

FOOTBALL: Woodside, M-A and Menlo School
all host CCS playoff games Saturday. Page 5

The Almanac

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

NOVEMBER 15, 2006

www.AlmanacNews.com

VOL. 42 NO. 11

WHAT'S NEXT?

**Can this council
heal a divided
Menlo Park?
Page 14**



REDEFINING QUALITY SINCE 1990

Reading between the emotional line makes the difference between finding a house and a home.



WOODSIDE

Fantastic 1.23+/- level acre at end of cul-de-sac in central Woodside. Old ranch-style home on property. Can build 4000+/-sf home with 440+/-sf garage and 1500+/-sf guest house. (Verify with Town of Woodside) Wonderful property with Woodside schools.

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Retreat to this classic Cape Cod style home - a wonderful infusion of home, garden and downtown living. The thoughtfully planned 4bd/3.5ba floor plan emphasizes space, style and comfort. Completely remodeled in 2002, the living room and dining area are elegantly rendered, while the granite finished kitchen offers a sophisticated extension to the entertaining venue.

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MENLO PARK

This charming 3bd/1ba home has been recently remodeled and has a spacious 1 bedroom, 1 bath guest cottage. Beautifully landscaped yard, hardwood floors throughout and convenient location.

\$1,160,000



Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

FIRST SHOT



The Almanac/Marjan Sadoughi

It's a bird ... no it's a Turkey Trot

Ormondale second-grader Avery Giles, left, takes flight with schoolmates Hayden MacArthur, right, Lauren Morganthaler, back left, and Emily Chargin, practicing on Ormondale field for the Portola Valley school's second annual "Turkey Trot" this Saturday, Nov. 18. For more information, see story on **Page 19**.

Election 2006

■ Local stories start on **Page 8**. Menlo Park elections start on **Page 14**.

Menlo Park

■ Referendum campaign collects enough valid signatures; City Council to address issues this week. **Page 5**

Portola Valley

■ Town settles property tax dispute with San Mateo County. **Page 11**
 ■ New post office not in the cards for Portola Valley. **Page 11**

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Sports

■ Three local football teams host CCS playoffs Saturday. **Page 5**

Schools

■ Las Lomas school board may act on parcel tax measure this week. **Page 17**

Family Almanac

■ Water polo's "Renaissance man": Menlo School coach Jack Bowen is also an author and musician. **Cover, Section 2**

On the cover

The new Menlo Park City Council will take office Dec. 5. Current council members Andy Cohen (far left) and Kelly Fergusson will be joined by new councilmen (from left) Richard Cline, John Boyle and Heyward Robinson. Photo by Marjan Sadoughi. Story begins on **Page 14**.

CALLING ON THE ALMANAC

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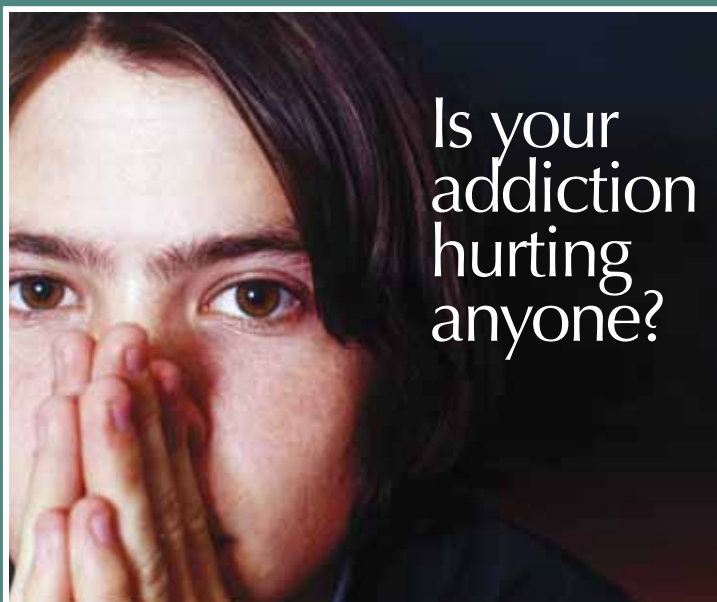
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Cranberry Sensations

Cranberries are at peak season, and their versatility and vibrancy make a great addition to sauces, salads, and baked goods. One of only three commercially grown fruits native to North America (the other two are blueberries and concord grapes), cranberries are cultivated primarily in Massachusetts, Wisconsin, New Jersey, Oregon and Washington. Cranberries are too tart to eat raw, so they need to be processed into a sauce for pie and tart fillings or a relish for a roasted dinner. Cranberry drinks have exploded in popularity because of the great taste and health benefits. And dried cranberries are a delicious snack eaten alone or as a topping for salads. Dried cranberries are a perfect addition to baked goods as well.

At ROBERTS MARKET we carry some of the freshest and most delectable produce: including fantastic fruits and vegetables. We guarantee you will find great food when you visit us. We have great cranberries that you can take advantage of. This is the perfect time of the season to do so. You can also find prepared foods such as home-made hot soups, sandwiches, salads, and gourmet food stuffs. Our deli department has an expansive display. Don't forget fresh cut flowers from our floral department to grace your table.

Hint: Make a spinach salad with dried cranberries, pecans, and feta cheese.

GROCERY

BREYER'S ALL NATURAL ICE CREAM **\$3.29**
56 oz.

NANCY'S PETITE QUICHE **\$2.99**
12 count

CARR'S BITE SIZE WATER CRACKERS **\$1.99**
4 oz. - Also Whole Wheat - Rosemary - Peppered - Croissant

FLORIDA'S NATURAL HOMESTYLE ORANGE JUICE **\$2.69**
64 oz. - Also Plus Calcium

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1 lb. box - Also Brown - Dark Brown

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40 count - Also All Occasion

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Roberts Market Thanksgiving Menu 2006

*Orders must be placed by Sunday, November 19th
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Free-Range Diestel Ranch Turkeys

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Starters & Sides

PUMPKIN SQUASH SOUP
Savory with a hint of
curry and cream **\$8.50 per qt.**

STUFFED BAKED BRIE
With your choice of caramel apple,
or cranberry chutney **\$14.50 each**

GREEN BEAN ALMANDINE
With caramelized shallots and butter
\$5.50 per pint. \$11.00 per qt.

SWEET POTATO PUREE
Seasoned with nutmeg & cinnamon and
candied walnuts and maple syrup
\$5.75 per pint. \$11.25 per qt.

ROASTED BUTTERNUT SQUASH
With sage butter and brown sugar
\$5.75 per pint. \$11.25 per qt.

WHIPPED POTATOES
Traditional potatoes with butter & cream
\$5.00 per pint. \$10.00 per qt.

Freshmade Cranberry Sauce
Delicious with a hint of orange
\$4.50 per pint. \$9.00 per qt.

Dressings & Gravy

TRADITIONAL STUFFING ~
With mushrooms, celery, onions, & water chestnuts
\$5.00 per pint. \$10.00 per qt.

CORNBREAD SAUSAGE STUFFING ~
With dried cranberries and apricots
\$5.00 per pint. \$10.00 per qt.

PORCINI MUSHROOM GRAVY ~
Rich and creamy
\$5.50 per pint. \$11.00 per qt.

ONION SAGE GRAVY ~ Red wine,
caramelized onion & sage flavor this rich gravy
\$5.50 per pint. \$11.00 per qt.

Desserts

UPPER CRUST BAKERY ~
8" Pies, serve 6 to 8 **\$14.99**
Apple, Apple Streusel, Berry Supreme, Pumpkin,
Pumpkin Amaretto, Cranapple, & Pecan

RUBICON BAKERY ~
8" Tarts, serves 6 **\$14.99**
Apple Almond, Apple Cranberry, Caramel Nut,
& Lemon

6" Cakes, serves 6 **\$14.99**
Pumpkin Cheesecake, Chocolate Cake,
Chocolate Turtle, & Carrot Spice Cake

WINE

TURKEY WINES

Roasted meats, including turkey, really go best with red wine. And, considering the diverse flavors and textures on the traditional Thanksgiving table, the wine should not be too tannic, nor lean. Here then are a few wines we believe offer exceptional quality, value and food-pairing flexibility.

2005 Louis Jadot Beaujolais -Villages Reg. \$9.99 — Sale **\$8.99**
A classic from a great vintage.

2005 Cantina del Pino Dolcetto d'Alba Reg. \$13.49 — Sale **\$11.99**
Soft, juicy cherry fruit and smoky tannins.

2005 Palmina Barbera, Santa Barbara County Reg. \$19.99 — Sale **\$17.99**
Bright, juicy, vivid fruits with low tannin and refreshing acids.

2003 Coyote Canyon "Big Pond," Pinot Noir, Santa Lucia Highlands Sale **\$19.99**
A silky, elegant, smooth Pinot. Perfect for turkey.

2005 Rusack Pinot Noir, Santa Barbara County Reg. \$23.99 — Sale **\$21.99**
Great Pinot and a great value. The best of California and France in one bottle.

— Beaujolais Nouveau Arrives Thursday 11/16! —

MEAT/POULTRY

Thanksgiving Specials

Distel
BONELESS TURKEY BREAST **\$5.98 lb.**

Distel
TURKEY BREAST **\$4.98 lb.**

Distel
TURKEY **\$2.00 lb.**

Curando
SPIRAL HAM **\$3.98 lb.**





Waltzing back into the finals

Atherton's Cheryl Burke has once again rhumba'd, tangoed and shimmied her way into the finals of ABC's show, "Dancing with the Stars." Last season, Ms. Burke, a professional ballroom dancer, won first place with her celebrity partner Drew Lachey. Now, she's up for the top spot again, this time with NFL great Emmitt Smith. The big finale airs Tuesday night, Nov. 14, at 8 p.m.

Man bites dog

Stop the presses! Someone in Woodside has good things to say about getting permits to build a new house.

Kip Prahl delighted the Woodside Town Council when he stood up at a recent meeting and praised the process.

"When I initially told a friend that I was building in Woodside, he told me to batten down the hatches," Mr. Prahl told the Almanac. "I was prepared for some dustups."

Instead, he said the staff is friendly, town rules are clear, and even his contractor is happy.

"We've had problems, we've acknowledged them, and we've worked really hard to resolve them," said Mayor Deborah Gordon. "It's great to get feedback that it's working."

Mr. Prahl promised that, if things go south, he would be sure to give them an earful.

Somebody has to do it

With a 2013 deadline, uh, looming for local police to match their radio equipment to new frequency assignments from the Federal Communications Commission, a San Mateo County civil grand jury is on the job.

In a recent report, the grand jury found potential problems lurking in the county's 21 jurisdictions. The county recently upgraded its system, but performance has not been stellar.

Every city should ensure that their systems "will comply with FCC regulations" and match or exceed the current performance, the report said.

To the county grand jury, "mole hills and mountains have the same altitude," said Portola Valley Councilman Ed Davis in a recent council discussion. "This is really an abysmal mole hill."

Local News

MENLO PARK | ATHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Enough signatures on Derry referendum petition; challenge may derail effort

■ Menlo council to address referendum questions Nov. 14, possibly in closed session.

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor

Signatures on petitions calling for a public vote on the City Council-approved Derry condominium-commercial project on El Camino Real in Menlo Park are valid and suf-

ficient in number, the city clerk announced last week, leading the way for the council to take up the issue at its Nov. 14 meeting.

But the task of the council will not be as uncomplicated as once thought: The Derry project developer, the O'Brien Group,

has raised legal questions over the legitimacy of the petitions, and before addressing any other aspect of the referendum drive, the council may review those questions — and City Attorney Bill McClure's analysis — in a closed session at the meeting.

Check AlmanacNews.com for a news update.

Although O'Brien Group spokesman Jim Pollart said his

firm hasn't yet filed a formal challenge to the referendum signature drive, Mr. McClure and City Clerk Silvia Vonderlinden are recommending that the council address the developer's questions before moving on to the next step of the process.

That step could be to rescind council actions in September

See **DERRY**, page 12



Norbert von der Groeben/Palo Alto Weekly

Woodside's Spencer Sarver muscled through Menlo-Atherton defenders in the Wildcats' Saturday shellacking of the Bears, 42-20, at M-A.

Football: Woodside, M-A, Menlo get CCS football berths

■ Teams will host first-round playoff games Saturday.

With visiting Woodside's 42-20 defeat of Menlo-Atherton in high school football Saturday, the teams finished tied for second place in the Peninsula Athletic League Bay Division, earning automatic berths into the Central Coast Section playoffs.

The two teams, plus Menlo School, will

host first-round playoff games this weekend.

Woodside (7-3) received a No. 2 seed in the CCS Large School Division and will host Milpitas (6-4) at 7 p.m. Saturday.

M-A (8-2) received a No. 3 seed in the Large School Division and will host No. 6 Santa Teresa (8-2) at 1 p.m. Saturday.

Menlo (9-1), which shared the PAL Ocean Division crown with Mills this season, picked up the No. 2 seed in the

Small School Division. The Knights will open the postseason on Saturday at home against No. 7 Willow Glen at 1 p.m.

Meanwhile, Aragon (8-2) has won its fifth straight PAL Bay Division crown, and will meet Palo Alto (9-1) at 7 p.m. Friday in an Open School Division playoff game.

Should it advance, Menlo-Atherton

See **FOOTBALL**, page 12



What Every Parent Needs to Know About Eating Disorders

If Your Child:

- * Severely limits or refuses food
- * Fears gaining weight
- * Is underweight
- * Denies seriousness of low weight
- * Exercises excessively
- * Engages in binge eating and/or purging
- * Uses diet pills, laxatives or other medications to assist with weight control
- * Is significantly overweight
- * Has feelings of depression, despair, loss of control or social isolation

Lucile Packard Children's Hospital is here to help. With two decades of experience, the eating disorders program at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital is the only comprehensive program in Northern California offering both inpatient and outpatient treatment for anorexia, bulimia and other eating problems. It's also the only one with a dedicated space designed particularly for the adolescents it serves.

Visit www.lpch.org or call (650) 498-4468 to obtain more information on these services provided by Packard Children's



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Friends wish Bill Walsh well

■ 49er legend and Woodside resident battles leukemia.

Friends and well-wishers of Hall of Fame football coach Bill Walsh have reportedly been beating a path to his Woodside home in recent weeks.

Mr. Walsh, 74, revealed publicly on Friday, Nov. 10, that he is battling leukemia.

He called sports writers Ira Miller and Lowell Cohn

to quell rumors about his health. Mr. Miller reported that Mr. Walsh has been suffering from leukemia, a cancer of the white blood cells, for about two years, and that he is "cautiously optimistic" about his prognosis.

The creator of the West



David Gonzales
Bill Walsh

Coast Offense, Mr. Walsh led the San Francisco 49ers to three Super Bowl victories in the 1980s and has a long association with both the 49ers and the Stanford Cardinal. He stepped down from his post as Stanford's interim athletic director in July.

Mr. Walsh told Mr. Miller he is planning to attend the 49ers' retirement ceremony for wide-receiver Jerry Rice, an Atherton resident, at Monster Park on Nov. 19.

MP hires community services director

After nearly a year under an interim director, the recreational and cultural programs in Menlo Park have a new director.

Barbara Santos George, 56, a former community services supervisor for the city of San Jose, will take the top job in Menlo Park's Community Services Department on Nov. 27 at a salary of \$133,500, said City Manager David Boesch.

Ms. George will oversee a \$6.3 million budget, a 55-person staff of full-time and permanent part-time employees, up to 130 seasonal and part-time staff members, and services that include child care programs, social services, and recreation and sports programs for youth, adults and seniors, Mr. Boesch said.

She replaces interim director Michael Taylor, who stepped in when Curtis Brown left at the end of last year to take a job with the city of San



Barbara Santos George is a former community services supervisor for the city of San Jose.

Bernardino in Southern California.

During 28 years at the city of San Jose, Ms. George worked first in the recreation department and then in the city's office of aging.

She is studying for a master's degree in public administration at the University of San Francisco, she said. Her bachelor's degree is in child development and family relationships from San Jose State University.

The city found Ms. George through a national search that netted about 70 applications, half of whom were from outside the state, Mr. Boesch said.

Ms. George, he said, "is energetic, with an unmatched level of experience, commitment and enthusiasm."

She lives in San Jose with her husband, John, a sales manager for IBM.

Connie Lurie, Christine Curry honored

Atherton residents Connie Lurie and Christine Curry are being honored for their contributions to San Jose State University and Family & Children Services.

Connie Lurie

Ms. Lurie is the recipient of the 2006 Tower Award from the San Jose State University Tower Foundation, the university's highest honor.

Ms. Lurie's projects include funding a permanent endowment for the university's author-in-residence program, which brings nationally known authors to campus for up to two semesters.

She also helped established the Connect, Motivate and Educate Society, which assists university students who were once foster children. She also organized Spartans in the Desert, an annual alumni event in Palm Springs.

Ms. Lurie graduated from San Jose State University in 1964 with a bachelor's degree in elementary education and



Atherton residents Connie Lurie, left, and Christine Curry.

psychology. A former school teacher, she is married to Robert Lurie, president and chairman of the San Francisco real estate development firm, Lurie Co., and a former owner of the San Francisco Giants.

Christine Curry

Ms. Curry will receive a Distinguished Volunteer Fundraiser Award for her leadership in furthering the mission of Family & Children Services. The Silicon Valley Chapter of the Association of Fundraising Professionals has selected 27 recipients of the award.

Ms. Curry will be honored at the 19th annual Philanthropy



Day awards celebration luncheon on Friday, Nov. 17, at the Fairmont Hotel in San Jose.

The current chair of the board of directors of Family & Children Services, Ms. Curry was invited to join the board in 2003. Assuming a leadership role in marketing and fundraising, she developed new programs for donor cultivation.

Since 1999, she has been involved with the organization that aims to build strong, safe and self-sufficient individuals, families and communities.

Tickets for the luncheon are \$70 per person or \$700 for a table of 10. For reservations, contact the chapter office at (408) 744-0412 or dawn@afpsv.org.

Post news and views on



www.AlmanacNews.com

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



New Seismic Maps

Q: I have been reviewing disclosures on a property in Palo Alto and there is no mention of the recently published seismic map revisions. Is this information readily available?

A: Yes, and the information should be part of the property disclosures. On October 18, 2006, the California Geologic Survey (part of the Department of Conservation) released the Official Seismic Hazard Zone Maps of Palo Alto, Mt. Sizer (in Henry Coe State Park) and revised Mountain View quadrangles. The maps can be viewed and downloaded by going to www.conservation.ca.gov.

There are new areas of liquefaction noted in both Menlo Park and Palo Alto.

The CGS website is careful to note that the maps may not be inclusive of all liquefaction zones and is based only on available information of varying reliability. The maps are meant to assist cities and counties in fulfilling their responsibilities for protecting the public safety from the effects of earthquake-triggered ground failure as required by the Seismic Hazards Mapping Act.

This information should now be included in the Natural Hazards Disclosure information that is part of each real estate transaction. If the information is not provided, your agent should obtain it from the company providing the information, such as JCP, Property I.D., and others.

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



Meet
Jan.

Jan Fong is a Deposit Relationship Manager at Borel Private Bank. With over 16 years in the industry, she knows banking and she knows her clients. A lover of the outdoors, Jan can be found hiking the trails of the local foothills. You can reach her directly at 650.917.4624 or janf@borel.com.

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San Mateo County would have elected Angelides

■ Also, the cigarette and oil tax would have passed.

If San Mateo County voters had their way, Phil Angelides would be the next governor of California, and there would be hefty new taxes on cigarettes and oil extraction.

Contrary to Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger's statewide sweep, county voters favored Phil Angelides by 392 votes, according to election figures as of Nov. 13. The count was 79,740 for Mr. Angelides and 79,348 for Gov. Schwarzenegger. That's a 0.2 percent difference. They also favored Propositions 86 and 87, which flamed out statewide.

Gov. Schwarzenegger may still retake San Mateo County, when the tallies from absentee ballots and provisional votes still being counted are completed. But in most state and national races, county voters participated in the overall Democratic sweep.

The election went smoothly in most precincts, as the county road-tested new eSlate voting machines, one or two at each precinct, but used mostly new paper ballots. The count, however, trickled in much more slowly than in previous years because of the paper ballots. The election night tally from all precincts wasn't reported until after 3:30 a.m.

Late results will be posted Thursday, Nov. 16, at 3 p.m.

and Tuesday, Nov. 21, at 3 p.m. on the county's election Web site shapethefuture.org. Official election results will be certified and presented to the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday, Dec. 5.

When all the votes are counted, Elections Manager David Tom expects turnout to be somewhat over 50 percent, about average for an off-year election. He also said he expects that more than half the votes will be absentee — a first for the county.

Eshoo in majority

With the Democratic sweep, local Congresswoman Anna Eshoo will be in the majority for the first time in 12 years. She was easily elected to an eighth term in the heavily Democratic 14th Congressional District with 71 percent of the votes.

Besides gaining clout as a Democrat, Rep. Eshoo may also become chair of a Congressional subcommittee, a member of her Washington staff suggested. She serves on the House Energy and Commerce Committee and on its Intelligence Committee.

State offices

Assemblyman Ira Ruskin swept easily to victory in the 21st District despite an energetic challenge from Republican volunteer and

■ ELECTION 2006

For Menlo Park election stories, see Page 14

Governor San Mateo County results		
Phil Angelides (Dem)	79,740	47.39%
Arnold Schwarzenegger (Rep)	79,348	47.16%

Data as of Nov. 13, 2006

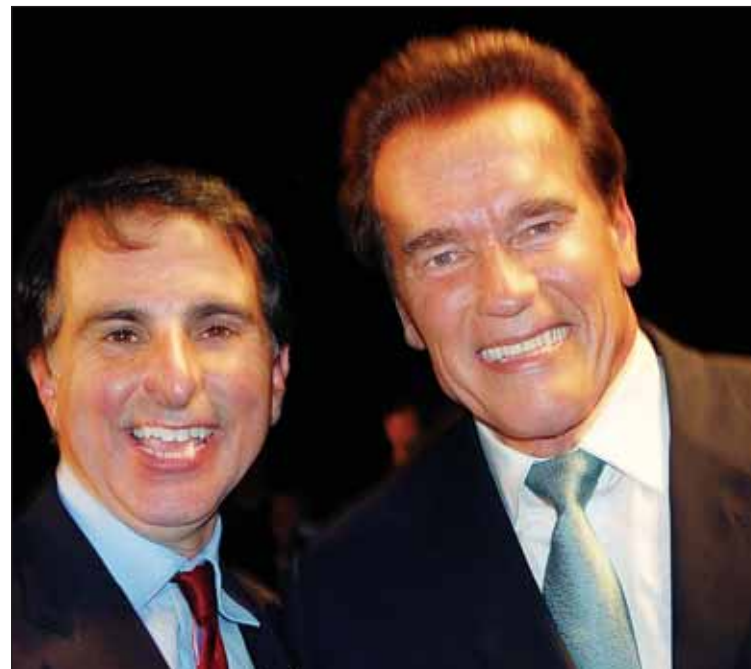
businesswoman Virginia Chang Kiraly of Menlo Park. Mr. Ruskin received 67 percent of the votes.

San Mateo County voters joined voters across California in electing a single Republican to statewide office. Steve Poizner, who lost to Mr. Ruskin in a bruising campaign for the Assembly two years ago, won the race for insurance commissioner.

Ballot measures

San Mateo County stands to benefit substantially from the \$42 billion in bonds approved by California voters in five separate bond issues.

Most visible locally are likely to be projects stemming from Proposition 1B, the \$20 billion bond issue to improve transportation infrastructure including freeways and transit. Housing



Atherton Mayor Charles Marsala with Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger on election night in Los Angeles. Gov. Schwarzenegger's re-election was one of the few bright spots for Republicans in an election dominated by Democrats. Mr. Marsala said the governor named him to his Statewide Bipartisan Leadership Team.

advocates also welcome passage of Proposition 1C, which will provide money toward new housing for working people and shelter for people in crisis.

Proposition 84 could also funnel funds for park, water and environmental projects in the Peninsula. It received 60 percent of the county vote, but only 54

percent statewide.

San Mateo County also rejected Proposition 90, the measure that would have required compensation to property owners for economic losses due to government regulations. It was rejected by 60 percent of county voters, and only 52.5 percent of state voters.

Yee first Chinese-American state senator in California

Assemblyman Leland Yee will become the new state senator representing the district that includes Portola Valley and Woodside. He is to be sworn in December 4 in Sacramento.

Mr. Yee, a Democrat, won with an overwhelming 77 percent of the vote. He takes over the seat vacated by Jackie Speier, who was forced out of office by term limits.

He said he will become the first Chinese-American California state senator, and the first Asian-American elected to the state Senate's in 40 years.

"I am honored by the results of this election and I am proud that together we were able to

make history," said Mr. Yee.

Sen. Speier, D-Hillsborough, said she plans to spend three months being a stay-at-home mom to her 12-year-old daughter. At a community meeting in Portola Valley last month, she said she does plan to run for elected office again.

In the meantime, she is set to go on tour to promote a new book she co-authored, "This is Not the Life I Ordered: 50 Ways to Keep Your Head Above Water When Life Keeps Dragging You Down."



Leland Yee

Smooth transition for MP school board

■ Laura Rich, Jeff Child, Deborah Fitz win.

By Marjorie Mader

Almanac Staff Writer

Incumbent Laura Rich, along with Jeff Child and Deborah Fitz -- the three candidates who filed first for the Menlo Park City School District board and shared a Web site -- won the three open seats on the five-member school board Nov. 7.

Ms. Rich, currently president of the school board, won re-election to a third, four-year term, and led with the most votes -- 4,637. Next came Jeff Child, a financial manager and treasurer of the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation, with 4,416. Deborah Fitz, co-chair of a \$91-million bond measure campaign that voters approved in June, garnered 4,040 votes.

The fourth candidate, Noria Zasslow, listed second on the ballot as mother-translator, received 1,692 votes, despite the fact that she didn't campaign, participate in interviews or attend school board meetings and candidates' nights.

The three winners will begin their four-year terms officially on noon Dec. 1. Their first board meeting probably will be held during the first week in December, possibly Wednesday, Dec. 6, pending a decision by the current board at its regular meeting on Wednesday, Nov. 15.

The two new trustees will take over from trustees Nancy Serrurier and Carol Orton, who did not seek re-election.

The board's transition is expected to be a smooth one because both Mr. Child and Ms. Fitz have been actively involved in district activities. They have attended board meetings regularly and are "up to speed" on the challenging issues facing the district as it launches its bond-funded program to expand and upgrade schools to accommo-

date a growing enrollment.

The three winning candidates did not file a campaign financial report, said Ms. Rich. "We have asked so much of the community recently for the schools that we decided not to ask for any campaign donations."

She put up the candidates' joint campaign Web site. The campaign included printing 100 fliers at Kinko's, talking with community members at neighborhood coffees, and buying an in the Almanac. ■

MP school board

(3 seats, 4-year terms)

✓ Laura Rich	4,637
✓ Jeff Child	4,416
✓ Deborah Fitz	4,040
Noria Zasslow	1,692

✓ = winner

Menlo Park fire district measure passes

Measure O, allowing the Menlo Park Fire Protection District to maintain its \$25 million appropriations limit, passed overwhelming in last week's election.

With all precinct votes and many absentee ballots counted as of 3 p.m. Nov. 10, yes votes totaled 12,646 (78.7 percent); and no votes, 3,432 (21.3 percent).

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Calico

Measure A defeated, but parks still need help

By Marion Softky
Almanac Staff Writer

Fifteen years of efforts to get a reliable source of funding for parks in San Mateo County are not going to go away just because Measure A didn't get two-thirds of county votes in a complex election.

"We're definitely not giving up," said Julia Bott, executive director of the San Mateo County Parks and Recreation Foundation, who led the campaign for the 1/8th cent sales tax to support parks in San Mateo County and its cities. "We're looking at the next step."

Measure A garnered almost 55 percent of the vote -- far short of the two-thirds needed to pass.

The vote then was 82,215 yes to 68,174 no.

The defeat was frustrating after an intense campaign when park supporters knocked on doors, made phone calls, and handed out 10,000 fliers at community fairs. "We were told we needed \$500,000; we got \$250,000," Ms. Bott said. "The ballot was just so long and confusing."

The Measure A sales tax would have raised \$16 million a year to support park and recreation programs in San Mateo County. The money would be divided among the county, its 20 cities, and three special districts, including the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.

San Mateo County, which operates 16 parks totaling almost

Measure A		
Yes	87,253	54.82%
No	71,903	45.18%
County as of Nov. 13, 2006		

16,000 acres plus three regional trails, is one of only two counties in the Bay Area without a source of funds dedicated specifically to parks, supporters noted.

As a result, the county has amassed more than \$100 million in deferred maintenance to its parks, and lost almost 50 percent of its park staff since 1990, Ms. Bott said.

Often park measures don't pass until the second try, Ms. Bott said hopefully. "That's just a fact."

"We're assessing," Ms. Bott concluded. "We have raised awareness of the condition of the parks and the need for people to support something they value." ■

State voters defeat Proposition 90

By Andrea Gemmet
Almanac Staff Writer

Proposition 90, an initiative to reform eminent domain law that opponents said would have had devastating impacts on local land-use authority, was defeated Tuesday by California voters.

The vote was 52.4 percent opposed, and 47.6 percent in favor, according to the California Secretary of State.

In San Mateo County, voters rejected Proposition 90 by a much bigger margin: 59.9 percent to 41.1 percent, the county's Elections Office reported.

Proponents of Proposition 90 said it is a desperately needed measure to curb government agencies' attempts to take away people's land for the benefit of wealthy developers and real estate investors.

The initiative was funded largely by Howard Rich, a millionaire real estate investor

from New York.

If it had passed, it would have cost the state's taxpayer billions of dollars in lawsuits over property values, according to the League of California Cities, a major backer of the No on Proposition 90 campaign.

Eminent domain is a process government agencies can use to acquire property against the owner's wishes. The state might use eminent domain to make way for a freeway extension, or a city might use it to redevelop a "blighted" area.

Tom Adams, president of the board of the California League of Conservation Voters, said that Proposition 90 supporters claimed it would protect people's homes from government seizure, but actually would have taken away one of the most important protections on property values — local zoning regulations.

The provisions of Proposition 90 said that any government

action that results in substantial economic losses to private property — not just real estate, but even business interests — would require taxpayers to pay for the loss, Mr. Adams said. It would have opened the door to lawsuits whenever a city or county wanted to regulate land use by changing zoning or placing other restrictions on property, whether environmental protections, consumer protections or noise restrictions, he said.

Kevin Spillane, spokesman for Yes on 90, complained that the opposition to Proposition 90 ran a campaign of distortion. It wouldn't make it impossible to make changes to zoning, or to enforce laws already on the books, he told the Almanac recently.

"That's too broad a statement to make," he said. "(Government agencies) may choose not to do something they would've done otherwise; hopefully, they will be more careful." ■

McCloskey triumphant over Pombo's defeat

The defeat of seven-term Republican Congressman Richard Pombo in the Central Valley is a personal triumph for former Congressman Pete McCloskey, also a Republican, of Portola Valley and Rumsey.

"The world is a better place," Mr. McCloskey crowed in Portola Valley on Wednesday. "The man in charge of the nation's land, water, fish and wildlife is gone forever." Mr. Pombo is chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee.

In a stunning upset, wind-energy consultant Jerry McNerney of Pleasanton, the Democratic candidate, defeated the

entrenched incumbent 53 to 47 percent in a district that sprawls from Morgan Hill and Gilroy across the Central Valley to the Sierra foothills.

Calling himself a "traditional Republican," Mr. McCloskey led the charge to unseat Mr. Pombo. Mr. McCloskey challenged him in the June primary; after he lost, he and a bipartisan coalition from the Bay Area threw their efforts into Mr. McNerney's campaign. "I think I worked harder these last five months than during the primary," Mr. McCloskey said.

Mr. McCloskey and his team challenged Mr. Pombo par-

ticularly on his environmental record and his ties to disgraced lobbyist Jack Abramoff.

As head of the top House environmental committee, Mr. Pombo has been a leader in weakening the Endangered Species Act, trying to sell off national park land, and promoting oil drilling off the coast, Mr. McCloskey claimed.

The contrast between the two Republicans is striking. A decorated Marine, Mr. McCloskey spent 14 years in Congress where he helped write the Endangered Species Act and other pioneering environmental laws. He also co-founded the first Earth Day.

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Hickey stays, Oblak off health care district board

■ Sheriff Don Horsley trades badge for seat on the board.

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor

San Mateo County Sheriff Don Horsley was aiming to send Sequoia Healthcare District board member Jack Hickey packing when he decided to run for a board seat, but it appears he has nudged incumbent John Oblak off instead.

Mr. Horsley, Art Faro (also an incumbent) and Mr. Hickey won the three open board seats in the Nov. 7 election.

With provisional ballots and absentee ballots dropped off on election day not yet completely counted, the county reports that Mr. Horsley was the top vote-getter, with 25,222 votes (25.89 percent); Mr. Faro got 24,165 (24.81 percent); and Mr. Hickey got 24,159 votes (24.80 percent).

Mr. Oblak trailed Mr. Hickey by 300 votes, making it unlikely that the uncounted absentee

Sequoia Healthcare board (3 seats; 4-year terms)			
✓ Don Horsley	25,222	25.89%	
✓ Arthur Faro	24,165	24.81%	
✓ Jack Hickey	24,159	24.80%	
John Oblak	23,859	24.49%	
(As of Nov. 13, 2006)			
✓ = winner			

votes will push him into the winning column. Results posted as of Nov. 13 gave Mr. Oblak 23,859 votes (24.49 percent).

Mr. Horsley, who chose not to seek re-election to the sheriff's post he's held since 1993, said his goal in entering the race was to unseat Mr. Hickey, who is often the lone dissenter in many of the five-member board's decisions.

Mr. Hickey, a Libertarian, had for many years run for a range of local and state public offices before winning his first race in 2002 with the health care district victory. He ran on a platform that included dissolv-

See HEALTH CARE, page 11

PV utility tax cut measure wins big

By David Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

Voters in Portola Valley overwhelmingly approved Measure F to lower to 4.5 percent the 5.5 percent utility tax levied on residential and commercial electricity, gas, water and telephone bills.

The new rate goes into effect Feb. 1, 2007, but returns to 5.5 percent July 1, 2010, unless the council offers another rate in a ballot measure in the November 2009 election.

The election count as of Nov. 13 shows 1,517 votes, or 86 percent, in favor of the measure, and 245, or 14 percent, opposed.

The measure's passage does not affect the town's 2 percent utility tax that sequesters funds for the purchase of open space.

The new tax rate will lower the town's revenues by about \$57,000 for the second half of the 2006-07 budget year, said Administrative Services Officer Stacie Nerdahl. "It will not cause us to perform poorly against our budget because we had already factored that in,"

Measure F (Reduce utility tax)	
✓ Yes	1,517
✓ No	245
✓ = winner	

she added.

In the 2005-06 budget year, the town took in about \$642,000 from the 5.5 percent utility tax. Considering the new 4.5 percent rate and a likely 5 percent annual increase in utility tax revenues, the take in 2007-08 would be around \$540,000, Ms. Nerdahl said.

The idea of lowering the 5.5 percent tax arose last winter, shortly after the Town Council learned that the county would be boosting Portola Valley's annual property tax revenues by about \$400,000 in keeping with a 1988 state law that the county had been ignoring for 17 years.

Cell-phone tax

The fate of the utility tax on cell phone calls by Portola Valley residents had been settled in July, when the council authorized Town Adminis-

trator Angela Howard to tell cell-phone companies to stop collecting utility taxes for calls made on national calling plans.

The decision lowered the town's tax revenues by about \$45,000 for 2006-07, a figure that would apply for 2007-08 as well, Ms. Howard said.

Council members said they took this step to be fair to residents who receive cell-phone services from companies other than Verizon Wireless. Verizon does not collect the tax and is in court with the city of Palo Alto, which sued the company to force it to collect the Palo Alto utility tax.

Portola Valley council members said they thought Verizon would win the argument in court, but in a recent settlement Verizon may have agreed to begin collecting the tax in Palo Alto.

Asked if the council might reverse itself and reinstate the tax on cell phones, Councilman Ed Davis, the liaison to the town's Finance Committee, said he didn't know what his council colleagues might say but that his own view is to let the decision stand. ■



Len Tillem Esq.

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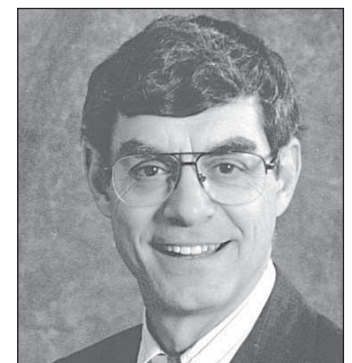
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Montessori school plans expansion in MP

By David Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

The Palo Alto-based Montessori school Casa dei Bambini — a self-directed-learning school for children ages 2 through 5 — has applied to the Menlo Park Planning Commission for a permit to establish a branch location at 1215 O'Brien Drive in Menlo Park.

The Palo Alto school already enrolls children from Menlo Park. A location in the city would relieve enrollment pressure at Palo Alto and reduce drive time for parent applicants who live in Menlo Park, Atherton, Woodside and Redwood City, said Sandra Balzaretta, the Palo Alto school's director.

The Planning Commission is scheduled to discuss the matter at 7 p.m. Monday, Nov. 27, in the council chambers in Menlo Park at 701 Laurel St.

The idea of opening a Menlo Park branch has been percolating for two years, Ms. Balzaretta said. "Our intention is to expand and we have a wonderful community of parents," she added. "The families that are calling us seem to be in great need."

The Palo Alto school, now in its 14th year, enrolls about 62 students and each classroom is staffed with at least two teachers, she said, adding that if a Menlo Park school were to approximate those numbers, it would be "a nice campus."

Ms. Balzaretta said she hopes to open the doors of a Menlo Park school by September 2007.

Asked if she anticipates any problems finding teachers, she replied that the Palo Alto school is intentionally "a bit overstaffed" to familiarize teachers with the school's ways so as to imbue a Menlo Park location with the same atmosphere. "I'm sure that we will be hiring more teachers as the program fills up and grows," she said.

Tuition in Palo Alto, and probably in Menlo Park as well, ranges from \$7,200 to \$13,000, depending on a student's age, she said. Younger students need teachers who have more specialized training, she added. ■

New post office not in the cards for PV

By David Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

A gloomy little cloud has settled over the town of Portola Valley. Last summer, when John's Valley Foods closed, the Portola Valley post office also closed, but finding it a new home and a new local manager is looking increasingly unlikely.

The U.S. Postal Service had set an Oct. 10 deadline for completed applications, but received none despite having sent out application packages to "prospective bidders" in town, said Planning Manager Leslie Lambert in an Oct. 31 memo.

Ms. Lambert has been and continues to coordinate the town's efforts to find someone to take on the job. At the town's request, the Postal Service has extended the deadline to Friday, Dec. 8, she said.

"Unless you can exert some friendly pressure (on someone) to apply, you will not have a post office," said Town Administrator Angela Howard to the Town Council at its Nov. 8 meeting. "I think it's dead unless someone comes forward for it."

The financial return for running a satellite post office has dropped from about \$3,500 a month to \$800, Ms. Howard said. A return that low may be making the proposition unattractive, she theorized, a sentiment endorsed by Councilman Richard Merk.

■ PORTOLA VALLEY

Post news, views on
AlmanacNews.com

Residents still have options:

■ The main post office in Menlo Park sell stamps via fax at 323-4027 and provides 24-hour access to an automated stamp/postage dispenser. The main post office is located at 3875 Bohannon Drive near the intersection of Marsh Road and U.S. 101.

■ Letter carriers can take orders for stamps.

■ Residents with Internet access can go to the Postal Service Web site at usps.com and choose the "Click & Ship" program, which offers options to print shipping labels, calculate rates, buy stamps and schedule a pickup.

■ For \$13.25, the Postal Service will pick up an unlimited number of priority and express-mail packages from your home.

■ The post office in Woodside is located at 2995 Woodside Road. Weekday hours are 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Other Menlo Park post offices with 24-hour stamp vending machines are at 655 Oak Grove Ave. and at 2120 Avy Ave.

■ At the Ladera Country Shopper, a UPS store is open weekdays from 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. and on Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ■

HEALTH CARE

continued from page 10

ing the district, which co-owns and oversees Sequoia Hospital in Redwood City.

As a board member, Mr. Hickey has fought hard against the publicly supported district's practice of giving money, through a grants program, to nonprofit organizations that focus on health care, including the Sequoia Hospital Foundation and groups that serve low-income residents.

Incumbents Oblak and Faro, along with board members Kathleen Kane and Malcolm MacNaughton, strongly defend the grants program, saying the money goes to agencies and organizations that provide

health care or promote public health in the district.

Unconventional board term

This was the first time that Mr. Oblak, president of Notre Dame de Namur University in Belmont, stood for election. He was appointed to the board in August 2004 after the resignation of Dr. Ed Katz, whose term was to expire in 2006. The appointment, made by the district board on a 3-1 vote, with Mr. Hickey opposed, was for four months, and Mr. Oblak had planned to run for a two-year term that November.

When he attempted to file papers to run for the two-year term, however, he mistakenly filed for a four-year term instead,

forcing him to go to court to keep his name off the ballot.

Ultimately, no one filed to run for the two-year term, and Mr. Oblak was again appointed to the board, this time by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Faro has served on the board since 1998, and was board president for many of those years.

The health care district serves Menlo Park, Atherton, Woodside, Portola Valley, Redwood City, San Carlos, Belmont and surrounding unincorporated cities.

The county continues to count provisional and absentee ballots; county officials hope to complete the count sometime this week, according to David Tom of the Elections Office. ■

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Portola Valley settles property tax dispute with San Mateo County

By David Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

With few words exchanged and in short order, the Town Council of Portola Valley unanimously agreed at its Nov. 8 meeting to settle its year-long dispute with San Mateo County over payment of overdue property tax revenues.

If the Woodside Town Council and the councils in Half Moon Bay and Colma also sign, Portola Valley will receive a check from the county Controller's Office for just over \$900,000.

This check, and a check received from the county last November for about the same amount, are a

late acknowledgment of a 1988 state law that guarantees the towns a 7 percent share of property tax revenues from their jurisdictions. The checks cover back payments for four of the 17 budget years for which the law applies — 2001-02 through 2004-05.

The county's recognition of the 1988 law also means an annual boost of about \$400,000 to Portola Valley's property tax revenues.

Mayor Steve Toben was absent for the 4-0 vote. In an afterword, Councilman Ted Driscoll commented: "I do believe that the county has in its coffers \$4 million to \$5 million of our money and I think the county

ought to recognize that."

Acting on global warming

At the urging of Councilwoman Maryann Moise Derwin, the Town Council of Portola Valley, at its Nov. 8 meeting, unanimously agreed to spend \$1,600 to further the town's efforts to address environmental problems.

The council authorized spending \$1,000 in annual dues to join Sustainable Silicon Valley, a group of businesses, local governments and non-governmental organizations

that collaborate on identifying and acting on regional environmental issues.

The other \$600 will go to the Oakland-based International Council for Local Environmental

Initiatives, a nonprofit that offers energy audits to cities and towns and long-term guidance in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The mayor recently signed the Mayors Agreement on Climate Change and has hosted meetings of the recently formed Climate Protection Task Force, a group of volunteers whose goals include coming up with ideas to locally address global warming.

"We're actually putting our money where our mouth is here," said Councilman Richard Merk. "I think it's probably worthwhile to step up to the plate, pay our dues and see what's there." ■

'I do believe that the county has in its coffers \$4 million to \$5 million of our money.'

COUNCILMAN TED DRISCOLL

Willow Road homes project headed to City Council

A proposal to build 33 detached three- and four-bedroom homes in Menlo Park's Linfield Oaks neighborhood is scheduled to be heard by the City Council at its Nov. 14 meeting.

The meeting is scheduled to start at 7 p.m. in the council chambers at the Civic Center, between Laurel and Alma streets. Check www.AlmanacNews.com for a news update.

The proposal includes the demolition of a 40,000-square-foot office building at 75 Willow Road, next to the Sunset magazine campus, to make way for building the homes on the 4.5-acre site.

The proposed homes range from 1,700 square feet to 2,400

■ MENLO WATCH

square feet, and will sell for an estimated \$1 million to \$2 million, said Elaine Breeze, a senior vice president and managing director of the Palo Alto-based Summer Hill Homes, which is proposing the project.

The project, which includes a general plan amendment and a rezoning of the property, was approved 6-0 by the Planning Commission at its Oct. 23 meeting.

Cancelled meeting

The Menlo Park City Council will not hold its regular meeting, Nov. 21. Meetings will resume Nov. 28.



Norbert von der Groeben/Palo Alto Weekly

The M-A Bears, including Steve DiSibio (8), suffered through their second-straight loss after winning their first eight. But they are still in the playoffs.

FOOTBALL

continued from page 5

would face the winner of No. 2 Woodside (7-3) and No. 7 Milpitas (6-4). Menlo's semifinal opponent would be either No. 3 Monterey (7-3) or No. 6 Pacific Grove (8-2).

Woodside vs. M-A

Menlo-Atherton (8-2) lost its final two games of the regular season after beginning the year 8-0. The Bears played their worst game of the season last Saturday in a 42-20 loss to rival Woodside by committing six turnovers (four fumbles) and yielding six sacks.

"We're not happy the way we're playing, but we get to line up for at least another week," said first-year M-A coach Bob

Sykes. "We're going to stay positive and I think we'll be fine."

M-A played the vast majority of its schedule versus run-oriented teams. Now, the Bears will face a Santa Teresa unit that will throw, run the Wing-T offense and attempt to mix things up. Yet, the problem for M-A hasn't been its defense, it's been on the offensive end for the last two games.

Though M-A faced two of the better defenses in the CCS in Aragon and Woodside, the Bears have not been able to run the ball with any consistency, turned the ball over 10 times and have not protected junior quarterback Troy McCabe, who has been sacked nine times.

"Now, we get to start a whole new season," said Sykes.

M-A will be without top receiver senior Kevin DiSibio for

the remainder of the season due to an injured shoulder suffered in the loss to Woodside.

On Saturday, M-A led rival Woodside 7-6 early in the second quarter, before the Wildcats started converting M-A miscues into points. After Woodside grabbed a 12-7 lead in the third quarter, the Wildcats increased the margin to 32-14 in a matter of minutes to put the game on ice.

The Bears scored on a five-yard touchdown pass from McCabe to junior tight end Matt Mosher, a Sam Knapp to Mosher 47-yard scoring pass via a fake punt and a 14-yard touchdown pass from sophomore quarterback Peter DePhillips to junior tight end Raymond Vainikolo late in the fourth quarter. ■

Craig Wentz, Palo Alto Weekly

DERRY

continued from page 5

that essentially green-lighted the Derry project: the construction of 135 condominiums and 22,525 square feet of commercial space on a 3.4-acre site bounded by El Camino Real, Oak Grove Avenue and the train tracks, known as the Derry family site.

The council could also decide instead to put the question to the voters.

Enough signatures

County officials determined that referendum organizers, led by Morris Brown of the citizens' group Menlo Park Tomorrow, had gathered enough signatures to qualify the referendum for the bal-

lot. Because the council's approvals involved two separate ordinances, Menlo Park Tomorrow gathered signatures on two petitions.

A minimum of 1,848 signatures were required for each petition. Random samplings by the county determined that the number of signatures on both petitions exceeded the required number by 430 to 550, according to a report by the city attorney and city clerk.

Mr. McClure said that, in questioning the validity of the referendum drive, O'Brien Group representatives argue that: The referendum proponents didn't include a specific notice that is required by the state elections code to be printed on the petitions; and the ordinances challenged by the

petitioner aren't subject to the referendum process because they didn't challenge the general plan amendment that made adoption of the ordinances possible.

In their staff report, the city attorney and city clerk listed a closed-session discussion as an option at the Nov. 14 council meeting "in light of the fact that there is substantial likelihood of litigation regardless of the council's determination."

The council meeting begins at 7 p.m. in the council chambers in the Civic Center.

A copy of the staff report can be found by going to www.menlopark.org, clicking on the City Council link, then clicking on the appropriate link under City Council Agendas, in the left column. ■



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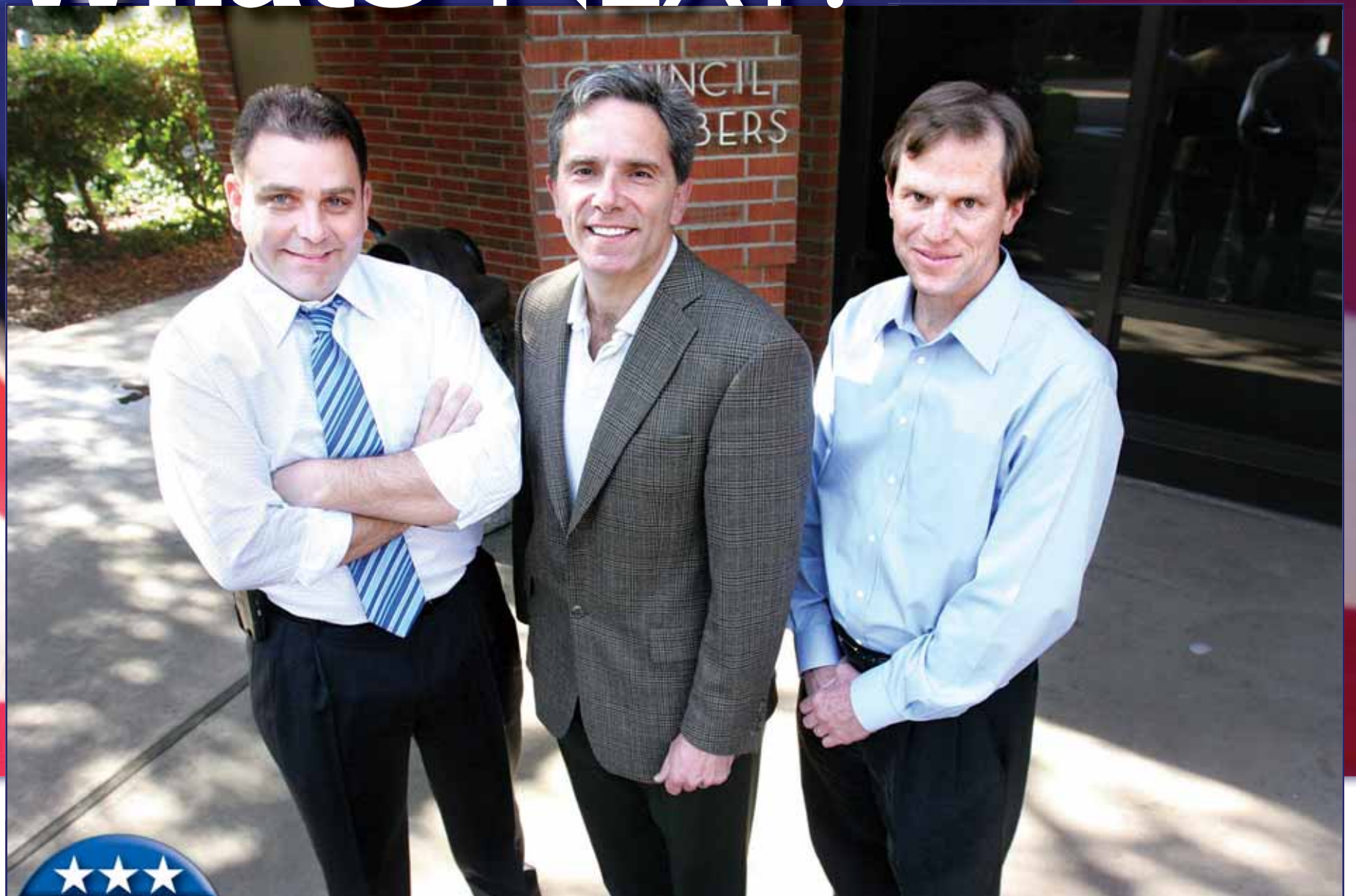
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Whats NEXT? Can the new City Council heal a divided Menlo Park?



By Rory Brown
Photos by Marjan Sadoughi

New councilmen, from left, Richard Cline, John Boyle and Heyward Robinson will officially join the council Dec. 5. Mr. Robinson and Mr. Cline ran campaigns opposed to John Boyle's political allies, incumbents Lee Duboc and Mickie Winkler.

contrasting, differentiating and polarizing," said Mr. Boyle. "Now it's time to make a transition, and turn our attention to where there is common ground."

Common ground, and whether or not it's being established among council members, will likely be a key issue as the new council takes office.

Partisan politics, not an attempt to reach common ground, have guided some major decisions of the current

council, with council members Lee Duboc, Nicholas Jellins and Mickie Winkler often voting together on contentious issues such as building sports fields at Bayfront Park and privatizing the city's aquatics center. Colleagues Andy Cohen and Kelly Fergusson were often opposed to those decisions.

The recent campaign season was also a far cry from finding common ground, as two political camps — one supporting

the slate of Mr. Boyle and incumbents Winkler and Duboc, and the other backing candidates Cline, Robinson and Vincent Bressler — campaigned fervently against each other to fill three open seats on the council.

In the election, incumbents Duboc and Winkler were rejected by voters, coming in last among the six candidates.

Political ties suggest that new council members Cline and Robinson will join sitting council members Cohen and Fergusson to create a four-member majority, but all four say that isn't the case.

"The big issue the new council has to take on is the divisiveness," said Mr. Cline. "People didn't feel like they were being heard, but they made their voices heard through the election. If [the new council] doesn't listen to different point of views, we're history too."

"We're a historically fractioned community," said Ms. Fergusson. "Changing that will be a challenge, but I'm optimistic we can leave the era of us versus them behind."

Bayfront Park

The councilmen-elect will be sworn in Dec. 5, and newcomers and incumbents Fergusson and Cohen alike have already

Whether its pro-business vs. pro-environment, pro-development vs. slow-growth, or residentialists vs. the establishment, different people have a range of ways to characterize the long-standing divided political scene in Menlo Park.

Now there are three new City Council members and two sitting members who say the city doesn't have to be divided.

Whether they follow through with that plan, and the rest of the city follows suit, is unknown, but across party lines, the new council says it is focused on acting as one body — not two parties.

Just 12 hours after John Boyle found out that he, Heyward Robinson and Richard Cline would likely be Menlo Park's newest City Council members, his focus shifted from keeping his opponents off the council to working with them.

"The unfortunate truth of our election process is that it creates this season of

Menlo Park election results

City Council	Measure J (sports fields at Bayfront Park)	Measure K (new utility tax)
✓ Heyward Robinson 4,741 19.9%	Yes 3,410 39%	Yes 4,275 49.6%
✓ Richard Cline 4,575 19.2%	✓ No 5,340 61%	✓ No 4,345 50.4%
✓ John Boyle 3,946 16.5%		
Vincent Bressler 3,841 16.1%		
Lee Duboc 3,551 14.9%		
Mickie Winkler 3,204 13.4%		

✓ = winner

Voters elected three candidates to four-year terms on the five-member council. The three top vote-getters were Heyward Robinson, Richard Cline and John Boyle. Vincent Bressler is 105 votes behind Boyle. Voters rejected Measure J, to give the city the option to explore building sports fields at Bayfront Park, with 61 percent voting no. The Measure K vote was much closer, with "yes" votes just 70 behind "no" votes. These are the counts as of Nov. 13. Some absentee and other ballots dropped off on election day have yet to be counted. The San Mateo County elections office says it plans to issue updates at 3 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 16 and 3 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 21. Final results are scheduled to be certified Dec. 5.

See **NEW COUNCIL** page 16

What Happened?

Why did voters reject two incumbents and elect three new City Council members?

By **Rory Brown**
Almanac Staff Writer

After four years of sitting on the Menlo Park City Council, being quoted in newspapers, and conducting two council campaigns, Lee Duboc and Mickie Winkler are familiar figures to many voters.

But that familiarity apparently hurt, rather than helped, the incumbents' bid for re-election, as Ms. Duboc and Ms. Winkler finished fifth and sixth, respectively, in the six-candidate race to fill three seats on the council.

Controversy has been a staple of the current council, where the incumbents and Mayor Nicholas Jellins often voted together on major issues, with council members Andy Cohen and Kelly



Incumbents Lee Duboc, left, and Mickie Winkler were rejected by voters, finishing last in the six-person race to fill three council seats.

Fergusson opposed.

The incumbents' opponents say a key problem has been the council majority's unwillingness to compromise. That problem fueled public frustration over an array of actions associated with the incumbents, from decisions regarding Bayfront Park, to their relationship with local unions, to efforts to privatize city services.

Candidates Vincent Bressler, Richard Cline and Heyward Robinson ran in opposition to the incumbents and their ally, John Boyle, basing their campaigns on public frustration with the incumbents.

"There's been a lot of frustration with the current council majority," said Mr. Robinson, the top vote-getter. "It's pretty clear [the incumbents] have left a steady stream of people frustrated that

they're not being listened to, and the voters made a statement [on Election Day]."

Mr. Cline and Mr. Boyle were also elected, according to updated election results. Mr. Boyle received about 100 more votes than Mr. Bressler.

During his campaign, Mr. Cline said the public deserved to be notified far in advance of what decisions were before the council so they could be more involved in those decisions.

"A big message that I stressed was restoring open government," said Mr. Cline. "I think people agreed ... and made their voices heard in the election."

"I think the results had more to do with past actions of the council majority than the new crop of candidates," said former councilman Steve Schmidt. "These are good candidates [who] got elected ... but the council majority already disregarded half of the electorate by doing whatever they wanted to do — they were arrogant."

Union controversy

A key controversy leading up to the election centered on local unions, as incumbents Duboc and Winkler said they would address rising costs associated with city employee pensions and benefits by pushing the privatization of city services.

Local unions spent \$27,000 opposing the incumbents and supporting candidates Robinson and Cline. The Service Employees International Union Local 715 had "dozens of people" walking precincts and distributing campaign literature, said Rico Mendez, a union spokesperson, at the election night party for candidates Bressler, Cline and Robinson.

The election party for the incumbents and Mr. Boyle was held a few doors away on San Mateo Drive, but was closed to the press.

"When I saw that first union hit piece, I realized what we were up against," said Ms. Duboc. "As local politicians, we're always warned to not rile up the unions... but our pension liabilities and health care costs are the issue of the day, and aren't going away. Outsourcing our programs is one way to mitigate those costs."

"The incumbents recognized that cities in California have a disaster approaching in public pensions," said Dick Poe, a supporter of the incumbents. "It's an important issue, but it's just not politically sexy."

Other candidates said the incumbents' approach to tackling rising employee costs — including approving a no-bid contract to privatize the city's aquatics center just four weeks after the operator came forward with the proposal — sparked unnecessary controversy.

"[The incumbents] have attacked the union, and that's just not the way to go about dealing with your employees," said Mr. Bressler.



John Boyle participates in a local cable television broadcast on election night in the Menlo Park council chambers. He was the only member of the "incumbent slate" elected to the council.

Measure J

In addition to rejecting the incumbents, voters also defeated Measure J, the advisory measure placed on the ballot by the current council majority to gauge support for building sports fields at Bayfront Park.

About 61 percent of voters opposed the measure.

The only organized support for the measure was provided by the incumbent slate, which paid for signs and campaign literature in favor of the measure. Campaign signs supporting the measure used the same red, white and blue design as the "Boyle/Duboc/Winkler" signs.

Incumbents Duboc and Winkler voted with Mayor Jellins to put the measure on the ballot in July, sparking accusations that the measure was politically motivated to garner votes for incumbent candidates from local sports groups.

"Measure J was meant to be a wedge issue, so sports groups would get out and vote for some candidates, said Elizabeth Lasensky, who has opposed developing the 160-acre park since a golf course was proposed for the site last year. But I think it motivated more people to get out and vote against it rather than support it."

Ms. Duboc said putting the issue to voters was not politically motivated, but acknowledged that it was "very hard to organize the people [who] would benefit from it."

Ms. Winkler said Measure J opponents used a "successful scare tactic" of convincing voters that studying the potential for fields at the park, which is built atop a capped landfill, would be unsafe.

Developer funds

After suggesting candidates Cline and Robinson could be influenced by endorsements from local unions, members of the incumbent slate had their own contributions to answer for — those by development and real estate interests.

More than \$36,000 of the three candidates' reported \$87,500 campaign contributions came from real estate and development interests, including one real estate company with a condo-commercial project set to go before the council next year.

"Special interest money is always somewhat problematic, because the point is to influence someone in some way," said Stu Soffer, a former planning commissioner. "The fact that the magnitude of those donations was so large certainly didn't assure anyone that whoever's on the council won't be influenced."

The incumbent slate candidates said there was no conflict of interest in accepting the donations. ■



Closed to the press, this house near San Mateo Drive is where the "incumbent slate" candidates held their election party. Just three houses away, the other three candidates held their party. The figure in the doorway is incumbent Lee Duboc.



Heyward Robinson, right, raises his arms in celebration of election returns showing himself and Mr. Cline, left, leading the council race. Vincent Bressler, center, was within 78 votes of joining his political allies on the council, according to early election returns, but ultimately finished fourth.

What's Next?

NEW COUNCIL

continued from page 14

agreed that one controversial effort will come to a screeching halt: building sports fields at Bayfront Park.

Bayfront Park was an especially contentious issue in the election, as Mr. Boyle and incumbents Winkler and Duboc backed Measure J, which asked voters if the city should consider building sports fields on 17 acres of the 160-acre park off Marsh Road.

About 61 percent of voters rejected the measure. Opponents labeled it a “politically motivated” move to garner votes for the incumbent slate from sports groups.

Mr. Boyle denied it was a political ploy, and insisted that putting the issue to voters was worthwhile.

“I’m personally disappointed because [building sports fields at Bayfront] was a good project that warranted further investigation,” he said. “But the voters have spoken with the clear direction to not waste time on this.”

Mr. Boyle said all of the council members have noted that the city needs more sports fields, and he’s “looking forward to trying to solve the problem.”

Mr. Robinson said the city should consider revamping the underused Kelly Field, and look for long-term solutions to the field shortage. “I know fixing Kelly [Field] doesn’t solve the problem, but in the short-term, we have to utilize what we’ve got.”

Mr. Cline said the council should keep trying to negotiate with St. Patrick’s Seminary and the Veteran’s Administration to acquire land for fields.

The effort to privatize the city’s Burgess child care programs was also a contentious issue leading up to the election, but that effort also is likely dead.

Council members Fergusson and Cohen, and

new councilmen Cline and Robinson oppose re-bidding the programs after a previous request for proposals ended prematurely — the one serious bidder withdrew due to opposition in the community.

Budget woes

One of the first major decisions the new council may have to make won’t be an easy one: If Measure K, the city’s utility tax measure, doesn’t pass (the vote count as of Nov. 13 shows it’s 71 votes short), the council will likely be forced to reduce services, increase fees, or both.

The current council opted to defer a variety of cuts and fee increases until they knew if voters would approve the tax measure. Among cost-cutting options that are likely to resurface are eliminating the city-subsidized adult sports programs, raising the Belle Haven child care fees

for non-residents, and reducing staff in the city manager’s office.

Council members would not specify the cost-cutting measures they will pursue, but they agreed they face difficult choices.

“If Measure K doesn’t pass, it’s going to make the next couple of years pretty tough,” Mr. Robinson said. “It really handcuffs your agenda to go forward if you have to make more cuts.”

Councilman Cohen said the city needs to nail down its financial figures — something he said wasn’t done when the city debated privatizing the aquatics center and child care programs, or asked voters to approve a tax.

“Over the last several years, we’ve been playing political football with our finances,” he said. He noted the council should consider reinstating the budget advisory committee as an economic development committee to further study the city’s budget.

Derry project

The new council’s role in the fate of the Derry condo-commercial project is undetermined, but the three newly elected members have their views of what should be done with the project.

Mr. Cline and Mr. Robinson supported the successful referendum campaign against two zoning ordinances related to the 135-condominium project: one that rezones the site proposed for the project, and the other changing the zoning language for the adjacent property at 1300 El Camino Real.

Both said they want to see the project re-negotiated rather than repealed or put to the voters in an election.

“I want to see the project preserved, but we just need to get more out of the deal,” Mr. Cline said. “If we can find a way to negotiate more elegantly without a vote, we should do it.”

See **NEW COUNCIL** page 17



There were plenty of cheers at the election party for candidates Bressler, Cline and Robinson after the 11:30 p.m. election returns showed Mr. Robinson and Mr. Cline as the top two vote-getters



Mark Bowles

Anything Goes in Woodside

Vamping in the Woodside Community Theatre's production of "Anything Goes" are, from left, Hiedi Schrupp, Lily Meyn, Sharon Maxwell-Yamamoto, Jenine Giusto and Sarah Small. There are three performances left in the run of the Cole Porter musical at Woodside High School: Nov. 17 and 18 at 7:30 p.m., and Nov. 19 at 2:30 p.m. Tickets cost \$18 for adults, \$15 for seniors and \$10 for students; call Mindy Bowles at 562-3900 or e-mail info@woodsidetheatre.org. The school is located at 199 Churchill Ave.

Las Lomitas board may seek parcel tax

The Board of Trustees of the Las Lomitas Elementary School District will meet Wednesday, Nov. 15, to consider authorizing a ballot measure to increase the parcel tax in a March 2007 election.

The current \$196 tax expires in 2008, but a March ballot measure may ask voters to raise

it and renew it a year early. The trustees will meet at 7:30 p.m. in the library at La Entrada Middle School at 2200 Sharon Road in Menlo Park.

A recent community survey showed diminishing support as the tax increase rises. Any jump of more than \$98 drops

below the required two-thirds majority of voters. Trustees have mentioned an increase of \$115, a figure arrived at after going over survey results "very carefully."

An increase of about \$200 is necessary to avoid making cuts in programs, said board president David Bailard.

NEW COUNCIL

continued from page 16

Mr. Boyle, who opposed the referendum, said he isn't sure how the city should go about dealing with the referendum, but he wants the project to be built.

"The bottom line is that the Derry project is a great project for Menlo Park, and I'd like to see it get back online," he said.

The current council, at its Nov. 14 council meeting, is expected to give direction on the project, but the new council could consider a re-negotiated project proposal.

Bigger council?

If Mr. Cline has his way, the new council will discuss increasing the number of council members from five to seven.

Mr. Cline said having seven council members would make the council "more inclusive," and he labeled the discussion a "top priority."

"More voices on the council equals more input, and that's good for the city," he said.

Ms. Fergusson said she's open to discussing the idea and has already discussed it with City Manager David Boesch.

Ms. Fergusson may lead that

discussion, as Mr. Cline and Mr. Robinson have endorsed her for mayor — the title given the chair of the council.

At the election party for candidates Bressler, Cline and Robinson, Mr. Robinson led a toast to Ms. Fergusson "the next mayor."

Mr. Cohen said the council should discuss other city policies, including setting limits on fundraising for council campaigns, and evaluating the city's mayoral policy.

"Anything we can do to get rid of party lines in everyday affairs is a good thing, in my view," he said. ■

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MP school board honors outgoing trustees

Menlo Park trustees Nancy Serrurier and Carol Orton, who did not seek re-election to the board, will be recognized for their service to the district on Wednesday, Nov. 15, at a special 6:30 p.m. board meeting in the district office at 181 Encinal Ave. in Atherton — prior to the board's 7 p.m. regular meeting.

Friends, teachers, community members and all interested in

SCHOOLS

Post news, views at AlmanacNews.com

honoring them are invited to attend.

It will be the last official board meeting for the two, who have contributed to the district for years as parents, school volunteers and board members.

Ms. Serrurier was a co-chair

of the district's 1995 bond election campaign, the first in decades, that started modernization of the district's schools. On the same ballot was a renewal of the district's first parcel tax. Ms. Serrurier served on the district's bond financial oversight committee until she was elected to the school board in November 1998 and re-elected four years later.

Drawing on her MBA and

business background, she has contributed to the district in many ways.

Ms. Orton, an attorney, was elected to the board in 2002 after serving as president of the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation and volunteering in the schools. Her legal background and ability to deal with complex issues were valuable assets as a trustee and board president.

She did all the legal filing and work required to change the

district PTAs (Parent Teacher Associations) to PTOs (Parent Teacher Organizations) and form the structures for the PTOs at each of the four schools.

Ms. Orton took an active role in the campaign for the district's 2000 parcel tax measure, which voters approved, and that substantially boosted funding to reduce class sizes in the upper grades, expand academic programs, and provide additional resources for teachers training.

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'Turkey Trot' Saturday in Portola Valley

The second annual "Ormondale Turkey Trot" takes off on Saturday morning, Nov. 18, with runs and fun for the entire family at the K-3 school, 200 Shawnee Pass Road in Portola Valley.

Sponsored by the Ormondale PTO, this event offers two runs and games for kids on the field, starting at 9 a.m. Run participants should be at school by 8:30.

The 5K run starts at 9 a.m. along the Shawnee Pass and

See picture on Page 3

Cervantes loop. The 1K Kid Run at 10 a.m. sends younger runners out to Cervantes and back to school.

The "Turkey Trot Training Program" is in full swing with a group of mothers supervising lap-running at lunch recess. Tim Cullinane, P.E. specialist, has students running the distance during his class. Students

receive a certificate each time they reach certain levels.

Already more than 100 students have run the 5K distance and 30-some have run the equivalent of 10K. Eight students have reached the half-marathon.

Runners may still register for the run, beginning at 8 a.m. on Saturday at school. The fee is \$30 for a family, \$20 for an individual, and \$5 for each child under 10 years. Registration forms are available at the Ormondale School office.

Faultline Track does Pumpkin Run

Faultline Track Club runners participated in the Half Moon Bay 5K Pumpkin Run on Oct. 15. Despite the dreary weather and legendary crowds, all runners had strong times in their divisions.

In the male ages 12 and under division, Connor Lindquist, a Hillview Middle School student, posted a time of 24:17, placing fourth. Woodside Elementary School students Kevin Stine completed the race in 25:47, placing 11th, and Will Patch in 27:40, placing 14th.

St. Matthew's Catholic School student Erin Brown placed second in the female ages 13 to 15, division, posting a time of 24:21.

In the male ages 13 to 15 division, Hillview Middle School students Jake Lindquist finished the 5K in 22:55, placing first, while Danny O'Neel placed second with a time of 24:16.

Submitted by team parent Louise Patch

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Woodside wrestles with tree protection plan

The Woodside Town Council is once again set to consider putting a tree-protection ordinance on the books, this time at the Tuesday, Nov. 14, meeting.

A subcommittee of council and Conservation and Environmental Health Committee members have been meeting to iron out a compromise after reaching a stalemate over details of the proposed ordinance in June ... and stalemating again in July.

It appears that a compromise was impossible to reach, so the council will have to decide between two versions of the tree ordinance.

The key difference is in the definition of a "significant tree," with council members and town staff favoring a simple, one-size-fits-all definition.

Committee members are lobbying for a more complicated definition that recognizes the different growth rates of various species of tree, such as the slow-

growing blue oak.

Staff said that if tree species have to be identified, tree removal permits would require site visits and take several days to issue. With the simple definition, based on trunk size, permits could be issued over the counter in a matter of minutes, according to town staff.

Woodside Town Council meetings start at 7:30 p.m. in Independence Hall, 2955 Woodside Road. Call 851-6790 for information.

Workshop on open space preserve

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District will hold its third community workshop to help plan use and protection of the La Honda Creek Open Space Preserve, on Thursday, Nov. 16, from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. at the La Honda Elementary School, 450 Sears Ranch Road.

The district's largest preserve in San Mateo County includes redwood forest, rolling grassland, and creek corridors extending from Skyline Boulevard down almost to La Honda. It is best known for the historic "red barn" on Highway 84, near La Honda.

The district is looking for community input on issues such as grazing, protection of creeks and fisheries, roads and trails, habitat protection, and traffic.

For information call Ana Ruiz at 691-1200, or go to openspace.org.

NOTEBOOK

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AlmanacNews.com

USGS lecture on Alaskan oil

"Drills, Spills, and Chills" will be the topic of the USGS monthly lecture Thursday, Nov. 16, at 7 p.m. in Building 3 of the U.S. Geological Survey, 345 Middlefield Road in Menlo Park.

Geologists Ken Bird and Rick Stanley will give the inside story of USGS estimates of Alaskan oil and gas reserves. They will cover petroleum geology, history of resource estimates, new scientific methods of making estimates, and how they apply to land-use decisions.

They will discuss contrasting case studies of the North Slope (including Prudhoe Bay and politically volatile areas) and Yukon Flats.

For information, call 329-5000, or go to online.wr.usgs.gov/calendar.

Applying technology to humanitarian needs

The World Affairs Council of Northern California and the Tech Museum of Innovation are sponsoring a panel on "Technology Applied to Humanitarian Needs" on Thursday, Nov. 16, from 7:30 to 9 p.m. at the Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road.

The panel will be made up of Tech Museum Laureates from around the world, who have made technical contributions to solving humanitarian problems.

The free program will start with refreshments at 7 p.m. For information, call the World Affairs Council at 415-293-4600, or itsyourworld.org; or the Tech Museum of Innovation at thetech.org.

Simitian extends contest deadline

State Sen. Joe Simitian, D-Palo Alto, has extended the deadline for his sixth annual "There Ought to be a Law" contest to Friday, Dec. 1. The contest invites Californians to submit ideas for new state legislation.

The winner will have his or her ideas introduced as legislation and have the opportunity to testify at a hearing on the bill in the state Capitol. The winner will also have lunch with Sen. Simitian and receive a California state flag that has flown over the Capitol.

Application forms for the contest may be downloaded at www.senate.ca.gov/simitian or call 831-425-0401 to request an entry form.

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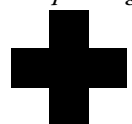
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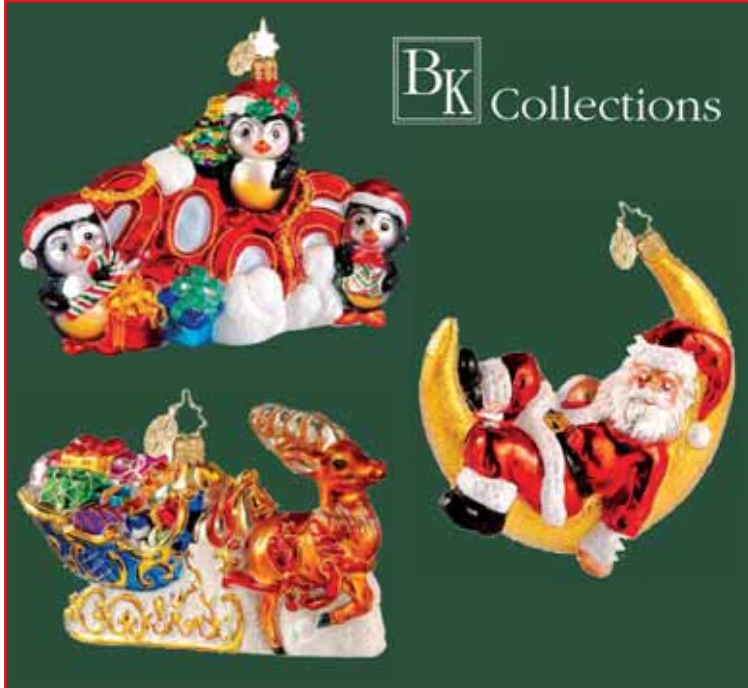
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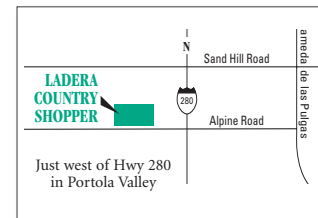
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Serena Houghton, 11, 'high point' rider with huge horses

Woodside girl wins junior draft horse title

By Stephanie Cadora

Special to the Almanac

Don't be surprised if you're in Woodside and you see a giant draft horse pulling a wagon with a small 11-year-old girl at the reins.

That 11-year-old is Serena Houghton, nicknamed Stubbs, of Woodside. And she knows exactly what she's doing.

In fact, she was just named junior state champion by the California Draft Horse and Mule Association for her success in showing and riding a Clydesdale draft horse named Cy at competitions in Grass Valley, Ventura and Los Angeles. The "high point youth" title is given to a kid 12 and under who scores the most points at these three venues.

"He's been my best friend," Serena says of Cy. "I've been working with him for three years."

Draft horses are equivalent to two regular horses, and in times past were the 18-wheelers of their days, says Serena's proud father, Paul Houghton of Woodside.

The youth competitions attract thousands of spectators, from both town and country.

"The agricultural community has a romantic notion about seeing wagons, unique harnesses, and other things of old," Houghton says. "Urban people, many of them equestrians, are attracted

to the big, powerful horses."

Stubbs' favorite event is called Gamblers' Choice, in which the horse pulls a cart carrying the rider and negotiates a number of obstacles in a limited period. The horse has to parallel park and back up, for instance. "Cy is careful, not showy, so I usually get a lot of points," she says.

"Showy" refers to the practice of hitch horses to raise their legs and hold their heads up high -- skills that are critical to the "showmanship" event. For this event, the mane, forelock, and tail are all braided in special ways. Stubbs' mother, Enong Houghton, makes the rosettes by hand that are incorporated into the braids.

The "pleasure" event is meant to show the old-fashioned practice of driving a draft horse from farm to town. Costumes are worn, or to just be informal, the horse is equipped with light running gear.

Some other events are "team," with at least two horses and a wagon; discipline rail, which is very formal; and riding the horse bareback and on a saddle.

Working with draft horses "is almost a lost art," says Houghton. "It's an esoteric subset of the horse world. They are the gentle giants, tractable and calm."

Stubbs says that Cy is gentle, easy-going, and not too big for a Clydesdale. "He watches out for me," she says. "When I was 9 years old, he would wait for me if I fell off."



Serena Houghton leads Cy, a Clydesdale draft horse, out of the Los Angeles arena after she wins a blue ribbon and belt buckle for a showmanship event. See how the horse's mane and forelock are braided and decorated with rosettes.

Driving horses through Woodside is what Stubbs sometimes does when she is not preparing to compete, says Jean Williams, breeder of Clydesdale draft horses at the Williams Ranch in Woodside, and owner of Cy.

"She has been an exceptional kid from the first day I met her," Williams says. "She loves to compete, loves to learn, and works hard. She has a great spirit and temperament, and is willing

to try anything."

In the summer, Stubbs goes everyday to the Williams ranch. When school's in session, she goes only on weekends. At the ranch, she washes horses, cleans out stalls, and practices for shows.

"Right before a big show, I practice braiding two or three times a day" for the showman-

ship event, says Stubbs. "I drive Cy around and practice things like backing up."

In their leisure time, Cy and Stubbs go off on a trail.

As to her future with horses, Stubbs says: "I don't really know. I want to try out other things, like dressage and jumping. Then I will decide." ■

Vikings drop Pop Warner conference finale

By Jim Gallagher

Vikings Boosters

A controversial pass interference call that set up the game's only touchdown cost the M-A Vikings PeeWees an 8-0 defeat in their Peninsula Conference championship game Nov. 12 at Woodside High.

Hollister's Pop Warner team, also called the Vikings, cashed in on a halfback pass and two-point

conversion kick in the second quarter for the winning margin.

On four separate occasions throughout the game, M-A came up inches short on critical fourth-down plays, negating otherwise effective running by tailback Khalil (Lil) James and quarterback Landon Baty.

Menlo-Atherton moved consistently on the ground behind effective blocking by Parker Smith, Nicky Brandman, Dominic Andrighetto,

Charlie Tidmarsh, Niki Goyle, Neil Schott and Chris Blank.

Defenders Ryan Blocker and Peter Bouret played well in the secondary, and fierce hitting by James and Baty slowed the unbeaten Hollister offense during a scoreless second half.

While the loss ended the Vikings season, all of M-A's Pop Warner teams reached this year's conference playoffs and established strong momentum for 2007. ■

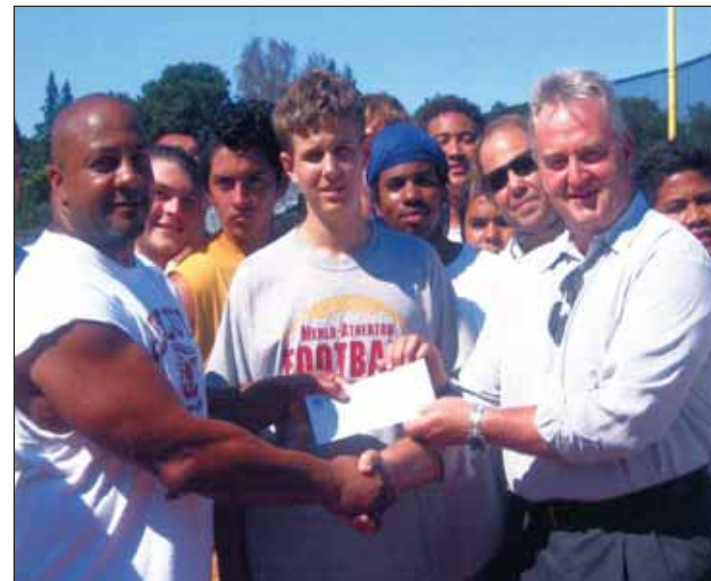


Photo courtesy of Menlo-Atherton High School parents

Hand-off complete

Good feelings are in evidence as Bob Brennan, chief of the Atherton Police Department, hands off a donation of \$5,000 from the Police Athletic League to Menlo-Atherton High School assistant varsity football coach Don Brady as lineman David Blank, center, looks on. The money will go toward new uniforms and equipment for M-A.

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Hearing on Dumbarton Rail

People interested in future rail service across San Francisco Bay along the old Dumbarton tracks, between Redwood City and Union City, may learn about the project and submit comments at a public hearing on Thursday, Nov. 16, in Menlo Park.

The two-hour meeting is set to start at 6:30 p.m. at the Menlo Park Senior Center at 110 Terminal Ave.

The "scoping session," sponsored by Caltrain and the Federal Transit Administration, will take public comments on

the scope of studies to be conducted in the environmental impact report to be prepared on the project.

The meeting will include an open house with information at 6:30 p.m., followed by a presentation at 7:15, and public testimony at 7:30.

The project to revive rail service across the old Dumbarton railroad bridge and tracks has come a long way since it was first proposed by former Atherton Councilman Malcolm Dudley more than 30 years ago.

The project to be studied

consists of reconstructing the railroad tracks, and building a new rail bridge and four new stations, one at Willow Road in Menlo Park. It would connect Caltrain on the Peninsula with East Bay rail systems and BART.

Written comments may be sent by e-mail to dumbarton_comments@caltrain.com, or by mail to Marie Peng, Environmental Manager, Caltrain, P.O. Box 3006, San Carlos, CA 94070-1306.

For information, go to www.caltrain.com/dumbartonrail.

Police sergeants, MP close to contract deal

Menlo Park's eight police sergeants, whose agreement with the city expired in July, have hammered out a compromise on salary and benefits.

The Menlo Park City Council is set to consider the tentative agreement at its Tuesday, Nov. 14, meeting. Last month, a mediator was called in to broker an agreement with the sergeants' union representatives after four months of negotiations ended in a stalemate.

The tentative, 30-month agreement includes an immediate 6 percent salary increase, followed by three, 2-percent salary increases spread out over the next two years.

Benefits include a \$200 increase in the monthly vehicle allowance, an increase in medical and dental benefits, and a raise in the annual reimbursement account for professional associations and tuition.

If the council approves the

memorandum of understanding with the union, it will cost the city \$84,200 in the current fiscal year, which represents a 6.16 percent increase.

The agreement would cost the city an estimated additional \$51,600 in the 2007-2008 fiscal year and \$38,000 for 2008-2009.

Council meetings begin at 7 p.m. and are held in the City Council Chambers at 701 Laurel St. in Menlo Park.

OBITUARIES

Leonard Reed

Native of Wales

Memorial services for Leonard Reed of Woodside will be held at 3 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 19, at Christ Episcopal Church, 815 Portola Road in Portola Valley.

Mr. Reed, a native of Cardiff, Wales, died Nov. 7 at his home in Woodside.

Mr. Reed received a doctorate in chemistry and metallurgy from Imperial College, University of London, in 1953. Later that year, he came to the United States to do post-doctoral work at Ohio State and Rutgers universities. He returned to the United Kingdom to serve in the Royal Air Force.

In 1957, he married Hazell Katherin Ann Dimmick and returned to the United States to work at Kaiser Aluminum.

During his business career, he was employed at EIMAC, a division of Varian in San Carlos; was vice president in charge of research and development at ILC; and was the founder of INTA Corp. in Santa Clara.

Mr. Reed is survived by his wife, Gail LeBaron Pepper, whom he married in 1990; children David Michael Reed of Layton, Utah, Olwen Reed Pencil of Sonoma, and Caro-

line Reed Ehrlich of Pleasanton; stepchildren Christopher Pepper of San Jose and Nicholas Pepper of Los Angeles; and eight grandchildren. His first wife died in 1989.

Memorials in his name may be made to Pathways Hospice or the Parkinson Institute. Arrangements are under the direction of the Roller Hapgood Tinney Funeral Home.

Elena Campodonico

Hospital auxiliary volunteer

Elena Maestri Campodonico, a resident of Atherton since 1938, died Oct. 28.

Ms. Campodonico was a life member of the Stanford Medical Center Auxiliary, and volunteered at the medical center as a "Pink Lady" for 35 years in the intensive care unit. She was a member of the Oakwood Auxiliary of the Religious of the Sacred Heart in Atherton, the Notre Dame Music Association, the American Red Cross, and the San Francisco Olympic Club.

She will be remembered for the beautiful gardens at her Atherton home and for the countless times she opened her home and gardens to volunteer organizations and friends, say family members. She took pride in being a gracious hostess, they say.

Ms. Campodonico is survived by her children: Richard of Gold Hill, Oregon, Robert of Menlo Park, and Claire of Monte Sereno; brother George Maestri of Lubbock, Texas; 11 grandchildren; and 10 great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Angelo Campodonico Jr.; and daughter Ellen Derry.

Donations in Ms. Campodonico's name may be made to Sloan Kettering Cancer Center, 1275 York Ave., New York, NY 10021; or St. Anthony's Dining Room, 45 Jones St., San Francisco, CA 94102.

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However, a sudden shower of floaters, new light flashes, or a "curtain" that obstructs vision warrants immediate professional attention.

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PS. The more serious causes of a sudden proliferation of flashes, floaters and/or a curtain obstructing vision include retinal tears, retinal detachment, infection, inflammation, hemorrhage, or a blow to the head (seeing stars).

Mark Schmidt is an American Board of Opticianry and National Contact Lens Examiners Certified Optician licensed by the Medical Board of California. He can be easily reached at Menlo Optical, 1166 University Drive, Menlo Park. 650-322-3900

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What is next for Menlo Park?

Now that the voters have spoken, we hope the new Menlo Park City Council can act swiftly to plot a course that will end the unproductive divisiveness that has characterized the city's government for many years.

The election of Heyward Robinson, Rich Cline and John Boyle could be the first step in clearing the air between the two perennially warring factions that are loosely characterized as "residentialist" and pro-business. Even these terms can be a detriment to making progress in the often complex decisions that are before the council these days.

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

All three of the winning candidates have said they want to end the bickering, and the electorate should hold them to that promise. One thing for sure: Both sides will have to jettison the most extreme wings of their supporters, particularly those who see the city as a developers' gift box, and, on the other side, those NIMBY-driven residents who want to lock out any improvement in the El Camino corridor and elsewhere.

This will not be an easy task for an inexperienced council, whose "veteran" members, Kelly Fergusson and Andy Cohen, have served only two years. All five should support taking a new look at critical elements of the city's "big picture" general plan before approving any more isolated projects along El Camino. By devising a border-to-border plan for the corridor, the city could join the "Grand Boulevard" concept sponsored by the county and Samtrans that can provide grants for plans that meld housing, shops and public spaces with transit along the Caltrain line.

Any effort to re-examine the general plan could be complicated by the upcoming referendum vote on the Derry project to build 135 condominiums and commercial space on Oak Grove Avenue at twice the maximum density formerly permitted. That could change, however, if the council chooses to renegotiate the terms of the project, or the developer and the petitioner agree on a new plan. Both Mr. Robinson and Mr. Cline supported the referendum drive to put it on the ballot. Mr. Boyle, who ran on a slate

with defeated incumbents Mickie Winkler and Lee Duboc, supports the project as approved.

But whatever happens to the Derry project, the council should make sure it understands what El Camino should look like before moving into the approval process for similar high-density residential and commercial developments planned for the site of the former Cadillac dealership and, farther south, at the former Anderson Chevrolet truck lot.

In other areas, the incoming council may get a few breaks, although the city will have to scramble to avoid deficit spending in the next fiscal year without the \$2.5 million a year that was expected from a utility tax, which voters rejected. On the upside, there is a new, tax-generating hotel under construction on Sand Hill Road, and it looks as if a General Motors plan to build a cluster of new auto dealerships on the Bayfront Expressway will move forward, although nothing is final yet. To keep the deal moving, the city had to agree to split its share of sales tax revenue with GM for up to 10 years. On El Camino, a plan to add a small convention center at the Stanford Park Hotel could produce more sales and hotel taxes at that franchise.

Several other hot-button issues that divided candidates have been resolved by voters. The resounding defeat of Measure J should signal the end of any effort to build playing fields at Bayfront Park, but reopens the door to find other playing space elsewhere in the city. And the defeat of Ms. Winkler and Ms. Duboc should halt any further effort to privatize the city's child care programs, where tuition now nearly covers costs. Another privatization issue, the no-bid contract issued to operate the city's swimming pools, was loudly criticized during the campaign, although we believe the operator, Tim Sheeper, is doing an excellent job and should be supported by the new majority.

All of these issues can be debated and resolved by a truly non-partisan government, which is the way municipal governments are supposed to operate. Other communities up and down the Peninsula do it with great success. It is time for Menlo Park to join the parade.

LETTERS

Our readers write

Student excelled as a precinct worker

Editor:

On Election Day Kendra Gilbertson, a senior at Menlo-Atherton High School, served effectively as a poll worker in Precinct No. 4401 in Menlo Park.

She attended the training sessions, learned the complex procedures quickly and put them into practice efficiently.

She arrived right on time at 6 a.m., helped set up the polling station, and took the oath of office with conviction. As voters entered the polling place, Ken-

See **LETTERS**, next page

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Portola Valley Archives

Our Regional Heritage

This small building stood in the redwood grove near Portola Valley's historic schoolhouse on Portola Road. Originally, it was a "teacherage," a place for the lone teacher to live, because the school was too remote for a commute. Later it became a library and, finally, a storeroom. No one remembers when it or why it was removed. Photo is undated.

Totting up a town's capital assets

By Steve Toben

What ensures the vitality of a community like Portola Valley?

Analysts of small towns describe six kinds of capital that help a community prosper. The first is human capital — the skills and talents of individuals that can be applied to civic tasks, whether it's running the school benefit or advising town staff on a technology upgrade.

The second is social capital, the relationships among residents built on shared experience, trust, and mutual aid. A healthy store of social capital is critical for mediating the conflicts that are part and parcel of every community. You may disagree with your neighbor on whether to trim a tree on your street, but if the two of you have a history of positive interaction, the odds of satisfactorily resolving your differences are greater.

The third form of capital is political capital — the extent that residents participate actively and effectively in governing their community. Portola Valley has a long tradition of volunteer government, and residents continue to influence the policies and activities of the town through active involvement in the town's many committees and commissions.

Fourth is cultural capital, those traditions and touchstones of the town that create a sense of shared history and community identity. Events like the Town Picnic and the Blues and Barbecue all contribute to forging bonds among residents over the years.

The fifth form of capital is natural capital — the preservation of green spaces, open vistas, and native habitats that offer respite

from hectic lives. Portola Valley has long excelled at conserving and investing in its natural capital; indeed, town residents go so far as to tax themselves to enable the purchase of open space.

Last but not least comes physical capital — the infrastructure and facilities that support the private and public affairs of residents.

The new Portola Valley Town Center will build community capital in all its forms. Human capital will be enhanced by learning opportunities at the new library and community hall, with its activity rooms for children and adults.

Social capital will increase from classes shared, sports teams coached, and chance meetings in the playground and town plaza.

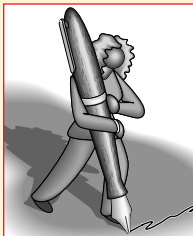
Political capital will grow from the presence of Town Hall, the seat of our government, located adjacent to the library and inviting the participation of residents in the programming of Town Center.

The performance lawn, plaza, library, and community hall will provide beautiful settings for all manner of community events, contributing to the town's cultural capital.

The demolition of the old school buildings at Town Center will open up dramatic vistas to the western hills, while the low-key new structures will occupy a smaller footprint, enhancing the town's natural capital.

And finally, the Town Center will provide a sparkling facility for all residents to enjoy — physical capital to inspire pride in a community that has chosen to invest wisely in its future.

Steve Toben is the mayor of Portola Valley.



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dra greeted them in a friendly manner, invited them to sign the roster, and checked each address carefully.

She gave each voter the choice of paper ballot or electronic voting and provided access codes as required. She monitored the scanner and answered questions directly and clearly as needed.

After the polls closed she provided a car and with another poll worker delivered the results to the receiving station. By 9 p.m. she had completed a very full day of working alongside the other workers and as a real asset to the entire team.

I write now to applaud Kendra Gilbertson for a job well done and also to thank her American government teacher, Diane Martinella, who helped inspire Kendra and over 40 other M-A students to serve at the polls. They are learning practical democracy through hands-on experience.

John B. Butcher
Inspector for Precinct 4401

Advice on ways to 'Cool It' on your own

Editor:

I read with great interest the Cooling It article in the Nov. 1 edition.

Despite being a long-time advocate of "cooling it," the arrival of an "Inconvenient Truth" challenged me to strive for more personal cuts in my own emissions, and participate in broader community programs to do the same.

While the prospect of controlling climate changes seems (and is) daunting on a global scale, when broken down to individual actions one realizes a plethora of convenient solutions exist.

Two convenient ways everyone can participate in are Acterra's Cool-It! campaign (visit www.Acterra.org) and the Green@Home project Acterra is now planning. With the Cool-It! calculator one may measure their current carbon emissions and buy green tags to offset all or part of those emissions. With Green@Home, Acterra will be training volunteers

to visit your home and perform several simple steps to reduce household energy use, along with providing additional information on further steps to reduce your overall carbon output.

The following year your Cool-It! calculation will show measurable results and a lower green tag cost.

If we all follow some basic energy saving steps, our collective action can begin to cool this planet we call home. The survival of humanity and all Earth's rich biodiversity may well depend upon it.

For more information or to participate as a Green@Home volunteer, contact Debbie Mytels at Acterra, 962-9876, ext. 302.

David Smernoff
Foxwood Road, Portola Valley

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