

**ATHERTON:** Home projects halted after plans were approved. Page 9

INSIDE:  
Home&Garden Design



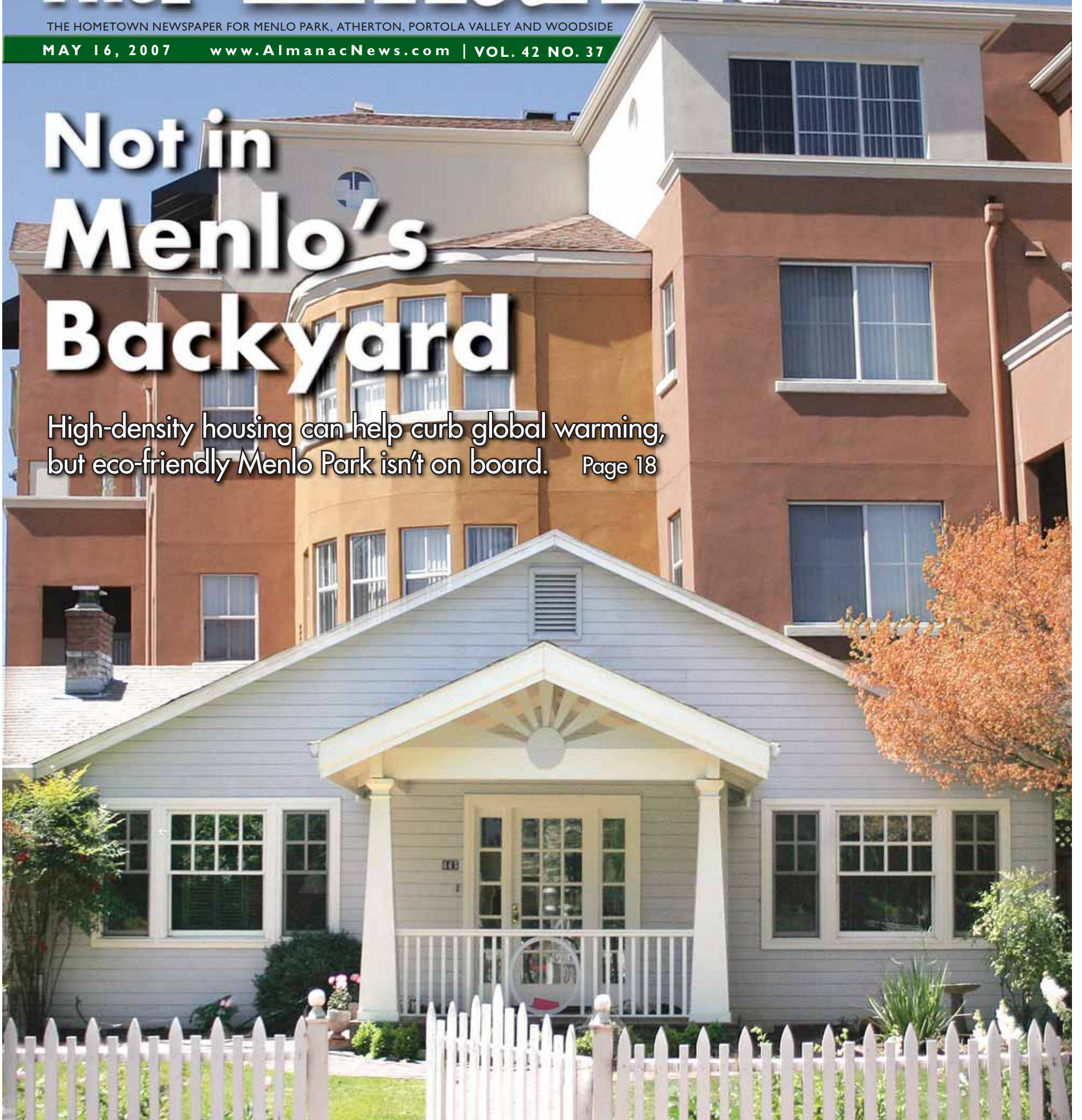
# The Almanac

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

MAY 16, 2007 [www.AlmanacNews.com](http://www.AlmanacNews.com) | VOL. 42 NO. 37

## Not in Menlo's Backyard

High-density housing can help curb global warming, but eco-friendly Menlo Park isn't on board. Page 18



REDEFINING QUALITY SINCE 1990

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



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# Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

## FIRST SHOT



Photo by Matt Stoecker

### Creek meets Bay

"San Francisquito Creek meets the Bay" is one of the Matt Stoecker photos on display through June at the Konditorei coffee shop in the Ladera shopping center on Alpine Road. The photos focus on streams and fish in the local watershed. Also, there's a video loop of Mr. Stoecker and his brother, Jim, kayaking San Francisquito Creek. The son of Portola Valley architect Bob Stoecker, Matt Stoecker grew up exploring local streams; now he runs Stoecker Ecological in Santa Barbara, and works for the removal of dams — including Searsville — to restore historic fish runs.

### Atherton

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### Portola Valley

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### People

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## On the cover

Some Menlo Park residents fear the city's "look and feel" will be damaged by high-density development. Environmentalists, meanwhile, say building dense housing projects near transit corridors is a good thing. Photo illustration by Veronica Weber. Story on **Page 18**.

## CALLING ON THE ALMANAC

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

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# RETIREMENT CELEBRATION SALE

See inside for more details on page 10!

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### Enjoy Some Asparagus

Asparagus is one of those vegetables that has it all. It's healthy and tasty, and it makes an especially beautiful presentation. Try cooking fresh asparagus in a bit of boiling water, and it will be ready in five to eight minutes. You can also stir fry it by cutting the stalks into quarter-inch diagonal pieces, leaving the tips whole. For a pretty and tantalizing appetizer, wrap asparagus stalks in bacon and bake them in the oven. Canned asparagus can be used to make a warm and healthful soup. Before storing fresh asparagus, cut about a quarter-inch off the stem, wash it, and pat it dry. Put it in the refrigerator in a moisture-proof wrapping, and use it within two or three days.

A wine journal can be great, regardless of your level of wine drinking. At ROBERTS MARKET, we think that wine can be a great hobby, and we are ourselves serious wine connoisseurs. We can help anyone with wine, from novices to those who consider themselves experts. We feature the finest produce, meats, poultry, and seafood available in the area, and we have a great selection of marinades which help change the taste of your favorite meats.



*P.S. Asparagus was prized as a delicacy in ancient Rome and Greece as a food fit for the gods.*

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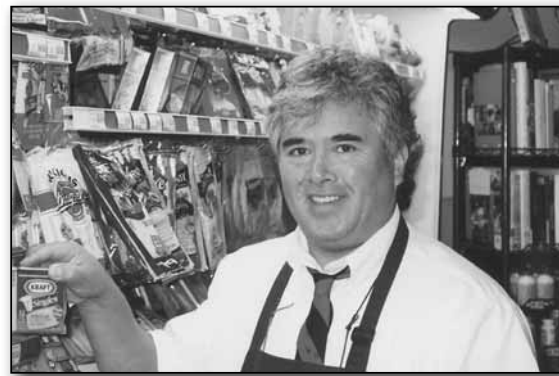
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## WINE

### Zinfandel

What to serve with lamb? There are plenty of appropriate wine matches for lamb like; Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, or Dyrak, but none adapt to the rich flavor and texture of lamb better than California's own Zinfandel. Zinfandel's natural acidity combined with its spicy, peppery character, make Zin and lamb an epicurean match.

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## MEAT

— *Special This Week at Roberts* —

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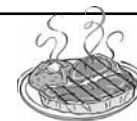
**TROUT** **\$8.98** lb.



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**NATURAL NEW YORK** **\$17.98** lb.





### One cool cat

Menlo Park jazz prodigy Taylor Eigsti scored a Cal Performances gig. He'll be performing in Berkeley with the Taylor Eigsti Quartet on October 13.

It seems like only yesterday the Almanac was writing about a young sprout of a lad and his surprisingly mature music, and now a 20-something hipster with a soul-patch is decorating the Cal Performances brochure above breathless text calling him "one of the freshest new talents on the jazz scene."

"Two-time Grammy nominee Taylor Eigsti, a brilliant pianist/composer/bandleader, has been around since he was a preteen in Menlo Park, performing with such legends as Dave Brubeck and James Moody," says Cal Performances.

We love it when local boys make good. Tickets are available at CalPerfs. Berkeley.edu.

### Cats of a certain age

The Peninsula Humane Society and SPCA are giving away cats that are 8 years old and older from now until the end of July at their facility at 12 Airport Boulevard in San Mateo.

The shelter is open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. on weekends.

Photos of these seasoned felines can be viewed at [www.phs-sPCA.org](http://www.phs-sPCA.org).

### Shhh! I'm backing up.

Who knew that reverse alarms on construction vehicles don't have to be loud and annoying?

At the work site of the library, Town Hall and community hall out at Town Center in Portola Valley — a tranquil community known for its sensitivity to noise — the to-ing and fro-ing of the equipment is remarkable for the low volume of the beeping alarm when the vehicles are in reverse, said Mayor Ted Driscoll.

"It was kind of hushed," he said at the May 9 Town Council meeting. "You could hear it, but you had to be pretty close."

# Local News

MENLO PARK | A THERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

## Town backs housing at college campus

■ College district wants to build 56 to 60 rental apartments on site of parking lot.

By **Andrea Gemmet**

Almanac Staff Writer

**C**oming in 2009: Posh apartments with cut-rate rents located off Farm Hill Boulevard near scenic Woodside.

Local residents may know it best as the place where teens learn to drive, but Ron Galatolo, the chancellor of the San Mateo County Community College District, has a different vision for Cañada College's often-empty parking lot No. 3 — as affordable housing for the faculty and staff of the district's three community colleges.

To get it done, however, college officials want to redraw the boundary line between Redwood

City and Woodside that cuts through the Cañada College campus, right down the middle of the 3.3-acre parking lot. Most of the Cañada College campus, including all of its buildings, is within Woodside town limits.

College officials solicited conceptual approval of the project from the Woodside Town Council at its May 8 meeting. The council was unanimous in its support, and members said Woodside staff would work with the district and Redwood City to de-annex the town's portion of the parking lot, enabling the 56-to-60-unit apartment complex to be built entirely in Redwood City. Redwood City has the multifam-

### ■ WOODSIDE

ily zoning and infrastructure, such as sewer and water lines, to accommodate the project.

The high cost of housing in San Mateo County is the primary reason that the college district has been facing high employee turnover rates and difficulty recruiting replacements, he said.

Mr. Galatolo said the Cañada College project, dubbed College Vista 2, would include up to 60 apartments, and pointed to the district's success with the similar, 44-unit College Vista project on the campus of College of San Mateo. College Vista opened in December 2005, and already has waiting list of 77 district employees.

"We transformed the lives of

those 44 occupants," he said.

It's not just that homes are expensive to buy, he said, but it's also expensive to rent in San Mateo County. The county's first-time homebuyer program and the district's second loan program aren't very helpful if their employees are spending so much on rent that they can't afford to save for a down payment, he said.

"We see this as transitional housing," he said. "We want them to churn out of (College Vista) in five to seven years" and into their first homes.

District officials considered building housing at Skyline College in San Bruno, but found that all of the Skyline employees they surveyed would rather commute

See **COLLEGE**, page 8

## 'Who Killed Electric Car?' director returns to Menlo

By **Marion Softky**

Almanac Staff Writer

**W**hen alumni Chris Paine and Roger Gilbertson came home to Menlo School recently, close to 400 people showed up. And had a blast.

No wonder. Mr. Paine, who grew up in Portola Valley, has brought recognition to the school and the community through his award-winning film, "Who Killed the Electric Car?" — which he wrote and directed. And the pair put on a lively program.

Mr. Gilbertson, although not connected with the film, has been involved in a number of projects with Mr. Paine over the years.

"The kids were totally enrapt," says Peter Brown, a history teacher at Menlo and old friend of Mr. Paine. Here was someone who came from their background and talked about cars and movies and Tom Hanks and Mel Gibson.

Mr. Paine took time out from a hectic schedule to talk about his personal journey from Portola Valley to international success as a film-maker. And success it has been. The film, which premiered last year at Sundance, has been shown in theaters and film festivals around the world; it won awards in Telluride, Canberra and Milan.

Chris Paine describes the real breakthrough: Sony Pictures ran "Who Killed the Electric Car?" as a trailer with Al Gore's "An Inconvenient Truth," which went on to win an Academy Award for best documentary.

"Al Gore said it made 'a perfect summer double feature,'" Mr. Paine says proudly.

### Environmental genes

Chris Paine picked his parents well. In the 1960s and 1970s when he was growing up, Ward and Mary Paine were leaders in the environmental movement that was taking off on the Peninsula. They still are.

"We crushed cans and recycled," Chris Paine remembers, sitting under a giant oak tree behind his parents' house. "We got tuned into the environment as an important value."

Chris took up films as a hobby at Menlo School with his friend Roger Gilbertson, then of Woodside. Their first production was a parody, "In Search of the Big Nose," he says.

Later, Mr. Paine graduated from Colgate College with a degree in international relations, and pursued a career that spanned Internet enterprises, films and political action. He moved to Los Angeles in 1990.

During the 1980s, he worked

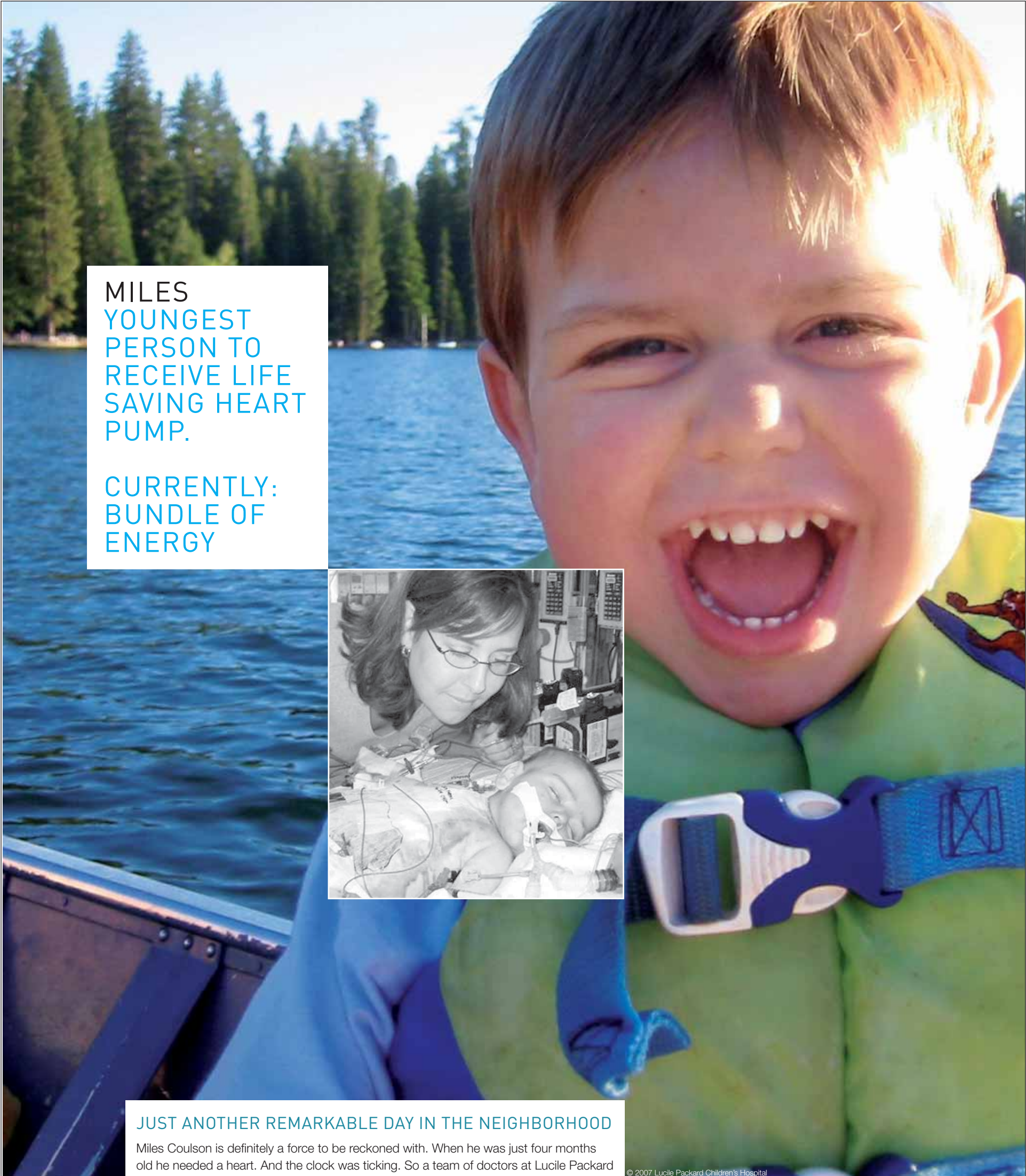


**Chris Paine** grew up in Portola Valley and learned film-making as a hobby at Menlo School.

with environmental activist Lenie Roberts to make a film attacking the proposed freeway bypass of Devil's Slide on the San Mateo County coast — where a tunnel is now being built.

In 1997, Mr. Paine leased a General Motors EV1 electric car. He loved it; it was fast, quiet, cheap, non-polluting, and you

See **PAINE**, page 8



MILES  
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PERSON TO  
RECEIVE LIFE  
SAVING HEART  
PUMP.

CURRENTLY:  
BUNDLE OF  
ENERGY



#### JUST ANOTHER REMARKABLE DAY IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

Miles Coulson is definitely a force to be reckoned with. When he was just four months old he needed a heart. And the clock was ticking. So a team of doctors at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital came up with a bold plan – use a Berlin Heart, an artificial pump, until a transplant could be found. That the device had only been used a few times in the U.S. didn't daunt them. They developed a protocol just for Miles. It was more than successful, it was groundbreaking for other pediatric heart patients. It's this kind of innovative thinking, combined with sensitive, nurturing care, that makes Packard Children's a world-class hospital and Miles a world-class bundle of energy. Visit [www.lpch.org](http://www.lpch.org) for more information.

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Lucile Packard  
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AT STANFORD





*'If someone felt strongly that we should not do this project, they should have run (for the council). That's the way representative government works.'*

MAYOR TED DRISCOLL

## Portola Valley residents open to 'greener' lifestyles, says mayor

Large private donations won't unduly influence council, he says

By David Boyce  
Almanac Staff Writer

Portola Valley Mayor Ted Driscoll says he surprised at how much residents of the town are open to green initiatives, such as installing solar panels on their homes.

In a 90-minute interview with the Almanac, Mr. Driscoll, who has been on the Town Council for 13 years, also said he didn't see any risk that large private donors to the Town Center rebuilding complex would have undue influence on the project or on the council. "There are never any strings attached to the money," he said.

The council is relying on private donations to raise the needed \$17 million for the complex. So far, \$12 million has been raised in pledges and gifts from 355 households, including 87 who donated \$5,000 or more.

Mr. Driscoll also responded to questions about a controversy over whether dogs on leashes should be allowed on the six miles of trails in the Portola Valley Ranch neighborhood. In June, the council is likely to discuss and perhaps rule on this issue.

The trails go through land considered a wildlife preserve,

where dogs are seen by some as predators, but people who walk dogs there say the other trails where dogs are allowed are not as rural and wooded.

The questions and answers below have been edited for brevity and relevance.

**Q.** *The town has an environmentally sensitive Town Center under way, remodelers and rebuilders must fill out a green-building checklist for a new project, the town has a green purchasing policy and the council signed the Mayors Climate Protection Initiative. Is there anywhere else to go with this effort to lower greenhouse gas emissions?*

**A.** There are new ideas coming every day. There are an awful lot of single children and single parents driving to school

every morning. It seems like it just screams for a school bus.

**Q.** *Do you have a sense that Portola Valley residents are open to living greener lives?*

**A.** I am surprised at how much. For example, the solar (panel) initiative. When Armand (Neukermans) and I started cooking this idea up, he expected to get 25 homes. We got something like 70 homes. It's remarkable how many

people signed on.

**Q.** *Regarding Town Center fundraising, have you had concerns that major donors*

*Continued on page 23*

## REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



### Single Story Neighborhoods

**Q:** I am considering buying a property in a neighborhood that has a "single-story overlay". Am I wise to buy something with this kind of restriction?

because adjacent houses are all on the same level and no one can see into another's yard. This is the main attraction of this kind of restriction.

**A:** There are a few neighborhoods in mid-Peninsula towns in which a majority of the residents have voted to prohibit second-story additions. In most cases the square foot allowances, or FARs (floor area ratios) are the same as they would be if a second story were allowed. But because the property must all be built on one level (plus a basement which is not counted in the FARs), more of the lot will be covered leaving less outdoor yard space. Single story neighborhoods give residents more outdoor privacy

The question is whether this kind of restriction affects property values in the restricted areas. The highest and best use of a lot in a good location is to be able to build the maximum square footage subject to zoning and design rules. Limiting the type of structure can limit the number of buyers who will be interested in the property. Most buyers would prefer to buy an unrestricted property. However if the style and look of the single story neighborhood is appealing and desirable, the overlay restriction can be a good thing. If you like the property and won't feel encumbered by the restriction, you should go ahead and buy it.

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



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# District attorney to make call on charges in Halberstam case

The Menlo Park Police Department has completed its investigation of the accident that killed Pulitzer Prize-winner journalist David Halberstam in Menlo Park on April 23, and has referred the case to the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office, the department announced April 10.

The police department made no recommendation regarding prosecution.

"They want us to make that decision," said Stephen Wagstaffe, chief deputy district attorney.

His office will review the case to determine "whether there was a violation of California's vehicular manslaughter law," Mr. Wagstaffe said.

Police said they interviewed four witnesses in connection with the three-car accident that occurred at the intersection of Bayfront Expressway (Hwy. 84) and Willow Road.

Mr. Halberstam, 73, of New York City was a passenger in a car driven by a UC Berkeley journalism student. The car was traveling west on the Bayfront Expressway and

turning left at Willow Road, when it was broadsided by another car around 10:30 a.m.

The driver of the other car said he didn't have enough time to stop to avoid the collision. Mr. Halberstam was killed instantly, authorities said.

Mr. Halberstam was en route from the East Bay to meet with Atherton resident and NFL Hall of Fame quarterback Y.A. Tittle for a book Mr. Halberstam was working on. ■

*Don Kazak of the Palo Alto Weekly contributed to this report.*

# 'Electric Car' director vows Menlo School

**PAINÉ**

*continued from page 5*

could plug it in at night. Many other Hollywood people, some of whom appear in the film, loved them too.

Then about the time that Mr. Paine decided he wanted to start directing his own films, General Motors took the car back. It cancelled the program in 2003. "A lot of people thought it was a setup," Mr. Paine says. "I set out to connect the dots."

His film asked the questions, "What really happened to the electric car? Why is this important? Why should anyone care?"

## Making a movie

"We didn't want to make a conspiracy movie or a Michael Moore movie. We wanted to make it entertaining," Mr. Paine recalls. "We framed it as a murder mystery."

Three years later, with the help

of 200 people, the movie ranked third in U.S. box office receipts for a documentary in 2006. "Movie-making is collaborative. I had a lot of help," Mr. Paine says.

"Who Killed the Electric Car?"

*Here was someone who came from their background and talked about cars and movies and Tom Hanks and Mel Gibson.*

starts with a funeral for a flower-draped EV1. It tracks the fate of hundreds of cars mysteriously sent off to the desert, where it shows them being crushed and shredded. And it gives arguments about six suspects in the murder.

Five of the six suspects are found guilty: oil companies; car companies; government; the California Air Resources Board (CARB!);

and hydrogen fuel cells. Batteries were found not guilty.

The film includes some big names. Martin Sheen narrates, and there are appearances by Phyllis Diller, Mel Gibson, Tom Hanks, and Ralph Nader.

Back in Portola Valley, Mr. Paine reflects on the issues explored in the movie. "We thought it was an excellent case study for why it's hard for America to get out of the 20th century," he says. "The electric car story has become a kind of metaphor.

"We're all in this pickle together. We're all dependent on oil, and we need to work together to get off of it."

What is Mr. Paine doing next?

"I'm working on a comedy about the end of the world," he says. "It's called 'Nice Try.'" ■

*Do you have any experiences with electric cars? Big ones? Fast ones? or the little neighborhood electric cars that buzz around town? Share your experiences in Town Square at [www.AlmanacNews.com](http://www.AlmanacNews.com).*

# College district to build 50-to-60 apartments

**COLLEGE**

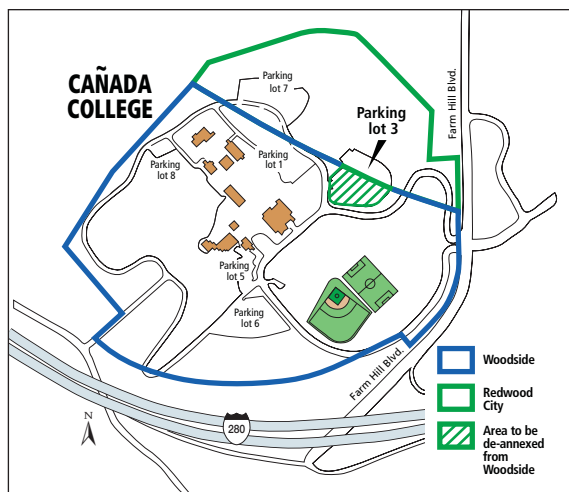
*continued from page 5*

from the sunnier campuses of Cañada or College of San Mateo, Mr. Galatolo said.

"This looks like a great project," said Councilman Ron Romines. "If you can improve the architectural component at Cañada, that would be a plus."

There was one little caveat to the Woodside Town Council's support of the project. Council members said they would love to get some credit for allowing affordable housing to be built. Woodside, like other cities, is facing state mandates to increase its housing stock in all price ranges.

Woodside doesn't have any zoning that allows multifamily hous-



## Cañada College

officials want to redraw the Woodside town boundary line in order to build staff housing on a campus parking lot.

The Almanac/  
Gail Thoreson

ing, and it doesn't have the sewer capacity to serve such a project, said Town Manager Susan George. Town staff has been talking with

Redwood City staff about getting Woodside partial credit for the project, she said. ■



The Almanac/David Boyce

## Silent killer

The dark wound in the crotch of this Portola Valley oak is a late symptom of sudden oak death disease. The carrier may have been the nearby rhododendron, which may have acquired it from a nursery. Brown tips on the leaves of a nearby bay laurel tree, also a carrier, is a strong indicator of the presence of the disease.

The oaks — tan, black and coast live, typically — may not be symptomatic until it is too late and the incurable disease is highly contagious, but early testing and treatment by a certified arborist can be effective

in saving a tree and/or preventing infection. Call 363-4700 to schedule a free test from the San Mateo County Agricultural Department. For more information, enter "sudden oak death" in a search engine and go to the Web page for the California Oak Mortality Task Force.



## Trial date set in molestation case

A trial by jury is ahead for Tyrone Darnell Williams, who pleaded not guilty on May 10 to charges of sexually molesting his young female cousins when he shared a Menlo Park house with them and their grandmother in the 1990s.

Mr. Williams, 29, is accused of 29 counts of lewd behavior with a child under the age of 14 and one count of sodomy with a minor, said Chief Deputy District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe.

Mr. Williams once worked at the

Onetta Harris Community Center in the Belle Haven neighborhood of Menlo Park, but none of the crimes he is accused of occurred in the context of his work at the community center, said Deputy District Attorney Melissa McKowan.

His trial is set for Sept. 17 at 8:45 a.m. in the courtroom of San Mateo County Superior Court Judge John Grandsaert in Redwood City, Mr. Wagstaffe said. Mr. Williams remains in jail on \$1 million bail.

## Celebration of Daniel Barclay's life

A celebration of the life of Menlo-Atherton High School's most celebrated Quiz Kid, Daniel Barclay, begins at 2 p.m. Saturday, May 19, in the J Building on the M-A campus at 555 Middlefield Road in Atherton.

Mr. Barclay, 22, a college senior set to graduate in June from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, was found dead April 19 on a Cape Cod beach after an apparent boating accident.

Classmates, friends, pals, teachers and anyone wanting to pay their respects and share

memories of Mr. Barclay are invited to the event, said his mother Sue Kayton. "Casual clothes are fine," she added.

Mr. Barclay, who had majored in political science and economics at MIT, had a job lined up as a currency trader in Boston.

His life came to a tragic end when, after a 12-day search, a birdwatcher discovered his



Daniel Barclay

body washed up on a Cape Cod beach with a bailing bucket and the remains of an inflatable raft by his side.

During his years in Menlo Park, Dan attended Menlo Park public schools, including Las Lomas and Oak Knoll elemen-

tary and Hillview Middle School, as well as M-A.

For more information, go to [www.suekayton.com](http://www.suekayton.com).

## Properties entangled in permit disputes

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

What happens when the building official who authorized your project retires, and his replacement tells you the plans never should have been approved in the first place?

In the case of several building projects in the town of Atherton, they shut down construction or tell you to tear down what you've built.

The headache-inducing aftermath of last year's turmoil in the Atherton Building Department looks like it is going to be playing out in the Atherton Town Council Chambers — and possibly the courts — in the coming weeks and months.

Among those at issue are two new homes, one on Barry Lane and one on Tallwood Court, and one pool house with a basement on Belbrook Way.

What the projects have in common is that they were approved by the building department when former building official Mike Hood was at the helm. After Mr. Hood retired in June 2006, town officials took a closer look and determined that each of the projects violate Atherton regulations.

The three property owners filed appeals with the City Council that were on the agenda for this week's meeting, but all three are likely to be postponed to the June council meeting.

### Barry Lane

For a house under construction at Barry Lane, it comes down to the definition of "attic." The plans were approved because the top floor of the home with a mansard-style roof was apparently considered attic space, so its square footage was not counted against the maximum.

But when Mr. Hood left and

interim building official Mike Cully looked at the plans, he ruled that it can't be considered an attic — it's a second floor, and as a result, the 13,720-square-foot house is 5,666 square feet over the maximum size allowed on the property.

Attic space is generally considered to be non-inhabitable space between the ceiling and the roof, said Atherton's new building official, Mike Wassmann.

The builder, Creative Habitats, and the homeowners, Linda and Robert Thomas, have each retained lawyers and are appealing to the Atherton City Council to reverse an abatement notice against the property.

"Prior to purchasing the home, the Thomases visited the Town of Atherton and were assured that there was a valid building permit for construction of the home and that there were no permit problems," said attorneys Dan K. Siegel and E. David Marks in the appeal letter.

The original permit is valid and cannot be revoked, the attorneys maintain.

### Belbrook Way

In the case of Belbrook Way, the dispute centers around a pool house with a basement built on allegedly expired permits. Between the time that the permit should have expired in 2003, and when construction actually began in 2005, Atherton clarified its rules to prohibit basements under any structure other than a main house.

The homeowners, Maryan Ackley and her husband Stephen, a principal with the Menlo Park-based development company Pacific Peninsula Group, hired a lawyer and are appealing

their case to the City Council.

The pool house was singled out in the town's audit of the problems and possible improprieties in the Atherton Building Department. Dubbed "Property C," the audit says the building department allowed the permit to remain active more than 24 months past its expiration date.

See PERMIT, page 13

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# Atherton city manager steered town through troubled times

By Andrea Gemmet  
Almanac Staff Writer

When Jim Robinson arrived in Atherton to fill the city manager job in 2001, he took on a troubled town.

At the time, Atherton was grappling with a divided City Council, budget cuts, turmoil over its financial practices, a controversial interim city manager and a downsized police department.

The council set out to find a candidate who would get things running smoothly and keep the town out of the headlines, and they found him in the mild-mannered man from Corte Madera.

Mr. Robinson, 58, announced last week that he plans to retire by the end of July, ending a 32-year career as a public official. The announcement was met with surprise and regret from council members.

"I think he's been the best city manager Atherton has ever had," said Atherton Councilman Jim Janz, a sentiment echoed by two other councilmen.

"He came in during a period of controversy, when a lot of people who (might) have considered the

(city manager) job wouldn't," said Mayor Alan Carlson. "I think he had a great calming influence on the staff and the community. He's also a person of great integrity."

During Mr. Robinson's tenure, the town passed a parcel tax to shore up its budget, satisfied auditors with improvements to its financial controls, and stemmed the tide of turnover in the police department.

"He preferred to work in the background on things, rather than waving his arms and try to draw a lot of attention to himself, which happened with some of the previous city managers," said Councilman Jerry Carlson. "That was something the town needed. It had gone through some traumatic experiences



The Almanac/Veronica Weber

**Atherton City Manger Jim Robinson plans to retire in July.**

(before he arrived)."

In the past year, however, problems in the Atherton Building Department, detailed in a series of internal audits, led to a major shake-up, as well as press scrutiny and at least one lawsuit. As the top member of town staff, Mr. Robinson did receive some public criticism for not becoming aware of irregularities in the building department's practices sooner.

However, he continued to enjoy the support of the City Council.

**'He managed the whole building department thing with a level head and kept calm while people around him were losing theirs.'**

COUNCILMAN CHARLES MARSALA.

"He managed the whole building department thing with a level head and kept calm while people around him were losing theirs," said Councilman Charles Mar-

sala. "He really knows his stuff, and he's able to keep his head in the midst of accusations and chaos."

Mr. Robinson was hired in May 2001 and began working for the town in July. His formal introduction came at the September 12 City Council meeting, the day after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon.

Mr. Robinson served as a city manager in California and Missouri for 24 years, including his previous stint with the

town of Corte Madera. He and his wife will move out of the town-provided house at Holbrook-Palmer Park and return to their home in Marin County, he said.

Mr. Robinson said he informed the City Council and town staff of his retirement plans on Monday, May 7. When he was hired, he committed to working for the town for five years, he said.

"I've really enjoyed working in Atherton, and living in Atherton," Mr. Robinson said. "It's been a great opportunity, and I'm very appreciative of the support of the council, the great town staff, and I've enjoyed working with an energized group of volunteers." ■

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## Atherton resident studies in London

Stephen Fisher of Atherton is spending the spring 2007 semester in London as part of a study abroad program with Lewis & Clark College, based in Portland, Oregon.

Mr. Fisher, a junior at Lewis & Clark, will study social issues and the provision of social services in London. He is one of 15 participants in the London program.

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## Council tightens definition of building rules

After hearing residents' concerns that developers are taking advantage of a glitch in Menlo Park's building code, the City Council opted to clean up the rules.

The council on May 8 voted 4-0-1 with Councilman Andy Cohen abstaining to direct staff to abide by a stricter definition of what is counted toward the square footage of proposed projects.

In evaluating past projects, the planning department hasn't always counted elevator shafts and mechanical rooms toward total square footage — a practice that allowed a proposed medical office complex to avoid triggering a traffic study.

Traffic studies are required for projects greater than 10,000 square feet, and the medical building — proposed for 1906 El Camino Real — was listed by staff at 9,825 square feet.

"The situation over time has gotten muddled," said Councilman Heyward Robinson.

The council told staff to hold future projects to a "more literal" interpretation of square footage, rather than grant exceptions.

Projects that have already been built or approved will not be subject to the new square footage calculations.

## Close Santa Cruz for block party?

If Mayor Kelly Fergusson and Councilman Heyward Robinson get their way, Menlo Park could host several block parties this summer on Santa Cruz Avenue.

The two council members have submitted a letter asking the council to consider closing off downtown Menlo Park to traffic on the evenings of Aug. 1 and Aug. 15 so residents can "relax, mingle, enjoy food and beverages and possibly even live music or a movie in a family-friendly setting."

They say the events would build community and create a "convivial and vibrant atmosphere."

The Chamber of Commerce, downtown businesses and restaurants could organize the event, with the city's help, Ms. Fergusson and Mr. Robinson say in the letter.

Closing the street would require a special event permit issued by the Planning Commission.

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# Board set to OK Oak Knoll plan Drive-by shooting in Willows

By **Rory Brown**  
Almanac Staff Writer

As the Menlo Park City School District Board of Trustees gets set to green-light plans to renovate Oak Knoll School, neighbors of the K-5 campus want the district to slow down.

The school board is expected to approve a plan for Oak Knoll at its meeting on Wednesday, May 16, in the school's multi-purpose room at 1895 Oak Knoll Lane. School board members are scheduled to discuss the Oak Knoll plan at 7 p.m.

All trustees have supported building a two-story multi-purpose building at the north end of the school near Oak Avenue — a major point of contention with neighbors.

"It looks like the district is set on building this two-story mega

structure just feet away from our homes," said Rich Rollins, a former Menlo Park planning commissioner who lives on Oak Avenue.

Mr. Rollins and other neighbors say the district is downplaying the size of the new building, and ignoring requests to come up with a new plan.

District officials say the 26-foot-tall building will be about 16,000 square feet on the ground floor, with some additional classrooms on the second story. Neighbors say that since the structure will house a gym, it will bulkier than advertised by the district, and cast shadows on nearby properties.

Neighbors have also said a parking lot proposed off Oak Avenue, adjacent to the multi-purpose building, will lead to traffic jams and safety hazards due to cars turning into the lot.

Superintendent Ken Ranella

said all impacts of the multi-purpose building and parking lot, in addition to other renovations, will undergo further environmental studies.

"We have to do what's best educationally and operationally for the school," Mr. Ranella said. "There are concerns that have been expressed and considered, but this process didn't start with studying impacts on neighborhoods, it started with planning how to operate our schools." ■

Three men were arrested following a drive-by shooting Saturday in the Willows area of Menlo Park, police report.

No one was injured, but a car was struck several times by bullets fired from a white Jeep Cherokee in the 400 block of Chester Street at around 8:50 p.m., said Sgt. Jim Simpson of the Menlo Park Police Department.

The three arrested were Jorge Solis, 29, and Juan Ceja, 22, of East Palo Alto, and Antonio Carillo, 31, of Avenal, police said.

They were charged with attempt-

ed murder, shooting at an occupied vehicle, and possession of a controlled substance, police said.

Minutes after the shooting, the Jeep was seen near Willow and Middlefield roads by Officer Nick Douglas. After evading Officer Douglas' first attempt to stop them, the jeep's occupants yielded at the corner of Middlefield Road and Oak Grove Avenue, police said.

Anyone with information about this shooting is asked to call the Menlo Park Police Department at 330-6300.

## Superintendent: No plans for two middle schools

A Menlo Park resident has compiled a lengthy report arguing the Menlo Park City School District should construct a new elementary school in its district-wide renovations, but Superintendent Ken Ranella said that's not going to happen.

Dave Montague, an engineering and management consultant, says in his report that the district should build a K-4 school at the O'Connor School site in the Willows neighborhood, and convert Encinal School into a second middle school.

By making these changes, the district could evenly distribute enrollment, and avoid traffic and construction impacts of building

two-story buildings at Hillview Middle School, he said. (See his guest opinion, "Menlo Park school plan on wrong track," on Page 31.)

But Mr. Ranella said Hillview is the cornerstone of the school district, and there are no plans to replicate the middle school's specialized facilities at a second campus.

"Hillview School is the sole middle school for educating our students," Mr. Ranella said. "It's not our intention to break up one of the best middle schools in the state. ... It has distinguished itself educationally and programmatically."

He noted that the O'Connor School could still be used by the district if district-wide enrollment continues to grow.

## Dance celebration at Woodside High

Tap, jazz, lyrical, hip-hop, ballroom. "Dancin' Fever," a celebration of dance by members of Woodside High School's dance team and artistic dance class, is happening at 8 p.m. Saturday, May 19, at the school's perform-

ing arts center, located at 199 Churchill Road in Woodside.

Tickets, which will be sold at the door only, are \$10 general admission and \$7 for students. For more information, write to jacee0101@yahoo.com.

## PERMIT

continued from page 9

## Tallwood Court

In a third case, homeowners Charles and Leslie King have filed suit over their nearly completed home on a hillside property at 94 Tallwood Court. Town officials say the basement protrudes too far above ground, and as a result, the two-story house is essentially a three-story house that exceeds the

maximum size allowed.

The Kings are also appealing to the town, and asking for a temporary residency permit, so they can move in while the dispute is being resolved.

They had already sold their old home when they received notice from the town about the problem, and they told the Almanac that, as a result, their family is essentially homeless while their house sits vacant. ■

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# Time to get serious about saving water

Water agencies call for a 10 percent voluntary reduction.

By Marion Softky  
Almanac Staff Writer

After the fourth driest winter on record, the hills are turning brown in May, the streams are drying up, and the Sierra snowpack feeding Hetch Hetchy Reservoir is 29 percent of normal.

In case these don't send a signal that we should be thinking how to use less water, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission and the water agencies that provide water to 2.4 million people in the Bay Area have already asked residents and businesses to cut back water use by 10 percent voluntarily.

Even then, we may face rationing later this summer as the Sierra snowpack which feeds our reservoirs melts off.

And if next winter is dry, and if global warming shrinks snowpacks long-term, the Bay Area — indeed California — could be in real trouble.

"The more efficient we can be, the more likely we can avoid severe cutbacks in the San Francisco supply,"

said Art Jensen general manager of the Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA), which represents the 27 water agencies in three counties that buy water wholesale from San Francisco.

"This is a very poor year," said Darin Duncan, general manager of the Bear Gulch District of the California Water Service Co., which provides water for much of South San Mateo County.

Probably Atherton, Woodside, Portola Valley and most of Menlo Park will get 95 percent of their water from San Francisco this year, he said; the Bear Gulch Reservoir in Atherton, which collects water from its local watershed, is a little more than half full.

Ruben Nino, acting public works director for Menlo Park, is also asking people to cut back. The city water system serves about 4,000 customers in Sharon Heights, the Civic Center, and east of Middlefield Road. It depends on San Francisco for 100 percent of its water.

The city is working with BAWSCA to prepare educational materials, and to provide rebates on the purchase of efficient new toilets and washing machines, Mr. Nino said.

People are actually using considerably less water than they used to, according to BAWSCA figures; they seem to learn from each drought. In 2005-06, the average person served by one of BAWSCA's 27 agencies used 88 gallons of water per day. That number is 15 percent below than in 1986-87, before the last drought; and 23 percent lower than in 1976-77.

### What to do?

"The best thing you can do is check for leaks," said Mr. Duncan. "They are most likely in irrigation or toilets."

For indoor leaks, Cal Water supplies dye tablets that can demonstrate if a toilet is leaking. A dripping faucet can waste 350 gallons per month, BAWSCA warns.

For outside leaks, BAWSCA suggests turning off all water taps and sprinklers inside and out, and then watching the water meter. If the dial is still moving, you may have a leak.

Advice on saving water breaks down into indoors and outdoors. According to BAWSCA, about 65 percent of the water used outside of San Francisco is used in the home; about 35 percent is used outside, mostly for landscaping.

The water agencies and the Internet have lots of advice on both. Some advice boils down to being conscious of how you use water:

■ Indoors, get low-flow shower heads, and take shorter showers; get aerators on faucets, and don't just let them run; turn off the faucet when you brush your teeth.

■ Outdoors, adjust your irrigation systems, turn off your sprinklers on cool days, and only water what needs watering. And water in the evening or at night.

■ Wash your cars less, and then use a bucket or a hose with a spray nozzle that turns off. Even better, take your car to an automated car wash; these use less water, and treat and re-use the runoff.

Other advice for indoor water use focuses on running full

*'The more efficient we can be, the more likely we can avoid severe cutbacks in the San Francisco supply.'*

ART JENSEN, GENERAL MANAGER,  
BAY AREA WATER SUPPLY AND  
CONSERVATION AGENCY

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Other advice for indoor water use focuses on running full

See **WATER**, page 15

## M-A High student cited for Encinal School car crash

A Menlo-Atherton High School student has been cited for violating his license requirements after a car he was driving struck a pole in the parking lot of Encinal Elementary School, 195 Encinal Ave. in Atherton on April 6, police reported.

The pole was a support for an overhang from the roof of an office building, but the building was unoccupied and there were no children in the vicinity, although school was in session, a school source said.

The M-A student was driving north on Middlefield Road and turned left into the parking lot when the car hit the pole, Atherton Police Chief Robert Brennan said.

No one was injured. The driver was out of compliance with his provisional license and had another teenager in the car, he said. The driver will have to make a mandatory appearance in court, the chief said.

It was a case of "bad judgment," he said.

## Transformers upgraded at Alameda substation

By David Boyce  
Almanac Staff Writer

The tall orange arm of a crane has been visible for the last week or two from outside Pacific Gas & Electric's Menlo substation at the southeast corner of Alameda de las Pulgas and Ashton Avenue.

The crane helped a work crew remove a 1960s-era 10.5 million watt bank of transformers and install a 16 million watt replacement. The upgrade is meant to handle customer demand projected to grow overall by 1.3 percent over the next five to seven years, said PG&E spokeswoman Melissa Mooney.

The new transformer bank — similar to another installed there in 2005 — powers parts of Menlo Park, including Sharon Heights, Alameda de las Pulgas to Walsh Road, western Santa Cruz Avenue, Alpine Road and the unincorporated areas of Los Trancos Woods and Vista Verde, Ms. Mooney said.

The upgrade "is not specifically driven by the need for additional capacity" to serve large power-

hungry houses, Ms. Mooney said, but then made a plea to anyone planning such a house to let PG&E in on their plans.

"We really need people who are putting up these huge houses, or buying four houses and tearing them down and building one house, to call PG&E and let us know what they're doing," she said.

More electricity generated might seem to mean more carbon dioxide emissions. It's not easily determined, Ms. Mooney said. The impact cannot be calculated since CO<sub>2</sub> emissions vary according to how the electricity is generated. Nevertheless, she said, "we're doing everything we can to raise awareness. Global warming and climate change are issues that will affect everyone, regardless of socio-economic standing."

Work on the upgrade was unrelated to the afternoon power outage on Monday, May 7, that dropped power from two to 12 hours for some 2,350 customers in parts of west Atherton, west Menlo Park and Woodside, Ms. Mooney said. ■

### WATER

continued from page 14

loads, and replacing toilets, dishwashers and clothes washers with more efficient models. Rebates are often available.

For landscaping, the greatest savings can be achieved by shrinking the size of lawns, and using drought-tolerant or native plants. Lawn grass requires 30 gallons per square foot per year, said Ryan Navratilov of the San Francisco Watershed Council. "And most people over-water their turf grass."

"Every little thing that people do will help," added Pam Sturmer of the Watershed Council.

Mr. Jensen warned: "We can't bank on hope. It's like thinking of the lottery as a retirement plan." ■

### ■ INFORMATION

Local water agencies are sources of abundant information on saving water, and in some cases provide free equipment and water-saving kits.

■ The California Water Service Co., at 3351 El Camino Real in Redwood City, gives away free water kits, low-flow shower heads, aeration devices for sinks and faucets, and low-flow hose nozzles. It also participates in point-of-purchase rebates for new high-efficiency washing machines. For information, drop by, or call Larry Mathias at 367-6800.

■ Also for information, call BAWSCA at 349-3000; or go to [bawscsca.org](http://bawscsca.org).

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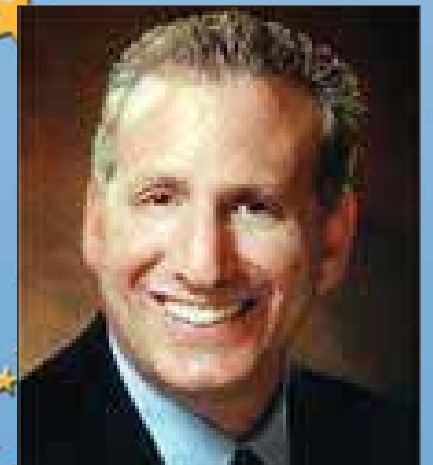
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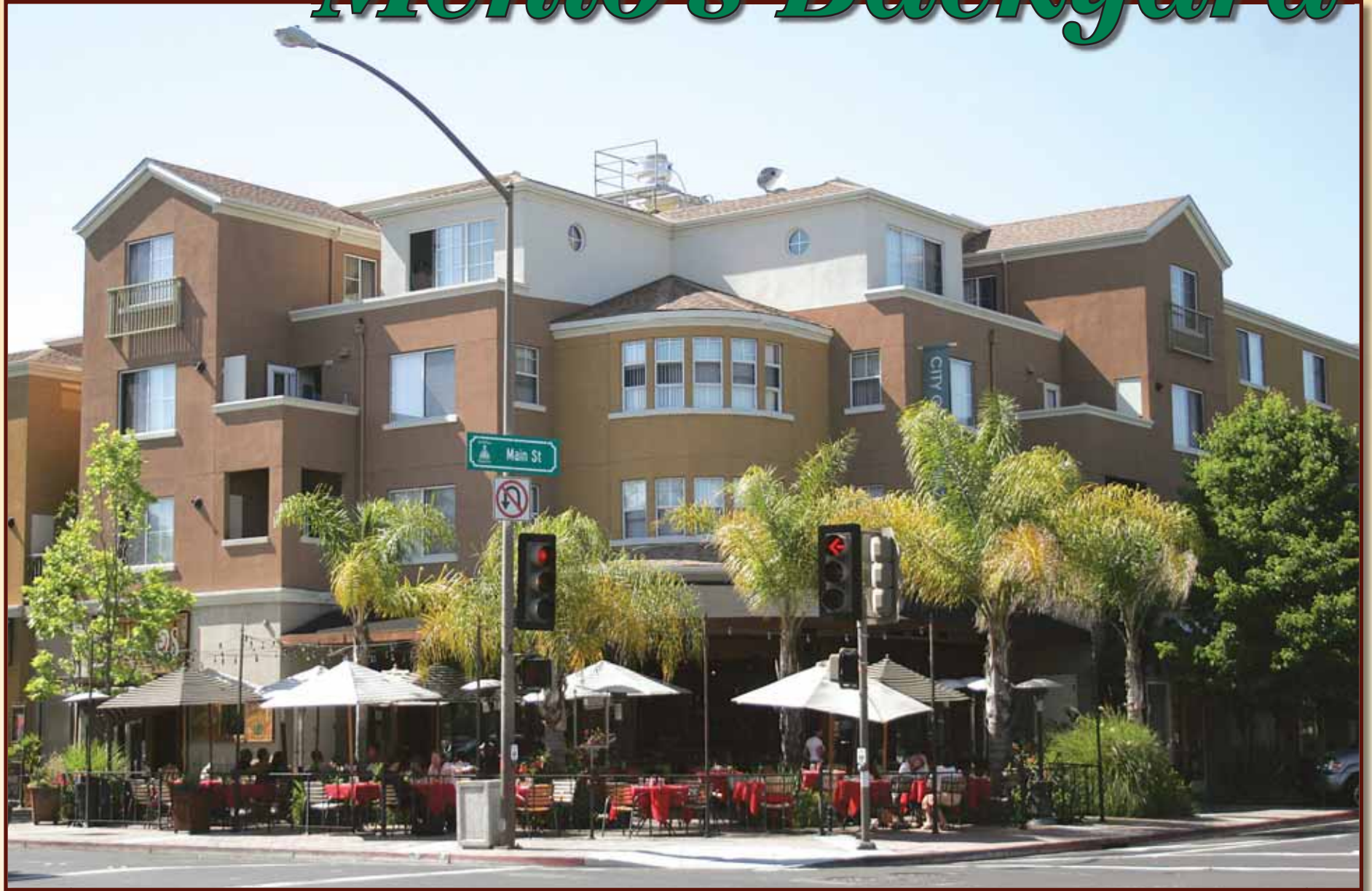


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# Not in *Menlo's Backyard*



The Almanac/Veronica Weber

The **City Center Plaza**, at the intersection of Middlefield Road and Main Street in Redwood City, is one example of high-density, transit-oriented projects endorsed by environmentalists. The development has 81 homes, at a density of 46 units per acre, plus commercial space.

*Environmentalists say high-density housing in transit corridors would curb global warming, but eco-friendly Menlo Park isn't on board*

*Story by Rory Brown*

**T**he global warming threat, which has raised environmental consciousness around the world, has not escaped Menlo Park.

Residents are switching to solar power; a 50-person task force is studying how the city can cut greenhouse gas emissions; and with unanimous approval from the City Council, Menlo Park is now one of almost 500 U.S. cities that has pledged to address global warming at the local level.

But amidst efforts to make Menlo Park as green as can be, the city isn't doing one thing environmental groups say it should: building multiple-story residential projects, with at least 25 condominiums and apartments per acre, near the city's train station and downtown area.

Environmental and housing groups say these types of projects put residents within walking distance of shops,

restaurants and public transportation, encouraging them to stay out of their cars, and limiting the amount of greenhouse gases pumped into the atmosphere.

"We have statistics that show that people who live within a half mile of transit are more likely to use it," said Irvin Dawid, former chair of the Sierra Club's sustainable land-use committee, who remains active with the group. "There's nothing un-American about living in projects that have more than 25 units an acre. ... We don't see a problem with [density] assuming it's designed well."

"New development really has to be more compact and transit-oriented," said Lennie Roberts, a legislative advocate with Committee for Green Foothills. "One of the keys for making cities green is having this type of development."

Environmental groups such as Green Belt Alliance say this type of development, also called "infill," can help accommodate the growing number of people who want to live on the Peninsula, without building into the foothills and other open space.

Groups such as the Association of Bay Area Governments and Housing Leadership Council also have endorsed the concept as a good approach to address the Peninsula's jobs-to-homes imbalance, and as an opportunity to allow people to live near where they work.

#### **Not buying it**

But despite the scare over global warming, not everyone is convinced high-density housing is a good thing for Menlo Park.

Over the past 10 months, two housing projects planned near the Caltrain tracks have been derailed due to

concerns from residents and council members that an influx of homes in the downtown area could cause severe impacts on traffic, schools, and the overall "look and feel" of Menlo Park.

The 135-condo Derry project, planned for a 3.4-acre site off Oak Grove Avenue near El Camino Real, was halted after a successful citizen-led referendum effort (contending parties are negotiating and may propose an alternative project); and Councilmen Rich Cline, Andy Cohen, and Heyward Robinson have since stated they would not support a 134-apartment complex proposed for the old Cadillac dealership, adjacent to the Derry property.

"I'm not sure that denser housing belongs along the Caltrain corridor," said Mr. Cohen, who has emphasized that the council should always put the potential impacts on Menlo Park residents before regional needs.

COVER STORY COVER STORY COVER STORY COVER STORY



Almanac file photo by Marjan Sadoughi

**Morris Brown**, leader of the residents' group Menlo Park Tomorrow, gathers signatures against the Derry condo-commercial project in September. Mr. Brown's group said the construction of high-density developments such as the Derry project would result in "the Manhattanization of Menlo Park."

"The kind of density that some of these environmental groups are supporting is too much," said Morris Brown, leader of Menlo Park Tomorrow, the residents' group that led the referendum effort against the Derry project. "I'm not at all convinced that we should pack everybody in a small circle, to save more green space."

The proposals for the Derry project and Cadillac site called for densities of 39 units and 40 units an acre, respectively.

Councilman Cohen, Mr. Brown, and other critics of high-density projects have been labeled "NIMBY" (not in my backyard) residents, but they continue to argue that the campaign for apartment and condo projects is largely driven by developers.

"Environmental groups haven't made their case, as far as I'm concerned," said Vincent Bressler, a planning commissioner and recent council candidate. "Developers are the people that would benefit from converting Menlo Park into a heavily urban community. ... I just don't think our police officers are going to move here to live in these tiny boxes."

#### Dealing with growth

But if Menlo Park is serious about addressing global warming through regional initiatives, the city has to work high-density housing into the equation, environmentalists say.

"By promoting low-density housing, you are indirectly increasing your carbon footprint," Mr. Dawid, of the Sierra Club, said. "It's great that Menlo

Park is tackling global warming, but if everyone drives a Prius in a sprawled-out neighborhood ... they're driving it all the time."

Mr. Dawid noted that affluent communities, such as Menlo Park, are often resistant to change, but the city is part of a bigger picture.

"If you're not building enough homes, you're just handing the burden

#### Council reaction

Council members differ in their opinions regarding high-density housing, but for the time being, it looks as if the council will not consider any projects that call for more than the 18.5-homes-per-acre that the existing zoning allows.

In the interim, the council has opted instead to create a comprehensive plan for development along El Camino Real, leaving the high-density housing question out of the city's push to address global warming. There is no timeline for when the El Camino plan will be finished, but the process will involve a combination of public outreach and environmental review.

Although the council recently voted unanimously to endorse the U.S. Mayor's Climate Protection Agreement, the wording was slightly changed to avoid committing the city to supporting high-density and transit-oriented projects.

"I certainly do think we need some density near our transit centers — the issue is how much and what's appropriate," said Councilman Robinson. "We know there's a pent-up demand for people to move to Menlo Park. ... But it would be imprudent for us to rush into this. It may appear we're delaying things, but we're trying to do it the right way."

Added Mayor Kelly Fergusson: "We need to get people out of their cars, but at the same time, people want to protect their neighborhoods, and I can't blame them." ■



Courtesy Steinberg Architects

**The Derry project** included plans for 135 condominiums and commercial space on a 3.4-acre site off Oak Grove Avenue in Menlo Park, near El Camino Real.

over to another city," he said — an argument reinforced by other groups.

"Growth is happening no matter what, so we have to plan where people are going to live now, and for the next 25 to 30 years," said Michelle Beasley of Green Belt Alliance. "Land-use decisions and dealing with global warming run hand-in-hand. ... El Camino Real is a prime opportunity for development, and it would be wonderful to see Menlo Park embrace that."

"It's really just common sense," said Chris Mohr, executive director of the San Mateo County Housing Leadership Council. "Cities have an opportunity to create more chances for people so they don't have to live very far away from where they work."

## Two groups seeing green

Pro-growth camp and environmentalists both support high-density housing

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

The push for high-density housing in Menlo Park has sparked an unusual marriage between environmentalists and the city's "pro-growth" political camp, both of which feel there is something to gain from more intense development.

"We can't unilaterally say we're going to do everything possible to be green, and unilaterally say we're going to avoid building higher-density projects," said Councilman John Boyle.

Mr. Boyle, like the previous council majority of Lee Duboc, Nicholas Jellins and Mickie Winkler, is a proponent of high-density housing, and thinks the benefits of developments like the Derry project far outweigh the potential traffic impacts.

Although no longer in office, Ms. Winkler reiterated her stance on high-density housing in a recent e-mail sent to political supporters and Almanac staff.

"The environmental hype of this city council has turned into hypocrisy," she wrote. "The missed opportunity is bad news for public transportation, for downtown vibrancy, for our merchants and the potential retail mix. ... It's bad news for Menlo Park and the environment."

And it's not just fans of the previous council majority who are backing the high-density housing campaign. Housing Commissioner Elizabeth Lasensky and former councilman Steve Schmidt — both key players in the environmentalist fight against plans to develop Bayfront Park — have publicly called for the current council to consider high-density housing.

Mr. Boyle said if the Derry project actually went to a vote (as promised by the referendum campaign), residents would see the "pros outweigh the cons."

"There was a referendum against the Derry project, but we don't really know what a majority of people in Menlo Park think about it," Mr. Boyle said. "We know what a relatively small, vocal, group of people think. If it came down to a vote, I think the voters would pass this project." ■

## Woodside, PV councils rally to save ambulance service

The Woodside Fire Protection District recruited a couple of obvious allies in its struggle to save the area's ambulance service — the town councils of Woodside and Portola Valley.

After presenting the case for continuing the firefighter-run ambulance stationed in Woodside — chiefly, faster response time and more highly trained paramedics — at separate meetings last week, both councils pledged to begin lobbying the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors.

"Those of us who have had the misfortune to call an ambulance service have been very lucky indeed to have you there in minutes," said Woodside Councilwoman Carroll Ann Hodges at

the May 8 meeting.

Fire district officials warned that their budget can no longer subsidize the ambulance, which pulls in an estimated \$1 million-plus annually in patient fees that they never see.

Thanks to complicated agreements between the county, its for-profit ambulance provider American Medical Response, and a joint powers agency that oversees emergency first responders, Woodside fire is being reimbursed for only a fraction of the \$900,000 it costs to staff and run the ambulance — \$177,000 annually.

Without some financial relief, the district will have to give up its ambulance service July 1, said Woodside fire district board member Peter Berger.

Woodside resident Fentress Hall reminded the Woodside Town Council that time is of the essence for people suffering from stroke or other heart conditions.

"I like to say that I'm not leaving Woodside unless I leave it in a box, but I don't want to leave in a box prematurely, because the ambulance (took too long)," she said.

## Hearing on future of health agencies

The future of two agencies that provide health care to much of San Mateo County will come before the county's Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCo) at a public hearing Wednesday, May 16, at 2:30 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors' chambers at 400 County Center (corner of Bradford and Hamilton streets) in Redwood City.

LAFCo is reviewing the future boundaries (sphere of influence) and services of the Sequoia Health Care District in the South County and the Peninsula Health Care District in the North County.

As both districts morphed from hospital districts to health care districts, they have transferred Sequoia and Mills-Peninsula hospitals to private operators. They now participate in oversight and rebuilding of the hospitals, and also provide sub-

stantial funding to public and community health care agencies in their areas.

Taken together, the two health care districts only cover 58 percent of San Mateo County. The Sequoia district runs from Menlo Park to San Mateo; it does not include the high-need areas of East Palo Alto and eastern Menlo Park.

LAFCo, an independent county agency which oversees changes in organization and boundaries of cities and special districts, will be considering alternatives for the districts, ranging from dissolving them to expanding them to serve the whole county.

LAFCo Executive Officer Martha Poyatos is recommending that LAFCo change the sphere of influence — future boundaries — of the districts from "Status Quo" to "Transitional," so that the commission can continue to

explore the most effective organization and functions.

At the first LAFCo hearing April 18, board member Jack Hickey, a Libertarian, called for dissolution of the district; it should not be using taxpayers' money for charity, he said.

On the other side, board member Don Horsley, former San Mateo County Sheriff, argued for allowing the district to help meet pressing health care needs in the community.

If the district were dissolved, Ms. Poyatos pointed out, its tax money would not revert to taxpayers. Under Proposition 13, it would be distributed among other agencies serving the area, like cities, school and fire districts.

For information, go to the LAFCo's Web site, [www.sanmateo-lafco.org](http://www.sanmateo-lafco.org), or call Executive Officer Martha Poyatos at 363-4224.

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## Want to serve on Caltrain panel?

Anyone interested in advising the Caltrain board on the needs of passengers may apply to serve on the Citizens Advisory Committee. Deadline for applications is Tuesday, May 15, at 5 p.m.

The nine-member CAC meets

the third Wednesday of every month at 6 p.m. at Caltrain headquarters in San Carlos, just one block from the Caltrain station.

Caltrain, which recently won a federal transportation award, runs 96 trains each weekday between

San Francisco and San Jose, with commute service to Gilroy. Last year the railroad carried more than 10 million riders, with an average weekly ridership of almost 35,000 trips, Caltrain says.

To apply, download an application from [caltrain.com](http://caltrain.com); or call the assistant board secretary at 508-6223.



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# Diversity of trail opportunities is important, says mayor

Continued from page 7

**could influence the direction of this project?**

**A.** We've had people who gave us money for a tot-lot (playground). We had to give them a really good tot-lot. In fact, we've engaged them in helping us design it. But I would say that the original program that we agreed on two or three years ago is pretty much unchanged.

We haven't had anybody give us money indexed to something we thought was undesirable to the community as a whole. I mean, we haven't had anybody who said, "We have to have a gun range or I'm not going to give you money," or something along those lines.

Some of the large donors said things like they wanted to make sure that the library was quiet. But that didn't mean that we put in a sound-proof room. We just pass it on to the library people.

Let me put it this way: When I felt pushed, I felt pushed in a direction I wanted to go, (a direction) I think the town wanted to go.

**Q. Might large anonymous donations to the Town Center project influence later decisions by the town?**

**A.** There are never any strings attached to the money. These are people who, I guess, are modest, or don't want the fact that they're giving money to a project like this to get out.

**Q. You responded recently in the Almanac to a guest opinion by residents Ed Wells and Charles Engles criticizing the council's securing of a \$4 million line of credit with the county rather than seeking a municipal bond, if needed, to complete the Town Center project. Is this criticism a sign that the council is not getting its message out?**

**A.** Well, I'd make the observation that neither (Mr. Wells nor Mr. Engles) have been seen at a Town Council meeting for a year. In fact, I'm not sure that Charles Engles has ever been to a council meeting. I don't remember ever seeing his face in the Historic Schoolhouse. So I would say they're just simply not well informed.

I feel very strongly that we will raise all this money, and that our leading citizens are going to make it possible. It is a minor miracle for a town of only 4,500 people to have charitable donations funding a project of this magnitude. (Editor's note: Mr. Engles told the Almanac he went to several council meetings two to three years

ago and recalls arguing with Mr. Driscoll at one of them. Mr. Wells said he last attended a council meeting on March 8, 2006.)

**Q. On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the most likely, how likely is that the council will ask voters to approve a municipal bond to finish the Town Center?**

**A.** One or two. I really think it's very unlikely.

It is very difficult to get 67 percent of a vote for pretty much



*'There will always be people who break the law no matter what it is.'*

MAYOR TED DRISCOLL

anything, and when the town has recently gone through a relatively polarizing utility users tax election that went 51 percent to 49 percent (in November 2005), it doesn't sound like it's a productive use of our time to go out and fight that battle when it will be turned into a referendum so that anything people don't like about it will cause them to vote no.

If someone felt strongly that we should not do this project, they should have run (for the council). That's the way representative government works.

**Q. Residents who walk dogs claim dogs have been walked on the wooded Portola Valley Ranch trails for years. There are petitions with more than 100 names on both sides of the issue of allowing dogs on these trails. What should be done?**

**A.** I think that diversity of trail opportunities in

town is an important issue. There are people, for example, who are afraid of dogs and there ought to be some trails in town for people who don't want to be around dogs. There should be trails where people should be able to walk their dogs, trails where people should be allowed to ride bikes.

I personally believe that six miles (of trails prohibiting dogs) out of 36 miles is a reasonable balance, particularly for an area that was designated from the outset as a nature preserve.

**Q. People say they were walking dogs there before there was a Portola Valley Ranch.**

**A.** Yeah, and people have been speeding on Alpine Road since the day Alpine Road was first paved. That doesn't necessarily mean that we should change the speed limit.

I can say that when I first came (to the Ranch), I saw very few dogs. It has been a growing problem because the signage was ambiguous, and then when it was made more clear, it was vandalized. We have a couple of people who appear to take the law into their own hands at times.

**Q. How are you going to enforce the rules?**

**A.** I don't know and I don't believe we should be a town that has policemen walking on the trails. I'm not in favor of aggressive enforcement.

There will always be people who break the law no matter what it is. I just hope that the majority of the people who currently are agitating for this change will accept leaving the status quo and will come to obey the law. ■

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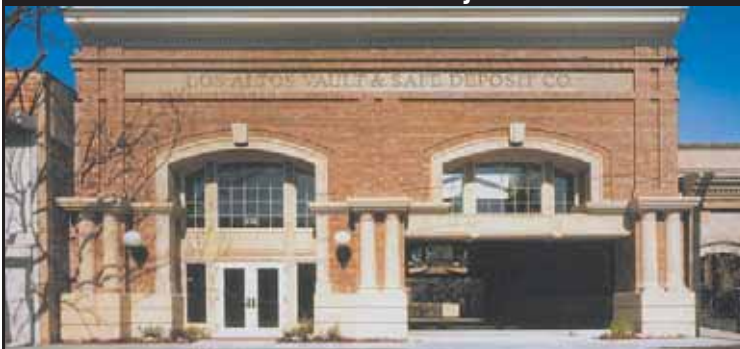
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## M-A art students exhibit works

An art exhibition and competition by students in Art Department classes at Menlo-Atherton High School continues through Saturday, May 26, at the Great Frame Up framing store located at 1047 El Camino Real in Menlo Park.

The juried exhibit includes sculpture and two-dimensional works that reflect all skill levels, said M-A art teacher Craig Le Claire. "We promise that you'll be impressed by what you see at the show," he added.

The Great Frame Up is sponsoring the show, as it has for the previous nine years, Mr. Le Claire said. Students judged to have the best entries in the beginner, intermediate and advanced categories will receive cash awards.

Award night is Thursday, May 1, at a reception from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the framing store, with catering by students in M-A's living skills classes.

For more information, call the Great Frame Up at 323-1097 or Craig Le Claire at 323-5311, ext. 8726.

### Art and music festival at M-A

An afternoon art and music festival is planned for Saturday, May 19, from noon to 4 p.m. on the girls' soccer field at Menlo-Atherton High School at 555 Middlefield Road in Atherton.

Visitors can expect live music, a kids' play zone and food. Admission is free but parking is \$5.



Photo courtesy of Craig Le Claire

This clay mask by M-A student Eileen Johnson is part of the display.

### New guide to summer activities

A list of Menlo Park's summer classes for adults and children alike can be found in the latest version of Menlo Park's Activity Guide.

The guide boasts information for city-hosted classes in areas such as sports, arts and crafts, and dance.

Classes run from June to August, and the registration period opens May 29 for Menlo Park residents, and June 7 for everyone else.

The guide is available at MenloPark.org. For more information, call 330-2200.

### \$150,000 grant to Peninsula Volunteers

The Sequoia Healthcare District recently awarded Peninsula

### AROUND TOWN

Volunteers a three-year, \$150,000 grant to continue the rehabilitation services at its Rosener House Adult Day Services Center at 500 Arbor Road in Menlo Park.

The Rosener House program helps those with Alzheimer's, dementia, post-stroke, Parkinson's, frailty, and social isolation.

Sandra Darrow of Menlo Park says of the program: "When my mother started the program, I had to lift her from her wheelchair. But since she has been working with the occupational therapist, she is able to get up and walk around on her own a bit at home and her spirits are much better, too."

To learn more, call 322-0126 or go to www.peninsulavolunteers.org.

### Fundraiser for Jobs for Youth

Jobs for Youth, a San Mateo County nonprofit that helps young people find jobs, will celebrate its 25th anniversary at an awards breakfast Thursday, May 31, from 7:30 to 9 a.m. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 1221 Chess Drive in Foster City.

Proceeds benefit the organization that helped nearly 2,000 young people last year to seek work, says Al Teglia, Jobs for Youth founder.

There will be a silent auction and raffle prizes. Tickets are \$40 per person or \$350 per table of 10. For reservations, call Al Teglia at 301-8444 or send an e-mail to: ateglia@smchsa.org.

## Glenna Vaskelis, Caltrain and HEART win awards

By Marion Softky  
 Almanac Staff Writer

Glenna Vaskelis, who turned Sequoia Hospital from red ink to black, is the recipient of the David D. Bohannon Memorial Award from San Mateo County's business organization, SAMCEDA.

In 1996, the 55-year-old public hospital had lost \$29 million when Ms. Vaskelis took over as president and CEO in its new life under Catholic Health Care West, said Scott Bohannon, grandson of the legendary Peninsula developer.

"Within three years, the hospital started to report profits," Mr. Bohannon told an audience of more than 200 at SAMCEDA's annual awards luncheon April 25. "In 2006, Sequoia Hospital provided almost \$28 million in unsponsored care and programs for the benefit of the community."

Caltrain won the Business Award for innovation, good management and overall success. The Peninsula railroad has survived a \$13 million deficit in 2005, and brought more traffic relief by adding 10 trains a day — from 86 to 96

— with the same number of crew and equipment, the citation said. Caltrain was recently awarded the first nationwide Federal Transit Administration Ridership Award.

The Public Agency Award went to HEART, San Mateo County's public/private agency that raises funds to meet critical housing needs. So far HEART has raised a total of \$4 million, and invested it in three developments that will contribute 398 new affordable homes for work-

See VASKELIS, page 25

**MATH 19 CALCULUS**  
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## Coach Ben Parks named to sports hall of fame

By David Boyce  
Almanac Staff Writer

Another honor is ahead for Ben Parks, a former football and wrestling coach at Menlo-Atherton High School in Atherton, an ardent fundraiser for needy families, and a noted mentor and friend to students on the M-A campus.

Coach Parks, 72, will be inducted in the San Mateo County Sports Hall of Fame on June 21, said M-A PTA co-president Leslie Airola-Murveit.

The ceremony includes a banquet at the San Mateo Elks Lodge at 229 West 20th Ave. in San Mateo. Tickets are \$50 per person. Make checks payable to Sports Hall of Fame and mail to John Horgan c/o The San Mateo Times, 1080 S. Amphlett Boulevard, San Mateo, CA 94402.

Proceeds benefit the San Mateo County History Museum, also home to the Sports Hall of Fame. Other hall members from M-A include Pam Wimberly, girls' basketball coach and athletic director; swimmer Dick Roth; former track coach Plato Yanicks; and Lars Jensen, an M-A wrestler who went on to win a national title as wrestling coach at San Francisco State University.

### Ben Parks

Ben Parks grew up under the care of his grandmother in Hollister among poor migrant field workers, according to a biographical entry on a Web site for M-A's Sports Hall of Fame. Mr. Parks went on to graduate in 1957 from the College of the Pacific.

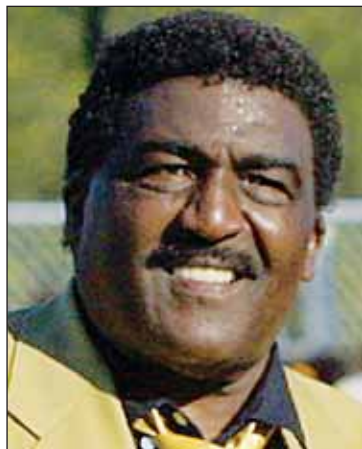
### VASKELIS

continued from page 24

ing families and seniors.

Other SAMCEDA awards and the winners are: The Community Service Award to the First National Bank of Northern California, founded in Daly City; the Environmental Action Award to Acteron Corp. of San Carlos, which supplies specialty plating and anodizing for high-technology applications; and the Small Business Award to the Bay Meadows Land Co., which is redeveloping the Bay Meadows Race Track into a mixture of uses.

For information, go to [samceda.org](http://samceda.org). ■



Coach Ben Parks has been an active fundraiser for needy families.

He began his career at M-A in 1968 as head football coach and wrestling coach. He taught physical education and was a vice principal for two years, the biography says.

He's been an active fundraiser for needy families, using such vehicles as a celebrity golf tournament and an annual birthday event in which he used to run a mile for each year of his age.

Coach Parks made a practice of leading group visits to tenant housing, migrant worker camps, and inner-city neighborhoods to deliver food, clothing, blankets, furniture, and Thanksgiving and Christmas turkeys, the biography says. ■

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By Keith Peters

Palo Alto Weekly

The Menlo School boys' tennis team completed a week perhaps unlike any other in school history by blasting away Bellarmine, 5-2, to win the 2007 Central Coast Section tennis tournament Friday at Courtside Tennis Club in Los Gatos.

The Knights (21-3) came into the tournament seeded third and received a huge boost to their title hopes when the No. 4 Bells (23-3) upset top-seeded and previously undefeated Sacred Heart Prep (26-1) in the semifinals, 4-3. The

Gators came into the tourney regarded as the No. 1 team in the country.

With the heavily favored Gators out of the way, Menlo took full advantage and won its first section title since 2003 and its first combined tournament ever. Prior to 1998, there was only one CCS division. When the CCS went to two divisions in 1998, Menlo began its streak of six consecutive titles.

By beating the Bells for the second time this season — Menlo earned a 4-3 non-league win on April 23 — the Knights gave coach Bill Shine his seventh CCS title in

his 11-year career at Menlo.

This week the Knights toppled Los Altos in the quarterfinals, 6-1, upended No. 2 Saratoga in the semifinals, 5-2, and handled Bellarmine in the finals.

"It was a week unlike any other, most definitely," Shine said.

Menlo now advances to the NorCal Championships set for May 18-19 at UC Davis. The Knights likely will be the top seed. Bellarmine also advances by virtue of reaching the CCS title match. It's likely the two teams could meet in that championship match, as well. ■

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## TOWN OF WOODSIDE INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR COMMITTEES

### BICYCLE COMMITTEE

Meets third Thursday of each month, 7:30 p.m.; appointment for a two-year term.

The Committee advises and recommends to the Town Council on the policies for planning, developing, maintaining, and usage of Town's bikeways system and provides an open forum for bicycle issues.

### LIVESTOCK AND ANIMAL CONTROL COMMITTEE

Meets fourth Wednesday of each month, 5:30 p.m.; appointment for a one-year term.

The Committee advises the Planning Director on applications for commercial stable permits, dog kennel permits, and exception requests to the private stable regulations.

### RECREATION COMMITTEE

Meets first Thursday of each month, 7:30 pm; appointments for two-year and one-year terms.

The Committee guides the activities of the community recreation programs.

*Committees are volunteer positions and serve in an advisory capacity to the Town Council.*

*Interested residents may request information and applications Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.–12 noon and 1:00–5:00 p.m. at Town Hall, 2955 Woodside Road, on the web site at [www.woodsidetown.org](http://www.woodsidetown.org), or telephone (650) 851-6790. Deadline for applications is Friday, June 1, 2007, 5:00 p.m.*

# SUMMER ClassGuide

## Dance

### MENLO PARK ACADEMY OF DANCE

1163 El Camino Real  
Menlo Park, CA 94025  
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See CLASS GUIDE, next page

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**CLASS GUIDE**

*continued from previous page*

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**www.menloswim.com**

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See CLASS GUIDE, page 28

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## Alpine seeks soccer players

Alpine FC (Futbol Club) based out of Portola Valley is holding open tryouts for a CYSA Girls U14 Class One team for fall.

To qualify, your birthday must be after July 31, 1993.

The team will be coached by Cris Gilmore and Christina Bell Gilmore, who are 2006-2007 National Super Y Olympic Development Program coaches, said the team's manager, Kimm Terpening.

They are part of the Nor-Cal player development program staff and also the Western

Regional US Club ID2 staff.

Both coaches played professionally; Christina played for the San Jose CyberRays, part of the former Women's United Soccer Association League.

Tryout dates: Saturday, May 19, 8:30-10:30 a.m.; Monday, May 21, 5:30-7:30 p.m.; and Tuesday, May 22, 5:15-6:45 p.m.

Tryouts will be held at Rossotti's field at 3915 Alpine Road in Portola Valley. For information, call 867-4880 or go to [www.alpinemenlosoccer.com](http://www.alpinemenlosoccer.com).

## M-A varsity softball tops Menlo, 8-2

The Menlo-Atherton High School varsity softball team finished the season May 9 with a win against Menlo, 8-2, at Menlo School. M-A's record improved to 12-11 overall and 8-6 in league play.

Freshman Pitcher Tami Vujovich won her 11th game of the season and posted an 8-win, 4-loss record in league play.

The offense was led by Emily McPhearson who had two hits -- a double and a single -- and drove in two runs; she also pitched 4 innings.

Senior Ellen Knapp closed her high school career with a base

hit to right and a great running catch in center field that saved two Menlo runs from scoring.

*Report by Rick Vujovich, parent and team statistician*

### Mary Wilder picked

Mary A. Wilder, the daughter of Abigail and Henry Wilder of Woodside, has been chosen to play for the Hamilton College women's tennis team for the 2007 season. A first year student, Wilder is a graduate of Crystal Springs Uplands School.

## Woodside won't support Caltrain group

A coalition of local officials seeking better Caltrain service for middle-of-the-line stations failed to get the support of the Woodside Town Council recently.

The Coalition for Expanding Transit Service, a group of current and former council members from San Mateo County, has been circulating a resolution requesting that Caltrain hire a consultant to analyze its current train schedule with an eye to improving service to smaller stations.

At its April 24 meeting, a divided Woodside Town Council extended an offer to Caltrain officials to come and explain the data behind the train schedule, but did not take action on the resolution.

Six cities in the county have passed the resolution, Atherton councilman and coalition member Jim Janz said recently. Among them: Atherton, Menlo Park and Portola Valley.

Atherton lost weekday service to its train station entirely in 2005,

and town officials have been lobbying hard to regain it.

Coalition members contend that San Mateo County stations are underserved by the current schedule, and that they believe options exist to improve service without interfering with the successful Baby Bullet express trains.

"This is sour grapes on Atherton's part," said Councilman Pete Sinclair. "They should've voted with their feet and used the train if they wanted to keep their station open."

## Eight brokers rank in top 1 percent

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage recently announced that eight of its Menlo Park agents ranked in the top 1 percent of all Northern California agents for 2006.

The agents are: Steve Bellumori, Hugh Cornish, Don Diltz, Janet Dore and Hanna Shacham of the Menlo Park El Camino office and Susie Dews, Arlene Gault and Keri Nicholas of the Menlo Park Santa Cruz office.

There are some 4,300 Northern California agents with Coldwell Banker, from Monterey to Tahoe.

Wendy McPherson is manager

### ■ BUSINESS

of the office at 800 El Camino Real, Suite 300, and Dave Hobson manages the office at 930 Santa Cruz Ave.

### PV venture firm names new partners

Three Arch Partners, a venture capital firm in Ladera that focuses on technology and service companies in the health care industry, has named two new venture partners: attorney Michael D. Ellwein

and Roderick A. Young.

Mr. Ellwein, 67, has for 17 years been guiding Minneapolis-based device manufacturer Medtronic through mergers and acquisitions, divestitures and strategic alliances. Over that time, Medtronic grew from a market capitalization of \$1.7 billion to \$60 billion, said Three Arch spokeswoman Barclay Nicholson.

Mr. Young, 63, has had executive roles at Silicon Valley-based medical-device companies Vivant Medical, Targesome and General Surgical Innovations, as well as Toshiba America MRI, based in South San Francisco, Ms. Nicholson said.

# SUMMER ClassGuide

### CLASS GUIDE

*continued from page 27*

### LOVING TO LEARN

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Catherine Lee, Director of Admissions

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## ■ OBITUARIES

**Lorraine Louise Sallquist***Longtime Woodside resident*

Lorraine Louise Sallquist, a Woodside resident for more than 30 years, died April 24 at Stanford Hospital from complications from non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

Born on Long Island in 1944, Ms. Sallquist graduated from North High School in Valley Stream in 1962. She worked for the New York Port Authority, and then in 1965 became a flight attendant for United Airlines, where she worked until retiring in 2003.

She met her future husband, Robert Sallquist, on a flight from New York to Los Angeles. The couple was married in 1972 at Valley Presbyterian Church in Portola Valley. They built a home in Woodside, where they raised their two daughters.

Ms. Sallquist was an active member of the Woodside-Atherton Auxiliary, which she joined in 1989. She served as president of the auxiliary in 1994, and as Tally Ho coordinator in 1989. She also worked a weekly shift at the Artisan Shop at Allied Arts.

Family members remember her as a world traveler, a volunteer driven by her love of children, and a strong woman who never complained about her illness.

Ms. Sallquist is survived by her husband Robert of Woodside; and her daughters Kira Feick of

San Ramon and Erin Sallquist of Palo Alto.

Services were held at Valley Presbyterian Church. The family prefers memorial donations be made to the Lucile Salter Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford.

**Henrietta L. Sherman***Menlo Park resident*

Hennie Sherman, a long-time resident of Menlo Park and Palo Alto, died May 5 after a courageous battle with cancer, family member said. She was 73.

She was born in Charleston, West Virginia, and graduated from Ohio State University in 1955 with a bachelor's degree in merchandising. She met her husband, Art, in Cincinnati, Ohio, soon after graduation and relocated to Princeton, New Jersey, where she supported her husband through his graduate fellowship at Princeton University.

Soon after, they relocated to Blue Bell, Pennsylvania, where they raised a family of three children and she continued her career in merchandising for several years. She and her family returned to Princeton, New Jersey, in 1974 where she was very active in the community and developed a career in real estate.

In 1979, they moved to Palo Alto, where she continued her career in real estate and was an active member in several community organizations, including Peninsula

Volunteers.

Survivors include her husband of 50 years, Art; daughter Linda Sherman; daughter Janice Blakely; son Douglas Sherman; sister Betty Lavender; brother Erwin Kahn; and four grandchildren.

A memorial service was held at Congregation Beth Am, 26790 Arastradero Road in Los Altos Hills. Memorial donations may be made to Community Breast Health, Cambridge Ave., Project 390, Palo Alto, CA 94306.

**Julianne Senior Rodman***Longtime Menlo Park resident*

Julianne Senior Rodman, a resident of Menlo Park for the past 34 years, died May 4. She was 76.

She grew up in Salt Lake City, graduated from East High School in 1948, received a bachelor's degree in business from the University of Utah in 1952, and a master's in marketing from NYU in 1953.

As a resident of Menlo Park, she worked as a real estate agent, volunteered at a blood bank, was a member of the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, and was lovingly active in her children and grandchildren's lives, family members said.

She will be remembered as a devoted and caring mother, gracious hostess, and domino player extraordinaire, they said.

Survivors include brother Richard Senior of Novato, son Gregory Scot Rodman of Salt Lake City, daughters Kimberly Rodman Menninger of Portola Valley and Karen Rodman Ramirez of Ft. Collins, Colorado, and 10 grandchildren.

A memorial service was held May 10 at Menlo Park Presbyterian Church. The family prefers memorial contributions to the Peninsula Humane Society. Arrangements were by Roller Hapgood & Tinney.



**ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS  
TOWN OF ATHERTON  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

**VALPARAISO AVENUE OVERLAY PROJECT  
PROJECT NO. #06-001**

Notice is hereby given that SEALED BIDS will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, California 94027, until 3:00 p.m. June 14, 2007, at which time they will be publicly opened and read, for performing the following work:

- a. Milling
- b. Installation of fabric (Menlo Park limits only)
- c. Open-graded AC Overlay.
- d. Installing street striping, pavement markings and markers.
- e. Performing other miscellaneous work as required in the plans or specifications.

Bids must be for the entire work, and shall be submitted in sealed envelopes clearly marked: "Bid of (Contractor) for VALPARAISO AVENUE OVERLAY PROJECT, Project No. #06-001", along with date and time of bid opening.

Plans and specifications may be obtained at the Town of Atherton Public Works Department, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton CA 94027, for a non-refundable fee of \$30.00. Additional important information is contained in Town of Atherton Standard Specifications, which are available for an additional \$20.00. If shipping is requested, there will be an additional charge of \$20.00.

Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the form of cash, a cashier's or certified check or bid bond for not less than ten percent (10%) of the amount of the bid, as a guarantee that the bidder, if awarded the Contract, will fulfill the terms of the bid. The Town of Atherton reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and/or to waive any irregularities therein.

Bidders are hereby notified that, pursuant to California Civil Code Sections 3247 and 3248 and Standard Specifications Section 3.02, the successful bidder will be required to provide payment and performance bonds in the amounts stated in Section 3.02 of the Standard Specifications.

Bidders are hereby notified that provisions of California Labor Code regarding prevailing wages are applicable to the work to be performed under this contract. Pursuant to Section 1773 et seq. the general prevailing wage rates have been determined by the Director of the California Department of Industrial Relations and appear in the California Prevailing Wage Rates. Copies are on file at the office of the City Engineer and are available to interested parties upon request. The successful bidder shall post a copy of the wage rates at the job site.

The Contractor may elect to receive 100 percent of payments due under the contract, without retention of any portion of the payment by the Town of Atherton, by depositing securities of equivalent value to the retention amount in accordance with the provisions of Section 22300 of the California Public Contracts Code.

The successful bidder must be licensed under the provisions of Chapter 9, Division 3, of the California Business and Professions Code to do the type of work contemplated in the project at the time the contract is awarded and shall be skilled and regularly engaged in the general class or type of work called for under the Contract. Failure of the bidder to obtain proper and adequate licensing for an award of the contract shall constitute a failure to execute the contract and result in the forfeiture of the bidder's bid security.

Each bidder shall submit with this bid a statement setting forth his/her/its experience and qualifications. The statement shall be made on the forms provided by the Town and must accompany each bid. The three lowest bidders will be required to submit subcontractor's experience and qualifications statements within 48 hours of the bid opening, on forms provided by the Town.

By submitting a bid in response to this advertisement for bids, the bidder shall be conclusively deemed to have read, understood and agreed with all of the information and materials contained in the bid documents, including but not limited to the construction contract, the standard specifications, the special provisions, the required nature and amount of insurance and the documentation evidencing said insurance.

Any questions regarding the project should be directed to the City Engineer, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, CA 94027, telephone (650) 752-0532, preferably no later than five days before bid opening. Requests for Information may be faxed to (650) 688-6539. Plan holder's lists may be obtained by calling (650) 752-0570.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Duncan L. Jones, P.E., City Engineer

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Published in THE COUNTRY ALMANAC on May 16, 23, 2007.

**'Pancake Man' Ken Pruitt dies at 83**

Well-known restaurateur Kenneth H. Pruitt, who became known as the "Pancake Man" after opening his first Ken's House of Pancakes in Menlo Park in 1959, died April 13. He was 83.

A memorial service will be held at 3 p.m. Sunday, May 20, at Spangler Mortuary, 399 S. San Antonio Road in Los Altos.

A native of Shawnee, Oklahoma, he opened his first restaurant, a little place called "The Shack" in Palo Alto in 1953.

Six years later, on Dec. 10, 1959, he opened Ken's House of Pancakes at 888 El Camino Real in Menlo Park — the first of several. Others were opened in Millbrae, Mountain View, Campbell, Vacaville and Hilo, Hawaii.

Ten years after opening the Menlo Park "Ken's," he sold the restaurant to his nephew, Jim Cunningham. The restaurant closed in 1999.

In addition to the pancake houses, Mr. Pruitt took over Walker's Wagon Wheel in Mountain View, which became known as the site of many high-level, high-tech business meetings in the early stages of Silicon Valley's tech boom. When The Tech museum was built in San Jose, Mr. Pruitt was asked to donate some Wag-

on Wheel memorabilia.

Other restaurants he ran over the years include the Melody Inn Pizza & Pipes in Los Altos, Doran's Supper Club in Belmont, Dubby's and Ken's Cabaret in Millbrae, Tio Pancho's Mexican Restaurant in Vacaville, and The Old Mill and Munchies Copper Cooker in Arizona.

Despite having only an eighth-grade education and losing his parents at a young age, he faced life's challenges with a strong and independent spirit, family members said. He was primarily self-taught but had a strong ambition as well as a natural business sense, they said. He benefited from the hard work and loyalty of many long-term employees, they added.

Mr. Pruitt's wife of 35 years, Eileen, died in 1987. In 2002, he married Janette. In addition to her, he is survived by son Dan Pruitt, daughter Dana Willson, brother Jack Pruitt, sister Gladys Pruitt, three grandchildren and a great-grandson.



**Ken Pruitt**

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The Almanac, established in September, 1965, is delivered each week to residents of Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside and adjacent unincorporated areas of southern San Mateo County. The Almanac is qualified by decree of the Superior Court of San Mateo County to publish public notices of a governmental and legal nature, as stated in Decree No. 147530, issued November 9, 1969. Voluntary subscriptions are available for delivery to homes in Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside at \$30 per year or \$50 for 2 years. Subscriptions by businesses or residents outside the area are \$50 for one year and \$80 for two years.



## 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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POST your views on the Town Square forum at www.AlmanacNews.com

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

**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.

# Clinging to suburbia

The current housing mantra, to build dense projects near public transit, has not gained a foothold in Menlo Park, at least among most City Council members.

Although high-density projects that call for at least 25 homes per acre near transit corridors are favored by environmentalists, neither of the two projects recently proposed for downtown has gone anywhere — despite the current council's recent focus on climate change, including the heavy promotion of its global warming task force.

## EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

Green is the word of the day in Menlo Park, as it is in many Peninsula cities, but Menlo Park is apparently not ready to join the high-density movement, even

though such buildings give residents much better access to mass transit and downtown shopping.

The last high-density housing built downtown was Menlo Square, at 18.5 units per acre. The 135-unit Derry project on Oak Grove Avenue near El Camino Real, at 39 units per acre, was approved by the prior council last year, and then stopped by a successful referendum/petition drive. It is in limbo, caught up in council-authorized secret negotiations between the developer and Morris Brown, the petition organizer. The talks have been going on for six months with no announced progress.

The owners of the former Cadillac dealership cancelled their housing plans for El Camino Real after they were told by three council members that the project would not be approved. Instead, they have announced they will build a mainly commercial project, which meets current zoning regulations.

Clearly, the council is torn between its support of making city residents aware of global warming and backing high-density housing

downtown. Council members have to be thinking of the many residents who have for years exhibited an intense dislike of high-density housing, and believe that it will reduce their property values and change the look and feel of the city.

The council is caught in the middle, but it shouldn't be. Menlo Park should not be the last city on the Peninsula to embrace some high-density housing projects in the downtown core. The Derry project is a perfect example of a good design, near transit and shopping, that would add immeasurably to the downtown neighborhood. The council should simply make sure that any housing project offered for downtown is well-designed, would offer good value for its residents, and be compatible with the surrounding area.

It is time for Mayor Kelly Fergusson and her fellow council members to get moving on housing. For starters, we urge them to jump-start negotiations on the Derry project. A deadline should be set, after which the project should be put to a referendum vote. It is ridiculous for this important project to drag on. Those who signed the referendum petition deserve to see the project voted up or down. As far as we know, the council has done nothing to facilitate these negotiations.

Next, the council needs to begin work that will lead to an updated zoning plan for the El Camino corridor. Some high-density housing should be included in this design, which would add luster to the city's current effort to slow global warming.

Opponents of dense housing downtown often cite added traffic as a reason to oppose such projects, while ignoring the benefits when residents are a two-minute walk from Caltrain and SamTrans bus lines. Enabling walking and biking in the downtown core can only enhance the city's green efforts.

## LETTERS

Our readers write

### Santa Cruz Avenue needs art shop and more

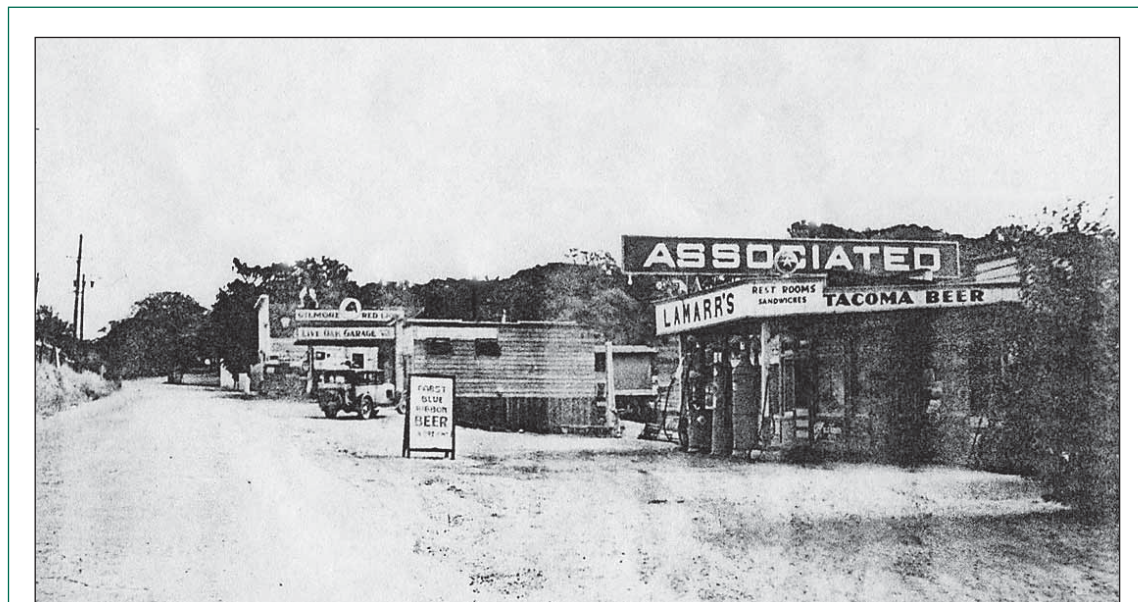
Editor:

About a month ago you asked local readers what businesses should be on Santa Cruz Avenue.

I am a mother of a seven-year-old girl, I loved art as a child and I want to show my daughter, Sherri, how creative art (not kits from toy stores) can be fun. Music is almost as important in our family. We have a large collection of CDs and some small instruments. A piano is too big for our home.

I have noticed from Mountain View/Sunnyvale to Redwood City there are only two music stores left. The one in Palo Alto is very small. What if my daughter wants to join a band and actually own her own instrument? Do I have to drive all the way to Sunnyvale for that?

I am also disappointed that there is no art store of any kind from Menlo Park to at least Redwood City. Palo Alto has one large one and a medium-sized one. I go to the stationary store if I want to shop locally for art supplies but I wanted more. Crayons, markers,



Jac Audiffred's Woodside Collection

### Our Regional Heritage

This 1930 view of Woodside Road shows, from foreground on right, service station operation by Bill Jackson and Gayle Shine, Gene Urban's barber shop and Arata Feed and Fuel.

sketch pencils, different qualities of paper, and Lyra products (high quality paints, pencils, and bees-wax molding wax).

The last suggestion is to include something for the other large population of Menlo Park, who are older people. My mother is 71 and needs certain gadgets due to her arthritis. What about

a special store for gadgets or tools that are helpful to seniors or people with disabilities?

I have talked to some of my friends about my ideas and they thought they were great. We certainly don't need another coffee shop, restaurant or rug store.

**Susanne Chang**  
Roble Avenue, Menlo Park

### Contaminated animal feed again

Editor:

The contaminated Chinese protein powder that has sickened some 17,000 American dogs and cats has now turned up

See LETTERS, next page

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

in the human food supply. The U.S. Department of Agriculture admits that 6,000 pigs and more than 2.5 million broiler chickens were sold for human consumption after being fed contaminated pet food.

This was a disaster waiting to happen. After all, animal feed mills are generally regarded as dumping grounds for all kinds of garbage: cat and dog carcasses from animal shelters, cancerous tissue and other slaughterhouse discards, and food processing waste. Why the fuss about some slightly toxic Chinese protein powder?

Our government and agribusiness will not protect our food supply, but we can, by purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables grown close to home, at farmers' markets and local food co-ops. And by avoiding garbage-fed meat and dairy products.

**Miles Barne  
Sharon Park Drive,  
Menlo Park**

# Menlo Park school plan on wrong track

By Dave Montague

On April 4, trustees of the Menlo Park City School District voted to proceed to the design phase for Laurel and Encinal schools.

This includes building a teaching resource center on the Encinal campus that further compromises our largest campus use. It specifically forecloses converting Encinal to a grade 5-8 middle school and dumps more than 900 students into a new, two-story middle school at Hillview at twice the state student density standard, and more than 700 students into Oak Knoll, which must also be expanded by using a two-story classroom building.

Careful analysis in a study based on the district's own data favors a superior plan, offering all the measurable benefits claimed for the adopted plan with much less impact to the community. This study, comparing the adopted plan and the proposed alternative, can be found at: <http://www.integralmanagement.net/MPSchools/>.

Unfortunately the district has adopted a plan that all but ignores its own data and long-range objectives, as well as the impact to the neighborhoods and the community.

A 50 percent increase in students and in traffic and parking congestion at Encinal and Hillview impacts everyone who resides near those schools or drives on Santa Cruz and Encinal avenues, and Middlefield Road.

Parents who think the adopted plan is going to improve their children's education should

consider that an entire generation of students will have to attend three schools under construction conditions that reduce outside activity space in every school for two to three years. Staging and construction will virtually eliminate all playing fields at Hillview for that time.

When complete, the "new" facilities will be at capacity with no space for further growth. Scarce, well-patronized public tennis courts and preschool parks maintained by the city also will be eliminated in the process.

It is time for taxpayers to take a hard look at what is happening. The bond money we voted in is being committed to a bad plan glossing over its problems, repeating past short-sightedness and making poor use of the bond funds.

None of these actions are in the interests of students, the community or the long-term interests of the district. Sadly, as the study report shows, none of this need be.

Unfortunately, the board never consider

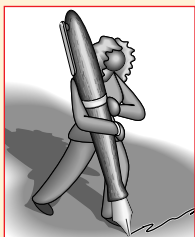
a much better plan. The five-campus plan in the study report builds a new 400-plus student K-4 school at the 5.8-acre O'Connor campus in the Willows at a much lower cost than the two-story construction at three schools. The teaching resource center would be located at O'Connor, not at Encinal.

This new O'Connor facility allows Hillview and Encinal to revert to grade 5-8 middle schools by 2010, actually reducing the number of students below those presently at Oak Knoll, Hillview and Laurel, and reducing the planned population at Encinal. This realignment provides campuses closer to residences of 60 percent of projected students.

This plan leaves more of the bond money available for major improvements at all schools while providing lower student density per school, with more total capacity and flexibility for uncertainties in future enrollment.

Yet, the Board of Trustees never seriously considered a new O'Connor facility, even though the district's data shows that more than 200 elementary-grade students live in the Willows and Willow Road corridor alone. We want to know whose interests are served by continuing to ignore this option? ■

*Dave Montague is a management and engineering consultant and a 47-year resident of Menlo Park. He lives on Hillview Drive.*



GUEST OPINION

# A pitch to head off artificial turf in Woodside

By Patrick Noonan

Am I the only person in Woodside who cares that soon two of our beautiful natural turf playing fields at the elementary school will be dug up and replaced with approximately 75,000 square feet of rubber and plastic several inches deep?

It's artificial turf. Birds don't like to land on it. There are no bees on it. There are no clover or dandelions on it. There is never the smell of fresh-cut grass. No white clover blossoms. There are no worms under it. Ladybugs who land on it don't last long.

On the surface there are loose particles of rubber and silica sand,

which hold up the plastic blades of grass. I wonder what will happen if some of the little creatures that live in our schoolyard eat the rubber. What if a first-grader drops a sandwich or an apple on the artificial turf and rubber particles stick to it? Will they be harmed if they accidentally eat it? What if a toddler watching a soccer game or on a weekend picnic picks up a handful of the loose rubber pellets from the top of the turf?

We are stealing something from the children. We are stealing the

unique and wonderful experience of playing sports on natural turf. As adults we all have that memory and cherish it. I don't understand why we would deny it to our children.

I console myself by saying that the children will still have the sky. We can't take the sky away from them. But it's not the top of the sky I'm worried about. It's the top six feet of sky above the artificial turf. Plastic and rubber smell. And that smell is tiny particles.

On a hot day when the chil-

dren are playing their hearts out and breathing as hard as they can, are they breathing something that may hurt them someday? How does the material age? What happens to it when it begins to break down?

The clue to the nature of artificial turf is that birds don't like it. There's nothing to eat there. It smells funny. So if birds don't like it, why are we putting our treasure, our children, and in my case, grandchildren, on it?

You know if I saw animals on it in a zoo, I would feel sorry for them and complain to the zookeeper that it is cruel to separate living beings from the

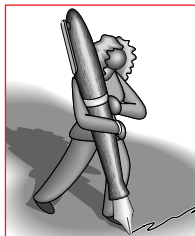
natural world.

Maybe if someone besides me contacts the school board and complains a little, the decision to renovate with artificial turf instead of natural turf may not be set in concrete.

Sooner or later we're going to get fed up with the rubber and plastic fields, or some one will discover that maybe it's harmful to our children. Then we'll dig the stuff up, haul it off to the recycler and renovate with natural turf. Why not do it now before we pay for it?

The Woodside Elementary School board's Web site is [www.woodside.k12.ca.us/board/board.html](http://www.woodside.k12.ca.us/board/board.html) ■

**Patrick Noonan  
Glenwood Avenue, Woodside**



GUEST OPINION

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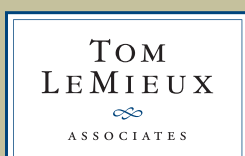
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