

**RASH OF BURGLARIES** not a trend,  
say Menlo Park police. Page 22

# The Almanac

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

OCTOBER 4, 2006 [www.AlmanacNews.com](http://www.AlmanacNews.com)

| VOL. 42 NO. 5 |

## NEW AT SLAC

Dark matter in the universe; new  
theorems by Archimedes: scientists at the  
Stanford Linear Accelerator Center  
push the boundaries of knowledge

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# Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

## FIRST SHOT



The Almanac/Marjan Sadoughi

### It's got game

This scuffed and semi-clean industrial-grade milling machine, used to make precise and complex cuts on metal objects, has life in it yet or it wouldn't have turned up at the new TechShop work space at 120 Independence Drive in Menlo Park. Tom Armstrong was a visitor to an open house held last weekend to celebrate TechShop's grand opening.

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## On the cover

Dark matter, shown in blue, speeds away from luminous stars, in red, in the bullet cluster of galaxies three billion light years away. Marusa Bradac of the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center confirmed the existence of the invisible stuff that makes up a quarter of the universe. John Wise made the visualization from an image by the orbiting Chandra X-ray Observatory. See story 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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TOM — WINE & GROCERY

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### Bachelor mayor to marry

... two Atherton residents, that is. Atherton's mayor, Charles Marsala, reports that Stevick Drive residents Sonia and Aydin have asked him to officiate at their Oct. 20 nuptials.

"My mother was so pleased when I told her someone had asked me to marry her," said Mr. Marsala.

Presumably, she was a little less excited when she heard the full story from her unmarried son.

### Hell on (two) wheels

Who is the real jock on the Woodside Town Council? Well, let's just say that Councilwoman Carroll Ann Hodges was presented with an unwieldy trophy by the town's Bicycle Committee honoring her as the "Most Aggressive Rider."

The committee sponsored a "Woodside Wander" ride attended by six of the seven council members on Sept. 23 to familiarize them with the joys and perils of cycling through town. Ms. Hodges apparently left her colleagues in the dust on the final push up Olive Hill Road.

Millo Fenzi, a committee member, judged the event a raging success. Besides getting a seven-mile guided tour, council members Sue Boynton, Paul Goeld, Deborah Gordon, Ron Romines, Dave Tanner and Ms. Hodges were offered bicycle tune-ups and safety checks by Mike Jacoubowsky of Chain Reaction Bicycles.

Perhaps the two-wheeled excursion will improve Woodside's reputation with bicyclists. Town rules currently limit the number of organized bike rides, and other events, to no more than two per month without special Town Council permission, something that has gotten Woodside into hot water with local cycling enthusiasts.

### Bird's eye view

A lovely aerial view of Larry Ellison's Woodside estate/compound/replica Japanese village was on Forbes.com last week. Mr. Ellison's pad was one of the homes featured in a story to satisfy the apparently insatiable curiosity about how billionaires live.

# Local News

MENLO PARK | ATHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

**Morris Brown** spokesperson for the resident group leading the referendum campaign against the Derry project, watches as Menlo Park resident Jacquie Schwartzman signs a petition in favor of the referendum.

The Almanac/Marjan Sadoughi



## Derry opponents stump for signatures

■ Opponents say the drive is "politically motivated."

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

A controversial referendum drive against a recently-approved condo-commercial project in downtown Menlo Park has until Oct. 12 to gather 1,850 signatures.

About 50 people associated with Menlo Park Tomorrow, the residents' group leading the referendum campaign, are working to get signatures against the City Council-approved Derry project, said Morris Brown, a spokesperson for the group.

If the group collects the required 1,850 signatures — 10 percent of the city's registered voters — the council will be forced to rescind approval of the project or put it to the voters in a special election.

Mr. Brown would not disclose how many signatures have been collected, but estimated the group has spent "\$5,000 to \$10,000" toward the referendum campaign.

Some of the funds were previously raised by Menlo Park Tomorrow, and Mr. Brown

### ■ MENLO PARK

said he has contributed additional funds. The group has opposed past development projects planned for the city.

The council voted 4-1 at its Aug. 29 meeting to amend the city's general plan to approve the 135 condominiums and 22,525 square feet of commercial space proposed for a 3.4-acre site between El Camino Real and the train station.

The council gave the project final approval and officially changed the city's zoning map by the same vote Sept. 13, greenlighting a ratio of 40 homes per acre and increasing the maximum building height for the site from 30 feet to 50 feet.

### Too dense?

Referendum proponents argue that the council rezoning allows too many homes per acre, as previous zoning called for a maximum of 18.5 homes per acre.

The council's approval of the Derry project also included a general plan amendment and change to the zoning code for the former Cadillac dealership on the

■ Adequate public notice for changes to former Cadillac site? **Page 8**

■ Former Cadillac site was not rezoned, city official says. **Page 8**

adjacent site at 1300 El Camino Real.

Although the 3.45-acre site hasn't been rezoned like the Derry property, a proposal to develop the site with an equally high density would be consistent with the general plan. A mixed-use project with apartments and commercial space for the site is currently in early stages of environmental review.

Referendum proponents say that combined, the projects will lead to "the Manhattanization of Menlo Park."

Mr. Brown said the residents' group is willing to reach into its collective pockets to prevent the high-density development. "We may have to get really crazy if we have to," he said.

Menlo Park Tomorrow has contracted for services with a petitioning group to help with the campaign, but Mr. Brown said outside

See **DERRY**, page 8

## Atherton OKs penalties for harming, removing artifacts

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

Historic buildings have no special protections in the town of Atherton, but historically significant tchotchkes do.

Atherton's Lindenwood neighborhood in particular is sprinkled with elegant street lamps, massive urns, gates and other remnants of Linden Towers, the elaborate 1880 estate of Silver

King James C. Flood.

But since these historic artifacts are, for the most part, portable, keeping them unharmed and in town could be a problem, said historic consultant Laura Jones.

"You've been slowly losing these treasures," she told the Atherton City Council at its Sept. 20 meeting.

With property owners' permission, Ms. Jones created an inventory of about three-dozen historic

artifacts and researched their significance. She said her contacts at the Smithsonian were captivated and amazed by the value of the town's artifacts from its "great estates" period, which ended in the 1930s.

The City Council voted to approve a historic preservation ordinance that penalizes property owners who damage, destroy or remove artifacts without permission.

The ordinance requires owners to get a permit from the Planning Commission to demolish an artifact, make major alterations, or make minor alterations, such as replacing missing parts, moving it off the property temporarily to repair it, or changing the color.

There will be a \$5,000 penalty for altering an artifact without a permit. Removing or demolishing

See **ARTIFACT**, page 8



# What Every Parent Needs to Know About Eating Disorders

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**Allison Jean White** is currently performing a major role in A.C.T.'s production of Tom Stoppard's comedy "Travesties."

## A.C.T.'s next generation artist

M-A grad opens in her first performance as a member of A.C.T.'s core company

By **Jane Knoerle**

Almanac Lifestyles Editor

Allison Jean White had her first glimpse of star power when she was in Brad Martin's fifth-grade class at La Entrada School. Assigned to read a poem, she chose "The Highwayman" by Alfred Noyes.

"It was a long poem. I felt it was really a magical time. I was falling in love with performing," she recalls.

That was the beginning. Now the 27-year-old actress has a major role as Cecily in the much-awaited production of Tom Stoppard's "Travesties," playing through Oct. 22 at American Conservatory Theater in San Francisco.

She has also been chosen by A.C.T. as the company's first "Next Generation Artist" addition to its core acting company, a one-year appointment. She joins present core members Rene Augesen, Steven Anthony Jones and Gregory Wallace, who perform at the Geary and Zeum theaters year-round and teach in A.C.T.'s conservatory.

"Ever since we formed the core company of actors, we have longed to have a younger company member as part of the ensemble," says A.C.T. artistic director Carey Perloff. "Allison brings a unique voice, a deep commitment, and a truly transformational spirit to the work she does as an actor."

Ms. White will also appear in W. Somerset Maugham's "The Circle" and Moliere's "The Imaginary Invalid," and understudy two additional plays.

She feels right at home with A.C.T. In 2002, she received a three-year ACT One Scholarship, its only fully funded three-year scholarship. She graduated from A.C.T.'s master of fine arts program in 2005.

For the past year she has been in New York. During the summer she joined Well-Fleet Harbor Actors' Theatre, playing in "Red Light Winter" on Cape Cod. She returned to the Bay Area in August. Her A.C.T. contract continues to July 15.

Until she found a studio apartment in San Francisco, Ms. White was commuting from the home of her mother, Barbara White, in Portola Valley. Her father, John White, lives in Mountain View. Her older sister, Shannon, also lives in San Francisco.

### Years of preparation

Although Allison White is still in her 20s, she has spent years training for her craft. After her fifth-grade epiphany, she attended the California Theater Center's summer program for children for a couple of years.

At age 11, she auditioned for the center's production of "A Christmas Carol" and was chosen to play Tiny Tim's sister. "I absolutely loved it, especially the chance to work with adults."

In the next year's production, she won the role of Belle, Scrooge's girl friend in his youth, when she was only 12. She played an adult role in "The Little Princess" when she was 13. "I think it was because I was tall and could do a British accent," she says.

At Menlo-Atherton High School she and friend Melanie Case were part of the Lunatic Players. "The improv helped me build my comedy muscle," she says. She has done sketch comedy at the Magic Theater in San Francisco.

In high school Ms. White was not only talented in theater, she was a good student, especially in math and science. So good, she

was awarded a scholarship to study those subjects at Brown University.

"I did that for a couple of years, and at one point realized I had no interest in becoming a geologist. In my junior year I ditched my major." She went on to graduate from Brown with a bachelor of arts degree in theater in 2001.

Ms. White is enthusiastic about her year with the core company. "To be chosen to be a part of this incredible group of artists and to have the chance to come back to a company that means so much to me is a great honor. ... Having the chance to work alongside actors I so deeply admire — actors who trained me — is a particularly thrilling prospect."

A big gala is being planned for next April to celebrate A.C.T.'s 40th anniversary. "I get to be in on artistic team meetings. It's fun to be on this side after being a student for so long," she says.

Riding her bike, dressed in jeans, the young actress could easily pass for a Stanford student instead of a "star of stage and screen."

"I think my life has a good balance," she says. "Most of my friends are from outside the theater. I like to spend a lot of time outdoors and chatting with friends."

At one time, while waiting to hear about the A.C.T. scholarship, she entertained other options for her life. "If I didn't get in anywhere, I thought of going to New Zealand to be a raft guide."

On her resume, under special skills, she lists skiing, snowboarding, mountain biking, and whitewater kayaking, as well as the usual singing, piano, dialects and sketch comedy.

"I'm 27 now. If by 35 I don't make it, there would still be time to be a raft guide," she says with a smile. ■

## REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



### Propositions 60 and 90

**Q: I want to sell my primary residence in San Mateo County and purchase a new home in Santa Cruz County. May I keep the same property taxes when I move? I am 63 years old.**

**A:** Prop 13 stipulates that property taxes will be reassessed each time there is a normal purchase. Several years after Prop 13 became law, Prop 60 and later Prop 90 became law. Prop 60 allows homeowners 55 years of age or older to retain their favorable Prop 13 tax payment if they move to a property of equal or lesser value. This was meant to encourage some homeowners to move out of their properties without fearing a large property tax increase. Prop 60 allows the taxpayer to pay the same tax as they were paying in their former property as long as

they move within the county.

Seven California counties also honor Prop 90, which allows taxpayers to transfer their old tax rate if their former property is in another county. The seven counties that accept these old tax rates are Alameda, Los Angeles, San Diego, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Orange and Ventura. Thus if you sell a house in San Mateo County and move to Santa Cruz County, you will not be allowed to retain your old tax rate because Santa Cruz County has elected not to accept these transfers.

The transfer of your old tax rate is subject to some specific rules and can be used only one time. If one spouse has already taken advantage of this tax treatment, the other spouse is not allowed to use this provision even if he or she was not a party to the prior transfer.

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# Was there adequate public notice for Cadillac site changes?

■ General plan amendment, change to zoning code not specifically mentioned in legally required notices.

By **Rory Brown**  
Almanac Staff Writer

Land-use restrictions on the 3.45-acre site at 1300 El Camino Real in Menlo Park, a former Cadillac dealership, were dramatically eased by the City Council, but no public notice distributed by the city explicitly informed the public that the change was about to be considered.

When the council approved the high-density Derry project on Aug. 29 — which increased the number of homes per acre from 18.5 to 40 and increased building heights from 30 feet to 50 feet — it also approved amendments to the general plan and to the text of the city's zoning ordinance that change what is permitted on the former Cadillac site.

As a result, the city essentially

gave away a density bonus that could have been used as a bargaining chip according to Councilwoman Kelly Fergusson, who voted to approve the project.

Although city officials say the zoning of the 1300 El Camino Real site has not changed, a developer can propose a project for the Cadillac site that is just as dense as the Derry project, and the proposal would be in line with the city's general plan.

San Mateo-based Sand Hill Property Co. has proposed 134 apartments and about 80,000 square feet of commercial space for the former Cadillac site. The project was publicly announced in February, and is in the early stages of environmental review.

But none of the legally required public notices for the general

plan amendment and zoning changes needed to approve the Derry project named the 1300 El Camino Real site as earmarked for any changes.

The notices mailed to residents and published in the Almanac said that changes could be made to parcels "in close proximity to the Caltrain station," but the former Cadillac site was not specifically mentioned.

Mention of the site was also absent from the agenda listing for the council's public hearing on the Derry project.

"Any changes to the Cadillac site should have been separately listed for the public to see," said Terry Francke, a general counsel for CalAware, a nonprofit group that advocates for open government. "[Changes to the Cadillac site] could not have been foreseen as an obvious outcome of approval of the Derry project."

Acting City Attorney Dan Siegel said the notices were legally

sufficient.

Community Development Director Arlinda Heineck said any proposal to develop the Cadillac property still has to undergo a full environmental impact report and be approved by the City Council.

The city included a general plan amendment and change to the zoning code for the 1300 El Camino Real site in the approval of the Derry project in order to focus on building "transit oriented development" on properties near the train tracks, Ms. Heineck said.

She noted that the site is still technically zoned a commercial property, and will remain so until the council considers and approves a specific proposal for the site and a change to the city's zoning map.

The current proposal for the site by Sand Hill Property Co. fits the density guidelines of the new zoning code, but further amendments would be needed to accommodate proposed buildings taller than 50 feet, said

Ms. Heineck.

Ms. Fergusson, although she voted in favor of the Derry project and the impacts to the Cadillac site, said the council "likely restricted" the financial benefits that the city could gain from Sand Hill Property Co. in exchange for amending the general plan.

"Now that we have made amendments, the proposal for [the Cadillac site] is in line with the general plan," Ms. Fergusson said. "With these vague notifications, people had no idea what was happening, and now we've given away density to a developer for free."

Ms. Fergusson said she recognized the changes being made to the 1300 El Camino Real site when she voted in favor of the Derry proposal, but still supported the project because it puts housing in the city's "main transit corridor."

She added that she has received "deserved criticism" for her vote. ■

## DERRY

continued from page 5

petitioners were used only "temporarily" to gauge support for the referendum.

He said he's unsure if he will ask the outside petition gatherers to provide further help. He would not identify the specific group used to help gather signatures.

## 'Politically motivated'

Council members Lee Duboc and Mickie Winkler have labeled the referendum campaign "politically motivated," citing a lack of public opposition to the project until it went before the council in August.

"Nobody stood up to contest [the Derry project], and to me, that suggests it is politically motivated," Ms. Winkler said. She noted the

project was reviewed by multiple city commissions and the environmental impact report was available for public review.

Ms. Winkler and Ms. Duboc are running for re-election on a slate with Transportation Commissioner John Boyle. The three candidates oppose the referendum campaign, but their opponents — Vincent Bressler, Richard Cline and Heyward Robinson — support it.

Andy Cohen, the only council member to vote against the project, said he supports the referendum.

The project is proposed by the Foster City-based O'Brien Group. The group is working with the Derry family, which owns the land.

"We're doing our best to be sure residents understand the facts before they decide whether

or not to sign the petition," said Jim Pollart, vice president of land acquisition and planning for the Foster City-based O'Brien Group. He noted that the O'Brien Group and Derry family have run advertisements in the Almanac, written letters to the editors of local newspapers, and asked volunteers to distribute fliers in favor of the project.

According to Chuck Bernstein, a member of Menlo Park Tomorrow, people assisting the O'Brien Group are "harassing" residents trying to collect signatures in support of the referendum. In a letter to the Almanac, Mr. Bernstein said he has been confronted by supporters of the Derry project, and at one point, an argument escalated into a shouting match.

Mr. Pollart said he had no comment on Mr. Bernstein's letter. ■

## Cadillac site 'not rezoned'

With the Sept. 12 approval of the Derry project, the Menlo Park City Council made changes to the general plan and to the zoning code that affect the neighboring 1300 El Camino Real site, but did not technically rezone the property, according to Arlinda Heineck, the city's community development director.

The general plan and the text of the zoning ordinance section that applies to the site — previously a Cadillac dealership — were amended, but the city's zoning map has not been changed, Ms. Heineck said.

She noted that a property is rezoned only if the zoning map is changed.

The permitted density for the site was increased, meaning the number of residences per acre was increased from 18.5 to 40, and permitted building heights were increased from 30 feet to 50 feet.

A proposed development for 1300 El Camino Real that has density equal to the Derry project would be consistent with the general plan and zoning code.

There is a current proposal to build 134 apartments and about 80,000 square feet of commercial space on the site.

In the Sept. 27 Almanac article, "Former Cadillac site rezoned, too," the statement that the Cadillac site is rezoned is incorrect, according to Ms. Heineck.

## ARTIFACT

continued from page 5

an artifact without a permit carries a fine of the appraised value of the artifact, plus 25 percent.

The council approved the ordinance unanimously after removing a provision that would have required property owners to pay a \$750 fee for permits. Property owners shouldn't be financially burdened, council members said.

The ordinance may require some additional tweaking, but council members said it needed to be passed immediately because a year-old moratorium protecting the artifacts is due to expire October 19.

Councilman Alan Carlson said that if the council didn't

vote to introduce the ordinance, the moratorium would expire before the ordinance would go into effect, creating a regulation-free window of opportunity for anyone who wanted to remove or destroy an artifact.

As with most historic preservation ordinances, opinions were divided about the effect of regulations on private property rights.

"I own three of the artifacts, two of which were in complete and total disrepair," Atherton resident Lisa Lamb said at the meeting.

She said she spent \$5,000 apiece to restore two large urns, and moved them from her front yard to her backyard for safety. She said the ordinance would take away personal property from Atherton residents, and

was the wrong way for the town to protect the artifacts.

"We will be moving, and our goal is to move those artifacts to our new home," said her husband Randy Lamb, a member of the town's General Plan Committee.

Another resident suggested the town create a fund and use it to buy the historic artifacts, rather than put the burden on property owners, an idea Councilwoman Kathy McKeithen said she is interested in pursuing.

"There are not a lot of artifacts left, and we must preserve and protect what we have left," said Marion Oster, president of the Atherton Heritage Association, who spoke in favor of the ordinance. "Once an artifact is moved, it's gone. It's lost its value."

The original, 45-day emergency ordinance was enacted April 20, 2005, amid concerns that a sizable three-tier fountain was threatened by a prospective owner's development plans. The property's impending sale lent urgency to a proposal to protect the town's historic artifacts that the council had been mulling over for several months.

Ms. Oster ultimately purchased the property, which is adjacent to her own, in order to preserve the fountain.

Phil Lively, president of the Lindenwood Homes Association, also spoke in favor of the ordinance.

"Sometimes, you have a situation where you as an owner have a public trust," said Councilman Jim Janz. "Even

if it's an urn in your backyard, it's still there, still in Atherton for future generations."

"Property has its duties as well as its rights," he said.

Ms. Jones' official historic inventory extensively documents artifacts belonging to property owners who permitted her on their property. Artifact owners also participated in several study meetings about the ordinance, Ms. Jones said.

Her study does not include artifacts belonging to owners who refused to participate, such as the three on the Lamb property, she said.

However, the ordinance applies to all artifacts in Atherton that meet certain historic standards, not just the three dozen that Ms. Jones documented. ■

# Swimmers laud pool programs after first summer season

By David Boyce  
Almanac Staff Writer

After the first summer of operation, swimmers asked to rate their experiences at the new Burgess Park public pools in Menlo Park are giving high marks to the facility, which is managed by the private firm Menlo Swim and Sport LLC.

Of the approximately 445 swimmers who filled out the questionnaire that was administered and collected by Menlo Swim and Sport, 88 percent said their expectations were met by the quality of the programs and 71 percent agreed that the fees and programs were competitive with facilities elsewhere.

The positive results on the questionnaire reflect the fact that the staff "listened to the public" in creating a schedule of swim programs, said Menlo Swim and Sport director Tim Sheeper. To accommodate the public's requests, the schedule was changed several times in the first week alone, he said.

Mr. Sheeper summarized the results in a Sept. 26 report to the five-member City Council and received general approval from council members, including both Kelly Fergusson and Andy Cohen, both of whom had opposed the way in which pool operations were turned over to a private company.

## ■ BURGESS POOL

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The Almanac/Marjan Sadoughi

The positive response reflects the fact that the staff "listened to the public" in creating a schedule of swim programs, said Menlo Swim and Sport director Tim Sheeper.

At the meeting, Ms. Fergusson and Mr. Cohen again knocked the hurry-up nature of last February's no-bid, no-rent lease agreement with Menlo Swim and Sport, reached one month after Mr. Sheeper proposed that he could operate the \$6.8 mil-

lion publicly funded aquatics facility. But they also praised his operation.

"All I've heard is that the programs are better than they ever were," Mr. Cohen said. "But I'm also a little concerned ... that Menlo Park gets full advantage of a \$7 million facility."

Mr. Cohen added that he didn't like Mr. Sheeper's practice of charging an entry fee to parents who just want to watch their kids during the open-swim program. Sheeper defended the practice, saying that everybody has to pay because it's too hard to detect who might be swimming for free.

Resident Patti Fry complained in a recent e-mail message to the council that the fees were too high, and her message came up during the council meeting. Mayor Nicholas Jellins suggested a survey by city staff to compare fees with public pools in other cities.

Mr. Sheeper defended his rates, and said he's "not operating a normal city pool" that's open between Memorial Day and Labor Day. This pool, he said, is open year round and offers 80 hours of lap swimming a week — about twice as much as public pools in neighboring communities. It's run on a "country club model," he added. ■

# Goodbye planned for old school buildings

The town of Portola Valley has scheduled a public goodbye ceremony at 3:30 p.m. Thursday, October 12, at the Town Center to mark the coming destruction of the 1950s-era Portola Valley School to make way for a new complex of buildings and playing fields.

The school buildings, which for most of the past 30 years have served as the town's governmental and community center, are set to be torn down in November, said Mayor Steve Toben in an e-mail message.

The plan for the day includes a gathering of former students, parents of former students and former school staff on the lawn west of the multi-use room to share memories of Portola Valley School and note its passing. Refreshments will be served.

The opening of a time capsule said to be buried on the grounds in 1968 was to have been a highlight of the ceremony, but the container and its original contents have apparently succumbed to the ravages of time. "It's corroded and contains

## ■ BRIEFS

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little," Mr. Toben said.

## Sen. Speier town hall meet in Portola Valley

State Sen. Jackie Speier is holding a town hall meeting in Portola Valley's Historic Schoolhouse on Saturday, Oct. 14, from 9 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Sen. Speier, who is forced out of office by term limits, is holding eight town hall meetings in her Senate district before she leaves office Nov. 30. She said she wants to make sure her constituents understand how their elected officials can help them.

"Whether it's problems they may have with the Department of Motor Vehicles, to unfair or illegal actions on the part of landlords or service businesses, or finding a lost tax refund, we are here to help and more people should take advantage of what we

can accomplish on their behalf," she said in a press release.

The Historic Schoolhouse is located in Town Center, 765 Portola Road. For information, call Sen. Speier's San Mateo district office at 340-8840.

## Public hearing on Coyote Point plan

Anyone with opinions of the future of the Coyote Point Recreation Area in San Mateo is invited to speak at a public hearing to be held by the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Commission on Thursday, Oct. 5, at 2:30 p.m., in the Board of Supervisors Chambers at 400 County Center, corner of Hamilton Avenue and Bradford Street, in Redwood City.

The commission will be reviewing an updated version of the draft master plan for the park. The plan can be viewed at [www.parks.net](http://www.parks.net) under "Park Planning," or at the county parks department office on the fourth floor of the county office building, 455 County Center.

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Steve Lewis is President of Lewis & Mathews Investment Management, Inc., which is a personal financial advisory firm in Menlo Park. He teaches investment courses for various colleges and institutions in the area. He is a financial author and has appeared on national radio and television. He is a past officer and has served as a board member of the S. C. International Association of Financial Planners. He has served on the National Academy Advisory Board of IAFP and is a member of the Palo Alto Financial Planning Forum. Among others, he has written for *Money Magazine* and *Dow Jones' Barron's*.

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# Trustees examine options for reorganizing elementary schools

■ The board seeks more information before an Oct. 25 meeting, when a decision could be made.

By Marjorie Mader  
Almanac Staff Writer

Trustees of the Menlo Park City School District are asking for more information before making a decision about reorganizing its elementary schools as part of a plan for dealing with rising enrollment.

The school board met Sept. 27 and plans another special meeting Oct. 25, when it will hear from the public, discuss the options, and possibly make a decision.

The board is focusing on two options:

■ Make all three elementary schools — Laurel, Encinal and Oak Knoll — K-5 schools. Currently, Laurel serves kindergartners through second-graders on the east side of the district. These students go on to Encinal for grades 3-5. Oak Knoll is a K-5 school, serving students west of El Camino Real.

■ Make Laurel a K-3 school with its students moving to an expanded Encinal for grades 4

## ■ MP SCHOOLS

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and 5. Both Encinal and Oak Knoll would be K-5 schools under this option.

Before making a decision, the board is seeking more information on the feasibility and costs, and wants updated enrollment projections.

Changing grade configurations could necessitate changing attendance boundaries to shift some students from the Oak Knoll attendance area to Encinal.

### Changing grade configurations could necessitate changing attendance boundaries.

Another decision would be determining which students, living east of El Camino, would go to Laurel or Encinal if both schools were K-5s or if Laurel would become a K-3 school.

"We're pressing forward as it's necessary to make these (configuration) decisions before we can move ahead with facility planning," said Superintendent Ken Ranella.

Enrollment is growing at a faster pace than projected. This fall the enrollment of 1,589 students in the three elementary schools is 7.5 percent higher than a year ago.

Total enrollment in grades K-5 is projected to reach 1,800 by 2015.

Superintendent Ranella plans to present more information from consultants and staff at the Oct. 25 board meeting. There will be time for community comment at that meeting before any decision is made.

"We heard loudly and clearly from the community last spring that Hillview must be retained as a district middle school" for all sixth-, seventh- and eighth-graders, he said.

The board plans to decide how to upgrade and expand Hillview Middle School after it decides the capacity and grade levels at the elementary schools.

## Big turnout

Some 150 parents, mostly from the Laurel and Encinal attendance area, came to Encinal School on Sept. 27 for the special board meeting, where Mr. Ranella gave a detailed Power Point presentation on reconfiguration of the elementary schools.

About 30 of the parents raised questions. Their input is now on the district's Web site ([mpcsd.org](http://mpcsd.org)) under the heading, "Reconfiguration," said board President Laura Rich.

One parent said he and his wife moved to Atherton and decided to remain in their home because they were comfortable with the schools. He liked the idea of "grandfathering" current families in their respective attendance districts, but

said he could live with anything. "How small is too small?" asked a mother who questioned the option of Laurel being a K-5 school with students spread across six grade levels.

Changes in attendance boundaries could lead to concerns over the safety of young children crossing El Camino Real to get to schools east of El Camino, another mother said.

"The density at Oak Knoll School could be reduced. It seems like twice the number of kids now than when I went there," said an Oak Knoll alumnus living near the school.

One mother spoke up in favor of introducing programs, such as a foreign language immersion program, at Encinal to attract families from the other parts of the district to help Encinal grow.

One dad described Laurel as "an enchanted forest" where K-2 children grow and flourish because the school and staff work well in addressing needs of the students.

Another suggestion was to move the recently completed district office and the proposed Educational Resource Center off the Encinal campus to leased facilities to provide more space for school needs.

Additional information to be gathered before the Oct. 25 meeting will include: a report from teachers about the optimal sizes of grade levels, an enrollment study in relation to the size of the three campuses, operational options for each of the two options being studied, review of school attendance areas and boundaries, and the issue of students crossing El Camino. ■

## Atherton man unveils 'shop' for public in Menlo Park

■ The work space has industrial-grade tools for public use, with instruction to boot.

By David Boyce  
Almanac Staff Writer

With the demise of high-school shop classes in California and elsewhere and with the relocation of blue-collar jobs to Central America and South Asia, Californians born after 1970 have little first-hand experience with jobs in which sparks fly, metal filings collect on work boots, and hands take on a grimy patina.

A remedy for such missed

opportunities opened last weekend in Menlo Park at the TechShop, a new 15,000-square-foot work space with classrooms, teachers, materials and industrial-grade equipment for the use of hobbyists, inventors, artists and anyone with a creative curiosity and an urge to play around with mechanical, electrical or software engineering tools.

The TechShop is located, appropriately enough, in the industrial zone of Menlo Park between U.S. 101 and the Bayfront Expressway in a one-story former office building at 120 Independence Drive.

"We're very upset that we're giving away manufacturing ability, development ability, to other countries," said TechShop co-founder and Atherton resident Ridge McGhee. "We want to give people the capability to develop here."


TechShop is currently a for-profit outfit with plans to become a "hybrid" company by partnering with a yet-to-be-established nonprofit foundation, Mr. McGhee said. The company's lease is for 18 months, reflecting the pilot nature of the enterprise.

The membership-based company will offer monthly passes for \$100 and yearly passes for \$1,200, he said.


New materials such as metal and plastic will be available for purchase in a store inside the building, and there will be an entire wall dedicated to storing free used materials and objects, Mr. McGhee said. "Re-purposing is a big thing here," he said. "Some people call it hacking."

Why now? "There's nowhere else to go," he said. "You can't go into a machine shop and say

See **SHOP**, next page



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## SHOP

continued from previous page

'Hey, can I borrow your lathe for a while.' ... We are enablers. We are definitely trying to fill a need in the community.'

The community has responded. To jumpstart the company, Mr. McGhee and co-founder Jim Newton of Belmont sought donations of \$25,000. The campaign found many donors, including 12 at that level, Mr. McGhee said.

"We're been amazed," he said. "People just really want this to happen." The membership may well sell out at the open house, he added.

About 150 people applied for TechShop teaching positions, he said. Selection included a background check and a dry run teaching to the co-founders. Instructors, shop stewards and volunteers will be around in various shops to offer advice, he said.

Hour-long basic instruction classes for specific machines are \$30, with advanced classes also available.

## Safety first

Milling machines and drill presses are not toys, and the U.S. service economy of the late 20th and early 21st centuries is hardly conducive to work with industrial-grade tools that makes demands on physical and spatial as well as mental intelligence.

Some of the machines were designed decades ago when Silicon Valley was in its infancy and high-school shop classes were common. Do people today have the right stuff to use these tools effectively?

"Safety is the primary concern" and is not limited to rolling up one's sleeves and wearing safety glasses, Mr. McGhee said. Only members who have shown ability — either through classes or demonstration — will be able to turn on a machine. Membership cards will be equipped with a sophisticated electronic device to enable machines that users have been trained on. ▀

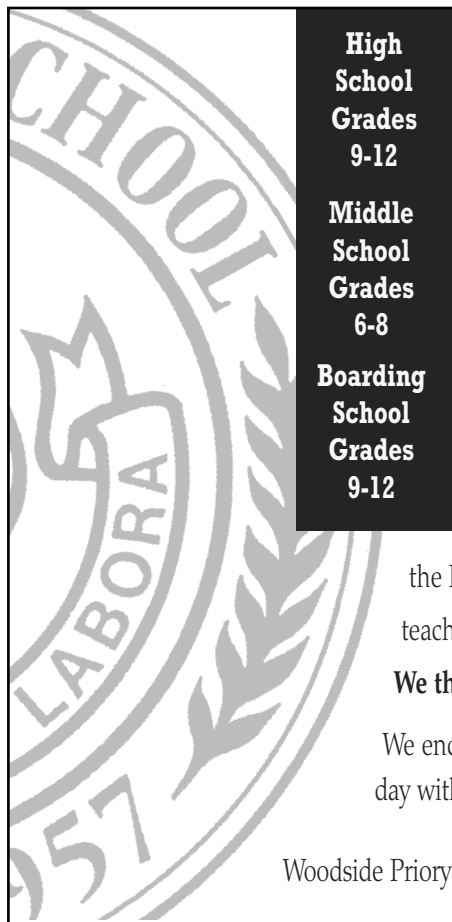
## Parking fees hiked

Fees for parking at the Menlo Park train station — and other stations along the line from San Jose to San Francisco — increased Oct. 1. Daily rates, currently \$1.50 for 24 hours, rose to \$2. Monthly parking passes, currently \$15, now cost \$20.

The increases are needed to help offset higher operating expenses, a spokesperson said.

Atherton offers free daily and overnight parking in the town-owned lot at its Caltrain station. Due to cutbacks, the station only has train service on weekends.

For schedule and fare information, call 800-6600-4287 (TTY 650-508-6448).



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# Lorraine Bakke taught generations of schoolchildren

Services were to be held at noon Tuesday, Oct. 3, at Menlo Colonial Chapel, 657 Oak Grove Ave. in Menlo Park, for Lorraine "Naine" Bakke of Portola Valley.

Ms. Baake, who was known to generations of kindergarten and early elementary students in the Las Lomas School District, died Sept. 26. She began teaching at the new Ladera School in 1954 and moved to Las Lomas School in 1979 when Ladera School was closed.

After she retired from the Las Lomas district in 1998, she continued working with young children, helping her friend and former colleague, Carlene Scheidtmann, at her preschool.

Ms. Baake is remembered by her colleagues and a multitude of students as an outstanding primary school teacher, the "heart and soul" of Ladera School. She loved her students and loved teaching, say colleagues.

She had an ability to understand children, making every child feel loved and special, launching them on to learning, they say.

Known for keeping copious notes about each student, she wrote lengthy personal evaluations to accompany report cards and worked endless hours preparing thorough lessons and guiding parents.

Ms. Baake was born in Mankato, Minnesota. She graduated

## ■ OBITUARY

from Mankato State College with a degree in education. She and her husband, Hans Bakke, moved to the Bay Area in 1953 and lived in Ladera until 1975 when they moved to Portola Valley.

Lorraine and Hans Bakke were founding members of the Claypipers Melodrama Troupe. For more than 40 years, the Claypipers performed on sum-



Lorraine Bakke

mer weekends at Drytown in the California Gold Country. Ms. Bakke was best known for portraying the seductive and sinister accomplice of the villain, earning hisses and boos from the audience.

She and her sister, Harriet Anderson, presented between-acts olios, the favorite part of the show to many playgoers. An accomplished singer, as well as actress, Ms. Bakke performed in musicals up and down the Peninsula, ranging from roles in "Oliver" and "I Remember Mama," to one of her favorites, "The Rainmaker," in which she played Lizzie.

Dramatic talent was inherited

by the Bakke's daughter, Bronwyn, who, as an actress living in North Hollywood, uses the stage name of Bronni Bakke.

Ms. Bakke is survived by her husband of 60 years, Hans Bakke of Portola Valley; daughter Bronwyn Bakke of North Hollywood; and sister Harriet Anderson of Pleasanton.

The family prefers memorials in her name be sent to the Las Lomas School District, Lorraine Bakke Memorial, 1011 Altschul Ave., Menlo Park, 94025, or to a favorite charity.

Interment was to be at Alta Mesa Memorial Park. Arrangements were under the direction of Menlo Colonial Chapel.

## ■ OBITUARIES

### Dan Kingman

Former Portola Valley resident

A celebration of the life of Dan Edward Kingman of San Jose will be held at 1 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 15, at Roller & Hapgood & Tinney, 980 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Mr. Kingman died Sept. 14 at Stanford Medical Center in Palo Alto. He was 52.

Mr. Kingman was born in Castro Valley and graduated from the University of Santa Clara in 1976. He worked for Mirassou Winery after graduation and then was employed by several software companies, including Signetics, Symmetry Communications,



Dan Kingman

MDL and Lagato. Most recently, he was human resources manager at Home Depot in San Carlos.

He was a nature lover, world traveler, avid golfer and cherished friend, say family members.

He is survived by his daughter, Hilary Kingman of Palo Alto; parents Alton and Becky Kingman of Sun City, Arizona; sisters Joan Kingman of Ft. Bragg and Mary Lou Krauland of Alameda; and former wife,

Nancy Hall of Palo Alto.

Mr. Kingman requested donations be made to the American Liver Foundation, 75 Maiden Lane, Suite 603, New York, NY 10038; or the Sempervirens Fund, P.O. Drawer BE, Los Altos, CA 94023.

### David Russell

Financial controller

A celebration of the life of David

"Dave" Russell will be held from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 7, at his home in Redwood City. Mr. Russell, a former Portola Valley resident, died Sept. 25 at home from complications brought on by liver cancer and Parkinson's Disease. He was 82.

Mr. Russell was born in Los Angeles. He graduated from Covina High School and served

See OBITUARIES, page 22

## THE ROUNDTABLE AT STANFORD UNIVERSITY PRESENTS

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SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14

9:00-11:15 A.M.

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[www.stanford.edu/roundtable](http://www.stanford.edu/roundtable)

The final decade of the 20th century was a time of great optimism. The fall of the Iron Curtain, expansion of the European Union, and the technology revolutions of the 1990s promised to unite diverse people.

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### Panelists

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Jean-Pierre Garnier, *CEO, GlaxoSmithKline*

The Hon. Anthony M. Kennedy, *Supreme Court justice*

William Perry, *former Secretary of Defense, Berberian Professor in the School of Engineering*

Dr. Lucy Shapiro, *Ludwig Professor of developmental biology and cancer researcher*

George P. Shultz, *former Secretary of State, Ford Distinguished Fellow, Hoover Institution*

Jerry Yang, *co-founder, Yahoo!*

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# NEW AT SLAC -

## X-rays at SLAC expose theorems of Archimedes under medieval prayers

By Marion Softky

Almanac Staff Writer

A modern marriage of ancient wisdom with space-age technology at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC) is producing new insights into the mind and work of one of the greatest mathematical thinkers of antiquity.

Just this year, scientists have aimed powerful X-ray beams at faded pages of a scruffy medieval prayer book and come up with long-buried writings of Archimedes that shed new light on his discoveries about floating objects, mechanical theorems, and even a mathematical game.

Greek copies of Archimedes' original works were recycled by a medieval monk in Constantinople, who wrote a prayer book

on top of the parchment after scraping and washing it to erase the old writing.

"The Archimedes Palimpsest" (a palimpsest is a document that has been erased and written over) is now on loan to the Walters Art Museum of Baltimore. It is being studied by scientists and scholars from all over the country to tease out the messages under the Latin prayers and later forged pictures of gilded saints.

Just this summer, the news media watched as a beam of high-powered X-rays from the Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Laboratory (SSRL) at SLAC zapped the most difficult pages that had resisted gentler techniques. The hair-sized beam — brighter than a million

sun — penetrated dirt, mold, gilt paint, and medieval ink to reveal Greek writing and diagrams from Archimedes' treatise, "The Method of Mechanical Theorems."

"We're getting a vastly better understanding of one of the greatest minds of all time," says Uwe Bergman of Menlo Park, the SLAC physicist who first realized that X-rays from the SSRL could excite the iron in the original ink and make it glow. "We're also showing it is possible to read completely hidden texts in ancient documents without harming them."

### Twisty tale

Dr. Bergmann, an enthusiastic scientist from the Black Forest in Germany, relishes the twisty

tale of how Archimedes' work filtered from Syracuse in Sicily, where Archimedes was born in 287 B.C., to SLAC in California in 2006.

Archimedes, of course, may be most famous from the legend that gave us the expression "eureka." As he was sitting in his bath, the story goes, he figured out how to measure the volume of a solid — and then ran naked through the streets of Syracuse shouting "Eureka" ("I have found it!").

Archimedes' works covered an extraordinary range, from calculating pi and discovering the laws governing levers, to inventing pulleys, catapults and devices that crashed or clawed Roman ships. He invented a pump that worked like a screw and is still used today.

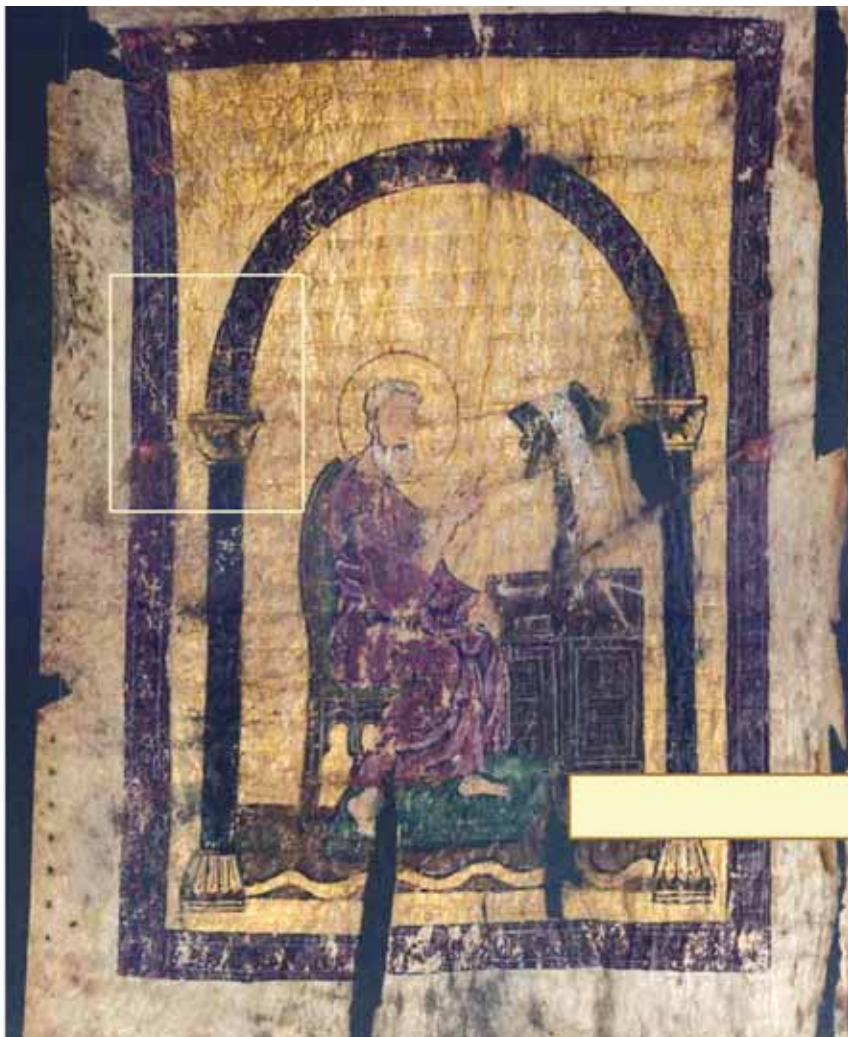
"He was a genius," says Dr. Bergmann. "He was dealing with infinity and calculus almost 2,000 years before Newton and Leibniz."

Archimedes was a towering figure in his time. His works were transcribed onto papyrus. As the papyrus failed, his works were copied onto parchment made from animal skins. The copy that became the palimpsest was made in the ninth century. "It may have been a copy of a copy of a copy. No one knows," Dr. Bergmann says.

In 1229, a monk needed some parchment for a prayer book, so he raided the library and collected several old documents. It was probably too expensive for the monastery to make its own parchment, Dr. Bergmann notes. "It takes a flock of sheep to make a prayer book. This was medieval recycling."

In making the prayer book, the monk first scraped the pages and washed the Archimedes script with a mild acid like lemon juice. Then he cut the

See **ARCHIMEDES**, page 16



Images produced by Rochester Institute of Technology/John Hopkins University, and the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC) © Owner of the Archimedes Palimpsest  
**Powerful X-rays** at SLAC penetrated the forged gilt picture of St. Matthew in the Archimedes Palimpsest to reveal medieval prayers, horizontal, and Greek text, vertical, from Archimedes' treatise, "The Method of Mechanical Theorems."

# Science center confirms dark matter that makes up most of the universe, and new theorems by master-mathematician Archimedes

## Dark matter confirmed in colliding galaxies



The Almanac/Marion Softky

**Marusa Bradac**, of Menlo Park and Slovenia, performed the simulation that confirms the existence of the invisible dark matter that makes up much of the universe.

By **Marion Softky**

Almanac Staff Writer

Since the 1930s, astronomers have recognized that the universe contains far more matter than can be explained by all the stars and planets and galaxies that can be observed.

Now, scientists at SLAC, studying a collision of galaxy clusters three billion light years away, have confirmed the existence of the invisible dark matter that gives the universe its gravitational heft.

"We had predicted the existence of dark matter for decades, but now we've seen it in action. It's groundbreaking," says astrophysicist Marusa Bradac, of Menlo Park and Slovenia.

Dr. Bradac, who is a postdoctoral fellow at the Kavli Institute for Astrophysics and Cosmology (KIPAC) at SLAC, did a computer simulation of the collision of two clusters of galaxies in what is called the "Bullet Cluster," possibly the largest explosion since the Big Bang launched the universe we know.

"The simulation shows how

the collision happened and what happened afterwards," Dr. Bradac says during an interview at the Kavli Institute, which just opened last spring. "All the gas (and stars) stayed in one place, and the dark matter kept going."

### Weird stuff

Dark matter has proved extraordinarily difficult to pin down, because the evidence of its existence is indirect, Dr. Bradac explains. We know it's there because clusters of galaxies are far more massive than their visible parts. Yet it doesn't shine or give off light or heat or any signal we can detect; it interacts with other matter only through gravity.

To confirm the existence of dark matter, scientists used the technique of gravitational lenses. These are based on an effect, first discovered by Einstein, that a massive object can bend the light from galaxies behind it. "With gravitational lenses, we can measure the mass that bends the light," says Dr.

Bradac. "We still can't 'see' it because it doesn't shine. But we can see its effects."

The latest discovery comes from a huge collaboration of scientists, using four major telescopes, including the Hubble Space Telescope and the orbiting Chandra X-ray Observatory. They mapped the distortions caused by the bullet cluster in the positions of galaxies in the background.

The result showed four separate clumps of matter: two large clumps of dark matter speeding away from the collision, and two smaller clumps of luminous matter trailing in their wake. "I actually measured the gravitational lens effect and discovered where the dark matter is positioned," says Dr. Bradac.

"These measurements are compelling," adds KIPAC Director Roger Blandford of Menlo Park. "The direct demonstration that dark matter has the properties inferred on the basis

See **DARK MATTER**, page 16

## SLAC pushes frontiers of science

Located on 430 acres of Stanford land in the foothills south of Sand Hill Road, the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC) has been exploring the makeup of matter since 1962.

The heart of SLAC is the linear accelerator, which speeds electrons through a two-mile tube at nearly the speed of light. As they crash into other particles at a target, scientists can study the basic structure and behavior of matter.

Five scientists have been awarded Nobel Prizes for research done at SLAC.

SLAC is almost entirely funded by the Department of Energy, and operated by Stanford under contract.

Over the years, SLAC has expanded its staff and its research. It now employs 1,500 people; some 3,000 scientists from around the world conduct research at SLAC every year.

Research at SLAC falls into three major areas that range from studying the smallest of particles to the whole universe:

■ **Photon science:** The Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Laboratory (SSRL) uses high-energy X-rays emitted by electrons rotating inside a ring to study different materials. Practical experiments have included studies leading to designer drugs, pollution-control equipment, treatment for osteoporosis, and — this year — new pages from Archimedes.

■ **Particle physics:** BaBar is the world's largest experiment examining the difference between matter and anti-matter, according to public information officer Neil Calder. Six hundred physicists from 11 countries study the results of collisions between B-mesons and anti-B mesons spinning in

opposite directions around an underground ring.

■ **The universe:** The new Kavli Institute for Particle Astrophysics and Cosmology (KIPAC) is expanding SLAC's research on particles to the scale of the universe, with research on the dark matter and dark energy that make up most of the universe.

SLAC is also engaged in a major new project. Bulldozers are preparing for the official groundbreaking in late October of a breakthrough X-ray source.

The Linac Coherent Light Source (LCLS) will be the world's first free electron X-ray laser. This will produce high-energy X-rays that are coherent and with identical wavelength, leading to the ability to do research at even smaller distances and shorter times. It will open in 2009.

Scientists at SLAC are also collaborating with an international group to plan the next-generation linear accelerator. To be called the International Linear Collider, it will also be an electron accelerator, but 40 miles long. "It won't be here," said Mr. Calder

— *Marion Softky*

### ■ INFORMATION

■ Tours of the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC) can be arranged by calling Maura Chatwell at 926-4931. Lots of information on SLAC and its projects are available on the Web. For starters, try: [slac.stanford.edu](http://slac.stanford.edu); [www.archimedespalimpsest.org](http://www.archimedespalimpsest.org); and [exploratorium.edu](http://exploratorium.edu) for a Webcast on the Archimedes palimpsest.

■ The History Channel will include a section on the Archimedes Palimpsest in its program Wednesday, Oct. 4, at 10 p.m. The program, "Modern Marvels," focuses on the history of ink, starting 3,000 years ago in China.

# X-rays at SLAC expose theorems of Archimedes under medieval prayers

## ARCHIMEDES

continued from page 14

pages in half, and rotated them 90 degrees, so that his writing was horizontal while the old writing was vertical. "That's nice," Dr. Bergmann says. "We can see both inks and separate the texts."

The palimpsest surfaced publicly on July 7, 1907. The front page of the *New York Times* proclaimed: "Big Literary Find in Constantinople." A Danish scholar had recognized it and bought it. Later he translated it to the best of his ability.

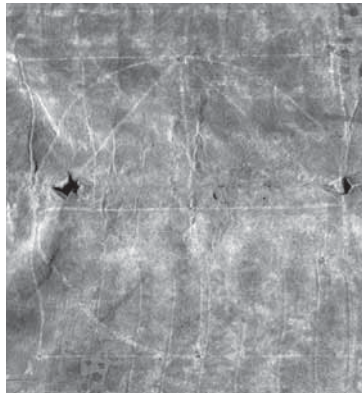
A forger got hold of the palimpsest after 1939, and painted over four pages with gilt pictures of the four evangelists.

The palimpsest surfaced again in 1998, when an anonymous American bought it for \$2 million at Christie's. He loaned it to the Walters Art Museum in Baltimore, and supported extensive research to find and interpret the Archimedes text.

Actually, the 174-page palimpsest is not made up just of Archimedes documents, it contains four other ancient books, Dr. Bergmann notes.

## Eureka

Dr. Bergmann never heard of the palimpsest until 2003. He had earned a Ph.D. from the State University of New York at Stony Brook, writing his thesis at Brookhaven National laboratory using X-rays "I develop novel X-ray techniques to study



Owner of the Archimedes Palimpsest; SLAC  
A yet-to-be interpreted diagram from Archimedes' "Method of Mechanical Theorems" was discovered under medieval writing at SLAC by shining powerful X-rays tuned to detect calcium and make it fluoresce.

all sorts of problems," he says.

By 2003, he was working at the SSRL and living in Menlo Park with his wife, Elisabetta, and their daughter Sofia, a third-grader at Oak Knoll School.

Dr. Bergmann credits his discovery of the palimpsest to his mother. He was visiting his family in the Black Forest while attending a conference on photosynthesis. At the time he was studying spinach, using X-rays to excite manganese and iron.

His eureka moment came one evening when he was reading a pile of clippings put out for him by his mother. An article on the palimpsest mentioned that the ink contained a lot of iron.

Wow! "I thought, if we can study iron in spinach, we should be able to detect it in ink," he

recalls. "I was 100 percent convinced. That was my eureka moment."

Dr. Bergmann contacted the Walters Art Museum, attended a workshop, and did tests to prove the X-rays would not harm the fragile manuscript. In May 2005, the first pages came to SLAC; they included one of the forged pages with the gold paint, which are the hardest to read. "We didn't image anything important, but we showed we could do it," he says.

To scan one page takes 12 hours. The X-ray beam, the size of a human hair, pulses back and forth across the page; it shuts off at the end of each line to protect the paper. The beam is tuned to a frequency that makes iron, or sometimes other elements, fluoresce. For one page, it makes 15 million measurements.

## Discoveries

Results started to pour out when several pages including those covered with evangelists Mark and Luke came back to SLAC in March 2006.

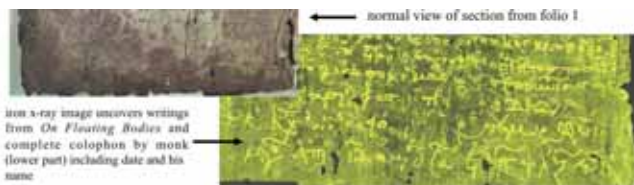
The beam focused on the first

page of a book called Folio 1. Dr. Bergmann exults, "Not only could we read the whole Archimedes text, we could read the name of the culprit." Johannes Myronas dedicated his prayer book with a flourish on April 13, 1229.

The scientists and scholars who interpret what they find, were excited to be able to read major sections of Archimedes' famous treatise "On Floating Bodies." "One page was never read before," says Dr. Bergmann.

These pages, which had been copied in Greek, differed in some respects from Latin translations that have been available to scholars, Dr. Bergmann notes. "We were the first in modern times to read the treatise in its original Greek," he says. "There are differences."

In August, the SLAC team scanned more pages, including those under evangelists Matthew and John. These contained Archimedes' most important work, "The Method of Mechanical Theorems." This appears nowhere else, and includes diagrams, says Dr. Bergmann.



Owner of the Archimedes Palimpsest; SLAC  
The X-ray image, lower right, of the text shows the dedication by the Byzantine monk who penned the palimpsest in 1229, Johannes Myronas, along with new theorems from "On Floating Bodies."



SLAC  
Uwe Bergmann of Menlo Park at the Stanford Synchrotron Radiation Laboratory, where high-powered X-rays reveal the Greek script by Archimedes.

The Web site, [www.archimedespalimpsest.org](http://www.archimedespalimpsest.org), notes that two treatises: "The Method of Mechanical Theorems" and the "Stomachion," are found only in the palimpsest.

Dr. Bergmann hesitates to interpret much of the material the team has unearthed, because it needs extensive further analysis. "The scholars have a lot of work over the next two years," he says.

So far SLAC has scanned 14 of the 174 pages of the palimpsest, including images overlapping on both sides of each page. Dr. Bergmann and the palimpsest team are busy planning for a return visit for more pages early next year.

Dr. Bergmann hopes they will pursue the Stomachion. This is a game like Tangrams, only it has 20 shapes that can be assembled into a rectangle in 14,000 ways. "Archimedes wrote a treatise about that." ■

## DARK MATTER

continued from page 15

of indirect arguments shows that we are on the right track in our quest to understand the universe."

## Dark matter and beyond

Dark matter is only part of the mysteries of the universe that scientists are probing; past observations have shown that only a very small percentage of the mass in the universe — maybe 5 percent — can be explained by regular matter.

"A universe that's dominated by dark stuff seems preposterous, so we wanted to test whether there were any basic flaws in our thinking," says Doug Clowe

of the University of Arizona, one of the leaders in the study. "We believe these results prove that dark matter exists."

From there, it gets even more confusing. Dr. Bradac estimates that about 25 percent of the universe is dark matter, 5 percent is luminous matter, and 70 percent is dark energy.

"Dark energy is even more mysterious," Dr. Bradac says. She refers to theories suggesting that dark energy is a form of material that exerts negative pressure that causes the universe to expand faster and faster, rather than collapsing.

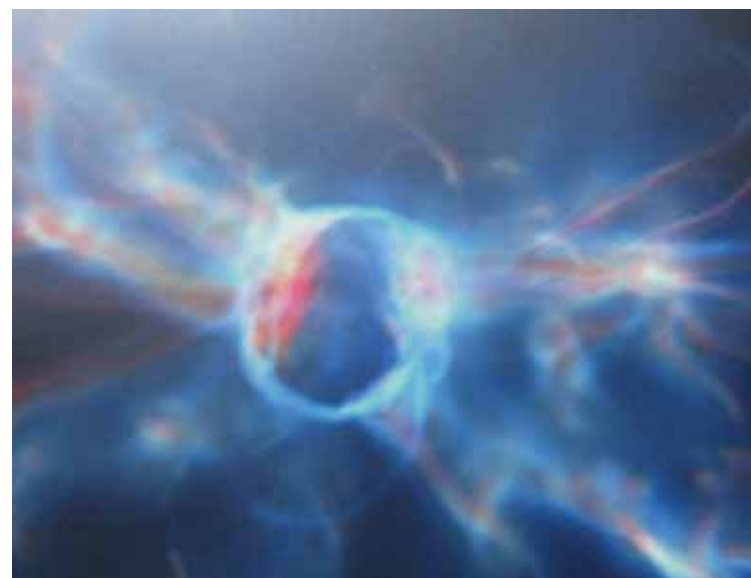
This kind of mind-stretching thinking makes Dr. Bradac love her time at SLAC. She comes from Slovenia, part of the old Yugoslavia, and earned her

Ph.D. in astrophysics from the University of Bonn in Germany. She is here on a three-year fellowship.

"It's so exciting here," she says, especially the interface with scientists studying such varied subjects. She hopes the particle physicists, working with SLAC's accelerators, will be able to detect some effects of dark matter.

"Dark matter particles barely see each other; they interact only gravitationally," Dr. Bradac says. "We tell particle physicists about properties they are trying to detect. The accelerator people will be trying to detect dark matter particles."

"Bridging the gap between particle physicists and astrophysicists — that's great." ■



The Almanac/Marion Softky  
This photo-realistic rendering of the birth of the first star shortly after the Big Bang was created by John Wise.

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October 4, 2006 ■ The Almanac ■ 17



## Should city drop summary minutes?

■ Council postpones record-keeping decision until after the election.

By **Rory Brown**  
Almanac Staff Writer

Members of the public looking to research deliberations and decisions by the Menlo Park City Council will have video footage, detailed "summary minutes," and abbreviated "action minutes" to choose from for the next several months, at least.

The council voted 5-0 at its Sept. 19 meeting to use all three methods to record city business for "a reasonable amount of time" — figured to be at least several months — and allow a future council to decide whether to drop summary minutes.

The council said it delayed the decision to allow time to evaluate the quality of the Webcasts — online video streaming of the meetings.

Council members Lee Duboc, Nicholas Jellins and Mickie Win-

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for news updates

kler have said they favor action minutes because summary minutes are subject to misinterpretation, and action minutes take less staff time to complete.

Council members Kelly Fergusson and Andy Cohen have said they favor summary minutes because they are more detailed than action minutes.

Included in the 5-0 vote Sept. 19, the council approved a one-year contract with San Francisco-based Granicus Inc. to provide Webcasts of council meetings. The service is expected to cost about \$31,000 a year.

Menlo Park has used the Webcast service for the past year for free, thanks to a Cable Co-op grant through the Midpenin-

sula Community Media Center. The grant expired at the end of September, and the Granicus contract went into effect Oct. 1.

To view live and archived Webcasts of council meetings provided by the city through Granicus, users must download Windows Media Player, said city staff.

City Clerk Silvia Vonderlinden said she expected to return to the council in early 2007 and ask whether summary or action minutes should accompany the Webcasts.

Summary minutes, now the written record of council meetings, record council members' discussions and positions on particular issues, and a summary of what members of the public say during council meetings.

The city currently has a four-month backlog of summary minutes to be transcribed, but temporary services will be hired to help the city clerk catch up at a cost of about \$10,000, according to city staff.

Action minutes, which currently are used to record decisions made by the Planning Commission, would provide a simple record of the council's final votes, with no summary of its deliberations. ■

## Perazich family walks in honor of an aunt

By **Kate Daly**  
Special to the Almanac

On Saturday, Oct. 7, Liliana Perazich of Menlo Park and her husband will carry their 2-month-old daughter and pull their 2-year-old daughter in a red wagon in a Memory Walk to honor her aunt, whose own memory is fading away.

Ms. Perazich will walk with her first cousin, Bill Davidovich, and his children, joining thousands of others in the Alzheimer's Association annual fundraiser on Treasure Island.

After her aunt was diagnosed with Alzheimer's five years ago, Ms. Perazich recalls how helpful it was to attend a discussion of the Alzheimer's Association hosted at the Palo Alto Medical Foundation.

Her aunt is now in her 80s and living in a convalescent home in South San Francisco. Ms. Perazich takes her on outings in her wheel-

chair, and was delighted that on a recent visit her aunt recognized the family well enough to give them hugs.

Ms. Perazich remembers her aunt as an adventuresome woman who emigrated here from Montenegro 52 years ago, raised a family, and earned a journalism degree at San Francisco State later on in life.

With the goal of raising \$500, Ms. Perazich sent out a bulk e-mail to family and friends. She quickly blew by that number with one donation from her real estate agent, Lynn Jason Cobb of Menlo Park, who gave \$1,000 in honor of her own relative with Alzheimer's, a brother-in-law.

The Alzheimer's Association estimates that about 11,000 residents of San Mateo County suffer from the disease.

For more information about the walk, go to [www.alzncorcal.org](http://www.alzncorcal.org). ■

### ACORN

continued from previous page

tion, pharmaceuticals, personal computing, banking and national defense.

The SRI campus is near the city's government center; with 1,400-plus employees, it's one of the largest employers in Menlo Park.

Scholarship recipient Aaron Vanides is pursuing studies in linguistics and philosophy at the

University of Chicago, according to the chamber.

He has studied German and Norwegian, and at M-A High School, was a member of the German Club and the National Honor Society.

Chamber executive board member Ron Derenzi was master of ceremonies of the awards event, which began with remarks by state Assemblyman Ira Ruskin, D-Redwood City. ■



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Saturday, November 11 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM  
Sunday, December 10 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

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Web site • [www.pamf.org](http://www.pamf.org) E-mail • [publicaffairs@pamf.org](mailto:publicaffairs@pamf.org)

### Events & Lectures

"Diagnosis and Treatment of Male and Female Infertility"  
Tuesday, Oct. 10, 7 - 8:30 p.m.  
Lillian Swiersz, M.D., PAMF  
Reproductive Endocrinology  
Andrew Epstein, M.D.  
PAMF Urology

Join us to hear a discussion of the causes, diagnostic testing and treatment options available to couples seeking medical intervention to improve their chances for a successful pregnancy.

Hearst Center for Health Education, Level 3, Jamplis Building, Palo Alto Medical Foundation, 795 El Camino Real, Palo Alto. RSVP to (650) 853-4873.

### Classes

"Supermarket Wise," Tuesday, October 10, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Learn techniques for making healthier food choices in a local supermarket with tour dietitian Karen Ross, M.S., R.D.

"Good Nutrition and Feeding Practices for Toddlers," Saturday, October 21, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.

This class will address parental concerns regarding nutrition and feeding practices. It should be attended by parents or caretakers only.

"What You Need to Know About Warfarin," Wednesday, October 25, 2 - 3 p.m.

Learn what warfarin is, why you are taking it and how you can help yourself.

"Advance Health Care Directives," call for available dates and times.

PAMF's specially trained volunteers will provide advice and answer questions about the Advance Health Care Directive form. Free.

### Support Groups

Cancer (1st & 3rd Tuesdays) • Diabetes (1st Wednesday) • Multiple Sclerosis (2nd & 4th Mondays) • Sleep Apnea (1st Thursday) • Alcohol and Drug Education (Every Tuesday) • Healing Imagery for Cancer Patients (Oct. 4 & 18)

For information on class fees and to register, call the Education Division at (650) 853-2960.

# Portola Valley home burglarized

By Stephanie Cadora

Special to the Almanac

A Portola Valley home in the 100 block of Russell Avenue was the scene of a major burglary on Sept. 20. Entry was gained through an unlocked door.

The residents reported that about \$11,350 in jewelry, a camera and cash was stolen from a bedroom dresser.

The suspect left the house through one of two unlocked doors and fled, the San Mateo

## BRIEFS

County Sheriff's Office reported.

### Woodside car crash

A man went into full cardiac arrest on Saturday, Sept. 30, at about 11:30 a.m. while driving his car westbound on Canada Road in Woodside, said Lt. Ken Jones of the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office.

At the intersection of Woodside Road, near Robert's Market, he

had the heart attack and his car collided with two other vehicles, with no other injuries or major damage, authorities said. He was taken to Stanford Hospital.

### Robbery suspects caught

Menlo Park police were on target Saturday night, Sept. 30, as they pursued and caught two robbery suspects in an incident that began in Redwood City.

At about 11:30 p.m., the Red-

wood City Police Department sent out a broadcast to be on the lookout for suspects in a robbery that had just occurred there. At 1:30 a.m., Menlo Park police encountered a car matching the description and pursued the vehicle northbound on Haven Avenue.

The suspects stopped the vehicle and got out and ran, and Menlo Park police chased them on foot. One suspect jumped a fence, but police caught and arrested him at 1:31 a.m. Then the Menlo Park police called the Redwood City police and the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office for assistance in

catching the other suspect. Using a canine unit, they were successful in arresting him at 2:07 a.m.

### Solo vehicle accident

A major solo accident involving an SUV occurred Sept. 28 at about 1:50 p.m. on Alpine Road at Junipero Serra Boulevard.

A 2002 gold Chevrolet 1500 rolled over onto the passenger side, Menlo Park police reported. The driver was taken to Stanford Hospital with major injuries, police said. There were no passengers in the vehicle. ■



## NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT and NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CITY OF MENLO PARK PLANNING COMMISSION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Planning Commission of the City of Menlo Park, California is scheduled to review the following item:

### General Plan Amendment, Rezoning, Conditional Development Permit, Tentative Subdivision Map, Heritage Tree Permit, and Environmental Review/SummerHill Homes/75 Willow Road:

- 1) **General Plan Amendment:** Change from Professional and Administrative Offices land use designation to Medium Density Residential land use designation;
- 2) **Rezoning:** Change from C-1 (Administrative and Professional District, Restrictive) to R-3-X (Apartment - Conditional Development District);
- 3) **Conditional Development Permit:** Establish specific development regulations and architectural designs for the demolition of an existing 40,000-square-foot office building and the construction of 33 single-family residential dwelling units;
- 4) **Tentative Subdivision Map:** Create 33 lots and associated common areas;
- 5) **Heritage Tree Permit:** Remove 46 heritage trees, relocate 4 heritage trees, and plant new trees; and
- 6) **Environmental Review** of the proposed project in the form of an Environmental Impact Report.

Copies of the Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) will be on file for review at the City Library and available for distribution at the Community Development Department, Civic Center, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025, as of **Tuesday, October 10, 2006**. The review period for the Final EIR has been set from **Tuesday, October 10, 2006** through **Monday, October 23, 2006**. Written comments should be submitted to the Community Development Department no later than 5:30 p.m., **Monday, October 23, 2006**.

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that the Planning Commission will hold a

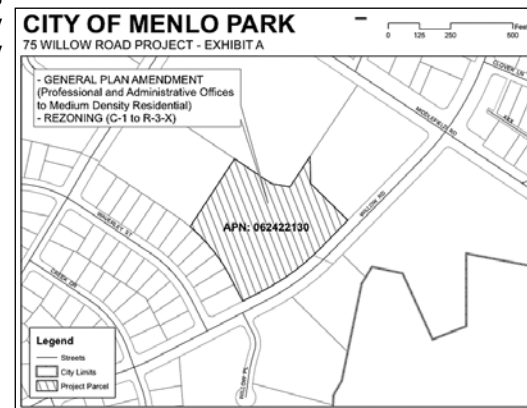
public hearing on this item in the Council Chambers of the City of Menlo Park, located at 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, on **Monday, October 23, 2006, 7:00 p.m.** or as near as possible thereafter, at which time and place interested persons may appear and be heard thereon. If you challenge this item in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Menlo Park during the public review period for the Final EIR or at, or prior to, the public hearing.

Documents related to these items may be inspected by the public on weekdays between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday, with alternate Fridays closed, at the Community Development Department, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park. Please call Deanna Chow, Senior Planner, if there are any questions or comments on this item. She may be reached at 650-330-6733 or by email at dmchow@menlopark.org.

DATED: September 29, 2006  
PUBLISHED: October 4, 2006

Justin Murphy,  
Development Services Manager

If there are any questions, please call the Planning Division at (650) 330-6702.



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**On September 12th, the Menlo Park City Council approved the Derry Project - concluding a comprehensive three year planning and public review process. That same day, five residents announced their intention to overturn the project approval by referendum - petitions are now being circulated.**

*"Members of my family have lived and worked in Menlo Park for more than 50 years and four generations. Our goal was to create a very high-quality, tasteful, mixed-use project that everyone can be proud of." -Blake Derry*

---

### **What the Almanac is saying about Derry Opponents and their Petition Campaign...**

*The Almanac calls it a "Misguided Challenge". "The petitioners have said nothing until now, after the debate is over...Where were the opponents when the Planning Commission and the City Council were reviewing all the plans and specifications over the last two years?" "The Derry project is a done deal and the petitioners should accept it and move on."*

**The Almanac – Viewpoint**  
Misguided Challenge to Derry Project -9/19/06

### **Community Leaders and Local Business Owners agree...**

*"I voted for this project because of the quality of the design, because of the quality of the materials, because this is the appropriate place for density. It's got a fine public space and a fine retail and commercial concept."*

**Kelly Fergusson, City Council Member**  
City Council Meeting -9/19/06

*"Clearly, the Derry Lane project will bring much-needed affordable housing to Menlo Park."*

**Elizabeth Lasensky, Housing Commissioner**

*"The Derry project, and the revitalization of that portion of Oak Grove Avenue, has been needed for many years and will provide a great improvement to the downtown community."*

**Mark Flegel, Owner, Flegel's Home Furnishings**

*"O'Brien and Derry have generously agreed to provide financial support in our business relocation. We appreciate their cooperation."*

**Mr. Lee, Owner, Foster's Freeze**

In September, 2002, the Menlo Park City Council identified the Derry property as a high priority site for high density housing as part of the General Plan Housing Element Update.

### **GET THE FACTS BEFORE YOU SIGN THE PETITION**

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For more information call 650-377-0300 or visit [www.derryatmenlo.com](http://www.derryatmenlo.com). This ad paid for by Friends of Derry sponsored by The O'Brien Group and the Derry family.

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**Recent burglaries not a trend, police say**

By David Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park experienced a run of 11 residential burglaries two weeks ago, but this type of property crime is probably not more frequent this year than it was last year at this time, said Sgt. Jim Simpson of the Menlo Park Police Department.

Sgt. Simpson and five other police officers from Menlo Park offered crime-stopping advice

at a meeting of about 40 Willows neighborhood residents on Thursday, Sept. 28, said Councilwoman Kelly Fergusson.

The conversation touched a bit on neighborhood traffic, but Ms. Fergusson said the focus was crime and tips on how to prevent it. Locking the bathroom window is important, she said, as is locking gates and calling police to report suspicious activity. A watchdog is another good step.

Ms. Fergusson arranged the

meeting Wednesday through the community's online mailing list after several residents, including two of her neighbors, contacted her about recent burglaries. There were three in the Willows during the week of Sept. 17.

"The Willows seems to (have) one of the better organized" neighborhood watch committees, Sgt. Simpson said.

For information, call Officer Brad Schuler at 330-6300.

**■ MENLO ELECTION****Finance reports due**

Campaign finance disclosure reports — documents that show who has donated funds to which candidates' campaigns — are due Thursday, Oct. 5, at 5 p.m.

The six Menlo Park City Council candidates must file reports. The documents will be available to the public, no more than 48 hours after they are filed, at the city clerk's office at the Civic Center, between Laurel and Alma streets, said City Clerk Silvia Vonderlinden.

A story on the filings will be posted on AlmanacNews.com.

**Linfield Oaks forum**

A Menlo Park City Council forum hosted by the Linfield Oaks Neighborhood Association is scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 4, from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. The forum will be held in the council chambers at the Civic Center.

**Meeting cancelled**

The Menlo Park City Council will not hold a meeting on Tuesday, October 3. The council will resume its weekly meeting October 10.

**OBITUARIES**

*continued from page 12*

as a signalman in the U.S. Navy during World War II. He graduated from U.C. Berkeley in 1950.

Mr. Russell worked at Lenkurt Electric for 28 years and helped many startups in Silicon Valley, say family members. After retiring, he served on the board of the Parkinsons Patients Support Groups Inc. He enjoyed gardening, golf, and exercising with his friends at the Cardiac Therapy Foundation in Palo Alto. He lived in Portola Valley for 38 years before moving to Redwood City in 2002.

Mr. Russell is survived by his children, Steven Russell of Redwood City, Alan Russell of Cupertino, and Marilyn Lawrence of Redwood City; four grandchildren; and his friend and companion for the past six years, Wanda Iverson. His wife, Marie, died in 1997.

Mr. Russell requested memorials be made to Parkinson's Patients Support Groups Inc., 1170 Morse Ave., Sunnyvale CA 94089-1605. Arrangements are under the direction of Crippen & Flynn, Woodside Chapel.

**Stacey Zonka**

Friends of Peninsula School teacher Stacey Greenberg Zonka are invited to a memorial service on Sunday, Oct. 8, at 11:30 a.m. at Peninsula School at 920 Peninsula Way in the Menlo Oaks neighborhood of Menlo Park. Ms. Zonka, a Peninsula School teacher, died July 13.

In lieu of flowers, contributions may be sent to the Stacey Zonka Benefit Memorial Fund at 526 Oak Ave., Davis CA 95616 or to the nursery program at Peninsula School, care of Heidi Nelson.

**■ VIKINGS REPORT**

Tough defensive struggles highlighted Sept. 30-Oct. 1 Pop Warner games as the Menlo-Atherton Vikings defended their home turf against teams from Fremont and Hollister. For details on the games go to AlmanacNews.com. Under Most Recent Editions, click on the Oct. 4 cover picture, and look for Vikings report under Sports.

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**■ POLICE CALLS****ATHERTON**

**Assault report:** Teacher struck student with book, Selby Lane School on Selby Lane, September 22.

**WOODSIDE****Fraud reports:**

■ Date of birth and address changed to obtain two unauthorized accounts, 100 block of Lakeview Drive, September 21.

■ Four unauthorized transactions made using debit card number, 100 block of Big Tree Road, September 21.

**PORTOLA VALLEY**

**Burglary report:** Jewelry, camera and cash valued at about \$11,350 stolen from unlocked residence, 100 block of Russell Avenue, September 20.

**Grand theft report:** Two unlocked bicycles, one worth \$1200, stolen, 4000 block of Alpine Road, September 21.

**Auto accident with major injury report:** An SUV, a 2002 gold Chevrolet 1500, rolled over and driver taken to Stanford Hospital, September 28.

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650.299.0141 fax  
[www.sanmateocountyhistory.com](http://www.sanmateocountyhistory.com)

Dear Friend,

Recognizing increased interest in our county's history in San Mateo County's Sesquicentennial year, I have gathered together some devoted friends to try to increase volunteer docent groups for the San Mateo County Historical Association. Please join us in helping history come alive for students in our community. Students can live the past through the interactive programs offered by the San Mateo County Historical Association at the San Mateo County History Museum, the Sanchez Adobe Historic Site and the Woodside Store Historic Site. In order to build those programs, the Historical Association needs you to volunteer as a docent.

At the San Mateo County History Museum in Redwood City, there exists an increasing demand for docents to assist students to discover how early residents used natural resources. The program features Ohlone Indian activities, including acorn preparation, making shell jewelry and games. In the coming year, docents will be needed for a multi-cultural school program to accompany the new permanent exhibit, *Land of Opportunity: The Immigrant Experience in San Mateo County*.

With the schedule fully booked a year in advance, docents can assist with the popular school programs at the Sanchez Adobe in Pacifica and the Woodside Store in Woodside. At the Sanchez Adobe, students explore life on a Mexican-era rancho and make adobe bricks and candles. At the Woodside Store, students discover life in the 1880s as they act as storekeepers and make redwood shingles.

For those who like working with all age groups, there is a continuing need for docents to interpret the Sanchez Adobe and Woodside Store on weekends. The docents share their knowledge of local history with visitors and demonstrate activities of the era.

Docent training is provided to all new volunteers. Sessions include presentations on local history and training. Mentoring by other docents is our key to successful volunteer participation.

For more information, please contact Education Director Carmen Blair at (650) 299-0104, ext. 33 or [carmen@samhist.com](mailto:carmen@samhist.com).

I hope you agree with us, that in our Sesquicentennial year, it is more important than ever that our children understand our cultural history. Please help us. Join the team of docents and make history come alive.

Sincerely yours,

Hon. Quentin Kopp  
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## LETTERS

*continued from page 27*

of the area, including the property at 735 Monte Rosa Drive. In my 23 years as a residential real estate business owner in this area, dealing in finance and appraisal every day, I have never seen a property value affected at all by a single-family residence that has six or fewer elderly residents.

Mr. Conley's statement "...I'm concerned about it bringing property values down..." is simply the result of being misinformed. And Mr. Sakrison's remark describing "...the Monte Rosa Drive home as 'an extremely odd and wrong environment' for the patients and the neighborhood..." causes me to wonder if he has ever even visited any of the wonderful residents that live there.

Apparently the only neighbors that Mr. Sakrison treasures are those independently capable of their own care. When he says "I think, as a community, we're going to try to fight this," he speaks for himself and not for those who consider these fine residents in the home to be part of the "the community."

**Greg Osgood**  
Oak Avenue, Menlo Park

## Unfair to focus ire on one council member

*Editor:*

The Sept. 20 Atherton City Council meeting generated a room full of people and a cyclone of expressed feelings.

The town's building department has developed problems. A very vocal, uninformed group wants to lay the blame on a single council member, which is ludicrous. The workings of the town are under the umbrella of the city manager and the five-member city council. These council members are volunteers, not paid employees. And not all of these people get to read all the updates that are sent to them.

I personally have been a very close observer of the Atherton council for many years and I can pinpoint the exact time that the council became more effective and better for the residents. When Kathy McKeithen began digging into the intricacies of the town, the building department had two drawers which were the repositories of the cash, and checks paid by residents. These drawers were not locked and records, to my knowledge, were relatively nonexistent. That was corrected after Kathy and her team discovered it.

My first observation of trouble in the building department came

about when an 11-foot wall was proposed for upper Stockbridge Avenue. The code dictated that this height could only be built as a retaining wall. This was pointed out and the applicant said, no worries, "the dirt will be delivered tomorrow." The pertinent papers could not be found that evening and the wall is there for all to view. "Why have codes?" was my thought.

Should we complement this untidy faction in town that wishes to hang laurel wreathes upon the building department and those employed there as being the epitome of all building departments? Well, we could. But, in doing this, they want to destroy a single council member who, of course, is the best and the brightest.

We need people who excel, who read and understand, who lead dedicated lives to help not only themselves but also the community. Greatness should be our goal even if it is hardly obtainable.

**Jean S. Schaaf**  
Stockbridge Avenue, Atherton

## City workers deserve support, do a good job

*Editor:*

I wish to express my support

See **LETTERS**, next page

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**LETTERS**

*continued from previous page*

for Menlo Park's city workers.

The service, professionalism and commitment to the public I have observed in any city employee have always been of the highest quality. City workers consistently receive high marks when surveys or other input from the public is gathered.

For example, consider the outpouring of support from parents for the city staff who work at the Menlo Children's Center during the recent RFP process. In the "Menlo Park Budget Report for 2006-2007" high levels of customer satisfaction, all above 81 percent and many near or at 100 percent, are reported, and most departmental goals are met or exceeded. The Menlo Park employees do their jobs and do them well.

It is sad to hear recent bashing of Menlo Park's city workers and the union that many of them belong to during City Council meetings and in other places. At the Sept. 12 meeting, council member Mickie Winkler said that city workers used to be a fairly "downtrodden lot" when it came to salaries and is concerned that salaries and benefits need to be looked at because they might become too high and offer too much security.

The people of Menlo Park do not believe in taking advantage of others, and the idea of ensuring that public employees are a "downtrodden lot" is absurd. People who do their jobs well deserve to be paid fairly. Everybody in this country deserves security.

Menlo Park employees are not responsible for the nation's economic woes; they did not cause the city's budget problems either. People should stop blaming city workers and their unions, and instead thank them for doing their jobs and allowing us to live in a safe, vibrant community.

**Roxanne Rorapough**  
Sherman Avenue, Menlo Park

**Different view of city's liability**

*Editor:*

In a letter published last week from Ms. Sue Kayton, the following claims were made regarding the Derry project referendum:

"If the referendum passes, it could end up costing the city millions of dollars if the developer files a breach of contract suit against the city. We approved the project and they have signed contracts. If the project is canceled, they will forfeit millions, and may decide to sue the city to reimburse them."

Contrary to these false claims by Ms. Kayton, the simple facts are:

The city always has signed agreements with any developer which prevent such actions from the developer. Even further, if the city is sued by an outside party, the

developer is obligated to pay for any legal expenses and liabilities that might incur. Usually what actually happens in the event of such lawsuits, the city simply turns over to the developer the responsibility to defend the city and any liability resulting must be borne by the developer and not the city.

I have talked to City Attorney Bill McClure about this before and he was quite clear about problems of this type. The city always protects itself. The developer knows full well that any project where legal action is taken, the developer will bear the potential legal and liability costs.

**Morris Brown**  
Menlo Park Tomorrow  
Stone Pine Lane, Menlo Park

**A superior slate at candidates' forum**

*Editor:*

I have never been involved in city politics until now, and I will be voting for the first time in a City Council election. I attended the recent candidates' forum and concluded that the three allies (Lee Duboc, Mickie Winkler and John Boyle) were the superior candidates.

The three had facts, dates, statistics, all manner of important information ready to go for each question. They were eloquent, concise, and direct in their logic. The three non-allied candidates (Vincent Bressler, Richard Cline, Heyward Robinson) seemed confused and unprepared.

Richard Cline stated that cops should write more speeding tickets to raise money for the city despite the fact everyone knows money from speeding tickets goes to the county, not the city of Menlo Park. The non-allied candidates only gave vague statements on the bad conditions of our city, yet the three allies point to facts about our potential future such as the Derry project and possibly building playing fields at Bayfront Park.

The non-allied candidates did nothing but oppose them. The allies can agree, the non-allies can only disagree. I believe we should vote for people who can say yes, and agree as a group on a plan. We should not vote for a bunch of nay-sayers who do not present new ideas or accurate information.

**Spencer Little**  
Oakhurst Place, Menlo Park

**Who is to blame for downtown blight?**

*Editor:*

I was disappointed in Mickie Winkler's Sept. 12 e-mail to her constituents which appeared to be little more than an effort to cover her track record.

Ms. Winkler asks us to resist signing any petitions that may support rescinding the recently

approved Derry project on Oak Grove Avenue. I have no quibble with the Derry project. It is Ms. Winkler's complaint about "blight" and "vacant eyesores" on El Camino Real that seems so hypocritical.

She overlooks the fact that the root causes of the blight we currently enjoy on El Camino sits squarely within her legacy. She proudly associates herself with a slate of politically aligned council members who have watched the world go by.

And now that the vacant eyesores happened on their watch, they are particularly desperate to accept anything to make it seem as though they are turning it around. An eleventh-hour development project coupled with the touting of new stucco on McDonald's and chairs inside Peet's do not a growth plan make.

How is it, thanks to Ms. Winkler's service and that of her politically aligned council members, we now have:

■ A \$2 million structural deficit in their city government?

■ City sales tax revenues that are down 50 percent but up overall statewide?

■ A permanent loss of huge sales-tax-producing sites, our car dealerships?

This does not appear to be the work of a council that understands nor can keep promises for healthy growth in Menlo Park.

**John Nash**  
Stanford Avenue, Menlo Park

**Playing fields too costly for Menlo Park**

*Editor:*

I cannot support the \$17 million

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(at least) playing field proposal to take away Menlo Park's only open parkland at Bayfront Park, not to mention the maintenance costs for the projects proposed for it.

And all that money would be spent on construction on an old landfill, built before present protections against toxic methane gas from hazardous waste were formulated. Among the other drawbacks: management of squirrels and Canada geese, destruction of wildlife habitat, lack of concrete planning with regard to costs, revenue resources and oversight.

I am going to vote no on Measure J.

**Barbara Seaney**  
Sharon Oaks Drive, Menlo Park

**Not a fan of BevMo store downtown**

*Editor:*

The thought that Menlo Park's downtown will be degraded if the Planning Commission grants a use

permit to BevMo, a liquor store chain, for a Santa Cruz Avenue location is alarming.

Now is the time for the residents of this community to come forward and tell our city that we don't want to see this type of business occupying the location of the former Dal Baffo restaurant.

A large variety of businesses in Menlo Park have expressed their strong objections at having a liquor store as their neighbor. The merchants want to see Santa Cruz Avenue retain its uniqueness and provide an attractive assortment of businesses that will complement the existing atmosphere of the main street. A liquor store will have a negative effect on our welfare and on the core of our city.

We need to urge the Planning Commission to deny this use, and we need to attend the commission's hearing and speak out against it.

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San Mateo County to publish public notices of a

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## Additional, unexpected impacts of Derry decision

As if there isn't enough controversy surrounding the City Council's approval of the 135-residential-unit Derry project in downtown Menlo Park, another wrinkle surfaced last week that indicates the Aug. 29 approval also affects the adjoining property, the former home of the Cadillac dealership.

The concern is that only the Derry project was specifically mentioned in the public notices published prior to the Aug. 29 meeting, even though significant changes were made that eased restrictions on the Cadillac site at 1300 El Camino Real, at the corner of Glenwood Avenue. It's a serious concern not only of those who support a referendum opposing the high-density Derry development, but of open-government watchdogs as well.

Together the two projects would add 269 residences and more than 100,000 square feet of commercial space in the area between Glenwood and Oak Grove avenues and El Camino Real and the Caltrain tracks. Just one of the two would constitute the largest project and rezoning changes in downtown Menlo Park in years, pushing housing density from 18 to 40 units an acre.

The rezoning decision was passed 4-1 by a council that was largely happy with the Derry project, which met its goals to build housing adjacent to Caltrain downtown. But along with the Derry approval, the council approved new zoning language for the entire area, and it is this change that critics say was not advertised in the legal notices published prior to the meeting.

The 1300 El Camino site wasn't technically rezoned, according to the city, but the general plan was amended to make way for high-density housing at the property.

The decision is important for several reasons, not the least

of which is that it takes away potential negotiating power that a future council could have used to gain concessions from the developer at 1300 El Camino. This bargaining power could be a quid pro quo for more parking or other amenities, such as higher park in-lieu fees, or even playing fields. The developer will not have to seek a general plan amendment and other changes that

are often traded in negotiations for items that benefit the public.

Given the questions that have come up, especially about the failure to specifically include the 1300 El Camino site in public notices, we believe the city's best course would be to rescind the general plan amendment, and then file proper public notices before deciding the matter again. Otherwise, there will be a cloud over the decision, and the politically charged referendum vote could gain even more stature.

The Derry project will not be the end of Menlo Park as we know it, as referendum supporters would have us believe. It is well-designed and will add a much-needed boost

to the downtown area. By the same token, the City Council could have been much more aggressive in seeking public-benefit concessions from the developers.

And that is why we should not allow the Derry project decision to be the blueprint for 1300 El Camino. That project should have to start from scratch, and we would hope that whoever is on the council when it comes up for approval will drive a much harder bargain than the present council did on the Derry project.

The plan should have been properly noticed, especially given the magnitude of the changes. Now the city should take whatever legal steps are necessary, including rescinding the change, to preserve its options going forward.

**EDITORIAL**

*The opinion of The Almanac*



Menlo Park Historical Association

### Our Regional Heritage

The Menlo Park Hotel, built in 1868, was located near the railroad tracks north of Oak Grove Avenue and owned by Martin and Diedrich Kuck, natives of Germany. The brothers maintained a grocery store on the ground floor, with hotel rooms above.

**WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?**

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

**EMAIL** your views to [letters@AlmanacNews.com](mailto:letters@AlmanacNews.com). Indicate if it is a letter to be published.

**FAX** to Editor at 854-0677.

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

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

## LETTERS

Our readers write

**Release secret  
Atherton investigation**

Editor:

Atherton is a wonderful town, filled with caring and thoughtful residents. It saddens us to hear that a small group has targeted council members for recall.

Until all of the facts about departmental practices — which are under scrutiny in current investigations — become known, citizens of our town have nothing to go on but generalities about the conduct of city business and the oversight by our City Council.

We urge Marc Hynes, Atherton city attorney, to make public the results of the original investigation of the building department. His argument that the document may not be released for personnel reasons doesn't ring true; every day classified documents are released once they've been redacted (confidential information marked out in black).

Town council members are unpaid volunteers, who spend countless hours and many late nights and weekends trying to make the best decisions with the information they have. It's a grueling, and often times frustrating volunteer assignment.

Kathy McKeithen is the very model of what a municipal council person should be. She can be counted on to have thoroughly investigated the issues and she's not afraid of changing the status quo for the betterment of the town residents.

Improving the town's overall operational and process effectiveness, with checks, balances, and equitability is Kathy's objective. Her view and voting record on issues is shared by most of the rest of the council. With most votes 5-0, why is she being singled out?

**Longtime coach will vote no on fields**

By James R. Madison

No one in Menlo Park has agitated longer for more soccer fields than I, both as an AYSO coach and also as a CYSA coach. Field limitations have restricted play ever since I began coaching U-16s 30 years ago.

Residents may, therefore, wonder why I oppose Measure J for development of fields at Bayfront Park. Folks should know that my opposition is not based on preserving the park as parkland. As a soccer person, I would sacrifice 10 percent of the acreage in a heartbeat if I thought it was feasible to construct fields there.

My opposition is based instead on my training in civil engineering and my fiscal conservatism. The cost estimate of \$17 million for Bayfront Park fields is fantasy, even in 2006 dollars. The cost by the time any fields were built is likely to be twice as much.

In current dollars, the proposed turf fields alone would cost about \$500,000 per acre. Imagine the additional cost of excavating the existing cap and the necessary underlying refuse and disposing of it; redoing the methane collection system; installing a system to prevent leachate from reaching the Bay; obtaining earth for, laying down, compacting and grading a new cap adequate to support the proposed fields without subsidence; and constructing the

appurtenant facilities.

Alternates are available, at least for soccer, for a minor fraction of the Bayfront cost.

Local AYSO and CYSA leaders both signed off on a design for renovating Burgess Park that included a full-size soccer field. Unfortunately, the city and its consultant (who, incidentally is also the city's current sports field consultant) deviated from the approved design by carving a segment out of the northeast corner for landscaping and a few parking spaces. This error could be corrected for \$200,000 or less with the result we would have a full-size field at Burgess.

Similarly, all that Kelly Park needs to accommodate a full-sized field is some regrading, together with the elimination of 10 or fewer parking spaces and the removal of two picnic tables and three trees, another modest construction project.

Add on the cost of installing artificial turf, if you want, and even lights if they would be tolerated, and we are still talking far less than the cost of a single field at Bayfront.

Former City Council member Chuck Kinney proposed acquiring land at St. Patrick's for an emergency water reservoir and building a soccer field on top. Some of the cost would have been borne by reservoir funds, which would have resulted in minimizing the cost of a field.

If St. Raymond's, St. Joseph's and Sacred Heart were to see their way clear to give a little back to the community by sharing their fields, four or five more full-sized fields would be available.

What's more, while full-sized fields are needed for teenage and adult play, we should not lose sight of the pressing need for cut-down fields to accommodate the majority of our players, who are younger and play on teams of fewer than 11 each.

Spending a disproportionate share of our Measure T bond money on Bayfront Park would preclude the much-needed renovation of various school sites, such as Encinal, Hillview, Las Lomitas and La Entrada, on which our younger players depend. Renovation of Encinal might even yield another full-size field, and the Terminal Avenue site would also be suitable for fields for younger players, as would the former Hoover School that is currently leased out for the German School.

It is no answer to say that La Entrada is not part of the Menlo Park City School District and that Las Lomitas is not even within Menlo Park. Joint powers authorities could deal with that issue.

In short, my view is that we should remember our priorities and spend our limited funds prudently.

*James R. Madison lives on Holly Avenue in Menlo Park*



GUEST OPINION

**Candidates' stands  
on playing fields**

Editor:

During discussion of the playing field shortage in Menlo Park at the Sept. 11 candidate forum, it was reported that the candidates were split on the solution.

This is misleading. Candidates Rich Cline and Heyward Robinson didn't offer any solution. Candidates Lee Duboc, Mickie Winkler and John Boyle said they would be guided by the Measure J

vote for getting cost numbers for fields on a small (10 percent) portion of Bayfront Park. Candidate Bressler was unclear as to whether there was a problem.

**Dave Gildea  
Hermosa Way, Menlo Park**

**Elder care neighbor  
lends support**

Editor:

In regard to the Sept. 18 article "New elderly care home in Sharon Heights upsets neighbors":

It has been my experience as a neighbor for the past 14 years of the home at 1239 Middle Ave. in Menlo Park that Ms. Samporn and the other residents are excellent neighbors. In fact, when earlier this year I needed to find the best home for my elderly mother, it was the home at 1239 Middle.

I have seen this home on Middle from the outside for 14 years and it looks the same as any other well-kept single family residence

See **LETTERS**, page 24

**Derry project's last-minute changes deserve referendum**

By Gail Slocum

In discussing the Derry project referendum, the Almanac's Sept. 20 editorial asked: "Where were the opponents during the two-year review process on these plans?"

The answer is twofold: First, some citizens did raise concerns to the Menlo Park City Council about more than doubling allowable residential density (40 units per acre, where current zoning allows 18.5 per acre) through spot zoning for this site, without any overall plan for the whole El Camino corridor.

But the second, more important answer is: Because the public was "sandbagged."

Many of us see a place for fairly dense mixed-use projects near transit hubs like the train station — if the council gets significant public benefits in exchange for any project-specific giveaways to those who will

profit mightily. Here, the developer gained an estimated \$35 million in land value from the density/intensity bonus and the city's abandonment of a three-quarter-acre of public right of way.

The council compiled a long list of potential public benefits to compensate the community in exchange for this increased density and right of way gift. And a task force led by council members Andy Cohen and Lee Duboc recommended a 1 percent to 2 percent formula to get up to \$740,000 for public benefits. That lulled observers into believing the city would negotiate something meaningful.

But the council majority caved in during the final meeting and got nothing from their long list: No additional parking; no additional traffic, shuttle, storm drain, or road improvements; no "very low"

GUEST OPINION

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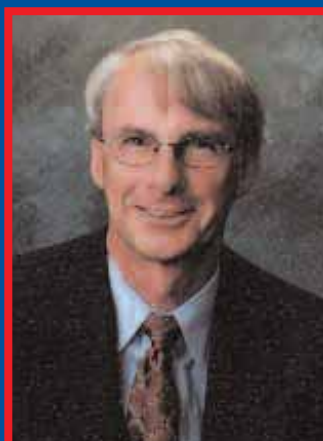


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