

MENLO-ATHERTON GIRL takes
her own life and community grieves. Page 5

The Almanac

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

MARCH 7, 2007

www.AlmanacNews.com | VOL. 42 NO. 27



'Together Again'

A new guide to
multigenerational
living is written by
Portola Valley author

— Page 14

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Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

FIRST SHOT



The Almanac/Veronica Weber

That happy feeling

No business but show business was the business of Woodside High School students Jenine Giusto, being made up, and Sabrina Garretson as they prepared backstage with 43 other cast members for the March 1 opening night of "Seussical the Musical."

Atherton

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Menlo Park

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On the cover

Sally "GiGi" Cody, center, has lived on her daughter and son-in-law Deborah and Richard Gordon's family property since retiring in 1985 and moving to their guest cottage in Woodside. She now enjoys time with her great-granddaughters, Katie Littlefield, left, and Brooke Dombkowski, right, and granddaughter, Ashley Gordon Dombkowski. Almanac photo by Veronica Weber. The story about multigenerational living begins on **Page 14**.

CALLING ON THE ALMANAC

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Tea Time

China has not only been cultivating tea since 3000 BC, it is also responsible for the myth of tea's creation. According to the tale, an ancient sage was angry with himself for falling asleep while meditating. As a penance, he cut off his eyelids and threw them away, and a tree grew on the spot where they landed. The leaves of that tree, if brewed and drunk, were said to ward off sleep. Though there are many varieties of tea, there are only three major tea types: black (the most commonly drunk here), oolong, and green teas. Black tea is graded by leaf size, not quality, and the words orange pekoe indicate that the leaves were large before processing.

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JEAN - "TEA TIME"

WINE

Exceptional Italian Wines

With one foot rooted in tradition and the other in modern winemaking, Italy's best wine makers are producing exceptional wines of quality and value. Here are a couple of producers who's wines transcend antiquated notions of Italian wines, elevating them to world class levels.

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From the Collio Euganei region of the Veneto come these fine, somewhat Bordeaux-like, reds. Such pure, balanced, sophisticated wines rarely are this affordable.

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Dialing for dollars

Firefighters have semi-heroic status in American society, but that's apparently no protection against the schemes of those e-mail-happy scammers from Nigeria.

Deputies of the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office were called to the Woodside station of the Woodside Fire Protection District on Feb. 21 to investigate "a suspicious fax" from someone claiming to be "a widow of a politician from Lebanon," said Lt. Ken Jones of the Sheriff's Office.

According to the fax, the widow had inherited \$86,000 that she wanted to invest in U.S. properties, and needed information on how to deposit the money in a U.S. bank in exchange for 20 percent of it.

A search on the phone number in the fax led to a pornography Web site and a notice of a "phishing" scam apparently out of the country of Nigeria," police said.

Deputies advised firefighters to "shred any other faxes that request bank account information and report any other suspicious messages received."

That's sound advice for anyone with a fax machine and a bank account.

World on a string

Professional yo-yo-er Helene Zeiger is set to perform at the Atherton library on Monday, March 12, at 4 p.m. The library is located at 2 Dinkelspiel Station Lane; call 328-2422.

■ CORRECTION

In the Feb. 21 story about Portola Valley Councilman Richard Merk traveling to Venezuela over the winter to watch birds, there is an error in the last name of Mr. Merk's companion and partner. The correct name is Peyton, not Senden. The Almanac regrets this error.

In the same story, the caption beneath a photo of a scarlet ibis incorrectly identifies the location of the ibis' evening gathering spot. The birds collect on trees along a river in the Venezuelan state of Apure.

Atherton basement conversions 'absolute fire traps,' says fire board member

■ Mayor calls Peter Carpenter's remarks 'irresponsible.'

By **Andrea Gemmet**
Almanac Staff Writer

Fire board member Peter Carpenter said he knows firsthand that there are illegal basement conversions in Atherton that represent a serious fire risk.

Basements built without adequate fire safety features are one of several areas of concern highlighted in last month's interim report on the Atherton Building Department issued by the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury.

The report's findings draw a corollary to management problems in the building depart-

ment and the town's policy of doing its own health and safety reviews, rather than sending building plans to be reviewed by the Menlo Park Fire Protection District.

Mr. Carpenter, the only Atherton resident who sits on the fire

Atherton mayor points out that Menlo Park doesn't submit single-family home plans to the fire district, either.

district's Board of Directors, contends that town officials approved building plans for "unimaginably large" basements as unoccupied storage

space. Basement storage space has fewer requirements for fire exits than occupied basement living space.

"Most of those basements were immediately remodeled without permits" into living spaces such as media rooms, Mr. Carpenter said in a letter to the Almanac. He called such conversions "absolute fire traps."

"I know of a number of them by my own personal knowledge, not based on my fire board role," he told the Almanac. "You don't want to fink on your friends. I told them, this is very hazardous and you shouldn't do this."

Atherton Mayor Alan Carlson called Mr. Carpenter's comments "irresponsible," and asked how building department officials are supposed to intuit which projects will later be ille-

See Peter Carpenter's and Alan Carlson's dueling opinions in Viewpoint. Page 27.

gally remodeled.

"If someone comes in with plans that indicate that a basement is for storage, then the plans are reviewed for that," Mr. Carlson said. "If someone then comes along and modifies it, there's nothing the town can do unless it's reported to the town."

Mr. Carpenter is proposing a radical solution to finding fire code scofflaws: create a joint team of town and fire district building inspectors, and use the fire district's authority under state law to conduct inspections with or without the property

See **FIRE TRAPS**, page 8

Students remember classmate

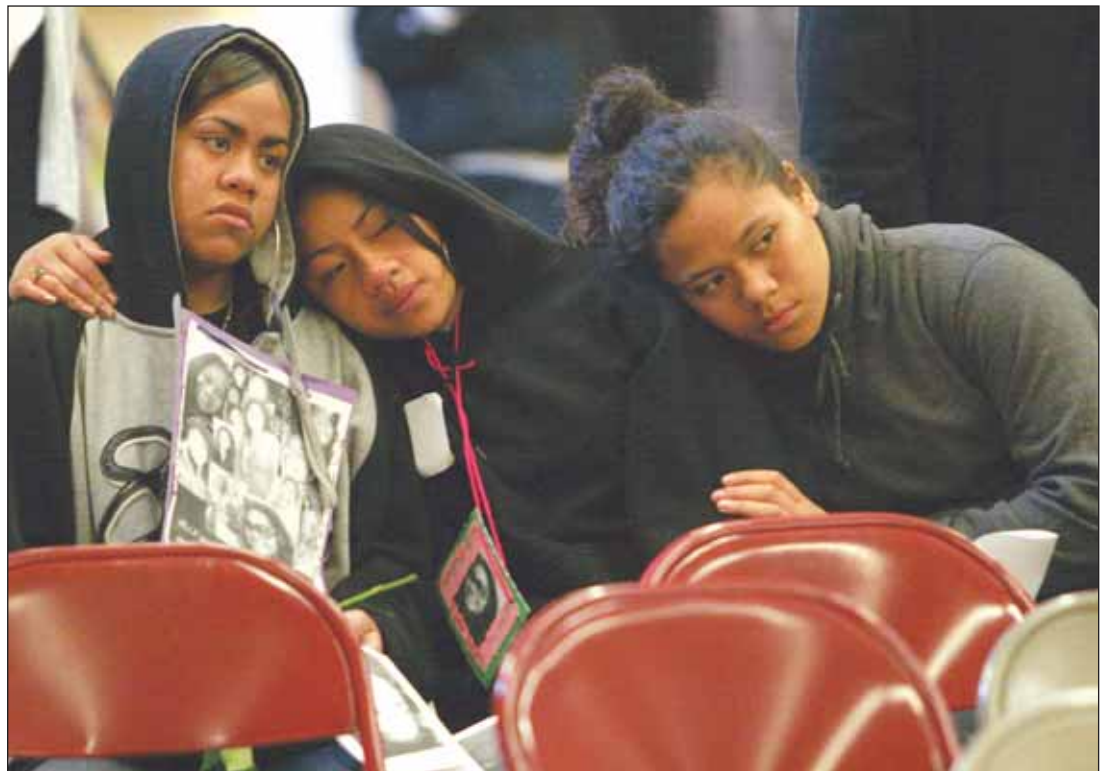
By **David Boyce**
Almanac Staff Writer

Grief-stricken friends, relatives and teachers mourned and lamented the death of 16-year-old Ophylia Mona Lisa Afuhaamango Mataele on Friday, March 3, at a tearful standing-room-only memorial service at Menlo-Atherton High School.

Ophylia, an 11th-grader at M-A, hanged herself from the back yard eaves of a house in the 1300 block of Almanor Avenue in Menlo Park on Tuesday, Feb. 27, while attending a party, said Robert Foucault, the San Mateo County Coroner. A suicide note was found, Mr. Foucault said.

Suicidal thoughts are not uncommon among teens, said Liz Schoeben, director of M-A's Adolescent Counseling Services, a nonprofit group based in Palo Alto that offers free psychotherapy at M-A. Suicide is the third leading cause of death among teens, after accidental death and drug and alcohol abuse, she said.

Ophylia's death stunned the Tongan community and people of Polynesian ancestry throughout East Palo Alto and nearby sections



The Almanac/Veronica Weber

Menlo-Atherton High School students hug each other during a memorial service for Ophylia Mona Lisa Afuhaamango Mataele on Friday.

of Menlo Park, said family spokesman Steve Teu. "She fooled me because of her smile," he said. "No one expected this, especially from her. She was very popular. But, as we all know now, she was alone in the crowd."

Black-clad student mourners packed the J Building on the M-A campus, and some came to the microphone and spoke.

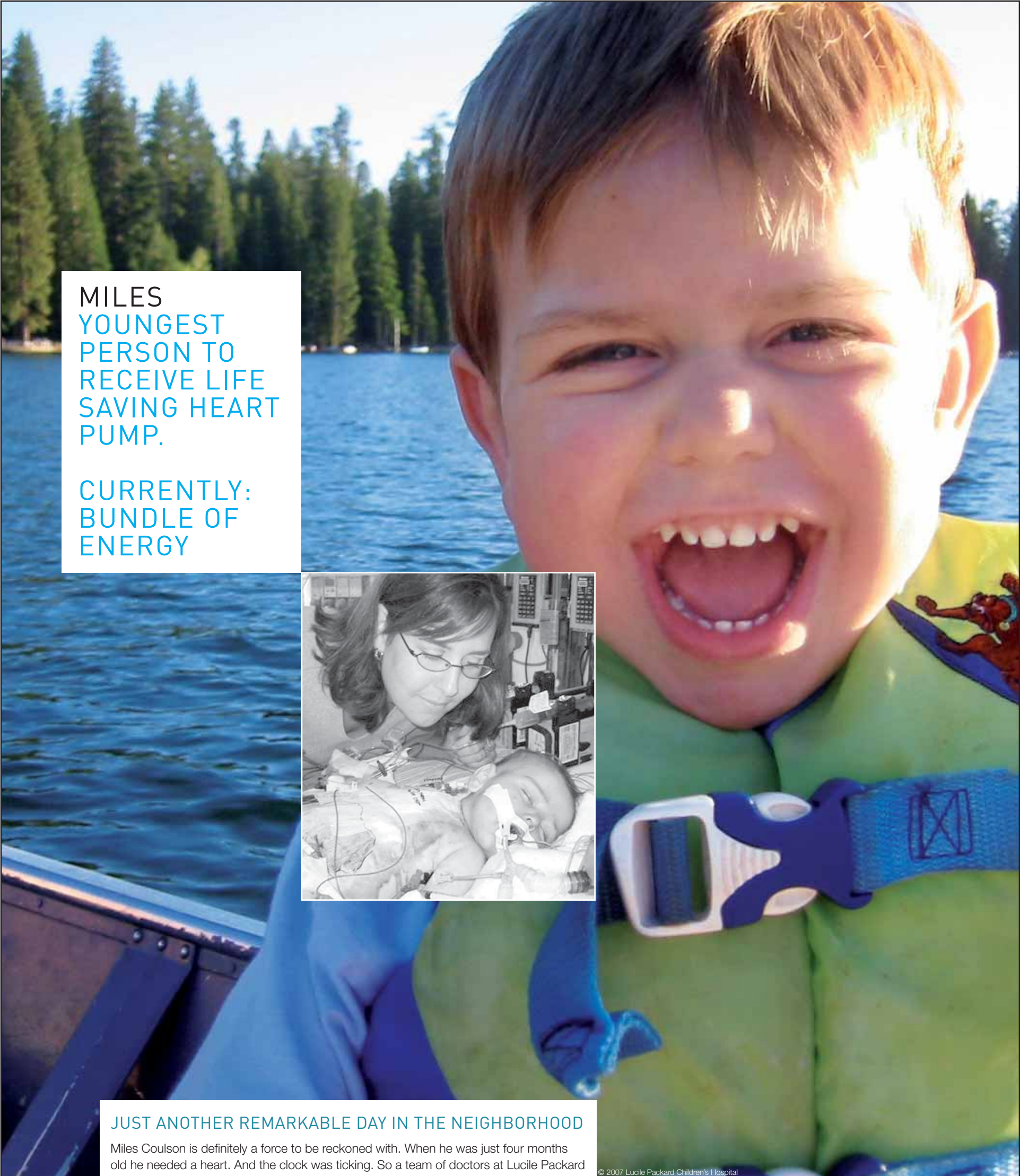
Amid tears, Mele Teu recalled her need for comfort upon learning of her mother's diagnosis of breast cancer, and the silence from friends and relatives except Ophylia. "You need someone to be there for you, and who was there for me? Mona Lisa," Mele said, using her friend's middle name.

Guitarist DeBraun Thomas played a soulful tune he said he

composed for his friend.

She was a force at M-A, playing a vibrant game of soccer and as a mover and shaker in the school's Polynesian Club. Her efforts raised participation among students and parents. "She was the person who challenged us as Polynesians to

See **SUICIDE**, page 8



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'Thoroughly Modern Millie'

Peninsula Youth Theatre presents "Thoroughly Modern Millie" March 10-18 at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts. Shown stepping out on the town are, from left, Emma Wiszowaty of Portola Valley, Arielle Fishman of Palo Alto, Connor Smith of Los Altos, and Roxanna Meyers of Menlo Park. For ticket prices and show times, go to www.pyt.net or call 903-6000.

Students do have homework in MP schools

By Marjorie Mader

Almanac Staff Writer

When the national media reaches out to grab a local angle to hype a high-profile issue — such as homework — sometimes they get it wrong.

That's what happened last week, according to the superintendent of the Menlo Park City School District.

Contrary to CBS Evening News with Katie Couric and other television and newspaper reports, "neither the district nor Oak Knoll School has banned homework," said Superintendent Ken Ranella. "These media reports have unfortunately misrepresented the district and the school."

School board President Terry Thygesen also weighed in, charging that the news coverage "completely misrepresents what's going on at Oak Knoll in the district."

The district has a homework policy, said Ms. Thygesen, and homework is an essential part of a well-developed instructional

To read the letter on homework policy by Oak Knoll Principal David Ackerman, go to AlmanacNews.com, and under the "Local News" column, click on this headline: "Oak Knoll principal's letter on homework policy."

program. The district's current homework policy is available on the district's Web site: mpcsd.org; click on News & Info, and download homework policy.

Why the confusion?

A Sept. 5, 2006, letter from Oak Knoll Principal David Ackerman to parents titled "The Future of Homework" apparently was seized upon on by unknown advocates in the school community's pro-homework and anti-homework camps and spread through the e-mail grapevine to authenticate their differing views.

Shortly after Mr. Ackerman's letter went out, Newsweek magazine came out with a cover story about kids' having too much homework and being stressed,

Ms. Thygesen said.

Mr. Ackerman's letter, after a philosophical introduction, focuses on how teachers and parents will work to support the district's homework policies.

Some of the priorities at Oak Knoll, according to the letter, are: promote reading of the child's choice, provide only weekly homework packets that are based on individual student's needs, keep homework time within the district's maximum time set for each grade, and assign homework other than reading when a specific need arises or when it's necessary to practice a skill or complete important work.

Several years ago, trustees took a long look at the district's homework policy, held several public meetings about it, and revised the policy; the revised policy has been in place since January 2004.

The current policy discusses the purposes of homework, sets maximum amounts of homework by grade-level, and encourages teachers to meet their instructional goals with less than the maximum minutes. ■

Tom Chapin sings in family concert

Folk singer Tom Chapin returns Sunday afternoon, March 11, to give another family concert at Foothill College as a benefit for "Music for Minors," a volunteer program that brings music education to children in local schools.

The concerts start at 1 p.m. and 4 p.m. in Smithwick Theatre at Foothill College, located

off Interstate 280 at 280 El Monte Road in Los Altos Hills.

Mr. Chapin, a three-time Grammy winner, sings original songs for the whole family from age 4 and up. He encourages everyone to be kind to each other, said Diane Tokheim of Menlo Park, president of People of Note, which raises funds for music education programs.

Dennis and Linda Ronberg of Menlo Park, owners of Linden Tree Books, are sponsoring the concert, and all profits will go to "Music for Minors."

Tickets at \$12 for general admission may be purchased in advance at Linden Tree Books, 170 State St. in Los Altos; by calling 949-3390; or online at www.lindentreebooks.com. Tickets will also be sold at the door.

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Preparing Your Home For Sale

Q: We are planning to retire and move in a few years and want to know what we should do to prepare our house for sale. The property is well-located, attractive and comfortable, but the kitchen and bathrooms could use updating. What do you suggest we do to make it most appealing to buyers?

A: If your house is in a good location you probably don't need to do anything to sell it in a few years. The lot value will grow in value if the overall market appreciates and you will benefit from this even if you don't make any improvements.

However, if you do decide to update the property you will most likely get back more than you invest in these

projects if the design and quality is good and you don't over-improve for the area. Be sure to engage a good architect and/or designer to plan your improvements so that they have aesthetic and structural integrity.

Many buyers prefer to buy a house that is in move-in condition rather than one that needs updating. Most have stretched to buy a house and don't have additional resources to spend on remodeling. They are willing to pay a premium for a finished house.

In addition to making your property more appealing to potential buyers, by renovating now, you will get to enjoy living in more attractive surroundings for the remaining time you live there. Why shouldn't you have some of this pleasure?

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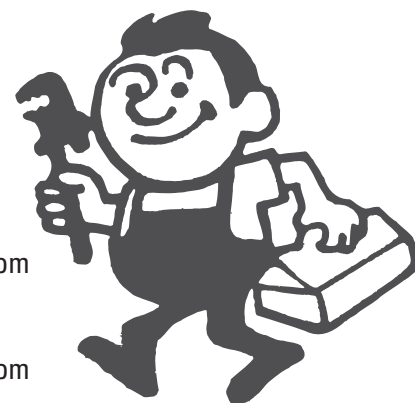
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Parents form task force on after-school child care

By Rory Brown
Almanac Staff Writer

Parents calling for the Menlo Park City School District to provide on-campus space for child care services by the fall got some bad news last week: Superintendent Ken Ranella said there's no way local schools can provide such space for at least two years.

Now, parents have formed a task force to figure out where new after-school child care services could set up shop in Menlo Park, and how to get those services up and running before the fall.

"If we're going to solve [the child care shortage], we need to solve it by the first part of June, so parents have more options before classes start," said parent Katherine Bailey, chair of the new task force.

No room at schools

Ms. Bailey and some 40 other people — many of whom have children entering kindergarten this fall — met with Mr. Ranella and Menlo Park City Council members Kelly Fergusson and John Boyle on Feb. 26 to discuss the city's shortage of child care options.

Many parents went into the meeting with the suggestion that the school district put portables on campuses to house after-school child care, but Mr. Ranella said that's not an option

as the district embarks on two years of campus renovations.

"We didn't pass a \$90 million bond to pull more portables onto our campuses," Mr. Ranella said. "The schools aren't going to be able to help you with the immediate problem. ... There's just no way to get child care on our campuses by the fall."

The district's renovation plans don't call for permanent after-school child care facilities on any campuses, but Mr. Ranella said those plans could change, depending on community input.

Parents said a parent-led task force should study sites such as local commercial properties, Flood School, and Holbrook-Palmer Park in Atherton, and determine if the sites could house temporary child care services.

Another idea floated at the meeting was busing children to the Belle Haven after-school program, which currently has room for 18 more children, according to city staff, although none of the current openings are for kindergarteners, the age level many parents have said is the most difficult to find child care for.

Ms. Bailey said she hopes local school and city officials join the task force. Ms. Fergusson and Mr. Boyle said they plan on updating fellow council members about the new task force, and discussing the child care shortage, at a future meeting. ■



The Almanac/Veronica Weber

Students lay flowers on an altar following a memorial service at the school for Ophylia Mona Lisa Afuhaamango Mataele.

SUICIDE

continued from page 5

come out to M-A to support their Polynesian Club," said Sela Teu, Mr. Teu's wife.

Mr. Teu said Ophylia, who took advanced-standing and advanced-placement classes, had had good grades until recently. "In the end, I was not aware of her grades falling," he said. "She had such a big heart and smile, every time it would sidetrack me. She'd smile and you would think 'She's OK.' She was very strong."

M-A offers help

Ophylia's smile may have fooled even a professional. "We're not predictors of human behavior," said Ms. Schoeben of the school's counseling service.

A diagnosis of clinical depression is a red flag and can be helpful, she said, but "that still doesn't mean they're going to do it (and

a kid can commit suicide with no red flags."

About one in every eight adolescents experience clinical depression, she said, referring to statistics from an October 2002 story in Newsweek magazine.

Ms. Schoeben said the M-A community — both students and teachers — alerts her to troubled students, some of whom reveal their anxieties in text messages or assigned essays.

Are teens more vulnerable? They have fewer coping skills, she said. As an adult, "I have learned that I can do other things besides take my own life (but) they're young."

When a student catches their attention, counseling staff at M-A get right to the point, asking students questions designed to gauge how far along the path

toward suicide they are, and why they haven't gone further.

Ms. Schoeben said she calls the ambulance about three times a school year. These students are hospitalized — maybe for an hour, or a week or two weeks — and evaluated by a psychiatrist.

Being hauled off in an ambulance has a message: "I can't trust your judgment right now because you're sad. When you start to feel better, you can make your own decisions again."

The Adolescent Counseling Service is putting together a letter for parents in the wake of Ophylia's death. ■



Ophylia from memorial program.

■ INFORMATION

For more information — for both teens and parents — go to www.acs-teens.org or call the Palo Alto office at 424-0852. To reach Ms. Schoeben, call 322-5311, ext. 5186.

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FIRE TRAPS

continued from page 5

owner's consent. He said he plans to present his inspection team idea at the next fire district board of directors meeting.

Fire safety review

Mr. Carlson has criticized the grand jury report and staunchly defended Atherton and its right to do its own health and safety reviews of building plans.

Under the law, the responsibility for reviewing plans for health and safety codes is the town's responsibility unless it formally delegates that responsibility to its fire department, Mr. Carlson said.

"The fire district never asked

for a delegation of that authority. So that answers that," he said.

As for local examples, Mr. Carlson points to the city of Menlo Park, which also does not submit single-family home plans to the fire district for review. The fire protection district includes Atherton, Menlo Park, East Palo Alto and some unincorporated neighborhoods.

"That's what Menlo Park does, so Menlo Park must also be in violation," he said.

In fact, on that one point, Mr. Carpenter is in agreement with Mr. Carlson.

"Two wrongs don't make a right," Mr. Carpenter said. "Both Atherton and Menlo Park have failed to fulfill their responsibility to their citizens."

"The fundamental issue is that (both towns) perceive the district as an irritant rather than as part of their team," he said.

Mr. Carpenter contends that, over the years, fire district officials have repeatedly approached Atherton about reviewing building plans.

"The town of Atherton has consistently rebuffed us, and now Mr. Carlson has the gall to say that they never asked," he said.

Speaking by phone from New York, Mr. Carpenter said he did not have specifics on which town officials the district made its request to, but said he believed it was the town's building official.

The safety of residents in both Atherton and Menlo Park would

be better served by having the fire district review all building plans, Mr. Carpenter said.

In the wake of the grand jury report, Atherton officials said the town is currently sending all its building plans to the district, and a joint meeting between the City Council and the district's board of directors is in the works. Atherton officials said that at the yet-to-be scheduled meeting, they will work with the district to hash out a mutually agreeable policy on building plan reviews, as well as other issues.

The interim grand jury report, released Feb. 7, calls for immediate action to address health and safety issues in the town's homebuilding projects, stemming from the building department's

management problems under former building official Mike Hood. The report contends that many building plans were not reviewed for fire safety, and recommends that Atherton immediately submit all building plans approved during Mr. Hood's 11-year tenure to the fire district to be retroactively reviewed.

Atherton council members, responding publicly to the grand jury report at the Feb. 21 council meeting, objected to going through hundreds of old building plans, and said if the fire district wanted to conduct such an extensive review, it should pay for it.

District officials said they are willing to do the plan reviews, but they expect Atherton to cover the cost. ■

Mayor invites public to join global warming task force

Menlo Park Mayor Kelly Fergusson is encouraging all people interested in joining her global warming task force to attend the group's first meeting on Wednesday, March 14.

The meeting will be held in the basement of the Menlo Park Library at 800 Alma St, from 4 to 6 p.m.

All five council members have voiced their support for cutting greenhouse gas emissions and addressing global warming at the local level, but council members John Boyle and Andy Cohen have questioned whether Ms. Fergusson's task force — which is

not required to abide by the state's open meeting laws — is the best approach to tackling the issue.

Both councilmen said a council-appointed group, which would be legally required to hold public meetings, could incorporate more input from the entire community.

But Ms. Fergusson said the task force will be transparent in its actions and discussions. She also said all task force meetings will be open to the public, although it is unclear how the public will be notified of scheduled meetings.

"Everybody who wants to work on this important project is welcome [at the meeting], Ms.

Fergusson said. "This is an opportunity for broad participation by interested community members to address global warming."

Ms. Fergusson is also scheduled to make several joint presentations about the benefits of solar power with the CEO of Foster City-based SolarCity, a solar power installation and service company.

Those presentations are scheduled for March 11 at 5:30 p.m. and March 17 at 5 p.m. Both presentations will be held in the council chambers at the Civic Center, between Laurel and Alma streets.

MP council plans to set priorities March 6

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

Resurfacing city streets, preparing to build a new Burgess Gym, and reimagining El Camino Real are among the projects Menlo Park city staff has proposed the City Council endorse for the fiscal year that starts July 1.

The council plans to consider at its March 6 meeting 46 potential projects — 26 of which are recommended by staff — to take on in the next fiscal year.

The meeting is set to start at 7 p.m. in the council chambers at the Civic Center, between Laurel and Alma streets.

Some of the more costly proposed projects are aimed at maintaining the city's infrastructure; they include resurfacing city streets at a cost of about

\$4.6 million, sidewalk repairs costing \$300,000, and storm drain improvements costing \$150,000.

Proposed projects for the community services department include devoting \$1.25 million to begin planning and obtaining permits to renovate the Burgess Gym; and a study to determine whether artificial turf and lights could be added to Burgess and Kelly parks to increase use of sports fields on those sites. That study would cost about \$40,000, according to staff.

El Camino Real

Staff has also recommended the council take on the daunting task of coming up with, and implementing, a plan to revamp properties along El Camino Real and Santa Cruz Avenue.

The cost and scope of such a

project are still undefined, but staff has estimated that a planning study of the area would cost \$500,000, and a full-blown environmental impact report would cost about \$1 million.

Other projects recommended by staff include studies to make the University Drive-Menlo Avenue and Linfield Drive-Middlefield Road intersections safer for pedestrians.

Some of the projects on the list, but not prioritized by staff, include creating "safe route to school" plans for children who walk and bike to Encinal and Oak Knoll schools.

To see the complete list, and what city staff recommends the council endorse for the next fiscal year, go to MenloPark.org, click on "City Council," and select the March 6 meeting agenda. ■

School board expected to approve Hillview design option

Superintendent Ken Ranella of the Menlo Park City School District will recommend to the school board Tuesday, March 6, a design option for rebuilding Hillview Middle School.

He will ask the board to approve the design option that night and

authorize the initiation of processes for "planning educational and operational specifications and environmental review."

The meeting is set to start at 7 p.m. in the multipurpose room at the Hillview Middle School, 100 Elder Ave. in Menlo Park.

The school board has already indicated it favors a plan to build all-new facilities — including three wings of two-story classroom buildings — on what is now the playing field, and then tear down all of the existing facilities, except the multi-use building. The space where classrooms are located now would become a four-acre playing field and hard-court area.

The superintendent had said he would look further at another option: demolishing the existing Hillview buildings and then

developing a new Hillview on the razed site. This option involves moving portable buildings on the existing playfield and developing an interim campus to be used during construction.

Board president Terry Thygesen said the board plans to review and take comments on the additional analyses at the March 6 meeting.

Conceptual site plans proposed for both Laurel and Encinal schools will be presented at a public meeting on Tuesday, March 13, at 7 p.m. in the Encinal School library at 195 Encinal Ave. in Atherton.

A public meeting on conceptual site plans for Oak Knoll School is scheduled for 7 p.m. Monday, March 19, in the Oak Knoll School library at 1895 Oak Knoll Lane in Menlo Park.



NOTICE OF PUBLIC STUDY SESSION FOR 1300 EL CAMINO REAL

CITY OF MENLO PARK CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF MARCH 13, 2007

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

General Plan Amendment, Zoning Ordinance Amendment, Rezoning, Planned Development Permit, Major Subdivision, Development Agreement, and Environmental Review/Sand Hill Property Company/1300 El Camino Real:

Requests for the following:

- 1) General Plan Amendment* to modify the El Camino Real land use designation and the associated land use intensity tables to allow the density for residential uses to exceed the base density of 18.5 dwelling units per acre (du/ac) and to allow the intensity to exceed the overall floor area ratio (FAR) on this property;
- 2) Zoning Ordinance Amendment to modify Chapter 16.57 P-D District to allow the density for residential uses to exceed the base density of 18.5 du/ac and to allow intensity to exceed the overall floor area ratio (FAR) requirements of the pre-existing zoning designation on this property;
- 3) Rezoning the property from C-4 General Commercial District (Applicable to El Camino Real) to P-D District;
- 4) Planned Development Permit to establish specific development regulations and architectural designs for the demolition of existing commercial structures associated with the former car dealership and the construction of:
 - 134 residential units at a density of 40 du/ac where 18.5 du/ac is the maximum density permitted by the pre-existing zoning designation;
 - Approximately 41,500 square feet of retail space and 39,500 square feet of office space for a total of 81,000 square feet;
 - An approximate residential FAR of 110 percent and commercial FAR of 55 percent for a total FAR of 165 percent where 75 percent is the maximum FAR permitted by the pre-existing zoning designation;
 - Three- and four-story building elements with a maximum building height of 56 feet where 30 feet is the maximum building height permitted by the pre-existing zoning designation;
 - 560 parking spaces in an at-grade and below-grade parking structure where 754 parking spaces would be required by the pre-existing zoning designation; and
- 5) Major Subdivision to merge six existing lots and create eight commercial and 134 residential condominium units;
- 6) Development Agreement to guarantee development rights associated with the requested entitlements; and
- 7) Environmental Impact Report to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the proposal.

*This request assumes that this project may not be able to utilize the General Plan Amendment approved as part of the Derry project.

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that said City Council will hold a public meeting on this item in the Council Chambers of the City of Menlo Park, located at 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, on Tuesday, March 13 2007, 7:00 p.m. or as near as possible thereafter, at which time and place interested persons may appear and be heard thereon.

Documents related to these items may be inspected by the public on weekdays between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday, with alternate Fridays closed, at the Department of Community Development, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park. Please call Megan Fisher, Associate Planner, at (650) 330-6737 or email at mefisher@menlopark.org if you have any questions or comments. In addition, you can receive periodic updates regarding this project by subscribing to the project page on the City's website at http://www.menlopark.org/projects/comdev_1300ecr.htm.

DATED: February 28, 2007

Silvia M. Vonderlinden, City Clerk

PUBLISHED: March 7, 2007

Visit our Web site for public hearing, agenda, and staff report information: <http://www.menlopark.org>

Published in THE COUNTRY ALMANAC on March 7, 2007.

■ CORRECTION

In the Feb. 28 issue of the Almanac, a story on the Feb. 19 fundraiser for Democratic presidential candidate Sen. Barack Obama, D-Illinois, incorrectly said that fewer than 10 Portola Valley residents attended. The event included about 100 residents and more would have come had it not been held over a ski weekend, said co-host Danna Breen.



**CITY OF MENLO PARK
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

ENGINEERING DIVISION

**NOTICE TO BIDDERS FOR
SAND HILL ROAD: SANTA CRUZ AVE TO 280 HIGHWAY ENTRANCE
RESURFACING PROJECT- STP 2005-06
FEDERAL PROJECT NO. STPL 5273 (016)
CITY PROJECT NO. 20-016**

1. **BID OPENING.** The bidder shall complete and submit the blue copy of the Proposal to the City Council form that is inserted in the Contract Documents. No other copy of the Proposal Section will be accepted. Sealed bids, containing said blue copies of the completed Proposal Section, and subject to the conditions named herein and in the specifications **SAND HILL ROAD: SANTA CRUZ AVE TO 280 HIGHWAY ENTRANCE RESURFACING PROJECT-STP 2005-06**, addressed to the City of Menlo Park will be received at the office of the Engineering Division up to **2:00 p.m., Wednesday, March 28, 2007**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read.

2. **WORK DESCRIPTION.** The work to be done consists of repair of failed pavement sections and asphalt concrete resurfacing of Sand Hill Road at various blocks bounded between Santa Cruz Avenue towards 280 Freeway entrance, including area grind, installation of striping and pavement markings; and doing all appurtenant work in place and ready for use, all as shown on the plans and described in the specifications with the title indicated in paragraph 1 above, and on file in the Office of the Director of Engineering Services. Reference to said plans and specifications is hereby made for further particulars.

3. **WORKING DAYS.** The work under this Contract is to be completed in **fifty (50)** working days.

4. **CONTRACTOR'S LICENSE.** A Class "A" Contractor's License is required for this work. No bid will be accepted from a Contractor who has not been licensed in accordance with Chapter 9, Division 3 of the Business and Professional Code.

5. **BID DEPOSIT.** A Bid Deposit equals to at least ten percent (10%) of the total amount of the bid shall be placed in the sealed proposal. The Bid Deposit shall be in one of the following forms: cash, cashier's check or certified check payable to the City, or bidder's bond in favor of the City executed by an authorized surety company.

6. **PERFORMANCE BONDS.** Performance guaranty bonds as set forth in Section 4-3 of the Special Provisions will be required from the successful bidder.

7. **CITY'S RIGHT TO REJECT BIDS.** The right is reserved, as the interest of the City may require, to reject any or all bids, or to waive any informality or minor irregularity in the bids.

8. **GENERAL PREVAILING WAGE RATES.** Pursuant to Section 1773 of the Labor Code, the general prevailing wage rates in the county, or counties, in which the work is to be done have been determined by the Director of the California Department of Industrial Relations. These wages are set forth in the General Prevailing Wage Rates for this project, available at City of Menlo Park, 701 Laurel Street, CA 94025 and available from the California Department of Industrial Relations' Internet web site at <http://www.dir.ca.gov>.

9. The Federal minimum wage rates for this project as predetermined by the United States Secretary of Labor are set forth in the books issued for bidding purposes entitled "Proposal and Contract," and in copies of this book that may be examined at the offices described above where project plans, special provisions, and proposal forms may be seen. Addenda to modify the Federal minimum wage rates, if necessary, will be issued to holders of "Proposal and Contract" books. Future effective general prevailing wage rates, which have been predetermined and are on file with the California Department of Industrial Relations are referenced but not printed in the general prevailing wage rates.

Attention is directed to the Federal minimum wage rate requirements in the books entitled "Proposal and Contract." If there is a difference between the minimum wage rates predetermined by the Secretary of Labor and the general prevailing wage rates determined by the Director of the California Department of Industrial Relations for similar classifications of labor, the Contractor and subcontractors shall pay not less than the higher wage rate. The Department will not accept lower State wage rates not specifically included in the Federal minimum wage determinations. This includes "helper" (or other classifications based on hours of experience) or any other classification not appearing in the Federal wage determinations. Where Federal wage determinations do not contain the State wage rate determination otherwise available for use by the Contractor and subcontractors, the Contractor and subcontractors shall pay not less than the Federal minimum wage rate which most closely approximates the duties of the employees in question.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) provides a toll-free "hotline" service to report bid rigging activities. Bid rigging activities can be reported Mondays through Fridays, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., eastern time, Telephone No. 1-800-424-9071. Anyone with knowledge of possible bid rigging, bidder collusion, or other fraudulent activities should use the "hotline" to report these activities. The "hotline" is part of the DOT's continuing effort to identify and investigate highway construction contract fraud and abuse and is operated under the direction of the DOT Inspector General. All information will be treated confidentially and caller anonymity will be respected.

10. **OBTAINING THE PROJECT PLANS AND CONTRACT BOOK.** The project plans and the Contract Documents may be purchased at the Engineering Division upon payment of \$40.00 for each set. Project plans and the Contract Book will be mailed to prospective bidders upon payment of \$40.00 plus \$10.00 for postage and handling.

11. **OBTAINING THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION SPECIFICATIONS.** The State of California Department of Transportation Standard Specifications and Standard Plans may be purchased at the State of California Department of Transportation Publication Distribution Unit, 1900 Royal Oaks Drive, Sacramento, CA 95819; Telephone: (916) 445-3520; Fax: (916) 324-8997.

12. **WITHDRAWAL OF PROPOSALS.** Any bid may be withdrawn at any time prior to the time fixed in the public notice for the opening of bids only by written request for the withdrawal of the bid filed with the Director of Engineering Services. The request shall be executed by the bidder or his/her duly authorized representative. The withdrawal of a bid does not prejudice the right of the bidder to file a new bid. Whether or not bids are opened exactly at the time fixed in the public notice for opening bids, a bid will not be received after that time nor may any bid be withdrawn after the time fixed in the public notice for opening of bids.

13. **RELIEF OF BIDDERS.** As stated in Public Contract Code Sections 5100 to 5108, inclusive (State Contract Act) concerning relief of bidders and in particular to the requirement therein, that if the bidder claims a mistake was made in his/her bid, the bidder shall give the Director of Engineering Services written notice within five (5) days after the opening of the bids of the alleged mistake, specifying in the notice in detail how the mistake occurred.

14. **DISQUALIFICATION OF BIDDERS.** More than one proposal from an individual, firm, partnership, corporation, or combination thereof under the same or different names will not be considered. Reasonable grounds for believing that any individual, firm, partnership, corporation or combination thereof is interested in more than one proposal for the work contemplated may cause the rejection of all proposals in which such individual, firm, partnership, corporation or combination thereof is interested. If there is reason for believing that collusion exists among the bidders, any or all proposals may be rejected. Proposals in which the prices obviously are unbalanced may be rejected.

15. **PREVIOUS DISQUALIFICATION, REMOVAL OR OTHER PREVENTION OF BIDDING.** A bid may be rejected on the basis of a bidder, any officer of such bidder, or any employee of such bidder who has a proprietary interest in such bidder, having been disqualified, removed, or otherwise prevented from bidding on, or completing a federal, state, or local project because of a violation of law or a safety regulation.

16. **RESPONSIBILITY FOR VERIFYING CONTRACT ADDENDA.** All bidders shall verify if any addenda for this project have been issued by the City of Menlo Park. It is the bidder's responsibility to ensure that all requirements of Contract addenda are included in the bidder's proposal.

17. **ESCROW FOR SECURITY DEPOSIT IN OF RETENTION.** Pursuant to Public Contract Code Section 22300, for monies earned by the Contractor and withheld by the City to ensure the performance of the Contract, the Contractor, may, at its option, choose to substitute securities meeting the requirements of said Public Contract Code Section 22300.

18. **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION.** Each prime and subcontract bidder will be required to comply with the City of Menlo Park Affirmative Action Program as set forth in Council Resolution No. 2340. Guidelines and report forms are provided with the Contract Documents and shall be considered part of any Contract made pursuant thereto.

19. **MINORITY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM.** Prime Contractors must submit their Minority Employment Program (MEP) to the Director of Engineering Services with their bids. Subcontractors must submit their MEP reports within six (6) calendar days after the bid opening.

20. **DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES (DBE). Bidders are advised that, as required by federal law, the State has established a statewide overall DBE goal.** This Agency federal-aid contract is considered to be part of the statewide overall DBE goal. The City of Menlo Park is required to report to Caltrans on DBE participation for all Federal-aid contracts each year so that attainment efforts may be evaluated. The City of Menlo Park hereby notifies all bidders that it will affirmatively insure that in any contract entered into pursuant to this advertisement, disadvantaged business enterprises will be afforded full opportunity to submit bids in response to this invitation and will not be discriminated against on the grounds of race, color, religion, national origin, ancestry, place of birth, sex, sexual orientation, age, or disability in consideration for an award. Bidders need not achieve the percentage stated in any DBE Availability Advisory as a condition of award. This project has an Availability Advisory of 9% percent disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) participation.

21. **BUY AMERICA PROVISIONS.** This project is subjected to the "BUY AMERICA" provisions of the Surface Assistance Act of 1982 as amended by the intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act Of 1991

Dated: March 5, 2007
Published in THE COUNTRY ALMANAC on March 7, 14, 2007.

Derry referendum: Parties agree to use mediator

■ MENLO WATCH

The developer behind the suspended Derry condo-commercial project and the Menlo Park residents who led a successful referendum campaign against the development have agreed to use a mediator to help negotiate a compromise that would result in a new project, said Morris Brown, the project's leading opponent.

Mediation is planned for March 16 to 19, Mr. Brown said.

It's been almost five months since Mr. Brown's group, Menlo Park Tomorrow, submitted more than the required 1,850 signatures to halt the project, which includes plans for 135 condominiums and 22,500 square feet of commercial space on a 3.4-acre site off Oak Grove Avenue near El Camino Real.

Instead of voting to kill the project or put it to the voters, the City Council opted, in November, to let the two groups try to negotiate a new project.

The developer, the San Mateo-based O'Brien Group, and Menlo

Park Tomorrow have not disclosed any details of the negotiations.

Project opponents said the original development would be too dense and would significantly impact traffic and schools.

No decision on Acorn site

The Menlo Park City Council postponed a decision on a proposal to build a two-story, 9,825-square-foot building for medical and dental offices at the site of the former Acorn restaurant at 1906 El Camino Real.

The council voted 4-1 to refer the matter back to the Planning Commission for additional input on the design of the project. Councilman Andy Cohen voted against sending it back to the commission, but did not explain his vote.

The project will return to the council after it is reviewed by the commission, said City Attorney Bill McClure.

Trial starts in kidnap-murder case

Opening statements could begin this week in the trial of a Fresno man allegedly hired by a Menlo Park jewelry store owner to kidnap, rape and murder a former female employee who refused the store owner's romantic overtures, according to San Mateo County Chief Deputy District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe.

According to prosecutors, Alfonso Cuevas Gonzalez, 40, was hired in 2005 by Ricardo Zambrano, 37, also of Fresno and the owner of a jewelry store located inside Mi Rancho Market in Menlo Park, to abduct the woman and take her to Fresno, where she was to be raped and then killed, Mr. Wagstaffe said.

Mr. Zambrano had reportedly fired the woman, who was in her

20s according to Mr. Wagstaffe, earlier that year after she refused his advances. The woman went on to work at another store in the same market, where on the afternoon of June 10, as she was leaving work, Mr. Gonzalez allegedly kidnapped her at gunpoint as she walked to her car, the district attorney's office reported.

Mr. Gonzalez then reportedly drove the woman to Fresno, where another person, as-yet unidentified by prosecutors, helped her to escape. Police were notified and Mr. Gonzalez was arrested in Fresno, according to the district attorney's office.

Mr. Zambrano was arrested in Fresno on July 22.

See TRIAL, next page

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directions, prices, and news:

www.menloswim.com

Preparing for the move

Sue Landsittel, associate conservation project manager of the Peninsula Open Space Trust, packs away her paperwork to prepare for POST's move from its longtime quarters on Sand Hill Road in Menlo Park to its new digs in Palo Alto. The nonprofit land trust expected to complete its move by March 5. Its new headquarters is at 222 High St., the former home of the Foundation for Global Community, which sold the building to POST last year.



The Almanac/Veronica Weber

MP workers 'very happy' with pension boost

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park's 193 salaried, non-safety employees won a 35 percent pension benefit increase as the City Council unanimously approved two new labor contracts on Feb. 27.

Under the contracts, employees will receive the increased pension benefit starting in March 2009. In return, workers have agreed to minimal pay increases: no increase in the current fiscal year ending June 30; 1 percent in the next fiscal year; and 2 percent in the year after that.

The contracts expire in October 2009.

The council, also unanimously, decided to postpone a vote on whether to authorize up to a 4 percent salary increase for the city's executive managers — the assistant city manager and department heads.

"We're very happy with our contract, and we're very happy the council decided to think about the [executive] managers' 4 percent [salary] increase," said Keith McLeod, a steward for the Service Employees International Union Local 715.

The pay raise for top management has been a sore point with labor unions representing city employees, because the executive staff would receive the pension benefit increase without sacrificing salary increases, as the unionized employees have agreed to do.

Council members said top management deserved to be fairly compensated, but agreed that the staff report authored by Personnel Director Glen Kramer didn't provide enough comparative data concerning how much managers in other cities are paid.

our future so we can look good this year and next year."

Under the contracts, employee pension benefit levels will increase from the "2 percent at 55" plan to a "2.7 percent at 55" system.

The new plan will allow a city employee to retire at age 55 with 2.7 percent of his or her top salary annually for every year of service. For example, an employee with 30 years of service could retire at age 55 and receive 81 percent (30 years x 2.7 percent) of his or her highest salary for life.

Councilman John Boyle said the city should avoid drastic "catch-up" salary increases once the contracts expire in order to retain savings associated with the labor deals.

Mr. McLeod told the Almanac that employees expect substantial pay increases once the contracts expire. ■

Pension hike

The new employee contracts defer major immediate costs to the city, but resident Chuck Bernstein said there will be drastic economic effects once the increased pension benefit goes into effect.

"Who the heck is making decisions in this city?" he said to the council. "You're mortgaging

TRIAL

continued from previous page

Both men are charged with conspiracy to commit murder, conspiracy to commit rape, kidnapping for the purpose of rape, and kidnapping during a carjacking. Attempted murder charges were dismissed earlier by the court because of insufficient evidence, Mr. Wagstaffe said.

Mr. Gonzalez is also charged with felony threats, and Mr. Zambrano with felony false imprisonment and threatening a witness, according to Mr. Wagstaffe.

Each could receive a sentence of at least 40 years to life in prison if convicted, Mr. Wagstaffe said.

Jury selection in Mr. Gonzalez's trial began last week. The victim and those involved in her escape are expected to testify against Mr. Gonzalez, Mr. Wagstaffe said.

Mr. Zambrano's trial is scheduled to begin on March 12. Both men remain in custody on no-bail status.

— Bay City News Service

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WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT RESOLUTION NO. 1608 (2007)

RESOLUTION OF INTENTION TO ANNEX CERTAIN TERRITORY TO THE WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT ON-SITE WASTEWATER DISPOSAL ZONE

Lands of Buchsbaum, Tidmarsh and Moulds

The District Board of West Bay Sanitary District finds and determines as follows:

A. This Resolution of Intention is adopted pursuant to the District's "Zone Master Annexation Resolution" ("ZOMAR"), which was adopted by the District Board on August 12, 1996. The provisions of ZOMAR are incorporated by reference into this Resolution of Intention.

B. The District has received an application to annex parcels of real property (the "Parcels") to the District's On-Site Wastewater Disposal Zone (the "Zone"). The Parcels are described in Exhibits "A, 1-4" attached to this Resolution of Intention and the description contained in the Exhibits are incorporated by reference. The name and address of the applicants and the number, type, volume and location of on-site wastewater disposal systems which are proposed to operate on the parcels to be annexed are described in Exhibits "B, 1-2" attached to this Resolution of Intention and the information contained in the Exhibits are incorporated by reference.

C. The applicants have demonstrated to the satisfaction of the District Board that the Parcel constitutes "real property" for the purposes of Section 2(b) of ZOMAR in that:

All of the conditions described in Subsections i., ii., iii., iv. and v. of ZOMAR Section 2(b) are satisfied; or

Other conditions exist which demonstrate that the Parcel will benefit directly or indirectly from the activities of the Zone. If applicable, those conditions are also set forth in Exhibit "B" and are incorporated by reference.

D. All of the conditions and requirements of ZOMAR Sections 2(a), 2(c), 2(d) and 2(e) have been fully satisfied.

In consideration of the foregoing findings and determinations,

IT IS RESOLVED by the District Board as follows:

1. It is the intention of the District Board to annex the Parcel to the Zone pursuant to the provisions of ZOMAR and applicable provisions of law.

2. In conjunction with a meeting of the District Board to be duly and regularly called and conducted, the Board will conduct a Public Hearing for the purpose of considering all matters pertaining to this Resolution of Intention.

The time, date and place of the Public Hearing are:

Date: April 23, 2007

Time: 7:00 PM

Place: West Bay Sanitary District Offices
500 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025

At the Public Hearing, all interested persons will be heard.

3. This Resolution of Intention shall be published and copies shall be delivered to the persons and entities as specified in ZOMAR Section 2(e)(i).

4. A true copy of this Resolution of Intention shall promptly be filed for record in the office of the County Recorder of the County of San Mateo.

5. The District Manager shall cause the matters set forth in Sections 3 and 4 of this Resolution of Intention to be completed as directed.

Passed and adopted by the District Board of the West Bay Sanitary District at a regular meeting thereof held on the 26th day of February, 2007 by the following vote:

AYES: Shepherd, Walker, Knight, Lomax, Harrison

NOES: None

ABSTAIN: None

ABSENT: None

/s/ Ronald Shepherd

President of the District Board of the
West Bay Sanitary District of San Mateo
County, State of California

Attest:

/s/ David Walker

Secretary of the District Board of the
West Bay Sanitary District of San Mateo
County, State of California

Published in THE COUNTRY ALMANAC on March 7, 14, 2007.

Election day in Las Lomas district

■ Ballot measure proposes 59 percent hike in parcel tax.

By David Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

Voters on Tuesday, March 6, will determine the size of the parcel tax for property owners in the Las Lomas Elementary School District, which includes parts of Menlo Park, Atherton, Woodside and nearby unincorporated areas, including Ladera.

A "yes" vote on Measure P would raise the annual parcel tax on homes and businesses in the district by \$115 — from the current \$196 to \$311. Unlike the current tax, the \$311 tax would not expire unless the Board of Trustees voted to end it.

The Almanac will post election night results online at www.AlmanacNews.com.

To pass, Measure P requires two-thirds voter approval. The measure has the endorsements of Menlo Park Mayor Kelly Fergusson, Councilman John Boyle and the California School Employees

Association.

The Elections Office Web site shows no ballot arguments in opposition to Measure P.

Polls open at 7 a.m. and close at 8 p.m. To find your polling place, look on the back page of the sample ballot mailed to you; go to www.shapethefuture.org and click on "Public Notice of Polling Locations"; or call the Elections Office at 312-5222.

The Las Lomas district's current \$196 parcel tax is less than the surrounding districts: \$224 for Woodside Elementary, \$290 for Portola Valley, and in Menlo Park, \$527, with an annual cost-of-living increase.

Annual income from the current tax is \$774,500, representing 6 percent of total district revenues of \$14 million. That percentage would rise to between 8 percent and 9 percent, or about \$1.2 million, if Measure P passes, said district business manager De Modderman.

Las Lomas needs the mon-

ONLINE

Election night results will be reported online at AlmanacNews.com

ey to maintain "the highest possible quality of education" and provide "the best qualified staff available" in a state in which education funding is described as "precarious," according to a resolution unanimously approved by the trustees in December.

Among the more specific priorities, the money would help to maintain the district's elective offerings such as foreign languages, music and art, and science, math and technology classes. ■

INFORMATION

For more information on Measure P, go to the "Yes on Measure P" campaign site, www.laslomas.org, or the San Mateo County Elections Office site, www.shapethefuture.org.

Steve Jobs takes lawsuit to state Supreme Court

By Andrea Gemmet
Almanac Staff Writer

Steve Jobs is not a quitter. The CEO of Apple Inc. is asking the California Supreme Court to hear his case over the fate of a historic house he owns in Woodside.

Mr. Jobs is seeking to demolish the Jackling house, a rambling Spanish Colonial Revival-style mansion built in the 1920s and designed by noted architect George Washington Smith.

In December 2004, Woodside officials granted him permission to tear down the house, but a preservationist group successfully blocked the demolition.

The group, Uphold Our Heritage, won its case in trial court and had another victory when the decision was upheld by the state appellate court in January. The court ruled that the town failed to show that alternatives to demolishing the house are infeasible, as required by the California Environmental Quality Act.

Doug Carstens, the Santa Monica-based attorney for the group, said that Mr. Jobs' attorney recently filed a petition for review with the state Supreme Court. Clotilde Luce, spokeswoman for Uphold

Our Heritage, said it could take up to two months to find out whether the state Supreme Court would agree to hear the case.

Mr. Jobs, who lived in the Jackling house for about 10 years before moving to Palo Alto in the 1990s, has said he plans to build a smaller, modern family home on the Mountain Home Road property.

His attorney, Howard Ellman, argues that the lower court's opinion "effectively requires (Mr. Jobs) either to abandon his plan for a home entirely or restore a building he does not want at a cost grossly disproportionate to the environmental impact of demolition," according to the petition filed with the state Supreme Court.

The legal wrangling continues to put an unusual condition of the demolition permit into limbo: Woodside officials required Mr. Jobs to give away the house to someone qualified to remove it from the property and restore it at another location.

Several suitors have emerged, most notably Gordon Smythe of Propel Properties, who is reportedly looking to purchase suitable property for the mansion in the Woodside area. ■

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'Together Again'

Story by MARJORIE MADER ■ Photos by VERONICA WEBER

Sharon Graham Niederhaus of Portola Valley has written a guide to an emerging trend in housing: the revival of multigenerational living — three or more generations living together under one roof.

Since 1990, the number of three-generation households has increased 60 percent, says her brother and co-author John L. Graham, professor of marketing and international business at the University of California, Irvine. He also notes there are more than six million such households in America.

Many factors play into the attractiveness of joint living arrangements, says Ms. Niederhaus. For grown children who return to the nest, there are economic advantages. For example, they can save money while going to school or build up a nest egg for a home of their own, especially if they live in a pricey area. Grandparents can help with child care, which is particularly helpful if both parents are working.

"Whether grandparents live in accessory apartments on the property or houses next door, these flexible hous-

ing arrangements provide privacy and companionship at the same time," says Ms. Niederhaus. Grandparents can enjoy knowing their grandchildren and be part of their lives. Adult children living nearby can provide assistance to older parents routinely or in cases of emergency.

Other factors accelerating the trend, says her brother, are the break-down of the pension system and the high cost of living in a retirement community — both of which favor multigenerational living for economic reasons.

Ms. Niederhaus sees more parents assisting adult children with housing, from helping with down payments to jointly buying a property with them.

Many baby boomers who are retiring in their early 60s don't look forward to their kids leaving home, he says. They desire their companionship, seeing their grandchildren develop and other mutual benefits of living near family, he says.

Collaboration

Mr. Graham kept nudging his sister Sharon to turn her master's thesis on multigenerational living arrangements, completed at Stanford University in 2001, into a useful guide for families.

"Initially, I dismissed the idea," she says. "After laboring on my research paper for over a year, I was ready to move on." She became interested in affordable housing issues.

"A phone call from John telling me that ideas from my master's thesis ('The Accessory Apartment: A Viable Housing Option for the New Longevity') were on the front page of the Wall Street Journal (Dec. 20, 2002) changed our plans," said Ms. Niederhaus.

The Journal article described the national trend for extended families to either stay connected or reconnect by using the accessory apartment as a way to live together and apart at the same time.

"We decided to collaborate on a book," related Ms. Niederhaus during an interview in her Portola Valley Ranch home. "We each wrote several chapters and collaborated on one. It was a wonderful experience

A new guide to
multigenerational
living is written by
Portola Valley author

working together. Never a cross word."

Their book — "Together Again: A Creative Guide to Successful Multigenerational Living" — offers practical suggestions and a long list of resources to help families adapt successfully to extended living arrangements.

Ms. Niederhaus traveled around the country and interviewed more than 100 families about their extended family living relationships. Their experiences — what works, what doesn't — formed the basis for the book.

These families stayed connected through a variety of housing arrangements. Some had homes with "granny downs" (bedrooms with baths downstairs), separate granny units or apartments over the garage. Others lived in duplexes, houses or townhouses next-door, condos in the same building, or on family compounds.

"Privacy with proximity" is the key to families living together in harmony, says Ms. Niederhaus. "A separate entrance and a separate kitchen is a must."

Reaching agreement

She recommends that families talk about expectations up front and make agreements for living together. These ground rules should be "democratically determined, fair for all, and allow for both communication and privacy."

One young man, who shares an accessory apartment in his parents' home, told her: "I think the most important thing is to get everyone together, and see what bothers people and what doesn't. Just common courtesy."

Ms. Niederhaus recommends family meetings on a regular basis to encourage "positive relationships." Some of the broad topics for discussion that came up with all the people she interviewed included: length of stay, communication preferences, relationship issues, privacy issues, shared responsibilities, personal preferences, household finances, child care, and family fun.

Other chapters in the book are titled "Why Living Together Again Makes Sense," "Designing and Remodeling Your Home for Privacy" and "Making Your Home Accessible to Seniors." The last three chapters focus on the challenges: "Overcoming Cultural Stigmas: Four Curses and a Blessing," financial and legal considerations, and "Making Agreements for Living Together."

Shared housing

While not aimed at multigenerational family living, locally, HIP Housing, short for Human Investment Project, has been providing home-sharing options for the past 25 years in San Mateo County. In that time, the project has matched 13,000 people to shared housing, said Bruce Hamilton, executive director.

In many cases, the owner of the home is a senior, and, generally, the person seeking a place to live is much younger, said Mr. Hamilton. They often negotiate a lease that includes services, not just money. (For information about shared housing, call the project office at 348-660.)

Teacher and mother

"Together Again" is the first book for Ms. Niederhaus, a mother and grandmother as well as a former



Sharon
Graham
Niederhaus

Author to speak at Kepler's March 15th

Portola Valley author Sharon Graham Niederhaus hits the "book tour" trail Thursday, March 15, and her first stop is Kepler's Books in Menlo Park at 7:30 p.m.

Ms. Niederhaus will discuss her new book, "Together Again: A Creative Guide to Successful Multigenerational Living," and respond to questions. She co-authored the book, just off the press, with her brother, John L. Graham, professor of marketing and international business in the Graduate School of Management at the University of California, Irvine.

Her next talk will be Thursday, March 29, at 7 p.m. in the Historic Schoolhouse at 765 Portola Road in Portola Valley. This program is part of

the Portola Valley Library's authors' series.

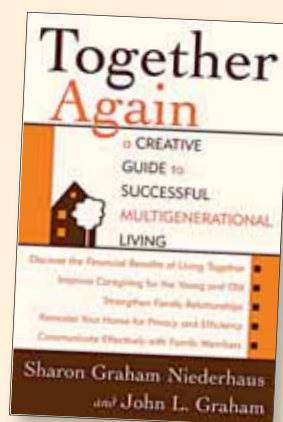
She has been invited to appear in mid-March on "Good Morning America" on Channel 7 (ABC-TV).

Future engagements will take her to Arizona and to the East Coast with an event at the Chapel Hill Public Library in Chapel Hill, North Carolina.

A spot on the Oprah Show is in the talking stage, she says.

She and her brother have been invited to give a presentation at an international conference for Generations United, to be held in Washington, D.C., July 23-27. ■

For more information: www.TogetherAgainBook.com





Family get-togethers are favorite times for Deborah and Richard Gordon's family in their Woodside home. Daughter Carrie Gordon Littlefield of Menlo Park plays with her niece, Brooke Dombkowski, left, and daughter Katie Littlefield. Deborah Gordon and her mother, Sally "GiGi" Cody, are getting dinner ready.

Living together is 'fabulous' for Gordon family

Deborah and Richard Gordon bought their home in Woodside during the winter of 1980-81 because there was a guest cottage on the property.

Being an only child, Ms. Gordon says, "I thought at some point I could be responsible for my mother."

The Gordons rented out their guest cottage until 1985. That's when her mother Sally Cody (known as GiGi) retired after working and living in the Los Angeles area.

"The family invited me to move up and live in their guest cottage, and I quickly accepted," said Ms. Cody. "Everybody I loved was up here."

"It's been fabulous having my mother with us," says Ms. Gordon. "She has been able to spend time with her granddaughters and now her great-granddaughters."

She also has been a big help with Ms. Gordon traveling a lot in her work as associate director of the Preventive Defense Project at Stanford University.

When their grandmother came to live in the guest cottage, the Gordons'

two daughters were living at home. Ashley, 14, was a freshman at Menlo School; Carrie, 11, was going to Woodside Elementary School.

Living together in an extended family "is not as hard as some people make it out to be," says Carrie Littlefield, now a mother of two daughters and living close by with her husband Paul in Menlo Park. "We've always been a close family."

"It did help that we technically weren't living under one roof," says Ashley. "The guest cottage, a ways from the house, did provide proximity and privacy."

When the girls were growing up they often would go to "GiGi's Restaurant" for snacks and to spend time with their grandmother.

"I like to think I taught the girls to drive," says Ms. Cody. She would ride along with the girls as they drove to high school and then drive the car back home.

When she was recovering from two serious surgeries, she says, "it was wonderful to be able to stay in the Gordons' home, and be cared for."

"We didn't sit down and make agreements about living together," says Deborah Gordon. "We respected each other, helped each other, and didn't take someone for granted."

When Ashley and her husband Brian Dombkowski were looking for a home to buy on the Peninsula two years ago, she was surprised when her husband suggested buying a house, only a short distance up the road, from her parents.

"We definitely should do this," he said. His brother had bought a house next door to his parents in Wisconsin, and he had seen the mutual benefits and pleasures of living close to family.

"We made the decision — a joint decision — and we both thought it was a great decision," says Ashley. "Again, it's proximity and privacy."

"I'm a lucky man," says father/grandfather Richard Gordon, who, among other things, directs the Woodside Village Band. "I'm so fortunate to have the kids close by. Their in-laws, who live far away, are jealous." ■

— Marjorie Mader



GiGi Cody is close to her family in the guest house she shares with her dog, Tipper, on the Gordons' property.



TOWN OF ATHERTON

Join us and Make a Difference

The Town of Atherton invites dedicated volunteers to submit an application for the following committees:

GENERAL PLAN COMMITTEE (2 terms expiring April 30, 2007):

The General Plan Committee reviews the General Plan and makes recommendations to the City Council, Planning Commission and Town staff regarding Town planning ordinances and policies. Meetings are held quarterly. Members of the Committee who are not members of the City Council or Planning Commission shall serve consecutively for no more than one, full four-year term.

PARK & RECREATION COMMISSION (4 terms expiring April 30, 2007):

The Park and Recreation Commission advises the City Council on matters regarding Park and Recreation programs, develops and revises the Master Plan for Holbrook-Palmer Park, reviews the annual budget for the Park and makes recommendations concerning long-term capital projects. Members serve no more than two consecutive 4-year terms.

PLANNING COMMISSION (2 terms expiring April 30, 2007):

The Planning Commission is authorized by the California Government Code. The powers and duties of the Planning Commission as set forth in the Government Code. The Commission is the Town's administrative agency for zoning issues. Each commissioner must file a public "Statement of Economic Interests" form annually.

Applicants must be Atherton residents and registered voters of the Town of Atherton. **Applications must be received in the City Clerk's Office by Monday, April 2, 2007.**

For more information or to obtain an application, contact Kathi Hamilton, Acting City Clerk, Town Administrative Offices, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, CA 94027, phone (650) 752-0529, e-mail: khamilton@ci.atherton.ca.us.

Applications may be downloaded from the Town website, www.ci.atherton.ca.us/armm.



TOWN OF ATHERTON

Join us and Make a Difference

ARTS COMMITTEE (7 vacancies, indefinite term):

The Arts Committee assists the City Council and the Park and Recreation Department in matters that pertain to arts programs, classes, workshops, performances, and other arts activities, as may be directed by the City Council. Each member serves at the pleasure of the City Council for an indefinite term. The committee meets monthly.

AUDIT COMMITTEE (1 vacancy, * 3 terms expiring April 30, 2007):

The Audit Committee provides oversight of the annual audit, makes recommendations to the City Council on matters related to the annual audit, and provides guidance to Town staff on financial controls throughout the year. ***New members serve one-year terms concurrent with the term of the two Council Members serving on the committee.**

ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS COMMITTEE (7 vacancies, Terms*)

The Environmental Programs Committee (formerly the Waste Reduction Committee) acts as an advisory resource to the community on matters related to its particular interest. The EPC addresses solid waste and recycling issues facing the Town, is striving to address global warming and CO2 emissions, green building standards, improving energy efficiency performance, pollution prevention and hosts an Earth Day event. Meetings are held monthly. * New members of the **Environmental Programs Committee** will serve either a 2-year or 4-year term.

Applicants must be Atherton residents and registered voters of the Town of Atherton. **Applications must be received in the City Clerk's Office by Monday, April 2, 2007.**

For more information or to obtain an application, contact Kathi Hamilton, Acting City Clerk, Town Administrative Offices, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, CA 94027, phone (650) 752-0529, e-mail: khamilton@ci.atherton.ca.us.

Applications may be downloaded from the Town website, www.ci.atherton.ca.us/armm.



Family plays a huge part in the lives of the Gordon family. Relaxing and talking in the living room one Sunday are, from left, son-in-law Brian Dombkowski and his wife, Ashley Gordon Dombkowski, seated; Carrie Gordon Littlefield, standing; and Brooke Dombkowski on the lap of her great-grandmother GiGi Cody.

'Together Again'

Continued from page 14

teacher in the Portola Valley and San Jose Unified school districts. She initiated the "Adopt-A-School Program" in San Mateo County that developed more than 100 business-education partnerships in K-12 schools in 23 districts. She has published articles in education journals and given talks on housing issues for the Housing Leadership Council of San Mateo County and League of Women Voters.

She acknowledges many local people for their help in the creation of the book. "My primary editor was my husband, Don Niederhaus," she says. "Bill Lane, retired publisher of Sunset magazine, was a huge help all along the journey."

Another Portola Valley resident, Iris Harrell, president of a remodeling firm, reviewed the chap-

ters on remodeling and making homes accessible for seniors. Dr. Walter M. Bortz II of Portola Valley, author of "Dare to Be 100: 99 Steps to a Long, Healthy Life," provided advice about how family and other social relationships extend and enrich life.

"In ocean surfing, you try to 'catch the big wave,'" said Mr. Lane. "And we all are in a rising sea of major demographic, economic, and psychological changes in our population. This carefully researched book examines real-life and time-tested solutions to the big wave of living Together Again." ■

Their 299-page paperback book, "Together Again: A Creative Guide to Successful Multi-generational Living," is published by M. Evans & Company, an imprint of The Rowman & Littlefield Publishing Group Inc. of Lanham, Maryland. It sells for \$16.95 and has been in bookstores since January. For more information, go to www.TogetherAgainBook.com.



Photo courtesy of the Peter Steiner family

Peter and Anne Steiner moved back to Portola Valley Ranch, upon Mr. Steiner's retirement, to be closer to their children and grandchildren. The grandkids are, from left, Nathan Steiner, Meg Sanford, Peter Steiner, Beth Sanford, Gregory Steiner, and Andrew Sanford. Reading the new book by friend Sharon Niederhaus convinced the Steiners to move back to Portola Valley.

Ruskin bill provides rewards for buyers of 'clean' cars

A bill introduced by Assemblyman Ira Ruskin, D-Redwood City, would give rebates up to \$2,500 to people in California who buy vehicles with lower emissions.

Under AB 493, the Clean Car Discount Act of 2007, the one-time rebates would be paid for by one-time surcharges — also up to \$2,500 — on buyers of new vehicles with higher emissions.

AB 493 is seen as an “effective market-based” tool to implement the emissions reduction standards set into law last year under AB 32, the California Global Warming Solutions Act, said Ruskin’s spokesman Nate Pinkston.

The Global Warming Solutions Act, signed into law by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger in September, calls for California greenhouse gas emissions to be reduced to 1990 levels by the year 2020.

That goal can’t be met without addressing greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles, said Mr. Ruskin.

“Since transportation accounts for over 40 percent of global

warming emissions in this state, we need effective tools to avert the worst consequences of climate change now,” Mr. Ruskin said in a Feb. 26 statement.

The bill’s promoters hope consumer incentives will increase demand for low-polluting vehicles and cause manufacturers to respond with greater production.

The bill’s authors estimate that 40 to 45 percent of new vehicles could be eligible for a rebate, and 20 to 25 percent would be unaffected, leaving 30 to 40 percent that would be assessed a surcharge, which they claim would ensure that consumers still retain the ability to choose while moving the industry as a whole toward greener pastures.

— Bay City News Service

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EYE CARE NEWS

Presented by
Mark Schmidt
 Licensed Optician

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In addition, drugstore reading glasses are set up with optical centers for the average persons pupillary distance (distance between the two pupils), and may not match your eyes. To best focus on reading material, visit an eye care professional.

Do you have trouble reading newspaper or restaurant menus? Our vision changes as we age. Although it may be tempting to purchase low-cost glasses from a convenience store, you will achieve better results with prescription lenses that are suited to your specific needs. We carry lightweight, scratch-resistant lenses and a variety of frames in the latest shapes, sizes, and colors. We are located at 1166 University Drive, on the corner of Oak Grove Avenue and University Drive.

P.S. Unlike drugstore reading glasses, the reading glasses available from eye care professionals can be outfitted with custom frame designs, special materials and anti-glare coatings.

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.

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Schools

NEWS OF LOCAL SCHOOLS, STUDENTS, TEACHERS, AND PARENTS.

Teen sleep deficit: Researchers survey M-A High students

Research shows that adolescents need at least nine hours of sleep every night, and that the average teen lives with a sleep deficit that can impair safety,

health, performance and mood.

To draw attention to sleep deficits and to improve sleep habits among busy teens, researchers have begun a survey of Menlo-Atherton High School students, said M-A parent Eileen Van Rheenen.

The survey team includes notable sleep researchers Mark Rosekind, Ph.D., founder and chief scientist at Cupertino-based Alertness Solutions, and Dr. William Dement of the Center for Human Sleep Research at Stanford University.

A group of Stanford undergrad-

uates working for Dr. Dement will be on the M-A campus between 7:50 and 11:30 a.m. Tuesday, March 6, to explain the program to high school students, Ms. Van Rheenen said. Parents and faculty attended presentations by Mr. Rosekind last fall and in January.

The school is planning a free public presentation of survey results and ideas on "positive sleep habits" at 7 p.m. April 18 in the M-A library. For more information, call Ms. Van Rheenen 796-1307 or write to her at eileen@vanr.org.

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Four local basketball teams head to Northern California playoffs

■ All four teams get lower seeds after dropping CCS championship games.

By Craig Wentz

Palo Alto Weekly

Four local basketball teams are headed to the Northern California playoffs, but not quite in the fashion they hoped.

The Sacred Heart Prep girls, and the boys from Menlo-Atherton, Menlo School, and Woodside Priory all lost their respective division championship games last week, meaning all four teams received lower seeds for the upcoming Nor-Cal tournament, and will open the playoffs on the road.

Sacred Heart

The Sacred Heart girls (12-18) received a No. 5 seed in the Division V Nor-Cal playoffs and will visit No. 4 Modesto Christian (26-5) on March 8.

The Gators lost 54-30 to Pinewood in the Central Coast Section title game on March 3. Sacred Heart led 21-15 at halftime, but scored only nine points in the entire second half, including a scoreless fourth quarter.

Sophomore guard Gabby Micek paced Sacred Heart with 12

points.

The win gave Pinewood its 10th consecutive girls' basketball CCS title.

Woodside Priory

After suffering the weekend's most surprising loss, Woodside Priory (25-4) will try and regroup before they face No. 3 Liberty Christian in Redding on March 8.

The Panthers, the top-seed in their Division V CCS tournament, lost the championship game 42-39 to No. 6 Bridgmont.

After the loss, Woodside Priory was given the No. 6 seed for the Nor-Cal playoffs.

"I know absolutely nothing about Liberty, but this is a chance for redemption and we're looking forward to it," said Woodside Priory coach Al Klein. "The seedings don't make much of a difference. If we win, we're going have to play the top seeds anyway."

The Panthers coughed up the ball 32 times in their CCS loss, and senior guard Reggie Willhite and junior 7-foot-1 center Greg Somogyi got into foul trouble.

Willhite led Woodside Priory with 17 points and 10 rebounds. Somogyi scored only four points, but had nine rebounds and 12 blocks.

Menlo-Atherton

After failing to upset Mitty in the Division II championship, M-A will face the Bay Area's leading scorer in Richmond's Wendell McKines in its Nor-Cal opener.

The Bears (22-10) are seeded No. 6 and will visit No. 3 Richmond (22-8) on Friday.

M-A played Mitty tough in the CCS championship, but Mitty went on an 11-0 run that bridged the second and third quarters and pushed a 29-23 game to 40-23. It was a sequence where M-A didn't score for 7:45.

"I thought we played hard," said M-A coach Craig Carson. "Against a team like Mitty, you have to execute and rebound better."

Senior guard Stephen Call led M-A with 15 points.

Menlo School

Menlo School (26-6) received a No. 6 seed in the Division IV Nor-Cal playoffs, and will cross the Bay to face No. 3 St. Mary's Berkeley (27-4) on Thursday.

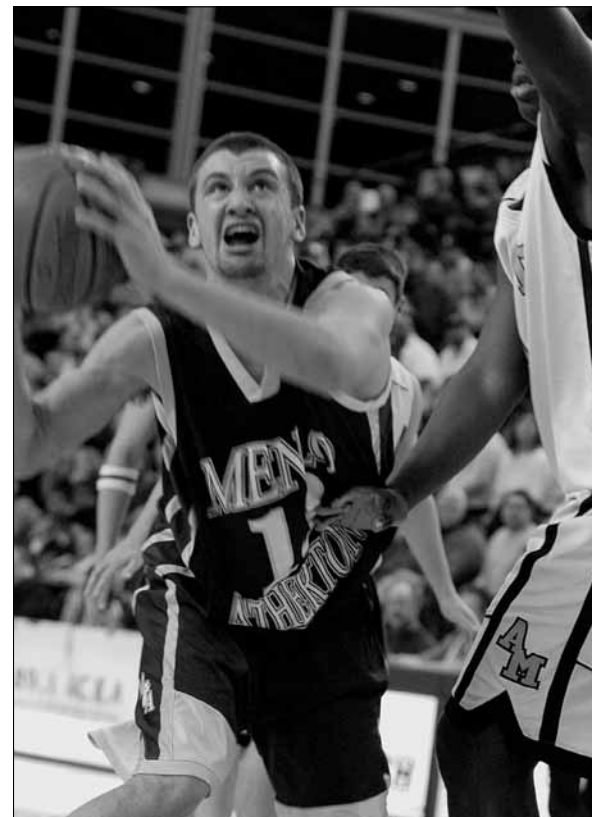


Photo by Sam Tenney/Palo Alto Weekly

M-A guard Kevin Disibio

looks for a way to the hoop in the Bears' 56-45 March 2 loss to Mitty at Santa Clara University.

The two teams met on Jan. 13, when St. Mary's held on for a 55-50 victory.

If the Vikings beat St. Mary's, they may be in for another rematch in the next round when they would likely face No. 2 Palma.

Palma beat Menlo 61-47 in the CCS Division IV championship on March 2.

Menlo kept things interesting, trailing 25-18 at the half. Yet, the

Chieftains squelched any ideas of an upset by outscoring Menlo 16-8 in the third quarter for a 41-26 lead entering the fourth quarter.

Menlo senior guard Beau Heidrich scored 14 points and corralled 12 rebounds, while senior guard Michael Guertin and sophomore forward Alex Smith added 11 and nine points, respectively, for the Knights. ■

Woodside: To Webcast or not to Webcast?

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

It probably wouldn't make YouTube's top featured videos, but there must be someone, somewhere who wants to watch Woodside town meetings at home on the computer.

The anonymous blog Citizens of Woodside, or COW, has offered the town more than \$31,000 to pay for equipment and a year's worth of Webcasting service.

As a result, the Woodside Town Council wants to hear from constituents interested in watching Webcasting — video online — at its next meeting on Tuesday, March 13.

So far, the cry for Webcasting hasn't made the leap from the online world to the real world. A chance for public comment about

Webcasting and the COW donation went unanswered at the well-attended Feb. 27 Woodside Town Council meeting.

The Almanac's call to Andrew J. Gessow, a former town bicycle commissioner who is Citizens of Woodside Inc.'s chief executive officer, was not returned.

Other towns, such as Menlo Park, offer Webcasts of government meetings, but the issue really hasn't been on Woodside's radar screen until recently.

That changed on Feb. 14, when COW apparently hired a courier to deliver a letter to the council and a cashier's check to be used only for Webcasting service.

Town Manager Susan George said she declined the anonymous check because only the Town Council has the authority to accept a restricted gift and to decide whether to install

Webcasting equipment.

Ms. George said the courier took back the check and asked for the letter back, as well.

After the offer was rebuffed, COW posted the letter online along with a nasty rebuke of Ms. George, accusing her of being "cold and hostile" and of keeping information from the council by refusing to accept the letter.

According to COW, the money was donated by Woodside residents. ■

■ INFORMATION

The Woodside Town Council meets at 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 13, in Independence Hall, 2955 Woodside Road. Call 851-6790 or go to WoodsideTown.org for meeting information. The Citizens of Woodside blog is at CitizensOfWoodside.com.



Photo by Chris Preimesberger

Imagination takes flight

Emily Greco, left, plays Peter Pan, with Nicole Stark as Wendy, in Portola Valley Theatre Conservatory's musical production of "Peter Pan" at Valley Presbyterian Church at 945 Portola Road. The show, which includes some aerobatics, is sold out but free performances are scheduled for 7 p.m. Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, March 13, 14 and 15, on a first-come, first-serve basis.

■ POLICE CALLS

This information is from the Atherton and Menlo Park police departments and the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office. Under law, people charged with offenses are considered innocent until convicted.

MENLO PARK Burglary reports:

- Flat-screen TV and jewelry stolen from residence, 100 block of Green Street, Feb. 23.
- \$400 in cash stolen from residence, 1400 block of Woodland Avenue, Feb. 23.
- Elizabeth Cruz, 19, of San Jose, and Thuy Vy Joanne Ngoc Vo, 19, of San Leandro arrested, Draeger's Supermarket at 1010

University Drive, Feb. 28.

■ Window smashed and stereo speakers stolen from vehicle, 1100 block of Willow Road, March 1.

Grand theft reports:

- Tools and tool bag stolen from truck bed, 300 block of Ivy Drive, Feb. 24.
- Baby stroller stolen, 1000 block of El Camino Real, Feb. 28.
- Tools stolen from front porch, 1200 block of Madera Avenue, March 1.
- \$600 in cash stolen from purse, Jack in the Box restaurant at 1401 Willow Road, March 1.

Theft report: Tool box, sanders and drills stolen from garage, 300 block of Pierce

Road, March 27.

Fraud reports:

- Unauthorized withdrawals made from bank account, 1400 block of Almanor Avenue, Feb. 23.
 - Identity theft used to open a fraudulent T-Mobile account, Feb. 26.
 - Bad cashier's checks received as payment, CAE Online at 885 Santa Cruz Avenue, March 1.
- Child protection services reports:** Feb 28 and March 1.
- Spousal abuse report:** 1100 block of Willow Road, Feb. 28.

Town Square is the Almanac's new online community forum, where people can exchange news, information and comments with others in the community. Log on today at www.Almanacnews.com



Biologist plants caterpillars at Edgewood preserve

Biologist Stuart Weiss of Menlo Park is planting 1,000 caterpillars of the Bay checkerspot butterfly in a patch of plantago erecta at Edgewood Natural Preserve. He gathered the caterpillars south of Gilroy.

He hopes to restore the threatened butterfly to its former habitat on the nutrient-poor serpentine grasslands that support a spectacular display of native California

wildflowers every spring.

The butterflies disappeared over the last decade as nitrogen pollution from Interstate 280 fertilized the hostile soil, and exotic grasses choked out the plantago on which the butterflies fed. Mowing has helped the plantago to recover.

Park lovers are hoping for a host of fluttering butterflies at Edgewood park in March and April.

Left: Biologist Stuart Weiss of Menlo Park plants caterpillars of the threatened Bay checkerspot butterfly in a patch of plantago erecta at Edgewood Natural Preserve to revive the lost butterfly colony there.

Below: Closeup of fuzzy black caterpillars with yellow dotted stripes.

Photos by Marion Softky



AROUND TOWN

Bach celebrated in Portola Valley

The Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra (PACO) will celebrate the 322nd birthday of Johann Sebastian Bach with a series of three Sunday evening concerts at Valley Presbyterian Church, 945 Portola Road in Portola Valley. The concerts take place at 7:30 p.m. March 11, 18 and 25.

On March 11, keyboard works will be performed by pianist Lucille Chung with guest violist Benjamin Simon. The second and third concerts feature the complete Brandenburg Concertos.

Tickets are \$12 for general admission per concert, and \$10 for seniors and students. For more information, call 856-3848.

Ohlone Indian program

San Mateo County History Museum staff will read two Ohlone Indian stories by Linda Yamane at 2 p.m. Friday, March 9: "How Hummingbird Got Fire" and "When the World Ended."

After the stories, children will grind acorns with a mortar and pestle and explore the "Nature's Bounty" gallery. The museum is at 2200 Broadway in Redwood City. Call 299-0104.



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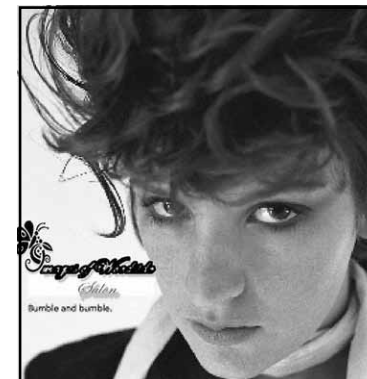
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See CLASS GUIDE, page 22



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CLASS GUIDE

continued from page 21

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Dance team show

The Menlo-Atherton High School dance team will present its fourth annual show at 6:30 p.m. Friday, March 9, in the school's practice gym. Under the direction of Nona Ybarra, the girls have won first place in the Universal Dance Team Association and JAMZ Dance Team competitions. Team members shown are, from top left, Sarah Hausman, Andrea Rivera, Abigail Feiler, Julia Cabral, Allie Brody, Alexis Bley, Justine Gananian, Rachel Bowley, and Angela Lam. Tickets are \$5 students, \$8 adults, at the door.

'Trying' opens on TheatreWorks stage

Broadway actor Ken Ruta takes on the role of an aged and ailing Francis Biddle — Franklin D. Roosevelt's attorney general and chief justice of the Nuremberg trials — in TheatreWorks' production of "Trying," opening this week in Palo Alto.

In its Northern California premiere, "Trying" opens March 7 and runs through April 1 at the Lucie Stern Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road.

The play, by Joanna McClelland Glass, tells the story of the 81-year-old Mr. Biddle and the 25-year-old secretary he hires to help him finish his memoirs. Sarah, played by Amanda Duarte, is just the latest in a string of secretaries to work with the irritable



Photo by David Allen

Ken Ruta and Amanda Duarte star in TheatreWorks' "Trying," by Joanna McClelland Glass.

but elegant old man.

What begins as a mercurial relationship between the two

develops into a deep friendship, with each influencing the other in unexpected ways.

The play is being directed by Jack Fletcher.

Mr. Ruta's Broadway credits include "Inherit the Wind," "Three Sisters" and "The Elephant Man." Locally, he has appeared in A.C.T.'s "The Circle," "The Invention of Love," and "A Christmas Carol." He also starred in the TheatreWorks' production of "Old Money."

Ms. Duarte has performed in productions staged by Magic Theatre, Berkeley Repertory Theatre and California Shakespeare Theatre, among others.

Tickets are \$20 to \$55. For tickets and information, call 903-6000, or log on at theatreworks.org.



A painter's Italy

"Ponte Vecchio" is one of the works in an exhibit of watercolors by Donna Sanson at the Portola Art Gallery at Allied Arts Guild. The exhibit, "Images from Italy," runs through March 31. An artist's reception is set for Saturday, March 10. Allied Arts Guild is at 75 Arbor Road in Menlo Park. For more information, call 321-0220, or log on at portolavalleyartgallery.com.



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OBITUARIES

Paula Callahan

Advocate for breast cancer patients

Paula Callahan, a 25-year Menlo Park resident, died Feb. 26 after a four-year battle with breast cancer. She was 61.

Ms. Callahan's death came three days after her daughter, Amy, and Alaistair McHugh were married at Stanford Hospital so that Ms. Callahan could witness the ceremony.

The couple had planned to be married in June, but as Ms. Callahan's health made a turn for the worse in recent weeks, her family became concerned that she wouldn't survive long enough to see her daughter marry. So the engaged couple hurriedly arranged the ceremony for the late afternoon of Feb. 23 at Stanford Hospital, where Ms. Callahan was being treated.

Ms. Callahan spent her entire life in the Bay Area, graduating from Sunnyvale High School. She married James Edward Callahan in 1964, and the couple had two daughters.



Paula Callahan

Since her diagnosis in 2003, Ms. Callahan had been involved in projects and advocacy for breast cancer survivors. She was featured in a May 2005 Almanac article about the Scribbling Women of CBHP — a Community Breast Health Project program led by Menlo Park writer Sharon Bray that brought together breast cancer patients to write and to support one another. Ms. Callahan's poem, "Scar" was published with the article.

Her friends and colleagues remember Ms. Callahan "as a woman always in charge, vocal with her opinions and incredibly generous of spirit," her family said in a written statement.

In addition to her husband, James, and daughter and son-in-law Amy and Alaistair of Daly City, Ms. Callahan is survived by daughter Kristie Callahn Gill of Wellesley, Massachusetts; her brothers Christopher Henry of Florida and Bruce Henry of San Mateo; her stepfather Robert Dale Talley of Nevada; and three grandchildren.

A funeral Mass was held on March 2 at Church of the Nativity in Menlo Park, and burial was in the Italian Cemetery in Colma.

The family requests that memorial donations be made to the Community Breast Health Project, 390 Cambridge Ave.,

Palo Alto, 94306; or to Northern California Community Foundation, The Paula Callahan Memorial Fund, P.O. Box 1268, Menlo Park, 94026.

Funeral arrangements were handled by Roller Hapgood Tinney Funeral Home in Palo Alto.

Michael Finnegan

Auto repair manager

Michael William Finnegan, a lifelong resident of Menlo Park and Redwood City, died Feb. 22 after a short illness. He was 49.

Mr. Finnegan was a graduate of Woodside High School and worked in the auto repair business for the past 25 years, most recently as manager of M and R Auto in Menlo Park.

He is survived by his mother, Barbara, of Menlo Park; his sister, Susan, of San Francisco; and his brother, Bill, of Menlo Park. His father, William J. Finnegan, sister Kathleen, and brother Thomas preceded him in death.

A memorial Mass was held March 3 at St. Raymond Church in Menlo Park. Donations may be made to the Peninsula Humane Society or to the St. Raymond Homeless Family Fund.

See OBITUARIES, page 25

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The Almanac

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Child care woes in Menlo Park

By Carmelite Souffront

The city of Menlo Park is described as a calm, vibrant city of beautiful tree-lined neighborhoods and friendly people, overflowing with resources and brilliance.

Made up of several tight-knit communities who share smiles, carpools and play dates, Menlo Park would seem like the ideal place to raise a family. The Menlo Park City School District is home to some of the best schools in the area. The district is praised for its high test scores and consistently ranks among the top 5 percent of schools statewide.

So, why are the parents of this lovely city so upset? It seems as though the one thing that this city is missing is sufficient, quality after-school child care.

Parents west of Highway 101 are concerned about the lack of child care options for their elementary school-aged children, while parents in the Belle Haven neighborhood are concerned about the lack of quality child care available in their community.

The west Menlo Park parents have grown extremely frustrated with perpetual waiting lists and archaic selection processes. Both public and private facilities are

at their maximum capacities and constantly turning away new parents, who are quickly running out of options for after-school care. Other facilities that do have space usually select from a random draw process that gives each parent a 50 percent chance of admission for their child, leaving many parents discouraged, knowing that there is no guarantee their child will be chosen.

The Belle Haven neighborhood has a slightly different problem. After fighting an uphill battle to keep Vanessa Carlisle, their most qualified, dedicated and cherished teacher, the city of Menlo Park ignored the cries of the community and transferred her to Menlo Children's Center. Now the lack of responsible adults to care for the children and

the unstructured curriculum has resulted in a chaotic scene of neglected children running around with little supervision.

When examining the issues of both sides, it's quite ironic that one area is full to capacity while the other is struggling to keep families enrolled. The Menlo Children's Center is at capacity with 102 children, while the Belle Haven program has a mere 51 children enrolled with room for at least 20 more students, and plenty of empty classrooms for expansion.

So why aren't parents sending their children to the Belle Haven facility? During a parents' meeting last week, several west Menlo Park parents made it quite clear that they would bus their children anywhere west of 101, but traveling to Belle Haven was a "danger to the children's lives."

At a recent meeting including

Menlo Park Mayor Kelly Ferguson, City Council member John Boyle and other city and school officials, these concerns were expressed with calls for immediate resolution. The end result was the election of a task force made up of concerned parents, local business owners, child care representatives, school board members and city officials, who have agreed to meet, brainstorm ideas and regroup with plausible solutions for these pressing child care issues. As members of the entire Menlo Park community continue to come together and demand changes, I am hopeful that very soon each child who needs it will have access to quality after-school care.

Carmelite Souffront lives in East Palo Alto and has a child who attends the Menlo Park City School District.



OBITUARIES

continued from page 24

Maynell Maxwell

Former owner of in-home day care center

Maynell Milton Maxwell, who raised her seven children in Menlo Park, died Feb. 15 in Visalia, California. She was 81.

Ms. Maxwell was born in Hanford and raised in Visalia. She graduated from Visalia Union High School, was a lifetime member of the California Scholarship Federation and president of her senior class. She also earned her Grand Cross of Colors as a member of the Rainbow Girls.

She graduated from French Hospital in San Francisco with a registered nurse degree and worked as a nurse for many years.

In 1945 she married Howard H. Maxwell and ultimately settled in Menlo Park. After her children were raised she returned to college, earning an associate of arts degree in early childhood education from Canada College. She worked as a pre-school teacher before opening her own in-home day care center. She was particularly fond of the youngest children: newborns, infants and toddlers, say family members. She moved back to Visalia in 1998.

Ms. Maxwell is survived by her children, Edward Maxwell of Half Moon Bay, Howard Maxwell of Phoenix, Deborah Maxwell of Visalia, Pamela Maxwell of Redwood City, Richard Maxwell of Scotts Valley, Megan Peters of Portland,

Oregon, and Mark Maxwell of Redwood City; brother Edward Maxwell of Visalia; and nine grandchildren. Her husband, Howard, preceded her in death.

In accordance with her wishes, no funeral was held. Memorials may be made to the Visalia Rescue Mission-Women's Program, P.O. Box 109, Visalia, CA 93279.

Sacred Heart play on Thoreau

Drama students at Sacred Heart Prep in Atherton will present a play the next two weekends that focuses on American author Henry David Thoreau's act of civil disobedience.

Written in 1970 as a response to the Vietnam War, "The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail" is based on Thoreau's refusal to pay taxes because of his anti-war beliefs.

Performances are at 7:30 p.m. on two Fridays and Saturdays, March 9-10 and March 16-17; and at 3 p.m. Friday, March 16, in the Campbell Center for the Performing Arts on campus at 150 Valparaiso Ave. in Atherton.

Tickets are \$8 for adults and \$5 for students and seniors. For ticket information, e-mail SHP drama director John Loschmann at jloschmann@shschools.org.

The cast includes: Kevin McFarland, Brian Holtvedt, Billy Rowan, Jen Bernard, Megan Putnam, Douglas Hosking, Alisa Healy, Brianna Pogue, Casey Larwood, Manuel Garcia, Andrew Caine, Aileene Ortiz, Andie Rodriguez, Jenny MacGregor, Sabrina Fagliano, Monica Seaney, Alex DiNardo, Jack Duane, Peter Holoien, and Austin Koenig.

BIRTH

Atherton

■ Muna and Jad Elias, a daughter, Feb. 14, at Sequoia Hospital.

PAULA H. CALLAHAN



Paula H. Callahan died February 26, 2007 after a four year battle with breast cancer. Born October 1, 1945 she spent her entire life in the San Francisco Bay Area where she graduated from Sunnyvale High School. Married in 1964, she resided in Menlo Park for the past 25 years.

Paula's devoted friends and colleagues remember her as a woman always in charge, vocal with her opinions and incredibly generous of spirit. A faithful servant to the Catholic Church, Paula was a true Christian, putting others before herself. When she contracted cancer in 2003, she became part of a new community of Survivors that would define the last years of her life. As an advocate for women suffering with breast cancer, she felt herself evolving into a better person with a more enriching life. Paula was a writer, a mother, a wife, a grandmother, a friend.

She is survived by her husband, James Edward Callahan of Menlo Park, CA, her daughters Amy Callahan McHugh of Daly City, CA and Kristie Callahan Gill of Wellesley, MA, her three grandchildren - Harrison, Carter and Elizabeth Gill of Wellesley, MA, her brother Christopher Henry of FL, her brother Bruce Henry of San Mateo, CA and her step-father Robert Dale Talley of Sparks, NV.

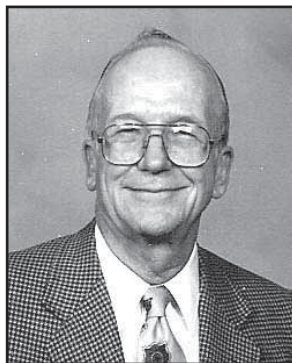
A rosary was held Thursday, March 1 at 7:00pm at Roller, Hapgood & Tinney, 980 Middlefield Rd, Palo Alto. A funeral mass was said Friday, March 2 at 11:00am at Church of the Nativity, 210 Oak Grove Ave., Menlo Park. A private, family burial took place Saturday morning at the Italian Cemetery in Colma.

Donations in Paula's honor should be made to Community Breast Health Project, 390 Cambridge Avenue >Palo Alto, CA 94306 or to Northern California Community Foundation, The Paula Callahan Memorial Fund >P.O. Box 1268 >Menlo Park, CA 94026. Roller Hapgood Tinney Funeral Home, Palo Alto, CA.

PAID OBITUARY

WALLACE (WALLY) EDMUND GILES

JULY 17, 1923 - FEBRUARY 23, 2007



Wally was a man of integrity, faith, and humor. He inspired many with his leadership and his wisdom.

Born in Pasadena, CA, son of Milton Eldridge and Sara Wolcott Giles. Wally graduated with honors from UCLA with a BS in Industrial Management (Accounting). He served with the US Navy Supply Corps as a Lt. (jg) in the Pacific theater during WWII, after which he completed his MBA at Harvard in 1947. He had a distinguished career as an Accounting Partner with Price-Waterhouse, working first in the Los Angeles office, then as partner-in-charge of the New Orleans office from 1961-1979, and finally as Administrative Partner in the San Francisco office, retiring in 1984. Following his retirement, Wally served for six years as financial administrator at Menlo Park Presbyterian Church.

Wally had a strong faith in the Lord Jesus, loved his family dearly, and was a mentor for younger men. He pursued his love of travel and photography, and served in many organizations, including Children's Health Council, Bible Study Fellowship, as Elder and Deacon in the New Orleans Presbyterian Church, and as President of the Louisiana CPA Society and Harvard Business School Association of Northern CA.

He is survived by his beloved and devoted wife Marjorie Irvine Giles of Portola Valley, daughters Nancy Giles Phillips of Los Altos and Shirley Giles Davis of Boulder, CO., son Ron Giles of Mountain View, grandchildren Matthew and Michelle Phillips, Grace and Allie Davis, and Ethan, Elaine, and Laurel Giles, brothers Robert Giles of White Bear Lake, MN and Paul Giles of Brentwood, CA, and sister Suzanne Giles Melin of Irvine, CA.

A memorial service will be held at Menlo Park Presbyterian Church Saturday, March 3 at 10:30 am. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Menlo Park Presbyterian Church College Short-term Missions fund, or to Canal St. Presbyterian Church (New Orleans) Katrina Relief Fund.

PAID OBITUARY

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WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

All views must include a home address and contact phone number. Published letters will also appear on the Almanac Web site, www.AlmanacNews.com, and occasionally on the Almanac's Town Square forum.

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

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

Time for schools to plan for child care

When the Menlo Park City School District was working hard last year to convince parents and voters to support a \$91 million bond issue to expand its schools, no mention was made that any of the money would cover on-site child care.

But that was an oversight that now seems glaringly obvious to the many working parents who are desperately searching for ways to care for their kindergarteners after they finish a half day of school. And at least for now, the Menlo Park district will not be any help, due to lack of space for more portable classrooms on their campuses, already crowded with portable classrooms.

Many of the concerned parents attended a workshop last week called by Mayor Kelly Fergusson and City Council member John Boyle to discuss the shortage of child care in the city. The 102 school-age seats at the city-run Menlo Children's Center are taken for the next school year, leaving virtually no options for kindergarten-age child care for anyone who just started to look for space.

The frustrated parents at the meeting wanted to know why the elementary schools do not provide child care on their campuses. Over the years, the answer has been simple: most Menlo Park campuses are small, and teachers are very reluctant to hand over their classrooms for after-school child care. Superintendent Ken Ranella told the shocked audience that it would be two years or more before the Menlo Park City district could address providing after-school child care on site, which is not what the parents wanted to hear.

Some of the parents evidently had no idea that there was even a child care shortage when they purchased a home or moved here in recent years. After all, Palo Alto and other neighboring cities do provide child care, either as a city function or at school. And at the K-8 Las Lomas School District, west Menlo Park and Atherton families have enjoyed on-campus child care for years, through a private provider who uses dedicated portable classrooms.

Mr. Ranella's district is in the process of upgrading its one middle school and three elementary school campuses, which will be paid for

by the \$91 million bond issue approved last year. During the run-up to the bond issue vote, the district took great pains to explain that the expanded campuses are needed to accommodate the huge increase in kindergarten students who are expected at Menlo Park schools.

But none of the early discussions talked about setting aside space for after-school child care, a critical factor in the lives of today's busy parents, many of whom both work 40 hours or more a week. Traditionally, the district relied on the city's program, or private groups, to provide child care. But the city-run school-age child care program is not only full, there are many families on the wait list. And although there is additional space in the Belle Haven center across town, few parents seemed interested, and city officials said the vacant seats wouldn't help anyway, since they are designated for older children rather than kindergartners.

Mayor Fergusson and Councilman Boyle promised they would support a parent-led task force already formed to study the problem and recommend solutions. Certainly the place to start is the school district, which is in an expansion mode now and could provide after school care if enough parents demanded it. Mr. Ranella probably spoke for his school board when he said that since the district just went to great trouble to eliminate portable classrooms, it might not be eager to turn around and add others to house child care operations.

But whether or not they like it, the most logical and obvious place to provide child care is on the campus where students attend regular classes. We remember futile efforts several years ago by then-City Council member Lee Duboc to convince the Menlo Park district to accommodate child care on site, but that was before the district raised the alarm about the enrollment increases coming and sold the community on a \$91 million bond issue.

It is time for the district to seriously consider changing its ways, and offer on-campus child care as soon as possible. As the existing crop of portable classrooms is phased out for new construction, some could and should be saved for a child care operation, modeled after what is now offered at Las Lomas. It seems like an obvious solution. We urge the Menlo Park City school board to seriously consider this option.

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

LETTERS

Our readers write

Council leadership on climate protection lauded

Editor:

The Menlo Park City Council is to be commended for taking initial steps towards helping the city curb its greenhouse gas emissions.

At its last meeting, the council voted to have a resolution prepared to endorse the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. By doing so they are joining hundreds of cities across the nation that have likewise decided to tackle this issue in this manner (www.coolcities.us/).

The council also voted to establish a task force to recommend ways that the city can take action on climate change and directed staff members to develop a proposal to have an experienced party, such as the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives, assess the greenhouse

See **LETTERS**, next page



Portola Valley Archives

Our Regional Heritage

Portola Valley artist Rachel Bentley displays some of her paintings in this 1963 photo. She is well known for her renditions of local landmarks, including her specialty of one-room school houses.

Dueling opinions over safety compliance

Mayor Carlson says jury, fire district all wrong

By Alan Carlson

In a Feb. 14 editorial citing a civil grand jury report, the Almanac found “most startling” Atherton’s “apparent failure to submit hundreds of housing plans for approval by the Menlo Park Fire Protection District.”

Following that grand jury report, which was based in part upon a review conducted with the fire district, the district asserted in a press release that “there is mounting evidence of irregular or improperly issued building permits” in Atherton without “fire department approval of building plans.” This is simply untrue.

Before issuing building permits, Atherton has for decades reviewed building plans for health and safety code compliance. By law, the town has this responsibility unless it delegates it to the fire district. Just like Menlo Park, it has not done so. The fire district has never complained to Atherton’s City Council or requested that it be delegated this responsibility. These facts were known to the district, but apparently not shared with the grand jury and the Almanac.

The grand jury criticizes Atherton’s fire sprinkler ordinance. And the fire district misstates “these systems are not required ... amazingly ... in basements where they may be needed the most.” In 2004, the district asked Atherton to adopt its sprinkler ordinance. The council did so, excluding remodels. Basements in new homes were included. In contrast, Menlo Park refused to enact any fire sprinkler ordinance, an item not noted in the district’s criticism of Atherton.

The grand jury cites concerns with “undersized fire hydrant water supply pipes” in Atherton. Again, the district

joins this criticism. I’m in my ninth year on the Atherton council, and inexplicably, it’s the first I’ve ever heard of this from the district. And with respect to water supply, whose responsibility is this? The district’s 2006-2007 strategic plan answers “substandard water supplies” in Atherton is the responsibility of the “fire district and the water districts ... to insure that a proper infrastructure is in place.”

The fire district has only asked for one thing from Atherton’s council in the last nine years. Just that sprinkler ordinance enacted in 2004. Notwithstanding, one district board member accuses in the Almanac that Atherton has “tended to view the fire department as not part of their team. The fire department is not routinely asked for input.”

Atherton’s residents should ask, if the district had all these serious safety concerns, why it never brought them to their City Council. Where has the fire district been in my nine years on the council? I’ve seen a succession of fire chiefs introduce themselves to the council, each saying he looked forward to working with Atherton, but little else of the district.

To imply that Atherton is unconcerned with its residents’ safety is



Alan Carlson



NOTE

A county civil grand jury report issued last month said many Atherton homes built in the last 11 years may not have had their plans reviewed by the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, and as a result, might not meet fire code standards. The Atherton City Council and the fire district disagree on this assessment, as noted in these two guest opinions.

Blistering words from fire board member

By Peter Carpenter

Atherton Mayor Alan Carlson first stated in the Feb. 14 Almanac that “the implication is that fire hazards were built in Atherton, and that is absolutely not the case.” He now states (in the Feb. 28 Almanac) that the town “never had a legal obligation to submit building plans to the fire district” and that the responsibility for this (non-existent problem) rests not with the town but with the fire district.

The facts will show that there have been many homes built in Atherton which do not meet the fire code. In addition, the town knowingly issued building permits for homes with unimaginably large non-occupied basement storage space and most of those basements were immediately remodeled without permits after they were built into media rooms, game rooms and other occupied spaces in violation of the fire codes. These remodeled basements have no secondary exits and no sprinklers

and are absolute fire traps for both the people living in those homes and any firefighters who enter those spaces in an attempt to save lives.

No city in California with its own fire department would even think of issuing a building permit without having a sign-off from its fire professionals. The fire district is the fire department for the citizens of Atherton and it shouldn’t take a rocket scientist to recognize that the fire district’s approval should be obtained before the town issues a building permit.



Peter Carpenter

A building permit is a guarantee to the recipient and to subsequent purchasers that the building meets all the codes, including the fire code. How can the town issue such a guarantee when it has not required that the plans be reviewed and approved by the fire district?

I will donate \$5,000 to Mayor Carlson’s favorite charity if he can prove that his statements are factually correct.

Peter Carpenter lives on Larch Drive in Atherton and is a board member of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District.

endo and misstatement, is a failure of responsibility.

That’s my perspective as one member of the Atherton City Council.

Alan Carlson is mayor of Atherton.

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

gas levels emitted by the city. While this work is just beginning, it is a start and all of the members of the council are demonstrating their leadership on an issue that has both local and global consequences.

Steve Taffee
Menlo Park resident and co-leader
Sierra Club Cool Cities Campaign
For Menlo Park

Mayor welcomes ideas, participation on new ‘green’ advisory committee

By Kelly Fergusson

Our planet is heating up. In the coming decades, Menlo Park may face significant environmental consequences due to climate change. Local, regional, and state organizations are banding together to develop solutions, and Menlo Park should join them by facing our own challenges and opportunities.

We may target cost savings with efficiencies that reduce our greenhouse gas pollution, both as a municipal organization and as a broader community.

We may further position Menlo Park as a “clean technology” or “new energy” hub for businesses providing solutions the whole world needs, thereby expanding the city’s tax base. With SRI, the USGS, our pro-

imity to Stanford and pre-eminent venture firms, we have a renowned history of innovation and science to build on.

We may prepare to mitigate possible consequences of climate change, such as sea level rise, which potentially could inundate thousands of residents in the Belle Haven neighborhood and affect our industrial district.

I’m launching the Green Ribbon Citizens’ Committee to research and advise on these and other challenges and opportunities we face in bringing the climate crisis under control. The committee will, at minimal cost, provide an



Kelly Fergusson

overview assessment of the broad range of available options.

I’m extending a public open invitation to everyone in Menlo Park and the region who is interested in volunteering their talents and passion. Far from being a hand-picked or secretive group, as implied in a recent Almanac article and editorial, this committee is open to everyone. All meetings will be publicly announced. Brainstorming between meetings will transpire on a publicly accessible e-mail log. People may have differences, and I welcome that. Palo Alto had fantastic results this way. Now let’s take it up a notch.

Whether you’re a resident, business owner, or an individual with relevant expertise, I welcome your ideas and participation in the committee. The first meeting will be Wednesday, March 14, from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m., in the Menlo Park Main Library basement, and will be facilitated by a highly skilled volunteer with expertise in sustainability. To

join the committee, attend the first meeting or send me an e-mail or letter stating your interest.

The committee will bring me its recommendations later this year, and I’ll invite the City Council to a public study session for a presentation of the committee’s results, including a question and answer session. It is time to lead by example, and Menlo Park has the ingenuity to lead on a truly global scale.

Kelly Fergusson is mayor of Menlo Park.



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