk on the west side of Alpine road between Sand Hill Road and Junipero Serra? Instead of a sidewalk we needed bike lanes.

Yeah, yeah they put in a bike lane but their bike lane only lets you go straight (Larry was that your doing?). When a bicyclist on Alpine turns east onto Sand Hill Road or Junipero Serra they must suicidally move in front of cars because there is not an inch of shoulder.

It would have been so easy to put in a right turn bike lane. They even had the room, but instead they built a brick sidewalk that goes nowhere for 100 feet.

The community kept trying to tell Stanford about the several thousand bicyclists who use those intersections. But no, they would not listen. Now they want our trust as they build their next sidewalk. No way, go away, and don't come back another day. We agreed to trails, not a sidewalk.

Alicia Vera
Bishop Lane
(AKA: Weekend Acres)
Menlo Park (San Mateo County)

Losing Andy Coe is the last straw

Editor:

In recent weeks, our communities have lost the services of Diana

Diamond, Steve Curl, and, now, Andy Coe. What is going on?

These are all valuable and dedicated people who have truly enriched our lives on the peninsula.

Diana was the former editor the Palo Alto Daily News, whose insights and commentaries on local affairs made that publication worth reading.

Steve was the paper's Friday cartoonist who always ended the week with a chuckle, but at no one's expense. These two have unique talents and are sorely missed.

Andy is another real asset to our area and to Palo Alto, in particular. He is unmatched in knowledge of local issues and how to work with people. If anyone can get results, it's Andy Coe. He would have been an ideal addition to Palo Alto's permanent staff, but it looks as if the Palo Alto City Council thinks it can do better. Good luck.

Again, what's going on? We're losing all the good guys who really care about improving our towns.

Reg Rice
Tioga Drive, Menlo Park

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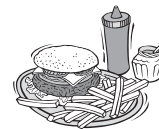
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FAX to Editor at 854-0677.

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Almanac endorsements

Preschool idea has merit, but not this version

We can't argue with Rob Reiner or education experts who say every child should attend preschool to get the maximum gain out of elementary education. And as proponents point out, only about 20 percent of preschool-age children in California attend high-quality preschool programs with trained teachers. The 70 percent number cited by opponents includes children in daycare and babysitting situations.

But Proposition 82, on the June 6 ballot, has some problems that we think should convince voters to defeat the measure.

The preschool initiative, put on the ballot by Mr. Reiner, would guarantee and pay for a half-day session of preschool for one year for every 4-year-old in the state, regardless of need. It would be funded by a new 1.7 percent tax on income over \$400,000 a year for individuals or over \$800,000 for couples.

Aside from the fact that we don't believe building a special tax like this into the California Constitution is a good idea, it is not good public policy to have this special class of less than 1 percent (about 100,000 people) of the population pay the entire cost of the program, which is projected to raise \$2 billion in its first year.

If a majority of voters believe preschool is a good idea, then all the taxpayers in the state should pitch in, not just the very wealthy. And by the same token, we would feel more comfortable if the Legislature placed the issue on the ballot, rather than an initiative campaign bankrolled by a millionaire.

If Proposition 82 passes, it will be administered by the state and county offices of education, which would be authorized to spend up to \$2 billion for new classrooms, and up to \$700 million to train teachers and aides to meet new qualification requirements in the program.

Given the state's current struggle to provide a good education for all students, we believe voters should be very cautious before adding another bureaucracy to the educational mix. Why not develop a need-based program using existing preschools, and make participation contingent on higher teacher qualifications?

If elementary and secondary education in California is ever to regain the first-class status it formerly held, perhaps a universal preschool program should be a component. But Proposition 82 simply has too many flaws. We urge voters to defeat it on June 6.

Rich Gordon for supervisor

Incumbent Rich Gordon is an easy choice for all county voters, including residents of the third supervisorial district, which includes unincorporated areas of Menlo Park, as well as Atherton, Woodside, Portola Valley, Skyline and the Coastside.

Mr. Gordon, who is running for his third and last four-year term (due to term limits), has token opposition from perennial Libertarian candidate Jack Hickey and Coastside resident Jo Chamberlain. Neither make a dent in Mr. Gordon's popularity, which he has earned through hard work on many difficult issues.

Mr. Gordon is a staunch environmental advocate, and helped guide the annexation vote adding the Coastside to the Peninsula Open Space District. He has served in virtually every capacity on the board, and put up a good record on transportation, housing and the environment. Residents of the unincorporated area of Menlo Park around the intersection of the Alameda de las Pulgas and Avey Avenue will recall how Mr. Gordon successfully shepherded a project that improved zoning, upgraded streets and sidewalks, and added trees to the area.

We urge voters to return Rich Gordon to the Board of Supervisors.

Greg Munks for sheriff

After serving as undersheriff since 1993, it is time for Greg Munks of Portola Valley to take over top billing. With the retirement of Sheriff Don Horsley, he will do just that in his unopposed bid for sheriff.

Mr. Munks started his career as a deputy sheriff in 1977, and in 1981 went to work in the Palo Alto Police Department. He rose to lieutenant and in 1990 became the city's human resources manager, before becoming San Mateo County's undersheriff in 1993.

Among his goals for the department are replacing the women's correctional facility to relieve overcrowding, expanding the gang intelligence unit, and pursuing funds to replace the County Emergency Disaster Center, which is not earthquake resistant.

Unopposed or not, we urge voters to support Greg Munks on June 6.

The Almanac also recommends:

- Vote yes on Measure U, the Menlo Park school bond.
- Vote for Mike Nevin in the Democratic primary for state Senate.



LETTERS

Our readers write

Time to renegotiate deal on BART to SFO

Editor:

Here we are again. The Bay Area Rapid Transit District (BART) is demanding payment from the San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) to again cover the operating shortfall for the BART-SFO extension.

But this year BART is asking for \$11.2 million; more than \$1 million over the previous year.

This was never supposed to happen. Taxpayers of San Mateo County were promised that there would be no operating losses to cover when our transit leaders signed the deal obligating us to support this system. We were supposed to get a bargain. But since this extension opened in 2003 it has been a catastrophic disaster.

The operating debt has forced us to dramatically cut bus service, raise bus and BART fares, and possibly close stations during weekends. In addition, we have been forced to allocate part of the half-cent sales tax, reauthorized by voters in 2004 as Measure A, to fund the operating losses of the extension. This funding source has always been designated for local transit needs in our cities.

As a member of the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury in 1995 I know first hand that proponents of this failed experiment were warned that this concept was badly flawed, and that the lofty ridership projections that were developed in the early 1990s (not later) were pure fantasy. The grand jury said so then but was dismissed and vilified for daring to take on the so-called visionaries.

According to news accounts, SamTrans is currently facing a \$24.7 million deficit that is increas-

McCloskey's last crusade – save the GOP

By Marion Softky

Anyone who thinks the Republican Party doesn't suffer from schizophrenia should tune into the race for the 11th Congressional District.

In a David-and-Goliath fight, former Republican Congressman Pete McCloskey of Portola Valley, Rumsey—and now Lodi—is challenging seven-term powerhouse Richard Pombo for the Republican nomination in Pombo's home district.

The 11th district sprawls from Gilroy and Morgan Hill, through Danville, Tracy and Stockton, to the Sierra foothills. It's farming heartland, and rock-hard Republican.

The contrast between the candidates, their records, and their issues, couldn't be clearer. For me, it came into focus May 15 in Tracy, Mr. Pombo's hometown, at the one and only forum that Mr. Pombo attended with Mr. McCloskey.

The middle-school gym was jammed. Pombo supporters, on the left and around the back and sides, cheered their man noisily. Clustered on the right, McCloskey backers were equally passionate. Many, like Al and Jo Scheck, and Jon Silver of Portola Valley, came from the Bay Area. Outside, a tall, lanky, bearded man dressed as Abe Lincoln carried a sign saying, "Vote for the Real Republican."

Mr. Pombo, a former city councilman in Tracy, told the audience in a folksy twang that he had grown up there and was one of them. "I thought I could change things in Washington," he said.

In a fast-paced introduction, Mr. McClo-

sky cited four provisions in the Republicans' 1994 Contract with America: "good ethics; a balanced budget; limited government; and a six-term limit."

"He has reneged on all four," Mr. McCloskey charged.

That exchange set the stage for the evening. Mr. McCloskey, four-times decorated marine veteran from the Korean War, attacked Mr. Pombo's record on ethics and the environment with the rat-tat-tat precision of a Marine leading a charge—as he has often done.

Mr. Pombo, who is proud of his property rights credentials and his efforts to change the Endangered Species Act—which Mr. McCloskey helped write—replied vaguely with hometown answers. He denied wrong-doing, and

accused opponents of making up charges. "They're not bound by the truth. They're saying I said things I never said," he said.

While Mr. McCloskey may not win his election in Tracy and Lodi, his campaign is resonating across the country as it pits traditional Republican values against the present administration's actions. "This administration may be the worst ever," he told the raucous audience in Tracy.

Mr. McCloskey is well known on the Peninsula as the land use lawyer who beat Shirley Temple Black in 1967, and started 13 dramatic years representing the Peninsula in Congress. A dedicated environmentalist, he helped write the Endangered Species Act, now under siege by Mr. Pombo, and co-chaired the first Earth

Day. He gave the first speech to impeach President Nixon, and briefly ran for President.

"He might be the only political figure in America who managed to offend just about everybody," said screen actor Paul Newman in "American Maverick," a campaign DVD being widely circulated.

An unapologetic carpetbagger, Mr. McCloskey, 78, came out of retirement because he couldn't find a Republican in the 11th District to take on Mr. Pombo, the entrenched chairman of the House Resources Committee, who crafts environmental legislation, and has been tied to the Jack Abramoff bribery scandals.

Mr. McCloskey is the breed of Republican who believes in clean government, balancing budgets, protecting the environment, and being cautious internationally. He is particularly incensed at Mr. Pombo for trying to weaken the Endangered Species Act, sell off national parks, and promote oil drilling off the Coast.

"I feel the Republican Party has washed out from under me," Mr. McCloskey said on the DVD. "I haven't left the Party; it's left me."

A lot of Peninsulans share Mr. McCloskey's flavor of Republicanism. They are fiscally conservative and socially liberal. They believe in limited government, balancing budgets, and protecting our nest. Republicans as well as Democrats are turning out to do precinct work, register voters, and donate money to his campaign.

Is the national disaffection with war, politics and corruption enough to tilt the election to McCloskey?

Who knows? But when Don Quixote tilts at windmills, the odds are still on the windmills.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK



MARION SOFTKY is a senior staff writer at the Almanac and lives in Portola Valley.

ing by the day. If the BART debt is not realistically addressed our bus system, the system that truly serves the working families in our communities, will be devastated. SamTrans must find a real solution and stop putting this issue off.

Tom Dempsey
Westridge Drive, Portola Valley

Article on water raises big questions

Editor:

Renee Batti's May 17 article, "How's the water" about the tap water disinfectant, chloramine, is thought-provoking.

How is it that people are not

able to connect the water with their symptoms—skin, respiratory, or digestive? The answer is simple—they can't believe that a public agency would put a toxin into their water.

Isn't water a necessity of life? It is incredible to think that the "responsible" public agents did

not have the foresight to investigate chloramine's effects on human health. Yes, they did think of the fish, the plumbing, and the dialysis patients but assumed that it was safe for people.

It was a shock to those affected

See **LETTERS**, page 25

Superintendent's view of school bond issue

By Ken Ranella

I have the privilege of being the superintendent of the Menlo Park City School District. My reason for writing is twofold. First, I'd like to thank local residents for investing the time to learn about Measure U. And secondly, I'd like to clarify a few points about this vital school bond that is on the June 6 ballot.

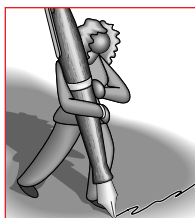
What is so impressive about this community is how many residents from all areas of interest—pre-school, private school and public school, as well as non-parents and seniors—have made an effort to understand Measure U and the needs of our schools. You have attended our school board meetings, read the literature, asked good questions and given us sound input. The school board members and I are grateful for your active involvement and broad support.

Before we go to the polls, I'd like to clarify the key components of Measure U. Our first priority is to replace the temporary, portable classrooms at Laurel, Encinal, Oak Knoll and Hillview with permanent classrooms. Based on the results of two demographic studies—and first hand experience—we know enrollment is growing and we need a better solution than adding more trailers to schools where open space is disappearing fast. Measure U will fund the construction of 60 classrooms so we can accommodate current students and prepare for those who are coming. (And they are coming. This fall, Laurel will have a record-breaking 10 kindergarten classes.)

But replacing portables is only part of the plan. We need to expand facilities that were

built decades ago for student populations that were a fraction of today's enrollment. New multipurpose rooms at Encinal and Oak Knoll, for example, will give students and teachers more room for assemblies, performances and indoor sports. And, in response to comments from school neighbors and parents, we will redesign parking and carpool lines to reduce neighborhood traffic and improve student safety.

Our school board and community representatives have studied our facility problems and potential solutions for over two years. Measure U is a measured response to our needs. If passed, it will cost homeowners approximately \$28 per \$100,000 of assessed value. Of the 36 kindergarten to eighth grade districts in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties,



GUEST OPINION

we would be ninth in bond commitments—s fiscally conservative standing.

As homes are sold and are turned over to young families with school-age kids and more students choose to stay in our public school classrooms through eighth grade, we must respond to the demands of our thriving community. By passing Measure U, our schools will continue their long tradition of excellence in serving local children. Without Measure U funding, we will be forced to educate our students on campuses crowded with portables and inadequate facilities.

Based on the strong support this community has always demonstrated for our schools, I am confident that local residents will vote **yes** on Measure U on June 6. I look forward to working with the community to develop specific plans and to build facilities that will meet the needs of the next generation of children.

Ken Ranella is superintendent of the Menlo Park City School District.

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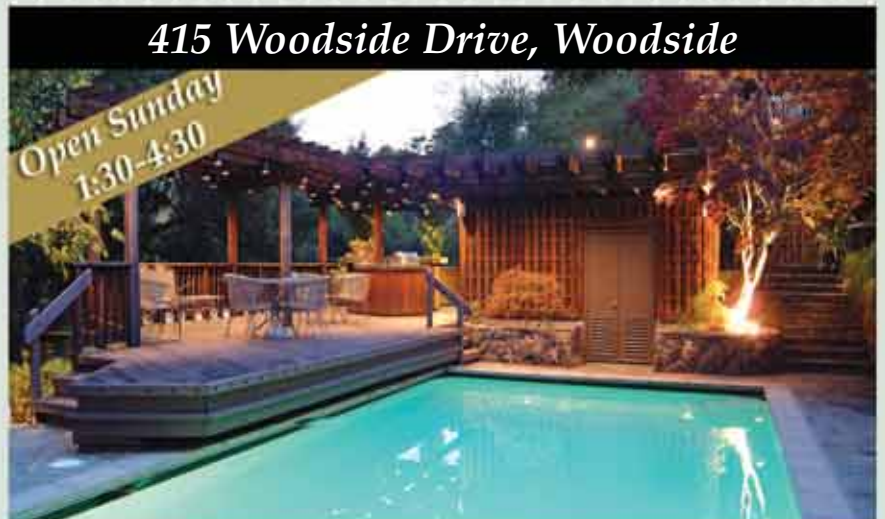
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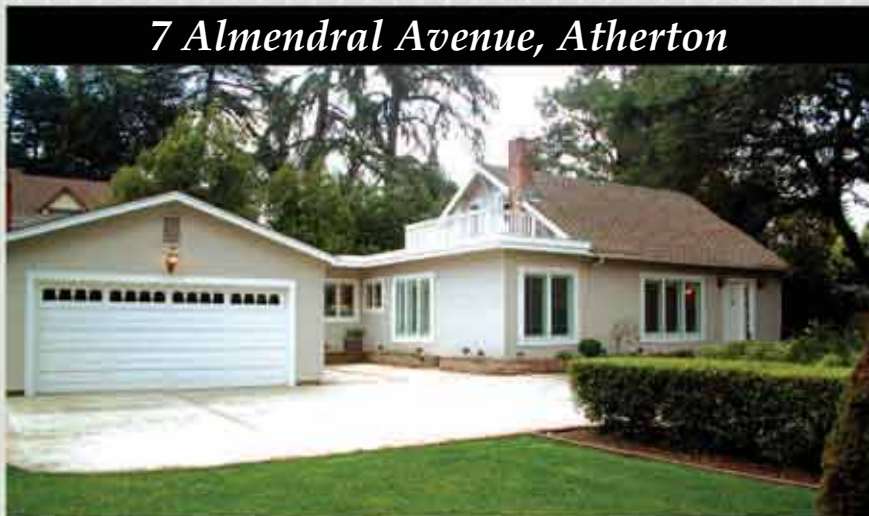
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