

**Atherton finance chief put on leave;
audit panel says he's unfairly targeted.** Page 5

The Almanac

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

Online.
Anyplace.
Anytime.

TheAlmanacOnline.com

SEPTEMBER 5, 2007

www.TheAlmanacOnline.com

| VOL. 43 NO. 1

Back to school

The Almanac's
special report
on local K-12
public schools

— See page 14



REDEFINING QUALITY SINCE 1990

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



LOS ALTOS

Stunning, fully remodeled 4bd/2.5ba North Los Altos home with spacious chef's kitchen, spa-like master bath and private, lush rear garden and patio.

\$1,625,000



REDWOOD CITY

Spacious home with privacy. 4bd/3ba, separate DR, FR, large lot. Light and bright. vaulted ceilings, hardwood floors. Not to be missed

\$1,535,000



SAN CARLOS

Carmel charm in the heart of San Carlos. Nestled in a private setting great setting with great curb appeal. Recently updated chef's kitchen, hardwood floors, French doors, brick patio. Don't miss!

\$1,195,000



Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

FIRST SHOT



Photo courtesy of Mary Ellen Margolis

Snack shack attacked

Demolition can elicit fond memories for even the humblest of buildings if it's been around long enough. This concession stand spanned generations at the edge of the Menlo-Atherton High School football field, but it was demolished in short order on Aug. 16 to make way for a sturdier and larger structure, said M-A alumnus Jim Gallagher. Menlo Park resident Mary Ellen Margolis was at the school to get pictures of football players when she caught the last minutes of the shack. That's M-A senior running back Jamal Wilkins walking by.

Atherton

■ Town's finance chief, who was placed on leave, is unfairly targeted, says audit panel. **Page 5**

Menlo Park

■ It's official: Whole Foods Market is interested in Menlo Park site. **Page 5**

■ Linfield Oaks residents fume over demolished building. **Page 10**

Food & Drink

■ New wine bar features the small-production work of local mountain wineries. **Cover, Section 2**

Also Inside

Around Town25
Calendar34
Obituaries7, 24
Theater review22

Community

■ Celebrating a local haven: Vallombrosa Retreat Center turns 60. **Page 5**

■ Cafe to open at Allied Arts Guild. **Page 9**

■ New funding proposal for rebuilding Sequoia Hospital. **Page 13**

People

■ William Kelley, a major player in Silicon Valley real estate, dies at 84. **Page 7**

Regional

■ Regional rail plan for 2050 depends on upgraded Caltrain. **Page 6**

On the cover

Ashley Alvarez-Gonzalez takes a break at Woodside Elementary School, which has undergone an "extreme makeover" with new classrooms and playing fields. The new administration building in the background is expected to be completed by November. Almanac photo by Veronica Weber. The Almanac's special report on local public schools starts on **Page 14**.

CALLING ON THE ALMANAC

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

For Classified ads, call **854-0858**

For all other calls, phone **854-2626**

News: **Ext. 213**

Display advertising: **Ext. 233**

Fax: **854-0677**

■ E-mail news to (no photos please): **editor@AlmanacNews.com**

■ E-mail news photos with captions to: **AlmanacPhotos@gmail.com**

■ E-mail letters to the editor to: **letters@AlmanacNews.com**

To request free delivery, or stop delivery, of The Almanac in zip code 94025, 94027, 94028 and the Woodside portion of 94062, call **854-2626**.

THE ALMANAC (ISSN 1097-3095 and USPS 459370) is published every Wednesday by Embarcadero Publishing Co., 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-4455. Periodicals Postage Paid at Menlo Park, CA and at additional mailing offices. Adjudicated a newspaper of general circulation for San Mateo County, the Almanac is delivered free to homes in Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside. Voluntary subscriptions for \$30 per year or \$50 per 2 years are welcome from residents of the above circulation area. Subscription rates for businesses and for residents of other communities is \$50 per year and \$80 for two years. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Almanac, P.O. Box 7008, Menlo Park, CA 94026-7008. Copyright ©2006 by Embarcadero Publishing Co., All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited.

Jewelry That Tells A Story



Hmmm,
Today I Feel
... Colorful



Erin MacGeraghty

Menlo Park • 650-854-4740 • Tue-Fri 11-7, Sat 12-5

Woodside Deli

Italian Delicacies



Gourmet Italian Foods

OPEN 7 DAYS

Mon-Sat 8am-6pm • Sun 8am-4pm

(650) 369-4235

WEEKLY SPECIALS

Roomkas
Soft Gouda

\$9⁹⁹
lb.
Exp. 9/18/07

Beretta
Italian Cooked
Ham

\$9⁹⁹
lb.
Exp. 9/18/07

Bel Gioioso
Domestic
Parmesan

\$8⁹⁹
lb.
Exp. 9/18/07

1453 Woodside Road, Redwood City (Next to Gray's Paint)

Define Your Dream Kitchen...

Is it Sleek and Sassy?



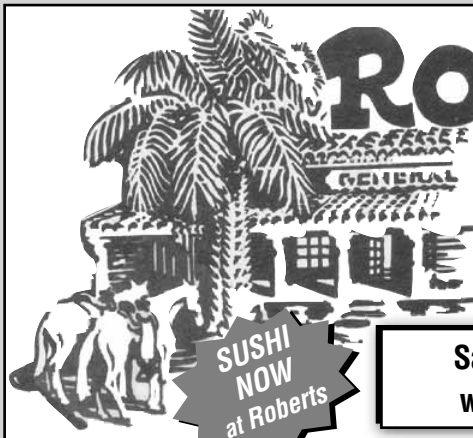
HUGE END OF SUMMER SALE

(50% Discount on Selected Kitchen Cabinet Styles)



Call Today - Sale Ends September 30!

650.325.2060




ROBERTS


A TOWN MARKET PLACE
 3015 WOODSIDE ROAD
 WOODSIDE, CA 94062
 650-851-1511
 Open 6:30AM - 8PM


SUSHI NOW at Roberts


Sale Dates: Sept. 5, 6, 7, 8
www.robertsmarket.com

PRODUCE

Whole or cut
SEEDLESS WATERMELON  **39¢ lb.**

California
BARTLETT PEARS  **99¢ lb.**

Tender
BLUE LAKE BEANS  **99¢ lb.**

Extra Large
YELLOW ONIONS  **3 lb. for 99¢ lb.**

TURKEY TIPS

It doesn't have to be Thanksgiving to serve a turkey dinner. The delicious birds can now be bought in parts and boneless cuts, and smaller-sized turkeys are also available. After cooking and serving a turkey, you will still have plenty of meat left over to freeze and use in other recipes. Keep turkey refrigerated, on a plate, when thawing it) a 16-20 pound bird defrosts in about three days.) Cook your unstuffed bird to a temperature of 180-185 degrees, with the thermometer placed in a thigh, not touching a bone, your stuffed bird should reach 165 degrees when a thermometer is placed through the body into the stuffing's center. Stuff the turkey loosely, as the stuffing will expand during cooking.



At ROBERTS MARKET, we are your source for specialty food, including Indian, Asian, European, and other specialties. With that being said, we are also your source for the finest produce, meats, poultry, and seafood available in the area. This includes turkey! We carry great turkeys in varying sizes, and we have the knowledge to assist you in your preparation of said turkey. Don't forget fresh cut flower from our floral department to grace your table.

HINT: After you have carved the meat off your turkey, the carcass can be used for a terrific turkey soup.

GROCERY

HORIZON ORGANIC LOW FAT COTTAGE CHEESE **\$2.69**
 Pint

CROISSANT HOT POCKET PEPPERONI PIZZA **\$2.19**
 9 oz. - Also Chicken Broccoli - Original - Hot Pockets

COLE WILD MOUNTAIN HONEY **\$2.99**
 Koz Jar

SUNMAID SEEDLESS RAISINS **\$1.49**
 10 oz. 6 pack

HANSEN NATURAL SODAS **\$1.89**
 12 oz. - 6 Pack Cans - Plus Calif. Redeem Value

ALLEY CAT CHICKEN & TUNA FLAVORS **\$3.69**
 1 lb. Bag

DELI

Arugula Roasted Corn **\$7.99**
 Cherry tomatoes salad lb.

Heirloom **\$8.00**
 Pancetta Panini ea.
 Crispy pancetta, fresh mozzarella,
 Heirloom tomatoes, Basil, Arugula,
 Lemon Olive Oil on Ciabatta Roll



LUIS - CHEF

WINE

WARM WEATHER REDS

Both people and food respond better to lighter, less oaked wines. When the weather is hot, Who wants a heavy, oaky Cabernet when it's 100° outside? Here are a few suggestions that pair with summer fare:

2004 Brigaldara Valpolicella Classico Reg. \$13.49 **Sale \$11.99**

A light, fresh red with a fine, smooth texture and a nice balance. Try in place of Pinot Noir.

2004 Ch du Hureau Saumur-Champigny Reg. \$13.99 **Sale \$11.99**

A Loire Cabernet-Franc with medium body and smooth, ripe tannins.

2005 Patrick Brunet Fleurie, cru Beaujolais. . . . Reg. \$15.99 **Sale \$13.99**

Bright, juicy berry flavors with a hint of minerals. A great vintage! Serve slightly chilled.

2004 La Pialade, Cotes du Rhone Reg. \$24.99 **Sale \$21.99**

From the famous Rayas estate comes this impeccably balance, elegant Cotes du Rhone. Outstanding!

MEAT/SEAFOOD

— *Special This Week at Roberts* —

HAWIAN PORK CHOPS **\$6.98** lb.

KOREAN BABY BACK RIBS **\$6.98** lb.

BONELESS SKINLESS CHICKEN BREAST **\$4.98** lb.

FRESH BAY SHRIMP MEAT **\$9.98** lb.

Local News

MENLO PARK | ATHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

It's official: Whole Foods interested in MP site

■ Menlo Park City Council could reconsider plans to build housing atop grocery store.

By **Rory Brown**
Almanac Staff Writer

After weeks of speculation, it's been confirmed that Whole Foods Market is considering setting up shop at the site of Menlo Park's abandoned Cadillac dealership.

What else could be built on the site, whether it's office space or apartments, is still up in the air.

Jeff Warmoth of the San Mateo-based Sand Hill Development Co. announced at the council's Aug. 28 meeting that his company is in talks with Whole Foods Market to build a store at the former auto lot at 1300 El Camino Real. The developer has built Whole Foods Market stores

in Los Altos, Cupertino, and has several others planned for the Bay Area.

Mr. Warmoth said Whole Foods Market has not yet agreed to move to the site, but is the only grocer being considered. He said that if Whole Foods does not fill the space, the area will become some combination of general retail use and a restaurant.

Sand Hill Property's current proposal, which is set to undergo environmental review in late September, includes plans for building a 58,850 square-foot grocery store and a two-story office building at the 3.45-acre site.

The plans also call for a 322-space underground park-

ing garage, 98 at-grade parking spaces, and an 8,000-square-foot patio for outdoor dining.

Housing above store?

During council discussion of the Cadillac site, Mayor Kelly Fergusson resurrected the controversial idea of building housing at the former Cadillac site.

Mr. Warmoth previously proposed building 135 apartments and 81,000 square feet of commercial space in buildings up to 60 feet tall at the site — a project praised by past council members, but not the current council.

Following the November election, councilmen Richard Cline, Andy Cohen and Heyward Robinson said the project, which called for 40 homes per acre, was too dense. At a March study session, they said the city should not



The former Cadillac site (blue), adjacent to the property for the proposed Derry condo-commercial project (pink), is being eyed by Whole Foods Market as a potential location for a Menlo Park store.

consider projects greater than the maximum 18.5 units per acre permitted under the current zoning until a comprehensive

plan for El Camino Real is in place.

After the feedback, Mr. Warmoth withdrew the project, and submitted his new proposal, which conforms to the city's existing zoning.

But council members have struggled creating a plan for El Camino Real, and with regional groups pushing Menlo Park to build more housing, Ms. Fergusson urged Mr. Warmoth to include some kind of housing component to the project. She floated the idea of putting his previous, high-density housing proposal back on the table, and comparing the two projects in a study session — a concept Mr. Warmoth agreed to.

Mr. Warmoth said whether it's

See **WHOLE FOODS**, page 8

Finance chief unfairly targeted, says audit panel

■ John Johns is placed on paid leave.

By **Andrea Gemmet**
Almanac Staff Writer

It is not well in the town of Atherton. Finance Director John Johns was suspended Aug. 27, following a complaint that he created a "hostile work environment." Town officials say they are following procedure while the complaint is investigated, while Mr. Johns says he's being targeted for digging up financial misdeeds within the town, and says he has evidence that he's been threatened and subject to abusive treatment.

Interim City Manager Wende Protzman confirmed that she placed Mr. Johns on paid administrative leave after receiving a complaint against him. She said she hired San Francisco-based attorney Mary Topliff, who has done previous work for the town, to conduct a personnel investigation.

She would not reveal the source of the complaint or its substance, citing privacy issues. "In a personnel matter, all parties, including John, are protected," Ms. Protzman said. "I hope to have the investigation wrapped up in a couple of weeks."

Mr. Johns said he wasn't aware of any complaints from his staff about his demeanor or behavior.

■ ATHERTON

"I don't think being placed on administrative leave is either necessary or appropriate," Mr. Johns told the Almanac. "It comes at an awkward time. The very day I was placed on administrative leave is the very day auditors arrived to do the yearly (outside) audit."

Both Mr. Johns and Ms. Protzman have said they intend to apply for Atherton's city manager job. The post has been open since city manager Jim Robinson retired at the end of July; recruitment for the job is expected to begin in a month or so.

Mr. Johns' suspension has galvanized the members of the town's audit committee, which is charged with overseeing the town's annual audit, and they remain staunch supporters of Mr. Johns, said committee Chairman Sam Goodman.

The audit committee is made up of council members Jerry Carlson and Kathy McKeithen, and five residents who are appointed by the council. Mr. Carlson and Ms. McKeithen could not be reached for comment.

Shortly before Mr. Johns was suspended, the Atherton Audit Committee drafted a letter of com-

See **JOHNS**, page 8



The Vallombrosa Retreat Center in Menlo Park was dedicated Dec. 7, 1947. In the picture is Archbishop John Mitty (center); Father Butler, the first director of Vallombrosa (to Archbishop Mitty's left); visiting clergy and sisters; and the first group of people to attend a retreat there.

Celebrating a local haven

Vallombrosa Retreat Center in Menlo Park turns 60-years-old this year

By **Natalie Jabbar**
Special to the Almanac

For 60 years, the Vallombrosa Retreat Center in Menlo Park has provided a place of refuge for people who want to get away from

the hubbub of their daily lives. Owned by the Catholic Archdiocese of San Francisco, which covers three Bay Area counties, the center originated as a facility for women but now hosts more than 10,000 women and men a year, said

Vallombrosa's program director Sister Rosina Conratto. Nestled on Oak Grove Avenue among trees from all over the world, Vallombrosa, which literally means "shady

See **VALLOMBROSA**, page 8

Regional rail plan for 2050 depends on upgraded Caltrain

■ Plan also calls for Dumbarton rail line across the Bay, and new tube across the Bay in San Francisco for BART and Caltrain.

By Marion Softky

Almanac Staff Writer

Like it or not, the Peninsula and Bay Area are still growing. And the 40 percent more people projected to live here by 2050 will result in a great many more trips than today's stressed transit systems can carry.

As part of the solution, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), together with BART and Caltrain, are finalizing a Regional Rail Plan for 2050 that addresses improvement and expansion of the region's railroads to handle increased demand for both passengers and freight.

This is the first long-range rail plan for the Bay Area in 50 years, Consultant Howard Goode told a crowded audience at a workshop in San Carlos on Aug. 27. The previous rail plan, in 1957, showed BART ringing the Bay — which didn't happen after San Mateo County pulled out of BART in 1962.

The new plan calls for "ringing the Bay" by extending BART to San Jose and upgrading Caltrain on the Peninsula. "The BART and Caltrain systems are the backbone," Mr. Goode said. "They provide comparable service."

The planners are looking at how to use the freight railroads, mostly in the East Bay,

to serve passengers as well, Mr. Goode said. Freight is increasing hugely, especially around the Port of Oakland. "By 2050, freight will increase more than 350 percent," he said.

In addition, houses are rapidly sprouting in the Central Valley for people who work in the Bay Area. "That translates into trips," Mr. Goode added.

Improvements to the Caltrain main line up the Peninsula will come in phases, Mr. Goode said. Electrification will allow Caltrain to run lightweight cars faster and more frequently. Over the years, tracks will be added, and more grade crossings built.

Three major projects in the 2050 plan would make the Peninsula more accessible by rail:

■ Reviving passenger rail service across the Bay over the old Dumbarton Bridge to connect

with the Altamont Commute Express to the Central Valley, and other East Bay rail and bus lines.

■ Extension of Caltrain into downtown San Francisco to a new TransBay Terminal.

■ Construction of a new double-decker transit tube under San Francisco Bay, near the present BART tube, to accommodate both BART and Caltrain.

The draft regional rail plan also includes analysis of how high-speed rail service from Southern California could "enhance and accelerate funding" for local rail lines. High-speed rail — if it is ever approved and funded — might contribute funding for grade separations and extra tracks.

The draft rail plan also analyzes the two proposed high-speed routes into the Bay Area: across Pacheco Pass and up the Caltrain line; and across Altamont Pass, with a Bay crossing at the

Dumbarton to Redwood City, and then San Francisco.

Critiques

Twenty-six people attending the workshop gave their opinions about some aspect of the draft rail plan.

Speaking for the Caltrain board, Chief Development Officer Ian McAvoy gave "full support" for the plan. He recommended the Pacheco Pass route for high-speed rail.

Several transit watchers asked for more information on ridership studies.

Residents of Atherton and Burlingame mourned the loss of local service and worried about the impact of even more high speed trains. Bobbi Benson of Burlingame said: "I'm concerned about how this may separate our town even more. We need the milk runs."

See **REGIONAL RAIL**, next page

think outside
the box



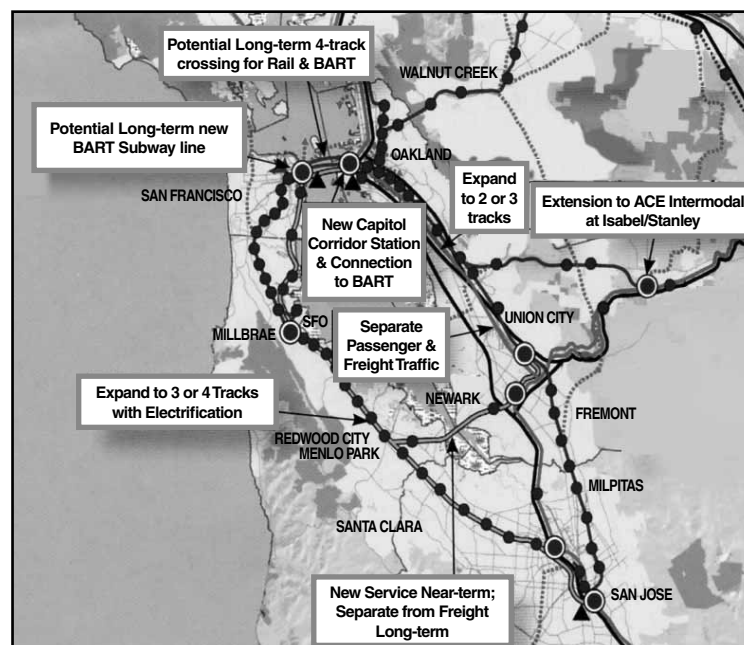
INTRODUCING
THE HILLSDALE SHOPPING CENTER
GIFT CARD
FROM AMERICAN EXPRESS

- Welcome at all stores and restaurants accepting American Express including Nordstrom, Macy's, Mervyn's and Sears.
- Available for purchase daily at the Information Center in denominations of \$20 to \$500. A \$2.00 fee is applicable to Gift Card purchases.
- You'll receive your choice of a beautifully ribboned box or gift bag FREE with any Hillside Gift Card purchase. (Limited offer)

Terms, fees and conditions apply to all Gift Cards. Visit www.hillside.com for more information.

HILLSDALE SHOPPING CENTER
THE ART OF SHOPPING

NORDSTROM, MACY'S, MERVYN'S AND SEARS PLUS 130 SPECIALTY STORES Located off Hwy. 101 at Hillside Blvd. and El Camino Real in San Mateo Shop Mon. - Sat. 10 am - 9 pm and Sun. 11 am - 7 pm 650.345.8222 hillside.com. Hillside is serviced by CalTrain and SamTrans.

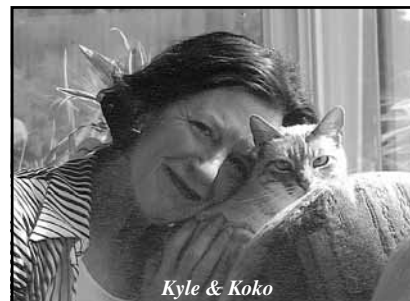


2050 System Map
Regional Rail without High Speed Rail

This map, from the Metropolitan Transportation Commission, shows the regional rail plan without high-speed rail.

Low Cost Divorce/Living Trust

DOCUMENT PREPARATION SERVICE



INCLUDES:

- Divorce \$449
- Living Trusts \$399/\$499
- Incorporations/LLC \$399
- Non-Profit \$399
- Probate (Free Quote)
- And much more!



We The People® 800-579-0009

Form and Service Center since 1985. We are not attorneys. We provide only self-help services at your specific discretion. LDA#72 Santa Clara County

William Kelley, a major player in Silicon Valley real estate, dies at 84

By David Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

Friends, relatives and associates of Peninsula real estate developer and notable Ladera resident William K. Kelley are invited to a service on the afternoon of Sunday, Sept. 16, to remember his life and 60-year career. Mr. Kelley, of the Palo Alto-based firm Hare, Brewer, and Kelley, Inc., died Monday, Aug. 27, at the age of 84.

The memorial service is scheduled for 1 to 5 p.m. at the Palo Alto Elks Club at 4249 El Camino Real in Palo Alto.

Mr. Kelley and his firm took on large projects. Ladera itself and Atherton neighborhoods of Lindenwood and the hills west of the Alameda de las Pulgas are among the subdivisions brought to existence by Bill Kelley and his partners, said his brother and Ladera resident Ryland Kelley.

Bill Kelley's insights led to Stanford University ending its practice of leasing land for 100 years, going instead with 50-year leases. The change added "immense value" to the uni-

versity's land endowment, Ryland said.

The 620-acre high-technology office complex in Sunnyvale known as Moffett Park is the result of Bill Kelley arranging a simultaneous closing for 60 parcels on the site, his brother said.

Mr. Kelley's firm was responsible for the concurrent development of an award-winning 15-story office building at 525 University Avenue in Palo Alto, the 500,000-square-foot Mayfield Mall at the border of Palo Alto and Mountain View, and the upscale vacation community of Pajaro Dunes on Monterey Bay, Ryland Kelley said.

The firm also contributed to some of the Peninsula's most cherished open space, the Windy Hill Open Space Preserve.

After repeated efforts to develop landmark Windy Hill ran up against the town of Portola Valley's stringent zoning, the firm donated 1,312 acres to the newly



William Kelley

formed Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) in 1981. POST sold its first major acquisition later that year to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District for half its market value.

A native of Palo Alto, Bill Kelley piloted a B-17 bomber during World War II and flew 35 missions over Germany, his brother said. He graduated from Stanford University after the war and joined his father's real estate firm.

He was the first president of the Ladera Oaks Swim & Tennis Club and a founding member of a men's lunch club in Palo Alto and a club for the sport of curling.

Bill Kelley's first wife, Mona, died of lung cancer at age 40. Mr. Kelley is survived by his second wife Rayna; brother Ryland of Ladera; daughters Lois of Nevada City, California, Mary of Portola Valley, and Sheryl of San Francisco; sons Michael of Los Altos, Pat of Mi Wuk, California, Brian of Palo Alto, and Clark of Menlo Park; and 11 grandchildren.

The family asks that memorials in Mr. Kelley's name be made to a charity of the donor's choice. ■

Coroner: Attorney died of accidental asphyxiation

An autopsy has concluded that Menlo Park attorney Daniel J. Weiser, 48, died of accidental asphyxiation by hanging, San Mateo County Coroner Robert Foucault has reported.

Mr. Foucault released the information on the cause of Mr. Weiser's death Aug. 27 after a Superior Court judge denied a plea by Mr. Weiser's family to keep the cause of death private.

Police found Mr. Weiser dead in his Creek Drive home in Menlo Park on July 23, 2007.

Mr. Weiser specialized in corporate securities, finance and restructurings at the Palo

■ BRIEFS

Alto law firm of Wilson Sonsini Goodrich & Rosati.

Simitian's ID tag bill goes to governor

State Sen. Joe Simitian, D-Palo Alto, has won Senate passage of a bill that would make it illegal to require any Californian to submit to forced implantation of a radio frequency identity tag.

The so-called RFID devices are electronic chips the size of a grain of sand and fitted with

tiny antennas. The chips can broadcast data to help track and/or identify anything, from people and pets to retail goods.

After a largely party-line vote of 28-9 on Aug. 30, the bill now goes to the governor. Unlike a broader RFID bill introduced by Sen. Simitian and vetoed in 2006 by Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, this one targets implantation only.

Sen. Simitian is carrying other legislation to address RFID chips in driver's licenses and school ID cards, public notification of scanning, and the unauthorized use of scanners.

Altamont route for high-speed rail. He suggested running the fast trains up the East Bay and through the new Bay tube to San Francisco. If the Pacheco Pass route is selected, he suggested looking at running the

route up the 280 corridor from San Jose to San Francisco.

"High-speed rail along the Caltrain corridor is not necessary or desirable," Mr. Janz wrote in a letter commenting on the plan. ■

■ INFORMATION

■ The draft regional rail plan will come before the Planning Committee of the Metropolitan Transportation Commission at its meeting Friday, Sept. 14, and before the full MTC for action at its meeting Sept. 26 in Oakland. For information, go to bayarearailplan.info; or the MTC Web site at mtc.ca.gov/planning/rail.

■ The California High Speed Rail Authority is conducting a review of its program Environmental Impact Report/Study on the proposed statewide high-speed train system. Comments may be submitted through Sept. 28 to the California High Speed Rail Authority, EIR/EIS Comments, 925 L Street, Suite 1425, Sacramento, CA 95814; Att'n: Dan Leavitt. For information, go to /www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov/.

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



The Importance of a Good Kitchen


Q: I have been looking to buy a house for a few months and find that I am most attracted to properties with good kitchens. These properties tend to be more expensive so I am wondering if I would do better if I bought a house with an older kitchen and updated it myself. What is your opinion?

A: I agree with you that a modern and functional kitchen is worth a lot both in dollars and in enjoyment. Kitchens and bathrooms are expensive to remodel and buyers these days have shown that they will pay more to have an updated or newer house. Everyone is too busy to spend time remodeling a house, not to mention the money

it takes to do upgrades. If you buy such a property, however, you are probably going to pay a premium for these updates.

It could well be more economical to buy an older house and upgrade it yourself. This means that you will need the time and money to remodel and that you will be able to endure the inconvenience and disruption that remodeling inevitably brings. However, if you choose to remodel a property yourself, you will likely be more satisfied with the outcome than you would be if you bought someone else's updates. Decide which category you fit into: those who can live through remodeling and those who can't. Once you know this, the decision will be obvious.

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



EYE CARE NEWS

Presented by
Mark Schmidt
Licensed Optician

Symptoms of this condition include intermittent double vision when viewing near objects and/or eyestrain after prolonged near work.

At MENLO OPTICAL, we are not a large, impersonal corporation where personnel changes are frequent. Locally owned, we emphasize personal attention and well-crafted eyewear for all prescriptions needs. You will find our prices to be most competitive to others in our community, while finding our service to be excellent. Bring us your prescription and browse through our display of frames. We are located at 1166 University Drive, on the corner of Oak Grove Avenue and University Drive. Call us at 322-3900.

P.S. By prescribing corrective lenses in plus strengths, particularly for near viewing, the eye professional can ensure that the eyes relax sufficiently to allow them to diverge in a more natural, comfortable position.


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

CONVERGING INTERESTS

When the eyes view an object, they must align properly, with both eyes directed at the same point, and they must focus on the object being viewed. Anything that disrupts proper alignment and/or focusing ability will compromise vision. One misalignment condition that disrupts vision to the extent that it may be intermittently blurred when near objects are viewed is called "convergence excess." Convergence excess causes the eyes to converge in front of the object being viewed.

BOWMAN

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



The Bowman program builds confidence, creativity and academic excellence.

- Lower School - Grades K - 5
- Middle School - Grades 6 - 8
- Individualized, self-directed program
- Rich international and cultural studies
- Proven, Montessori approach
- State-of-the-art facility
- Low student-teacher ratio

www.bowmanschool.org
4000 Terman Drive • Palo Alto, CA • Tel: 650-813-9131

REGIONAL RAIL

continued from previous page

Atherton Mayor Jerry Carlson foresaw trouble when residents learn what is proposed through Atherton. "Ninety-nine point nine percent of our residents have no idea of what the plan is and how it would impact our community," he said.

James Janz, vice mayor of Atherton and chair of the Atherton Rail Committee, called for bringing BART back to the Peninsula between Millbrae and San Jose. "We made a mistake 45 years ago," he said. "Did you ever look at replacing Caltrain with BART?"

Mr. Janz also recommended the

Vallombrosa center turns 60 this year

VALLOMBROSA

continued from page 5

glen,” has emerged as a haven for not only religious groups but also nonprofit and educational organizations.

“I see Vallombrosa as a little treasure, a center for prayer, reflection learning, and growing, hidden in the Silicon Valley and the beauty of Menlo Park,” said Father Patrick LaBelle, a new director of the center.

On Sept. 15 and 16, Vallombrosa invites the public to celebrate its 60-year anniversary with a special benefit dinner and a jubilee liturgy.

Previous directors of the Vallombrosa Retreat Center, including Monsignor Eugene Boyle, Monsignor Warren Holleran and Father Tom Madden, will be honored at the benefit dinner, which will be held Saturday at 7 p.m. and will be preceded by a social at 6 p.m.

Displays of photographs and other memorabilia will be showcased. Proceeds from the dinner will support the current programs and future needs of the center.

On Sunday, Sept. 16, Archbishop George Niederauer will deliver a jubilee liturgy at 11 a.m., which will be followed by a blessing of a new memorial fountain at noon. The Vallombrosa Retreat Association, a volunteer group that supports the center, donated the fountain a few months ago. An open house with refreshments will follow the liturgy and blessing.

A center for women

In 1947, the Archdiocese of San Francisco purchased 17 acres around the area of Oak Grove Avenue in Menlo Park. At the time, the Jesuit Retreat Center in Los Altos was only providing retreats for men, and the Archbishop wanted to create a facility for women, said Sister Rosina.

On Dec. 7, 1947, Archbishop John Mitty dedicated the Vallombrosa Retreat Center for the use of women in the then 13 counties in the San Francisco Archdiocese.

Every weekend, retreats would take place for women of the Catholic parishes and organizations such as altar societies, mothers' clubs and the Young Ladies Institute.

These events were held in the old mansion on the property, built during the Civil War period by Edward Hopkins, the nephew of railroad tycoon Mark

Hopkins.

In the 1950s and 1960s, the on-site mansion was renovated and additional buildings were constructed. The “administration” building, which includes a library, dining room and meeting rooms, was built along with 40 double occupancy rooms for retreat goers, said Sister Rosina. These renovations were partly funded by the sale of seven acres of the original property for the site of Nativity School, which is still located at 1250 Laurel St.

Welcoming more

With demographic and sociological changes in the 1970s, the mission of Vallombrosa shifted from serving only women, Sister Rosina noted. The center began running programs for men and women, and started to allow the use of the facilities by outside ecumenical groups, as well as educational and nonprofit organizations.

Various workshops and programs, such as a cancer support group, were made available at Vallombrosa. In addition, the center became the site for retreats for the priests of the archdiocese.

In February 1999, the center hosted a special visitor: Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI. He stayed in the old mansion for several days while attending a meeting with doctrinal officials from the United States, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands.

Today, the retreat spot can occupy up to 100 people at a time. Sister Rosina notes that many groups like to come to the center because they find they are more productive “off site.”

“And there’s always good food,” she adds. “That’s something we’re known for.” ■

■ INFORMATION

■ To celebrate Vallombrosa’s 60th anniversary, a benefit dinner will be held at 7 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 15, at the retreat center, located at 250 Oak Grove Ave. in Menlo Park. It will be preceded by a reception at 6 p.m. Tickets for the dinner are \$150.

■ On Sunday, Sept. 16, a jubilee liturgy will be delivered at 11 a.m.; the public is welcome to attend at no cost. To make reservations for the benefit dinner or the Jubilee liturgy, call 325-5614. For more information about the Vallombrosa Center, go to vallombrosa.org.



Photo by Nicholas Jensen/Palo Alto Weekly

The new Whole Foods Market in Los Altos, also built by Sand Hill Development Co., which is in talks with Whole Foods Market to build a store in Menlo Park.

Whole Foods Market interested in MP site

WHOLE FOODS

continued from page 5

a commercial and office project, or a condo-commercial project, Whole Foods Market could potentially fill the commercial space.

The council will discuss whether or not to hold such a study ses-

sion at a future meeting.

The idea of revisiting plans for high-density housing at the Cadillac site drew immediate criticism from Morris Brown, head of Menlo Park Tomorrow, the residents group that led a referendum against the Derry project last fall.

“If you’re going to stack hous-

ing on top of commercial property, you’re going to get opposition,” he told the council.

Councilman Heyward Robinson encouraged Mr. Warmoth to include some housing in the project, but at a lesser density, similar to the Menlo Square development at Oak Grove Avenue and Merrill Street. ■

Audit panel: Finance chief unfairly targeted

JOHNS

continued from page 5

commendation praising his “exemplary service.” Signed by the audit committee’s resident members, the letter now includes a protest over the town’s treatment of Mr. Johns.

Placing Mr. Johns on administrative leave for creating a hostile work environment “constitutes an unacceptable rebuff,” according to the letter to town officials. The letter also demands private access to the town’s investigator and reserves the right to bring the matter to the San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury.

Mr. Goodman said it’s Mr. Johns himself who has been the victim of a hostile work environment, stemming from his scrutiny of the building department.

Mr. Johns conducted a three-phase audit of the Atherton Building Department last year, resulting in a restructuring of that department. The upheaval generated a great deal of outrage among frequent users of the building department, including Atherton residents, developers and contrac-

tor, Ms. Topliff. “I believe information is available in the form of e-mail (showing) intimidation attempts by some of the town officials to punish employees who investigate things in town,” Mr. Goodman said. “The audit committee is interested only in obtaining facts and a fair resolution. The appearances of intimidation are very strong, and that’s something that the audit committee intends to cast some light on.”

Mr. Johns said while he was conducting the last phase of the building department audit he was cautioned by a colleague against upsetting powerful people in town.

He also told the Almanac that, on three separate occasions, “I have been made to fear for my personal safety.”

Mr. Johns said that his employees in the finance department have been subject to “abusive treatment” by other town employees, and that he can document the incidents, which occurred over the past two years, with e-mail and other correspondence. He said he’s turned over the information to Mr. Goodman, and that he plans to provide it to the town’s investiga-

tor, Ms. Topliff.

“I don’t think you should feel the fear of losing your job just for doing your job,” Mr. Johns said. “The job of the chief financial officer is not to go along to get along. Chief financial officers occasionally have to question spending practices or perform audits, and that’s not always an enjoyable experience.”

Councilman Charles Marsala said he supports Ms. Protzman’s handling of the matter. “She’s in a tough situation and I respect her tremendously for meeting a difficult situation head-on,” he said.

Mr. Marsala praised Mr. Johns’ handling of financial matters, but criticized his audits of the building department, saying Mr. Johns’ findings were presented in an “inflammatory” manner and were inaccurate.

The timing of Mr. Johns’ suspension, which coincides with the yearly audit of the town’s books by Caporicci & Larson, is raising the suspicions of some residents who closely follow town politics. And, it may prevent the town from getting a clean, “unqualified” audit this

See **JOHNS**, page 13

Cafe to open at Allied Arts

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

At long last, a restaurateur has signed on to open a cafe at the Allied Arts Guild, whose owner has been trying since early this year to find someone to feed guests and tenants at the historic Menlo Park complex.

Nir and Ayellet Perry are hoping to open the Red Currant cafe in late October, according to Vicki Kojola of the Allied Arts Guild.

The cafe will be open 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday.

The Perrys currently have a catering business, Ms. Kojola said.

The restaurant space at Allied Arts has been vacant since the end of February. That's when the Palo Alto Auxiliary, a nonprofit whose volunteer members ran a restau-

rant serving lunch there for 75 years, closed because the Guild's owner wouldn't renew the lease.

At the time, the Allied Arts Guild owner, the nonprofit Woodside-Atherton Auxiliary, said it was trying to bring in a professional restaurateur to generate more business and be open longer hours.

But the near-deal with local restaurateur Jesse Cool to open a restaurant and move the bulk of her catering business to Allied Arts fell through last spring. Although neither party would elaborate on the reason for the failure to seal a deal, neighbors cited use-permit issues that would have greatly limited what a catering business could do on the premises, and Ms. Cool cited a "misunderstanding in the use permit."

In keeping with the terms of the auxiliary's use permit for the complex, the Red Currant won't be serving dinner.

Both the Palo Alto and the Woodside-Atherton auxiliaries raise money for the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford. Allied Arts has generated funds over the years through operation of the restaurant and the Traditional Shop, which also closed in February and was also run by volunteers.

Revenue is also generated by leasing space to small shops and artists, but some fear that the tenants may not survive if the number of visitors to Allied Arts doesn't increase. Tenants have reported a significant drop in foot traffic and business since the restaurant's closure. ■

Pacific rower Roz Savage finds her boat

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

A jubilant Roz Savage, the British woman attempting to row solo across the Pacific Ocean, said she has found her boat adrift off the coast of Northern California. She abandoned it when she was rescued from rough seas by the U.S. Coast Guard on Aug. 23.

"Have a drink on me! We found her!" Ms. Savage said in a podcast posted to her Web site www.RozSavage.com on Aug. 29.

Ms. Savage, 39, who made her home in Woodside this summer, said she intends to continue

to Hawaii, the first leg of her journey, if she can successfully repair her boat. The first hurdle was finding it before a salvage boat could claim it. A global positioning system led her right to the Brocade, her custom-built boat, she said.

Ms. Savage said she intends to make repairs to the Brocade while aboard the White Holly, a research vessel she chartered. She then plans to return to the spot where a Coast Guard helicopter plucked her from the water, so she can resume her voyage. She intends to cross the Pacific in three stages, ending in Australia. By having left her boat for nearly

a week, she's probably out of record contention for being the first woman to make a solo crossing of the Pacific, but that doesn't matter, she said.

"In my mind I'll know that I rowed across the Pacific," she said.

Rough weather, several cap-sizes and the failure of key pieces of equipment, including her sea anchor, crippled her prospects less than two weeks into her journey. Ms. Savage said she agreed to be rescued because bad weather and distance were about to put her out of range. She was about 90 miles offshore, in the seas off Humboldt Bay. ■

Revised Oak Knoll plans on board agenda

Revised plans for Oak Knoll School's expansion, part of the Menlo Park district's \$91.1 bond-financed building program, are scheduled to come back for discussion and possible action at the school board's next meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 11. It begins at 7 p.m. in the Menlo Park City School District office at 181 Encinal Ave. in Atherton.

Ahmad Sheikholeslami, the district's facility planner and project manager, is expected to present the facility team's recommendations to the board for discussion and possible action.

Under the revised plan, a two-story classroom building would be separated from the multipurpose building, and would face a courtyard.

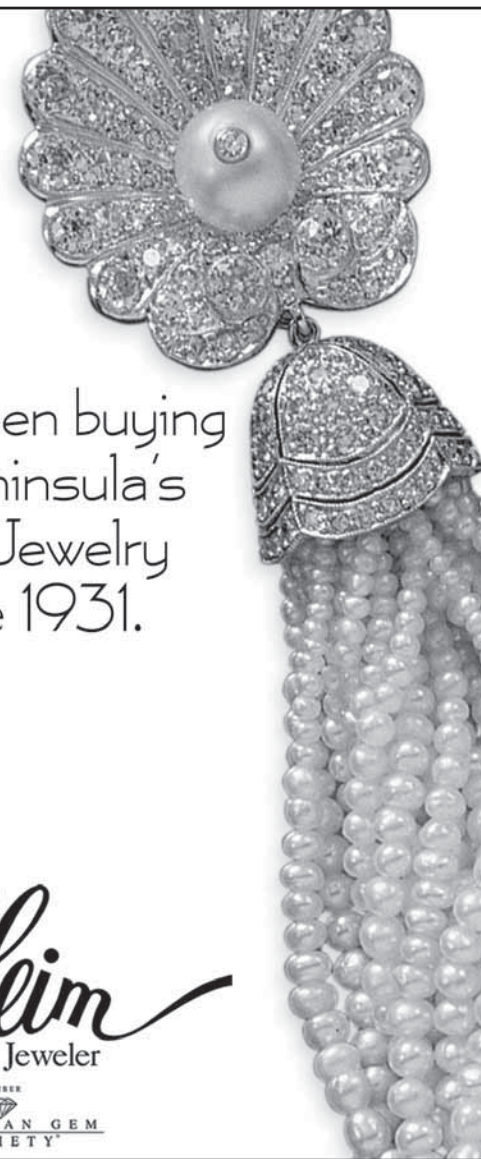
About 60 neighbors and parents attended the Aug. 29 Oak Knoll community meeting, when the facility team presented the revised plans.

Most of their comments focused on traffic issues, the length of the student drop-off and pick-up area, traffic congestion, concerns about sufficient parking for bikes, parking for buses, possible restrictions on a proposed new parking

lot, and the location of trash containers. Many of the comments revolved around operational issues that need to be worked out, said Mr. Sheikholeslami.

A neighbor, Erica Bailey, spoke toward the end of the meeting, saying she was encouraged by the revised plan, an improvement over the original one. "We saved a major tree and broke up the larger building," she said.

She acknowledged the facility team for listening to the concerns. If we all give a little bit, we'll get a better plan" for the school and neighborhood, she said.



We've been buying
the Peninsula's
Estate Jewelry
Since 1931.

Gleim
the Jeweler
MEMBER
AMERICAN GEM
SOCIETY

PALO ALTO • 650.323.1331 LOS ALTOS • 650.949.1122
STANFORD SHOPPING CENTER • 650.325.3533
GLEIMJEWELERS.COM



You give me your financial goals.
I'll give you powerful tools to help
achieve them.



Charles E. (Ted) Pollock, CLU®, ChFC®
Financial Representative
CA. Insurance Lic. 0453266

New England Financial

950 Tower Lane, Suite 1000
Foster City, CA 94404
650-286-5800
Fax: 650-286-5818
tpollock@sf.nef.com

Looking for a representative who offers his financial solutions? Then look to me for:

- Life Insurance
- Annuities
- Estate Conservation Strategies
- Retirement Strategies
- Disability Income Insurance
- Mutual Funds
- Long-Term Care Insurance

I focus on helping people create, conserve, and distribute assets. To learn more, call me today.

New England Financial®
A MetLife Company

Charles E. (Ted) Pollock is a Registered Representative of New England Securities Corp., 950 Tower Lane, Ste. 1000, Foster City, CA 94404. New England Financial is the service mark for New England Life Insurance Company, 501 Boylston Street, Boston, MA, a MetLife company. Securities products offered through registered representatives of New England Securities Corp., Boston, MA (member FINRA, SIPC) CD200604020, Exp. 07/30/2008


TheAlmanacOnline.com

**Online.
Anyplace.
Anytime.**

Jensen  Hauser

CUSTOM UPHOLSTERING

Swiss Craftsmanship Since 1950
98 5th Ave. • (650) 365-5027 • Redwood City

*High Holy Days 5768
at Keddem Congregation*

Keddem is a community-led, Reconstructionist Jewish congregation, passionately committed to infusing tradition with new meaning.



קהילת קדם

Palo Alto, CA

- Inclusive
- Egalitarian
- Participatory
- Questioning
- Reconstructionist

For information or reservations:

650-494-6400

www.Keddem.org

hhd_reservations@Keddem.org

Everyone is welcome to attend our High Holy Day services at no charge, as space permits, at Cubberley Community Center, 4000 Middlefield Rd, Palo Alto.

Advance reservations required

Rosh Hashanah

Wed, Sept 12: 7:30 pm

Thu, Sept 13: 9:30 am

Junior Congregation: 9:45 am
Young Children's Service: 10 am
Tashlich walk: 4:00 pm, Byxbee Park, Palo Alto Baylands (go right at end of Embarcadero Rd)

Fri, Sept 14: 9:30 am

Yom Kippur

Fri, Sept 21, Kol Nidrey: 7 pm

Collection of nonperishable food for Ecumenical Hunger Project

Sat, Sept 22: 9:30 am

Junior Congregation: 9:45 am
Young Children's Service: 10 am
Afternoon workshops and Jonah play
Mincha, Yizkor, Ne'ilah: 5:00 pm

Linfield Oaks residents fume over demolished building

■ City staff says no rules were broken in approving tear-down of office building.

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

It's not a secret that residents of Menlo Park's Linfield Oaks neighborhood are fed up with construction in their part of town.

Over the last 18 months, neighbors have vehemently opposed the construction of a 56-home project on Linfield Drive, another 33-home project on Willow Road, and the renovation of a Middlefield Road office building to medical office, but all of the projects have been approved.

Now yet another project is under way at 64 Willow Road, complete with jack hammers and rumbling dump trucks, and some neighbors say the city intentionally downplayed how big of a project it is.

The property, behind the Sunset magazine campus, is owned by Palo Alto developer Roxy Rapp, who applied last year for a use permit and architectural control to "partially reconstruct and expand" an existing two-story office building to accommodate high-end venture capital firms, according to a staff report. The Planning Commission granted the requests.

But neighbors say that the project is much more than a "partial reconstruction" — the building,

foundation and all, has been turned to rubble, and a completely new building is going up in its place.

"We're having some major ethics problems in our city," said Don Brawner, a Linfield Oaks resident, while eating a hamburger outside the council chambers before sounding off on the project at the beginning of the City Council's Aug. 28 meeting.

Mr. Brawner and Planning Commissioner Vincent Bressler, both Linfield Oaks residents, have been leading critics of the project.

"The disconnect between the information provided in the staff report/public hearing and the actual construction is a serious matter," Mr. Bressler wrote in an e-mail to the council.

In the staff report, the project is described as follows: "The construction of the proposed project would involve removal of all the existing exterior walls while maintaining existing structural beams, columns, and pier and grade foundation."

Staff's story

Members of city staff said the city hasn't done anything out of the ordinary, and there was never an intention to mislead residents.

Community Development Director Arlinda Heineck acknowledged that the city allowed construction crews to "demolish a little bit more than the original plan showed," but said the project was publicized as "an extensive restoration and demolition project." ■

She said demolition permits had been issued to Mr. Rapp as part of the original proposal, and staff did not bypass any inspection of the project in granting the request to demolish structural beams and portions of the foundation.

"Staff is very careful with its professional ethics, and we're very careful to scrutinize projects like this," Ms. Heineck said. She said minor changes were made to, but changes to a demolition plan don't usually go back to the Planning Commission for public review.

"Neighbors have tended to think of this project as just a minor addition to an existing building," she said. "Clearly neighbors didn't expect to see as much demolition as what occurred at the site."

Council members contacted by the Almanac said they were just learning the details of the project, and had no comment as of the Almanac's press deadline.

Not 'bent out of shape'

Stu Soffer, a former planning commissioner, and a Linfield Oaks resident who has been outspoken against past development plans for the neighborhood, said he isn't too worried about the project.

"I'm not bent out of shape about this, but I see why others are," he said. "After reading the staff report last year, I didn't think a total demolition was what was in the cards. ... But Roxy Rapp builds good projects, and I'm assuming the end project will be what was originally proposed." ■



WOODSIDE COMMUNITY RECREATION PROGRAM FALL SCHEDULE 2007



CLASS	DAY	TIME	INSTRUCTOR	LOCATION	FEES	STARTING DATE
YOGA FOR EVERYONE						
14 Weeks	Mon	9:30 AM - 10:30 AM	Carla Germano	Independence Hall	\$210	Sept 10
14 Weeks	Tues.	9:30 AM - 10:30 AM		Wdse. Village Church Guild Hall	\$210	Sept 11
14 Weeks	Thurs.	9:00 AM - 10:00 AM		Wdse. Village Church Guild Hall	\$210	Sept 13
14 Weeks	Fri.	9:30 AM - 10:30 AM		Independence Hall	\$210	Sept 14
LOW IMPACT AEROBICS & JOYFLEX BODY TONING						
13 Weeks — No Classes Nov 22-23	Mon.	7:45 AM - 9:00 AM	Joy Lopez	Independence Hall	\$374	Oct 1
Healthy Back, Cardio, Inner-Core Strengthening	Fri.	7:45 AM - 9:00 AM		Independence Hall	\$22 drop in	Oct 5
MUSIC TOGETHER						
10 Weeks — No Classes Nov 20-23	Tues.	8:30 AM - 9:15 AM	Sean Mendelson	Wdse. Library	\$150	Sept 18
Ages 0-4 Years	Tues.	9:15 AM - 10:00 AM		Wdse. Library	\$150	Sept 18
Creative Classes	Tues.	10:15 AM - 11:00 PM		Wdse. Library	\$150	Sept 18
For Children	Fri.	1:00 PM - 1:45 PM		Independence Hall	\$150	Sept 21
	Fri.	2:00 PM - 2:45 PM		Independence Hall	\$150	Sept 21

Financial assistance available for children. Visit our Web Site at: www.woodsiderec.com

* **To Register or Fax: (650) 851-3534** *



Flegels

Fine Furniture & Interior Design

Menlo Park

San Ramon

San Rafael

870 Santa Cruz Ave.

300 Market Place

1654 Second Street

650.326.9661

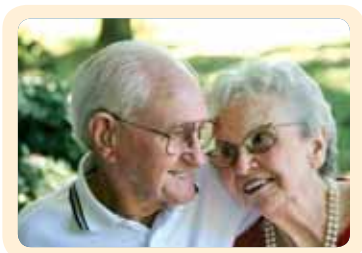
925.806.0430

415.454.0502

www.flegels.com

C o m p l e t e I n t e r i o r D e s i g n S e r v i c e

When we set out to change the community, we started by changing ourselves.



The counties of San Mateo and Santa Clara have always stood for imagination and innovation. So when it came to dreaming up ways to better serve the region, we imagined a new way forward for ourselves. The new Silicon Valley Community Foundation resulted from the historic merger of Peninsula Community Foundation and Community Foundation Silicon Valley in January 2007. The new community foundation combines more than \$1.9 billion in assets with a priceless portfolio of expertise and experience - in turn creating a catalyst for change greater than the sum of its parts. Imagine that.

SILICON VALLEY | **community foundation**

SERVING SAN MATEO AND SANTA CLARA COUNTIES

2440 West El Camino Real, Suite 300 | Mountain View, California 94040-1498
tel: 650.450.5400 | fax: 650.450.5401 | www.siliconvalleycf.org

Business owner reignites efforts to take down sign

By Rory Brown
Almanac Staff Writer

■ MENLO PARK

“Menlo Park Officer Ron Prickett and District Attorney Chuck Finney are corrupt, abuse power, and violate civil rights.”

That’s the message printed in big red-and-blue letters on a poster that has hung from the inside of the now-vacant Just Add Water swimwear shop in Menlo Park for six years.

Local business owner Jim Lewis says it’s time for the sign to come down, and he’s jump-starting efforts to persuade the owner to let go of his grudge and get a successful business in the space.

The closed swimwear shop is on the corner of El Camino Real and Menlo Avenue, and is owned by Maurice Thoreson of Woodside. Following a police investigation into accusations he illegally towed 119 cars from the store’s parking lot over a six-month period, shop owner Mr. Thoreson hung the sign.

Sgt. Prickett, then a line officer, was the investigating officer in the case.

Although the case was settled in 2000, and the business has since closed, the sign, now faded and torn, remains in the window.

Mr. Thoreson, who also owns the adjacent business, A Tan for All Seasons, could not be reached for comment.

“For that sign to be the first impression of our beautiful downtown area is just sad,” said Mr. Lewis, a former Menlo Park resident who now lives in Palo Alto. “This

dumb sign is sitting in the window, and it’s just counter-productive.”

Mr. Lewis brought up the issue at the City Council’s Aug. 28 meeting, and urged council members to push Mr. Thoreson to take down the banner as part of efforts to revamp properties along El Camino Real.

Legally, the council has little say in the matter because political speech is not regulated by the city’s sign ordinance, and is protected by the First Amendment, said City Attorney Bill McClure.

City Manager Glen Rojas said David Johnson, the city’s business development manager, is in the process of asking Mr. Thoreson and property manager Douglas Wright to remove, or at least clean up, the sign.

A familiar face

Mr. Lewis has a big supporter in former councilman Nicholas Jellins, who also urged the council to address the sign.

At the meeting, he said the business is “smack dab at the heart of [the city’s] commercial district,” and it’s worth a try to ask the owner to remove it.

Mr. Jellins said that when he was mayor in 2003, he wrote a letter and called Mr. Thoreson to discuss the matter, but he did not get a reply.

Mayor Kelly Fergusson asked Mr. Jellins to meet with Mr. Rojas and see if he could help the city persuade Mr. Thoreson to take down the sign. “If there is something I can do to help, I stand ready to do so,” Mr. Jellins told the Almanac. ■

Green group to hold night meetings

■ MENLO WATCH

In an effort to get more people involved in addressing global warming at the local level, the Menlo Park Green Ribbon Citizens Committee will now hold evening meetings.

The committee, starting Wednesday, Sept. 5, will hold meetings from 6:30 to 8:45 p.m. in the basement of the Menlo Park Library, at 800 Alma Street. The group usually meets on alternate Wednesdays, and previous meetings started at 4 p.m.

The scheduling change was made to accommodate residents that want to address global warming, but may not be able to get off work by 4 p.m., said Chris Bui, a member of the committee’s coordinating team.

For notification of upcoming meetings, go to MenloPark.org, and scroll down to “Upcoming Community Meetings.”

Applicants sought for town commissions

There are a slew of upcoming vacancies on Menlo Park commissions, and the city is inviting residents to apply.

The four-year terms will last through September 2011, and the deadline to apply is Sept. 26.

There are two open seats on the Transportation Commission;

one on the Parks and Recreation Commission; two on the Environmental Quality Commission; two on the Housing Commission; and one on the Library Commission.

Applications are available in the City Clerk’s Office, on the second story of the administration building at the Civic Center, between Laurel and Alma streets.

New funding proposal for rebuilding Sequoia Hospital

By Marion Softky

Almanac staff writer

A new proposal for funding the \$240 million rebuilding and seismic retrofit of Sequoia Hospital also calls for removing the Sequoia Healthcare District entirely from operation of the hospital run by Catholic Healthcare West (CHW).

The health-care district board will hear a presentation of the proposal at its meeting Tuesday, Sept. 4, in the Sequoia Room on the ground floor of the hospital. Open community forms on the proposals are planned in mid-September.

Under the proposed agreement, CHW, the district, and the hospital will each contribute \$75 million to the project to rebuild, modernize, and seismically strengthen the 1940s-vintage hospital. The final \$15 million would be made up through funds raised by the Sequoia Hospital Foundation.

"The proposed terms involve no additional cost to our District's residents ... while allowing for the District to continue valuable community health programs," board chairman Kathleen Kane wrote in a letter to the board.

The proposal would also

remove the health-care district, a public agency supported by taxpayers, from any role in running the hospital. Currently, the district board appoints five members to the board of Sequoia Health Services (SHS), the nonprofit that owns and governs the hospital. For the most part, district board members appointed themselves to serve on the 10-member SHS board.

That involvement would end under the proposed agreement. Instead, the public's role with SHS would be as community representatives appointed to the SHS board by the hospital. The board is likely to be expanded to 12 to 15 members, according to the hospital's chief administrator, Glenna Vaskelis.

"Sequoia Hospital will be operated as a non-religious institution in accordance with the 'Statement of Common Values' that now applies to the Hospital," according to the summary posted on the Web.

Plans for the massive rebuild were approved by the City Council of Redwood City on Aug. 27. Groundbreaking is set for November.

For more information, go to: Sequoiahealthcaredistrict.com and sequoiahospital.org. ■

News Editor Renee Batti contributed to this report.

JOHNS

continued from page 8

year, as it has for the past seven, explained Mr. Goodman.

"Any time the financial officer who prepares the financial statements is impeded, or has a change of status, it must be reported in the audit," he said. "I'm concerned about the town's ability to get a clean opinion."

Mr. Johns said he's been encouraged by the support of the audit committee and the Atherton Civic Interest League, and added that the current turmoil hasn't dissuaded him from pursuing the city manager position.

"I do believe that now is the time for one with courage, integrity and experience to lead the town through this time of recovery," he said. "As the second-longest-serving department head, I also believe that I'm very well qualified for the assignment."

Vandalized computer

The brouhaha in the finance

department spilled over into the police blotter, as well. Mr. Johns said on Monday he was instructed to turn over all town property, including his computer and the key to his office.

That same day, Atherton police began an investigation of a vandalized or broken laptop that was in the finance director's office. Chief Bob Brennan said the investigation is continuing, and there are no suspects yet. "We have a computer forensics expert, and we will have (evidence of data removal) looked at as part of the investigation," he said.

However, there is no investigation into a missing laptop, Chief Brennan said, although the police log cites a "damaged/destroyed laptop and missing laptop."

Mr. Johns said he was surprised to see the investigation listed in the police blotter.

"The town has in their custody the computer I had access to," he said. "One (computer) I know was cannibalized for spare parts and left in my office, if I needed additional spare parts." ■

THE ALMANAC



The Winners



Best Hardware Store

Menlo Park Hardware

700 Santa Cruz Ave
Menlo Park
325.2515

Best Book Store

Kepler's Books & Magazines

1010 El Camino Real
Menlo park
324.4321

Best Jewelry Store

Hirzel Fine Jewelers

730 Santa Cruz Ave
Menlo Park
328.6030

Best Fitness Facility

Sequoia YMCA

1445 Hudson St.
Redwood City
368.4168

Best Meat Store

Draeger's

1010 University Dr.
Menlo Park
324.7700

Best Chinese

Restaurant/Take Out

Su Hong

1039 El Camino Real
Menlo Park
323.6852

Su Hong Take Out

630 Menlo Ave
Menlo Park
322.4631

Best Sandwiches

Luttiken's

3535 Alameda de las Pulgas
Menlo Park
854.0291

Best Bakery

Draeger's

1010 University Dr
Menlo Park
324.7700

Woodside Bakery

3052 Woodside Rd
Woodside
851.7247

Best Seafood

The Fish Market

3150 El Camino Real
Palo Alto
493.TUNA(8862)

Best Italian Restaurant

Carpaccio

1120 Crane St
Menlo Park
322.1211

Best Painter

Ruben's

322.5062

Best Produce

Sigona's Farmers Market

Stanford Shopping Center
Palo Alto
329.1340
2345 Middlefield Rd
Redwood City
368.6993

Best Stationery Store

Village Stationers

719 Santa Cruz Ave
Menlo Park
321.6920
310 California Ave
Palo Alto
326.7970

Best Thai Restaurant

Thai City Restaurant

3691 El Camino Real
Palo Alto
493.0643

Best Hotel

Stanford Park Hotel

100 El Camino Real
Menlo Park
322.1234

Best Toy Store

Cheeky Monkey

640 Santa Cruz Ave
Menlo Park
328.7975

Best Hair Salon

Images of Woodside

3040 Woodside Rd
Woodside
851.7103



Las Lomitas school district superintendent Eric Hartwig, a former M-A principal, has returned to the education scene in Menlo Park and Atherton.

New head of Las Lomitas district to emphasize intangibles

With highlands that include the hills of Atherton, Ladera and West Menlo Park, the eight square miles of the Las Lomitas Elementary School District is anything but flat, but ask new superintendent Eric Hartwig about the competitive world of work the graduates are headed for and he will argue that flatness — ala New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman — is its primary characteristic.

In his 2005 book “The World is Flat,” Mr. Friedman proposes that educational and industrial progress in rising economic powers such as India and China is leveling advantages that have allowed the West to prosper. Mr. Hartwig, a former principal at Menlo-Atherton High School, tends to agree and says it is incumbent upon U.S. school districts to pay attention.

“I think we need to rise to that challenge and realize that the world is more competitive than we could have imagined 20 years ago,” Mr. Hartwig says. “What will our graduates be doing in 2019 or 2020? If experience is anything, the next 12 years will be more radical (in terms of change) than the last 12 years.”

The key to preparing children for this future, he says, is tapping their curiosity and building their confidence for the study of higher math, the sciences, communication, languages and world cultures.

“We can do that here (at the Las Lomitas district) and we are doing that here,” he says. “It really does start in the early grades.”

The two schools in the K-8 Las Lomitas district have earned ranks of 10 out of a possible 10 in each of the eight years the state has been measuring academic performance statewide.

Mr. Hartwig, a Woodside resident, comes to the Las Lomitas district and its 1,180 students from the Sequoia Union High School District, where he spent 12 years, including nine as M-A principal from 1995 to 2004.

The Almanac talked with him about his priorities as he prepares for his first year as Las Lomitas district superintendent.

Priorities beyond numbers

Consistently high test scores in the Las Lomitas district seem related to

consistently high spending: for 2007-08, \$13,000 per student compared to a statewide average of \$8,500.

Recent scores for La Entrada show above-average scores for 95 percent of fourth-graders on the English test and 88 percent on the math test. Statewide, the figures are 51 percent and 56 percent, respectively.

For poorer districts, that achievement gap lends resonance to the phrase “high stakes testing.” Low scores for elementary and middle school students can translate into fewer options in high school and beyond.

In a Las Lomitas district under Mr.

A certain sophistication

Mr. Hartwig got his first brush with La Entrada eighth-graders at the graduation ceremony in June. The student speeches and sentiments, he told the Almanac, “are on a par with anything I heard as a high school principal.”

“They seem sophisticated,” he adds. “They have a great sense of humor. What I saw was a great sense of camaraderie, maturity and sophisticated and insightful comments. I cannot wait, I really cannot wait, to get on the school grounds and get to know the kids and get to know what their school experi-

Self-confidence and curiosity
are essentials for students facing
an increasingly competitive
world, he says.

BY DAVID BOYCE *Almanac Staff Writer*

Hartwig, the stakes for testing — assuming that the district’s top-ranking scores continue — will not be that high, he says.

“One of my goals is to make sure that my staff knows that testing is tertiary,” he says. “My commitment to high performance is steadfast and unwavering, but my commitment is not to test scores.”

It’s not that scores mean nothing — they are very valuable in measuring fundamental skills and knowledge, he says — but they don’t rank above students becoming self-confident and realizing their full potential.

“The academic environment is more challenging than ever when you get to high school and college,” he says. “Who knows what disciplines there will be for them to pursue?”

ence is like at ground level.”

It will also be a chance to interact with teachers informally. Getting out there, he says, “is, first of all, a sign of respect, but also you learn something.”

Is there a maxim for teachers as there is for physicians, who commit to do no harm? “Teachers are teachers of children, not teachers of subjects,” Mr. Hartwig says, reflecting on his 33 years in education. “Teachers who embrace that fundamental difference, I think, are happier.”

Recruited

In 2004, the high school district asked Mr. Hartwig to start a three-year high school for about 350 mid-to-high-ability students. The students would have exchanged some of the extras of a comprehensive high school in return for smaller

classes, extensive academic support and an interdisciplinary curriculum.

“That three-year school was a very stimulating idea and I felt ready to make that happen,” Mr. Hartwig says. But events intervened and the project never got off the ground.

His mission aborted, Mr. Hartwig was assigned to program management, which included curriculum review, being the point man for student and parental rights, and being an all-around problem solver for matters such as a new program to find and dismiss non-resident students.

“It was satisfying and challenging in new ways,” he says, adding: “If I hadn’t done that, I wouldn’t have been a candidate for this job.”

A recruiter from a national search firm who’d been given Mr. Hartwig’s name called him about the Las Lomitas position and asked if he was interested. He was, and he will earn \$160,000 a year doing it.

“It’s the work I love. You couldn’t find more interesting work than helping kids realize their potential in a community that values and supports teachers as much as this district does,” he says. “My goal is to exploit the very special gifts we have in the district so that the student leaves with the best possible experience.”

His life away from the office has its own riches, including a Woodside vineyard of syrah grapes and the necessary fermenting and bottling equipment, and a Left Bank apartment in Paris that he shares with his wife Debbie Hartwig, a language arts teacher at Woodside Elementary School.

The couple have two grown children — stepchildren to Mr. Hartwig.

What kind of personal transportation says career educator, winemaker, and owner of a second home in the City of Light? For Mr. Hartwig, a silver late-model, 177-mph, Porsche 911 Carrera convertible will have to do.

“I just enjoy it,” he says, as he enjoys the apparent incongruity of owning a high-performance sports car in the context of gentler pursuits. A British banker he met socially in Paris, upon learning of Mr. Hartwig’s choice of vehicle, remarked: “I didn’t take you for a car fellow.” ▀

It's back to school ... again

What would Dick and Jane say if they stepped out of the pages of the classic reading series decades ago and into today's classrooms?

"Come, Dick. Come and see." See the boy pulling a suitcase to school? Why are all those machines blinking?

School classrooms have come a long way from the simpler era of Dick and Jane, with the surge of technology. Now laptop computer carts are rolled into classrooms. Students use high-tech whiteboards, document cameras and the Internet daily. Most local schools have moved into the tech age in a big way.

The Almanac's back to school report this week gives a snapshot of what's going on in the area's public schools from kindergarten through high school. The focus is on effective teaching to motivate and guide students to be successful lifelong learners.

Changes also are taking place on the facilities scene. One of the oldest and smallest schools in the county, Woodside Elementary School, accomplished an "extreme make-over" in 22 months after passage of the bond measure that funded it. Building projects are under way in the Menlo Park district and at Menlo-Atherton High School.

Changes in leadership also have taken place. Eric Hartwig, a former

Menlo-Atherton High School principal, is the new superintendent of the elementary Las Lomas School District. New principals are Matt Zito at Menlo-Atherton, Lawrance Thomas at La Entrada, Allison Liner at Encinal, and Jennifer Warren at Ormondale.

Back to School Directory

Sequoia Union High School District

Woodside High School	18
Menlo-Atherton High School	18
Summit Preparatory High School	20

Menlo Park City School District

Laurel	16
Oak Knoll	16
Encinal	16
Hillview	17

Woodside School District

Woodside Elementary School	17
--------------------------------------	----

Las Lomas School District

Las Lomas	18
La Entrada	18

Portola Valley School District

Ormondale	19
Corte Madera	19

SEQUOIA UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

More moves into digital age at local high schools

By David Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

If chalkboards and eraser dust were not already long gone from the classroom, the 41 new and sophisticated whiteboards at Woodside High School this year would have consigned them to the throwaway bin.

The computerized boards use a projector-driven display to give teachers a flexibility impossible with chalk or colored markers. The boards can be "written on" in colors using any stylus, including fingers, and erased with the same kinds of devices. The system software can download and save the board's contents in a variety of formats and can translate handwriting into text.

The new whiteboards would seem a natural fit for four Woodside science classrooms that were made larger and re-equipped over the summer, Principal Linda Common said.

Nineteen of the high-tech boards are already in use at Menlo-Atherton High School, M-A Principal Matthew Zito said. New at M-A for this school year are two sections of a two-semester digital photography class. The choral program is back on this year at M-A after a lapse of "many, many years," Mr. Zito said.

SEQUOIA UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT

480 James Ave.,
Redwood City, 94062
Superintendent: Patrick Gemma
Call 369-1411
Web: www.seq.org



See SEQUOIA DISTRICT, page 18 Woodside High School Wildcats of the junior varsity kind show their spirit for the game at this pre-season practice.

MENLO PARK CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Shifting school attendance boundaries is key to district's master plan

By Marjorie Mader

Almanac Staff Writer

The Menlo Park City School District faces another year of huge challenges as it moves forward on its \$91.1 million, multi-year planning and rebuilding program for all four schools.

"The key issue," says Superintendent Ken Ranella, is making the final decision by December on adjusting school attendance boundaries for Laurel, Encinal and Oak Knoll schools.

The district's master plan hinges on changing attendance boundaries. It proposes to change Encinal, the grade 3-5 school with 406 students (the smallest enrollment and largest school site), to a K-5 school with about 700 students. Enrollment at both Laurel and Oak Knoll would be lowered. Plans call for opening kindergarten classes at Encinal next fall and adding a grade each year until the school becomes a K-5.

Here's the picture:

Laurel, the K-2 school, is at capacity now with 520 students. Oak Knoll, the K-8 school west of El Camino

Real built 50-some years ago for 250 students, has 730 students. Both Laurel and Encinal are located east of El Camino Real, the current boundary for school attendance. Enrollment at Hillview Middle School, serving all district sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-graders, has remained at 667 students.

Kindergarten enrollment is an indicator of future class sizes. This year's kindergarten count is at a high with 302 new students entering the district last month. Once students enter the district, they tend to stay and graduate from eighth grade.

The district's total enrollment grew from 2,255 last year to 2,323 students last week, 14 students shy of the enrollment consultant's projection of 2,347 students.

"We have a significant amount of work ahead to draw the (attendance boundary) line between Laurel and Encinal," said the superintendent. The intent is to do the changes systematically and gradually over a three-year period, he said.

One issue is whether or not to include "magnet schools" or "choice" as part of the decision, he said.

"Parents and teachers definitely will be involved in this important issue," said the superintendent.

The district's facility planning is moving ahead. By next month, the district's first special education preschool building at Laurel School will be near completion. The district will be able to serve district children, ages 3 to 5, with special needs at the district facility instead of sending them to county or private schools.

More district priorities include: exploring a foreign language program, to be taught by a specialist, for students in K-6; maintaining and enhancing the current educational program; considering after-school child care options, primarily for kindergartners through fourth-graders; and revisiting home-to-school transportation options.

Following is information on the district's four schools, where classes began Thursday, Aug. 23. ■

MENLO PARK CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

181 Encinal Ave., Atherton, 94027
Superintendent: Ken Ranella
Call 321-7140
www.mpcsd.org

Laurel School

95 Edge Road
Atherton
Phone: 324-0186

Nancy Hendry, principal
Enrollment: 520

Full house. Laurel is at capacity with 31 more students, a 6.3 percent growth from last year's enrollment of 489. All classrooms are in use.

Class size. All classes have 19 to 20 students except for the first grades, which have 21. There are nine classes each of kindergarten and second grade and eight third-grade classes.

New teachers. Brynn Cahill, who completed her undergraduate work and master's degree in education at UC Santa Barbara, is the new kindergarten teacher. Amy Gee, Laurel's first physical education specialist five years ago, has returned to her former position after being on leave.

Focus on learning. Laurel's entire teaching staff is involved in an ongoing program that focuses on children's learning styles and teachers' teaching styles. Consultant Lane Narvaez, elementary school principal in the St. Louis, Missouri, area, returns this year to coach each of the Laurel teachers as they present a lesson to their class and participate afterward in a debriefing discussion. Ms. Narvaez will be at Laurel Thursday and Friday, Oct. 4-5; Nov. 29-30; Jan. 31 and Feb. 1; March 27-28. This program is funded by the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation as part of its teacher excellence initiative.

Special education preschool. Scheduled for completion later next month on the Laurel campus is the modular building that will house the district's preschool program for children, ages 3 to 5, who need special support. This building also will house the district's occupational therapy program.

Reconfigured parking lot. Changes were made over the summer to Laurel's parking lot to serve the new preschool and

add a dedicated bus lane. This lane will be used by buses that bring students from Encinal to Laurel as part of the voluntary transfer program and by the Menlo Park shuttle between the two schools.

Back-to-school night. Parents on Thursday, Sept. 6, at 7 p.m. will visit their children's classrooms, meet their teachers and learn about the year's programs. **"Quarter Gourmet."** A favorite event returns for another year when families bring dishes to share, pay a quarter for each serving, and get to know each other. The first Quarter Gourmet is Friday, Sept. 14, at 5 p.m. on the new sod second-grade playground.

First PTO meeting. Parents are invited to the first general meeting of the school's Parent Teacher Organization on Wednesday, Sept. 26 starting at 6:15 p.m. with hors d'oeuvres for parents and teachers.

Book fair. Save the date for Laurel's annual book fair Monday through Friday, Oct. 8-12.

Oak Knoll School

1895 Oak Knoll Lane
Menlo Park
Phone: 854-4433

David Ackerman, principal
Grades: K-5
Enrollment: 730 students

Class sizes. Classes meet the district's targets at every level: 20 students in grades K-3 and an average of 24 students in grades 4-5. A new second grade was created this fall as class sizes had grown during the past school year in first grade.

Teachers. Ten new teachers have joined the Oak Knoll staff. Among them are: Joyce Chan, kindergarten teacher from the Berryessa School District; first-grade teachers Andrea Boatwright, student teacher at Oak Knoll who took over from first-grade teacher Tami Nurisso while she was on maternity leave; Alison Dyer, student teacher in the Palo Alto and Las Lomas school districts;



Siena Roat-Shumway, left, and Alison Myoraku, both in the eighth-grade at Hillview Middle School in Menlo Park, compare schedules in search of classes that they share.

and Elizabeth Wood, former teacher at St. Joseph's School in Atherton and most recently program coordinator for the nonprofit Bring Me A Book Foundation. Joining the second-grade team are Megan Dei Rossi from the Manteca Unified School District and Laura Johnston, a student teacher at Oak Knoll last year. New members of the fourth-grade team are: Jessica Bouret, Jon Coldoff and Teri Murphy, who took over for Oak Knoll teachers who were on maternity leave last year. John Fuller, new fifth-grade teacher, brings 15 years of experience teaching in Redmond, Washington. Ceil Kellogg transferred from Encinal to teach fifth-grade at Oak Knoll.

Changing assignments. Jeanne McCann has moved from teaching kindergarten to first grade and will job share with Julie Zarcione. Linda Cotter will teach first grade full time. Joan von der Linden moves to fifth grade after serving as vice principal for much of last year when Maria Clemo filled in as Encinal interim principal. Renee Lavezzo moves from first to third grade.

Johnna Becker and Stacy Emmert, returning from maternity leave, will be job-sharing a fourth-grade class.

Focus. The Oak Knoll staff is poring over test data from last year and working to continue to improve math scores and push more students into advanced groups in reading and math, says Principal Ackerman.

Technology. Another set of 20 mobile laptop computers on carts has been added, increasing the school's cache to five laptop sets in use by students in grades 2, 3, 4 and 5 this year. A full-time technology guru has been hired to maintain the computer equipment. Kindergartners and first- and second-graders use the school's computer lab.

Garden growing. Sunflowers bloom in the school's garden. Last fall, second-graders collected the sunflower seeds, stored, packaged and then sold them, giving the profits to the garden project. The garden is being used by all grade levels as part of the curriculum in science, math and social studies. Third-graders developed a

Native American "three sisters garden" of corn, squash and peas.

Back-to-school night. On Thursday, Sept. 6, parents will meet teachers and learn about school programs. Starting times are 6:30 p.m. for grades 3-5; and 7:30 p.m. for grades K-2.

Fall Family Fiesta. Families will return to school Friday, Sept. 14, for a social time, casual dinner and games, from 5 to 7 p.m. Sign up at school and purchase tickets in advance.

Bike Safety week. All Oak Knoll students will participate in a variety of activities during bike safety week Sept. 10-14 that culminate with the family bike ride Sunday, Sept. 16, in memory of Michelle Mazzei.

Memorial Family Bike Ride. Oak Knoll School is sponsoring the second annual family bike ride Sunday, Sept. 16, to honor Michelle Mazzei, the fourth-grade teacher and triathlete who lost her life in a bike-car accident October 2005. Former students of Ms. Mazzei, friends and community members, are invited to register and ride the 1.5-mile Otter Run loop up to four times. The first wave of riders starts at 8 a.m. Registration fee is \$20 for adults, \$10 for students. Forms are available at the school office. The event benefits the Michelle Mazzei Fund for Education at the nonprofit Environmental Volunteers.

Encinal School

195 Encinal Ave.
Atherton
Phone: 326-5164
Allison Liner, principal
Grades: 3-5

Enrollment: 406, up from last year's 396.

Classes. Class sizes are 20 students or under in third grade; 22-24 in fourth grade, and 25-26 in fifth-grade. The growth in enrollment is spread across all three grade levels. An additional

See MENLO DISTRICT, next page

WOODSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT

Students start school in new classrooms, updated campus

By Marjorie Mader
Almanac Staff Writer

The Woodside School campus swarmed like a beehive the day before school opened Aug. 27.

It was crunch time. Heavy equipment was still working at the site of the school's \$12 million construction project last weekend. Crews of workers cleared construction debris, washed down paved areas, installed plants and grass areas in courtyards, and took down the familiar construction barriers. A field crew rolled out and installed the new artificial turf field in just a day.

Almost every staff member, the school board president, trustees, and about 100 parent volunteers, some with children in tow, rallied to set up the new classrooms. They helped the Woodside and Portola Valley school districts' maintenance teams and professional crews get the "new school campus" ready for opening day.

"Call it the extreme 48-hour make-over," said Dan Vinson, superintendent/principal. "Once again this unbelievable community and staff came together and made it happen."

Students and parents arrived Monday morning to a clean campus and classrooms ready to go.

"It took only 22 months from the passage of the bond issue (to replace portables with permanent classrooms) to near completion" of this major construction project, said Mr. Vinson.

Construction continues with the completion of the music rooms and middle school restrooms scheduled in the next two weeks. It probably will be late November before the office staff can move out of the portable into the new administration building. All except one of the old portable classrooms have been removed. Work is moving ahead on the new grass field near the primary classrooms.

The new classroom buildings reflect the architectural style of the wooden two-room schoolhouse, built in 1877 and renovated several

years ago as the Rosekrans Library. The cluster of new buildings is reminiscent of the early California style of architecture.

Portola Valley architect Carter Warr and his team designed the buildings. Classrooms have crown moldings, plenty of cabinet space, counters, high windows, carpeting, sliding whiteboards, and furniture.

The Woodside School Foundation office has moved out of its trailer to the new "Wildcats" community room. School board meetings also will be held in this room, and the cast of the Woodside Community Theatre's November production of "The Music Man" will begin rehearsals there.

Following is the report on Woodside School, where classes started Monday, Aug. 27. ■



New classrooms were ready at Woodside Elementary School when school opened August 27 after months of construction.

WOODSIDE SCHOOL DISTRICT

3195 Woodside Road, Woodside
Superintendent/Principal: Dan Vinson
Call 851-1571.
www.woodside.k12.ca.us

Woodside Elementary School

3195 Woodside Road

Woodside

Phone: 851-1571

Dan Vinson, superintendent/principal

Grades: K-8

Enrollment: 469, up 17 students from last year

Class sizes. 20 or fewer students in K-2; and 21-22 in grades 3, 4 and 5; the goal is to keep upper grade classes at 25 or under.

New teachers. Joining Woodside's kindergarten team are Tracy Reilly and Stacy Corsiglia, who will job-share with returning teacher Sonja Virgallito. More new teachers are: Lisa Brown, fourth grade; Debra Campbell, fifth grade; Maggie Mark da Silva, seventh-grade language arts; Pamela Coccary, seventh-eighth grade math; Marie "Chris" Gray, health for sixth- through eighth-graders through March; Pamela Heyda, art, part-time; Beth Dameron, instrumental music; and Jennifer Mitchell, speech therapy.

Technology update. Woodside continues

See WOODSIDE DISTRICT, page 20

MENLO DISTRICT

continued from previous page

third grade was added this summer, making eight third grades. There are six fourth grades and five fifth grades.

New principal. Alison Liner, Encinal's new principal, reports the grade 3-5 school is off and running, and "it's a wonderful and exciting place to be."

On the job only a month before school started, she's learning names of students, staff and parents before "the real work begins," she says. She was the unanimous choice of the selection committee to succeed Stacy Marshall, who decided not to return after the birth of twins. Ms. Liner brings to Encinal her experience as a teacher (in every grade from first through fifth), teaching principal and principal of the K-4 Arundel School in San Carlos for the past five years.

Focus. Encinal staff is focusing on developing professional learning communities and working collaboratively as school wide and grade-level teams. The goal is to use "best practices" to ensure that every child progresses, says Ms. Liner.



Allison Liner

New teachers. Six experienced teachers have joined the Encinal faculty. They are: Petrina Jones, third grade; Kira Bough and Georgia Klee-man-Keller, fourth grade; Jessy Hamlin and Molly Stiff, fifth grade; Robin Red-ing, reading specialist.

Counselor. Jennifer Butler, school counselor serving K-5 students in Virginia schools for the past two years, will spend half-time at Encinal and at Oak Knoll.

Specialist. Ines Negron, a new member of the district's special education team, is the new inclusion specialist. She will split her time helping students at Encinal and Hillview schools.

On to construction. Encinal has begun its three-year transition from a grade 3-5 school to a larger K-5 facility, serving more students, as part of the district's reorganization plan. Portable classrooms were moved on campus this summer to house third-grade classes and some offices, while F wing, closest to the district office, is being renovated for the first crop of kindergartners in fall 2008. The old portables, near Middlefield Road, were removed to make room for a new classroom complex for fourth and fifth grades.

"Character Counts." This character education program, involving all students, will continue with some changes this year. Teachers will take a close look at this citizenship program with the aim of helping students become even better citizens.

"Community Read." Everybody at Encinal — students, staff and parents — will read the same book and get together for an evening discussion in the spring. The title of this year's book will be revealed later in the school year.

Garden keeps growing. Encinal's garden, planted in raised beds along Middlefield Road, continues to be a focus for each of the grades. Activities are geared to the state curriculum for the grade-level.

Fall family picnic. Families bring a picnic supper for this annual get-together on Friday, Sept. 7, from 6 to 8 p.m. on the grass.

Hillview Middle School

1100 Elder Ave.

Menlo Park

Phone: 326-4341

Michael Moore, principal

Grades: 6-8

Enrollment: 667

Class size. Core classes (language arts and social studies) range from 22 to 26 students at each grade level.

Teachers. Joining the Hillview staff is art teacher Janet Strauss, who completed her student teaching at Hillview with Terry McMahon last year under San Francisco State University's credential program in art. Ms. Straus is following her interest in art after a career in mass communications and marketing and receiving previous degrees from Cornell University and Harvard. Moving to Hillview from Encinal School as the new sixth-grade core teacher is Marianne Santo, who previously taught fifth grade.

Looking ahead. Hillview will move ahead on program planning and developing specifications for its new campus to be built on the site of the current playfield. Funding will come from the \$91.1 million bond measure, approved by voters in 2006.

Building character. Counselor Debbie Devoto will again coordinate the school-wide character education program. Teachers will spend time with students, discussing integrity, respect, responsibility, friendship, citizenship, caring, empathy, perseverance, the importance of a positive attitude, and the value of service. Four school-wide community service projects will be decided upon and carried out by students with the help of parent volunteers. The projects will deal with the environment, the elderly, fundraising,

and a noontime club. All students will be encouraged to participate in some way.

Electives. "Creative Cooking" is one of the popular electives at Hillview, where students cook quick-and-easy, 30-minute meals, share recipes and learn about a balanced diet. Students chose two electives each semester and only one elective if they take Spanish or French. The 20 offerings range from advanced art and photography to robotics, video production and woodshop.

"Hawk Talk." Students produce the morning news, televised throughout the school each morning on the campus TV station, HTV.

Camp Hillview. All incoming sixth-graders participate in Camp Hillview, a three-day orientation program on campus. The program, designed and carried out by the Hillview staff, provides a common academic and social experience for sixth-graders. This year's program was held Aug. 29-31.

Community festival and potluck supper. This school-wide, traditional event for students and parents takes place at school on Friday, Sept. 28, from 5:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Online. Hillview's weekly calendar is available by e-mail. To sign up, go to www.hillviewpto.org and click on weekly calendar. ■



No tears and no fears are evident in the expressions of these Las Lomitas Elementary School students.

LAS LOMITAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Las Lomitas schools craft courtyards as classroom extensions

By David Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

For little folks returning to K-3 Las Lomitas Elementary School, the news may be the courtyards between classrooms, redone over the summer and meant to invite the opening of adjacent classroom doors. Already installed or coming soon are new tables, chairs and umbrellas to go with new paving to run around on and new low walls to jump down from.

A corresponding newness permeates the courtyards at La Entrada Middle School, where there is now a small amphitheater as well as new gardening areas for seventh-grade science classes.

Also noteworthy: two new administrators in the Las

Lomitas district this year. Eric Hartwig, former principal of Menlo-Atherton High School, is now the district superintendent, and Lawrence

Thomas took over as principal at La Entrada after Dee Brummett's June 30 retirement. ■

LAS LOMITAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

1011 Altschul Ave., Menlo Park, 94025
Superintendent: Eric Hartwig
Call: 854-2880
Web: www.llesd.k12.ca.us

Las Lomitas Elementary School

299 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park
Phone: 854-5900
Jerry Traynor, principal
Grades: K-3
Enrollment: 548

New classes and programs. The concepts of the "Talk it out" conflict-resolution program have been given a trial run in kindergarten at Las Lomitas, and will now be tried school-wide, Principal Jerry Traynor and Assistant Principal Sue Sartor told the Almanac. The plan is to have teachers and staff teach and model a consistent approach to dealing with conflict and have the children pick it up, Ms. Sartor said. With kindergarten enrollment at 141 this year, the school is running one more kindergarten class, Mr. Traynor said.

New facilities. The redone courtyards invite teachers to extend the classrooms outside amid new shrubbery, new trees and new seating. A new staff parking lot for 20 vehicles effectively provides more parking for parents along Camino al Lago. "Parents just stack up out there," Mr. Traynor said. The new staff lot means that "the whole front of the school will open up to parents." Two new portable buildings will house music and special-education classes.

New staff. The K-3 school will have nine new staff members this year, Mr. Traynor said. Teri Chickman will teach kindergarten, Gena Palacios and Janet Holbrook will teach first grade, Trisha DeChristoferi will teach second grade, and Anna Pong and Kristine Reis will teach third grade. Lesli Leong will share language-lab responsibilities with Rebecca Garcia. The new school psychologist is Kristi Sanders.

Events. Parent information night is Thursday, Sept. 6, and the family picnic is set for Thursday, Sept. 20, Ms. Sartor said.

La Entrada Middle School

2200 Sharon Road, Menlo Park
Phone: 854-3962
Lawrance Thomas, principal
Grades: 4-8
Enrollment: 585

New facilities. The courtyards near the science classrooms now have raised planters for the gardening element of the life-science program for seventh-graders, Principal Lawrence Thomas said. The courtyard outside the library and music room was redone with a tiered semicircle of paved steps where students can gather and sit. Benches and grass are new and new umbrellas are coming, Mr. Thomas said.

Staff changes. Principal Thomas came to La Entrada from Duveneck Elementary School in Palo Alto, where he was also principal following five years as principal at Terman Middle School, and a year each as assistant principal at Jordan Middle School and Gunn High School. Mr. Thomas, who is married and has two school-age children, received a bachelor's degree in biology from Rice University in 1989; a master's degree in education from Stanford University in 1990; and an administration credential, a district trustee said. Tanya Rianda is taking over the leadership and student activities responsibilities once held by Steve Gallagher, who left the district to become the assistant principal at Terman Middle School in Palo Alto, Mr. Thomas said. Longtime principal Dee Brummett retired June 30, but made herself and her good cheer available over the summer to help clean up after a broken water pipe flooded several classrooms.

Events. The family picnic is set for Thursday, Sept. 27, with a dance for seventh- and eighth-graders the next night on Sept. 28. An opera program is due Oct. 12 and a father-daughter dance on Oct. 19. ■

SEQUOIA DISTRICT

continued from page 15

The itinerant years for Summit Preparatory Charter High School's staff and student body may be behind them. The Sequoia Union High School District is housing Summit at 890 Broadway in Redwood City, a former warehouse and office and home to an earlier charter school.

Below is information on three local schools in the Sequoia Union High School District that serve residents in the Almanac circulation area. ■

Woodside High School

199 Churchill Ave., Woodside
Phone: 367-9750
Linda Common, principal
Grades: 9-12
Enrollment: 1,990

New classes and programs. Woodside is adding a freshman section to a state-funded program intended to jump-start college preparation and improve understanding in math, engineering

and the sciences, Principal Linda Common said. AVID/MESA targets students who don't have advantages such as well-educated and economically secure parents and well-funded elementary and middle-school preparation.

Accreditation. A regional accreditation team will make a one-day visit to Woodside High in February or March. The school's current accreditation expires in 2011.

"Health pathways." In the second semester, Woodside plans to initiate a "health pathways" program, a collaboration with Canada College in Woodside to develop internships in local hospitals for students with career plans in healthcare, Ms. Common said.

Events. The school musical this year is "Footloose," which will run over two weekends. The annual back-to-school night is set for Thursday, Sept. 20, with orientation night for parents of eighth-graders on Nov. 13. A talent show is planned for Oct. 11.

New facilities. Woodside classrooms in the B wing were upgraded, including the installation of the new projector-driven whiteboards, Ms. Common said, adding that her goal is to have one in every classroom. The upgrade included modernizing four science classrooms. By the end of September, the campus will have

another modular classroom building to complement one installed last spring.

New Staff. Woodside has nine new teachers for 2007-08. The new English teachers are Adele Alvarez and Lauren Biagi. The new math teachers are Bich-Ng Lam and Marian Gurskaya. Seth Miller, Sarah Vergara and Kathleen Deudale are new special education teachers. Chemistry teacher Ashwini Avadhani is new this year, as is Christopher Logue for Spanish and French. The school will have seven interns and/or students teachers from Stanford University and Notre Dame de Namur University in Belmont.

Departing staff. Special education teachers Jeff and Sue Cowitz have retired, Ms. Common said.

Menlo-Atherton High School

555 Middlefield Road, Atherton
Phone: 322-5311
Matthew Zito, principal
Grades: 9-12
Enrollment: 1,960

New classes and programs. Cameras will be required in the new digital photography classes, but the school will have 25 of them for borrowing, Principal Zito said.

The class, taught by arts teacher Cindy Lynch, will meet University of California fine-arts requirements. The re-instituted choral program will be taught by Patrick Maier, a music teacher on the M-A staff and a bandleader and veteran of the Starlight Room in San Francisco, Mr. Zito said. Advanced-placement European history will be taking a sabbatical expected to last one year because of insufficient interest, vice-principal Steve Lippi said. The M-A Jazz Band, just back from "a successful tour of Europe," has cut a CD and will perform during the school year, though when and where are still uncertain, Mr. Lippi said.

Back-to-school night is scheduled for Thursday, Sept. 20, and information night for parents of eighth-graders for Nov. 8.

New facilities. The news in this category is the disappearance in August of the J Building and the impact this will have on drama productions while the school waits for the expected completion in mid-2009 of a \$29 million new performing arts center. The lack of a venue won't stop the show from going on, however. At least one of the two planned shows will be at a suitable outside space on campus, Mr. Zito said. Meredith Hagedorn of Palo Alto-based Dragon Productions will put on a fall production of "A Midsummer Night's Dream" and the musical "Chicago" in the

spring, Mr. Zito said.

New Staff: Sixteen new teachers came to M-A this year. New English teachers are Elizabeth Bannan, Kim Dunfey and Caitlin Sullivan. The social studies department has added Hector Camacho Jr., Halo Shapiro and Ben Wellington. New in the math department are Michele Breen, CJ Carlson and Jennifer Payne, and in the science department Brian Kruse, Todd Rose and Hillary Rubin. Mary Podesta joins the physical education department, with Miki Cristerna in student support, Paula Kousounadis in guidance, and Aubrey Stevenson in special education.

Departing Staff: M-A's economics and psychology teacher for the past 25 years, Jim MacKenzie, will be missed in his retirement. He attended M-A himself, as did his brothers, his wife and his two children, but he lives in Atherton when he is not in his Sierras mountain retreat. Science teacher Denis Lose retired after 38 years. Mr. Lose was instrumental, Mr. Lippi said, in the start of M-A's computer academy, a school-within-a-school intended for sophomores and juniors not achieving to their potential or needing to work while in college.

See SEQUOIA DISTRICT, page 20

PORTOLA VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Portola Valley zeroes in on learning, teaching, strategic plan

By Marjorie Mader
Almanac Staff Writer

Without the distraction of construction or major upheavals this year, Portola Valley School District is focusing time and resources right where it belongs — on its 708 students.

“I see this year as one of consolidation and inquiry,” says Superintendent Anne Campbell. “We need to take the time to figure out the next steps” in the investigative learning model, launched at Ormondale last year, and develop an assessment piece to evaluate what we’re doing. “That’s huge,” she says.

Teachers are exploring and piloting teaching strategies to increase student achievement

and engagement in learning as illustrated by the “investigative learning” projects at Ormondale last year. Students became interested, motivated and involved, for example, in the creek study and “the chick” project, extending their learning beyond teachers’ expectations.

“We’re also focusing on skills our kids will need to know to be a ‘global student’ in an increasingly complex and interre-

lated world,” says the superintendent, as the district begins its second year in the strategic planning process.

This summer teacher Anna Henderson delved into student STAR test scores and progress reports, pulling together information to develop a prototype for ongoing assessments of each child that could continue from kindergarten through eighth grade and be readily available to teachers.

Superintendent Campbell sees this prototype as having “great potential” for teachers to better understand how a student learns and the effectiveness of various teaching strategies.

Teachers, working on K-8 teams, are developing district standards in language arts by grade levels that most likely will go beyond

the state curriculum standards, said Ms. Campbell. The teachers also will look at differing learning styles and how students learn.

The district has made huge advances and a substantial investment in the use of technology to further learning opportunities for its students. A visible investment is two new laptop computer carts on wheels, each with 25 laptops,

PORTOLA VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Corte Madera School
4575 Alpine Road, Portola Valley
Superintendent: Anne Campbell
Call 851-1777. www.pvdsd.net



Principal Jennifer Warren of Ormondale School greets her small charges on their level.

that can be rolled into a classroom at Corte Madera. Two new “ActiveBoards” have replaced “whiteboards” and the earlier blackboards in two Ormondale classrooms.

The technology crew has worked long and hard over the summer to make improvements, such as changing the district Internet provider to Comcast, increasing computer capacity 10 times, and installing new servers. Nine document cameras were purchased for Ormondale.

Tom Keating, a former college professor and director of education and technology at the Tech Museum in San Jose, is the district’s educational technology

coordinator. Michael Bray is the network administrator. Lee Applebaum provides tech support at Ormondale; Brett Fishman does the same at Corte Madera.

There will be a school board election Nov. 6 when voters choose two trustees to serve four-year terms on the board. Three parents, who have been involved in school activities, have stepped forward as candidates. They are: Judy Mendelsohn, Steve Humphreys and Brad Turner. Incumbents Karen Jordan and Teresa Godfrey did not seek re-election.

Following is information on the district’s two schools, where classes started Aug. 27. ■

Ormondale School

200 Shawnee Pass
Portola Valley
Phone: 851-1777

Jennifer Warren, principal
Grades: K-3
Enrollment: 330

New principal. Jennifer Warren, Ormondale’s new principal, has made it her mission to contact each of the school families to introduce herself and welcome them to the school. And she’s enjoying meeting and getting to know students, her staff and parents. She takes over from Principal Eva Gal, who retired in June after guiding Ormondale for 20 years. Ms. Warren, an experienced elementary school teacher and an assistant principal, is completing a doctor of education degree from the University of Pennsylvania.

Small classes. Most classes have 20 or fewer students. There are four classes each of kindergarten, first, second and third grades. A combination first-second grade class was formed before school opened with Peggy Jacquot as the teacher.

New teachers. Ormondale welcomes three new teachers. Adam Ahlback, long-term substitute in first grade for Jennifer Bloom-Smith last year, joins the first-grade team. Joining the second-grade team are Suzanne Fast, who relocated to the Bay Area after teaching elementary school in Las Vegas for five years, and Kerry Guinn, former

math specialist at Pinewood School in Los Altos Hills. The Spanish position is in the process of being filled.

Focus. Ormondale staff is continuing its journey of developing the “Global Student” — one who is prepared to navigate the myriad of opportunities that the 21st century holds, says Ms. Warren. The Ormondale model includes a strong foundation of core knowledge as well as the “investigative learning” model, developed last year. The staff will continue to learn and grow by reflecting on the innovative work done last year, analyzing data, re-evaluating needs, and refining and enhancing practices to best meet the needs of all students.

Programs. Among programs continuing this year: the Pride Assemblies with character education themes, a science fair, Reading Recovery, and Art in Action.

Service Learning. Students and teachers will take part again this year in district-wide programs that focus on building community. Third-graders already have launched a program to educate other students about having “waste free” lunches this year at Ormondale.

Bountiful garden. The large school garden continues to be a focal point for science projects and opportunities for service learning.

Back-to-school night. Parents and guardians will come to school Thursday, Sept. 6, to meet teachers and learn about classroom programs. The

times are: 5:30 p.m. for new kindergarten families; 6 p.m. for first grade; 7 p.m., assembly with Principal Warren for all; and 7:30 p.m. for second and third grade.

“Turkey Trot.” Save Saturday, Nov. 17. The school’s PTO is sponsoring the third annual Turkey Trot, a 5K and 10K run and walk and a kids’ walk at Ormondale.

Child care. New Horizons School-Age Center, a private organization offering child care for schoolchildren from ages 5 to 13, is located at Ormondale in the portable classroom adjacent to the kindergarten playground. Ajmir Thompkins is the director. For information and fees, call 851-5671.

Corte Madera School

4575 Alpine Road
Portola Valley
Phone: 851-1777

Joel Willen, principal
Grades: 4-8

Enrollment: 378, up 23 students from last year. The eighth-grade class graduating was smaller than usual.

Class size. Classes will average 21 students in grades 4-5; and 22 students in grades 6-8.

New teacher. Jason Braun is the new instrumental band teacher, taking over from Wiatt Grant. Mr. Braun has taught in the Redwood City School District and in the Boston area. He brings experience teaching a wide range of instruments, including band, strings

and guitar, and plans to develop programs this year for strings and guitar.

Focus. Corte Madera staff is in its second year of implementing the district’s five-year strategic plan. The focus is on language arts; “math mastery maps,” a process to track student math skills in grades 4-8; and the adoption of new science materials at each grade level.

Building character. Principal Willen and teachers will continue to work on building character among students, helping them to interact positively with each other. A copy of “Corte Madera School’s Levels of Behavior” has been sent home to parents.

Mobile laptop carts. New to Corte Madera this fall are two laptop carts on wheels that each house 25 laptop computers for use by students in the classrooms.

Garden grows. Teachers and students from various grades will be involved in school garden projects, such as the native plant area, and growing produce to be distributed through organizations that provide food for the homeless.

Watch “Panther News.” Students in TV-video production electives will produce the school news bi-weekly over closed-circuit TV, under the guidance of teacher Brigetta Brown.

Overnight field trips. This year’s overnight field trips, approved by the school board, will take fourth-graders to “Gold Country” at Old Oak Ranch in Sonora for three days, Oct. 10-12; sev-

enth-graders to Yosemite Nov. 26-30; and eighth-graders to the Washington, D.C., area May 11-16.

Back-to-school night. Parents are invited to return to school Tuesday, Sept. 4, from 5:10 to 8:45 p.m. to learn about school programs and meet teachers.

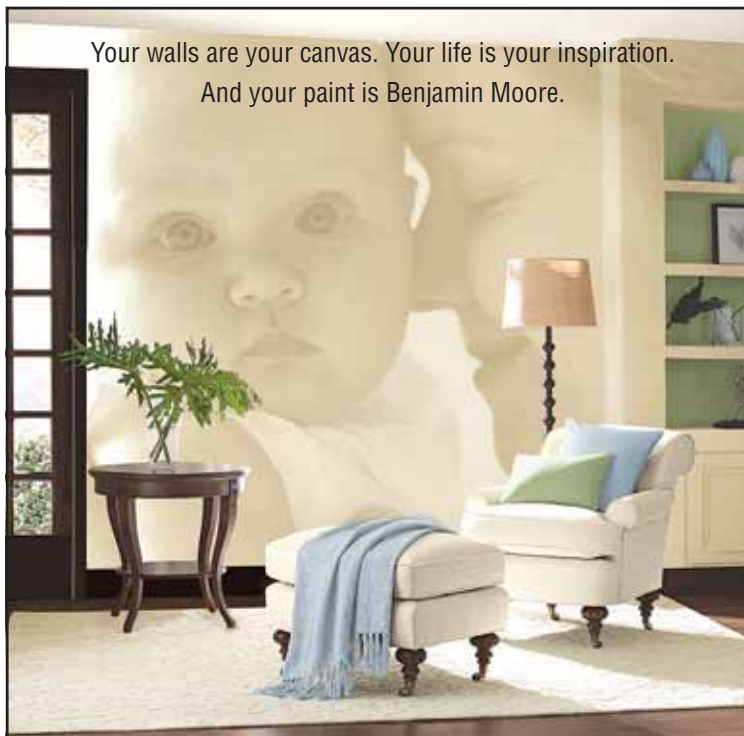
Back-to-school picnic. This annual event is Friday, Sept. 7, from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., in the upper-grade eating area.

Principal’s Forum. The first of Principal Joel Willen’s forums for parents will be Friday, Sept. 14, at 8:45 a.m. in Room 1001 at Corte Madera.

Information night. Principal Willen is scheduling a high school information night for parents of eighth-graders. ■



Your walls are your canvas. Your life is your inspiration.
And your paint is Benjamin Moore.



Benjamin Moore
The Leader in Paint & Color™



Discover the paint that best captures
your personality, style and taste.

Gray's Paint

717 Oak Grove Avenue, Menlo Park
(Across from the Fire Station) 650-322-2238
1411 Woodside Rd. (next to Woodside Deli),
Redwood City (650) 365-6222

Back to school 2007



After a summer break, the halls of Menlo-Atherton High School again echo with the voices and footsteps of students.

SEQUOIA DISTRICT

continued from page 18

Summit Preparatory Charter High School

890 Broadway St., Redwood City

Phone: 556-1110

Diane Tavenner, executive director

Grades: 9-12

Enrollment: 375

New classes and programs.

Physics instruction at Summit Prep this year is moving from 11th grade to ninth grade, Executive Director Diane Tavenner said. Biology, which has been

a staple for ninth-graders, will be moved to the 11th-grade curriculum and thus will not be taught for two years.

Trip. The annual all-school camping and community-building trip to Big Basin State Park is set for Sept. 6 and 7, with a first homecoming celebration planned for Oct. 13.

Events. A musical along with art exhibits — including a painting, drawing, sculpting, digital art, photography and a student film festival — are scheduled for January and June, Ms. Tavenner said.

New facilities. The new home on Broadway Street in Redwood City has an open and collaborative feeling inside because of all the glass walls,

Ms. Tavenner said. "Classrooms are designed to support team and interdisciplinary teaching," she added. The site is equipped with wireless Internet access and includes space for a college guidance center, a library, faculty office space and room for the entire school to assemble, Ms. Tavenner added.

New staff: Eight new teachers will join the staff. In social studies teachers are Elana Feinberg and Chris Kelly, while the math department now includes Julian Cortella and Maura Dudley. Brian Johnson and Brian Valek are new science teachers. Claire Amley will teach Spanish language and Jamie MacDonald is a new special education teacher. ■

WOODSIDE DISTRICT

continued from page 17

to focus on improving technology in the classroom so that students and teacher will more easily integrate technology into the curriculum. Now in the second year of the district's technology plan, the school moves closer to the goal of one computer per student in middle school, says Harlin Hansen, director of instructional technology. This year middle school classes in language arts and social studies classes will have their own set of computers that can be accessed daily. Other middle school classes will use a laptop cart. The plan calls for increasing K-3 student access to computers from two per room to five.

Hands-on science. Teachers will use two new hands-on science programs. Kindergartners through fifth-graders will use an updated version of the California FOSS program. Middle school students will use CPO (Cambridge Physics Outlet) Science that was field-tested last year and recommended by the science teachers. The programs meet the California state science standards.

Life Skills. One of the cornerstones at Woodside School is developing the whole child and building up a student's character. The Life Skills program focuses each month on one character trait from "respect" in September through "adventurous" in June, says Janai Bryan, school counselor.

Field trips. Students will be going on various field trips this year, including to Washington, D.C., Yosemite, Marin Headlands, Catalina Island and the Gold Country. Some are more expensive than others and require parents



Photo by George Mader

Installing synthetic turf at Woodside Elementary School is a crew from the company, Field Turf. They stitched together 15-foot wide panels before rolling out the turf on the prepared rock base the day before school opened Aug. 27. Part of the new emerald green field is shown in the background.

to pay for the cost. The PTA has set aside scholarship funds to help families that need assistance.

Electives. This year middle school students will be able to choose from a wide range of elective classes, held during the last period. They include art, environmental science, band, string instruments, poetry, yearbook, peer counseling, and a study hall to get a jump start on homework.

Homework Club. Starting this week, Homework Club provides a place for students wishing to stay after school to work on their homework.

Back-to-school barbecue. This annual get-together for parents, kids,

teachers and neighbors starts at 5:30 p.m. Friday, Sept. 7. Food will be available for purchase at this event, sponsored by the PTA.

Back-to-school nights. Parents of kindergartners through fifth-graders will return to school Tuesday, Sept. 11, at 6:30 p.m. to meet teachers and learn about programs. For parents of sixth- through eighth-graders, the date is Thursday, Sept. 19, also at 6:30 p.m.

Preschool. The fee-based preschool offered on the school campus is filled. Classes are for two days, three days and five days for children, ages 2 years, 9 months, and up. For information, call Cathy Stienstra at 851-1571, ext. 194. ■

If you can
imagine it...



- Home Theater
- Whole House Audio & High Definition Video Distribution
- Home Automation
- Automation Systems Programming
- Phone & Computer Network Wiring & Distribution
- Lighting Control
- Security & Surveillance Cameras
- ISF Calibrations

we can do it.



SOUND PERFECTION
Design • Integration • Installation

www.soundperfection.com

700 El Camino Real, Menlo Park 94025 • 650-323-1000

Open Tue - Fri 10-6pm • Sat 11-5pm • Closed Sun & Mon

CA CONTRACTORS LICENSE #805780



Sitting pretty

This decorative glass swing by artist Nikolas Weinstein is among the offerings of one-of-a-kind swings and gliders to be auctioned off in a fundraiser for Holbrook-Palmer Park in Atherton on Sunday, Sept. 9, at 150 Watkins Ave. It's one of the park's largest fundraising events and will feature a catered meal, live music, pony rides and a wine bar. The event lasts from 2 p.m. to dusk and is sponsored by the Atherton Dames and the Holbrook-Palmer Park Foundation. Proceeds from the family-friendly festivities will go toward future improvements at the 22-acre park. For reservations, call 752-0536.

Ken Burns to speak at Kepler's

Famed PBS documentary director and producer Ken Burns is scheduled to speak at Kepler's bookstore in Menlo Park at 11:30 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 15, about his new book and PBS special about World War II.

Mr. Burns will also be signing copies of the book, "The War: An Intimate History, 1941-1945," co-authored by Geoffrey C. Ward.

The book is a companion volume to the fall 2007 PBS series on the American experience of World War II, "captured in the hearts and minds, words and deeds of those

who made history on the battlefields and on the home front," says Kepler's spokesperson Susan Lider.

The book, with 450 photos, contains the voices of — not historians or scholars — but the "ordinary men and women who experienced, and helped to win, the most extraordinary war in history," she said.

Focusing on the residents of four towns — Waterbury, Connecticut; Mobile, Alabama; Sacramento, California; and Luverne, Minnesota — the book follows more than 40 people from 1941 to 1945.

A TASTE OF THE PENINSULA

A cornucopia of restaurants and cafes providing the finest dining from brunch to dessert.

Coffee & Tea Connoisseur Coffee Co.

2801 Middlefield Road Redwood City (650) 369-5250
9am-5:30pm, Mon. - Sat. ■ Coffee roasting & fine teas, espresso bar, retail & wholesale.



Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner Vive Sol-Cocina Mexicana

2020 W. El Camino Real, Mtn. View (650) 938-2020.
Specializing in the Cuisine of Puebla.
Open daily for lunch and dinner.



To Advertise in "A Taste of the Peninsula" call The Almanac 650-854-2626.





University of East-West Medicine

Become a licensed Acupuncturist!




**EARN AN ACCREDITED MASTER'S DEGREE
IN TRADITIONAL CHINESE MEDICINE**

- Requires Only 60 Semester College Units
- Full or Part-time/Day or Evening
- Federal Financial Aid Available
- International Students Accepted (I-20 Issued)
- Low Tuition/Flexible Payments

UNIVERSITY OF EAST-WEST MEDICINE
970 W. EL CAMINO REAL, SUNNYVALE
call 408-733-1878 or visit www.uewm.edu

LUCILE PACKARD CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL



YOUR CHILD'S HEALTH UNIVERSITY
Provided by Lucile Packard Children's Hospital

Your Child's Health University

Lucile Packard Children's Hospital offers classes, seminars and resources designed to foster good health and enhance the lives of parents and children.

- * NEWBORN CARE 101**

Often touted as our "most fun" class, this interactive program teaches the specifics of newborn care, including bathing, temperature-taking, changing diapers, swaddling, soothing techniques and more. Infant doll models are used to allow for hands-on practice.

- Saturday, September 29
- * IS MEDIA THE OTHER PARENT?**

Dr. Tom Robinson from the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Center for Healthy Weight and Rebecca Randall from Common Sense Media discuss the effects of media on the health of our children and practical ways parents can guide their children towards a better understanding of media messages and productive lifestyle.

- Tuesday, October 2
- * CESAREAN BIRTH CLASS**


This two-hour class is taught by a labor and delivery nurse childbirth educator who helps prepare families for cesarean delivery. Information about vaginal birth after cesarean (VBAC) will also be provided to go over questions and expectations.

- Wednesday, October 3
- * TALKING WITH YOUR KIDS ABOUT GROWING UP**


Renowned for creating the Heart to Heart lecture series, Julie Metzger, RN, and Rob Lehman, MD, will teach you how to develop conversations with your pre-teens on the experiences of adolescence. They will also present new ideas and current information on the topics of adolescent development and risk-taking behavior.

- Wednesday, October 17

Call (650) 723-4600 or visit www.lpch.org to register or obtain more information on the times, locations and fees for these and other courses.



**LUCILE PACKARD
CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL**



CALL TODAY TO SIGN UP FOR CLASSES (650) 723-4600



ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

TOWN OF ATHERTON STATE OF CALIFORNIA

HOLBROOK-PALMER WALKING PATH PROJECT PROJECT NO. 07-001

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. September 13, 2007, at which time they will be publicly opened and read, for performing the following work:

Installation of a new 6 foot wide walking path that consists of a pavement section of 2" AC with 4" baserock for 475 foot in length on the southeast corner of Holbrook-Palmer Park. This will connect to and complete an existing walking path network located within the park.

Bids must be for the entire work, and shall be submitted in sealed envelopes clearly marked: "Bid of (Contractor) for HOLBROOK-PALMER WALKING PATH PROJECT, Project No. 07-001", 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 August 29, September 5, 2007.

REVIEW

TheatreWorks' 'Emma' has perfect pitch

By Karen MacLaughlin

Special to the Almanac

It is a truth universally acknowledged that when a favorite novel is musicalized, we are bound to have to endure at least a few false notes. Not so in the musical "Emma," currently playing through Sept. 16 at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts under the superb direction of TheatreWorks' founder, Robert Kelley.

"Perfect" is a word I usually reserve for a well-glazed creme brulee. But it is the only apt modifier for this production, adapted from Jane Austen's novel about the amateur matchmaker Emma Woodhouse and all her friends, foes, and relations.

Paul Gordon's book preserves much of the novel's scintillating dialogue, yet incorporates enough of his own to let us know that, unlike our dearly departed

Miss Austen, he is very much alive and in tune with the 21st century. His memorable musical score plants us firmly at the intersection of Broadway and Austen, and keeps us fixed until the final choreographed curtain call.

All the actors and musicians give highly polished performances. The tack of casting Harriet Smith as more of a foil for, rather than a mere tool of, Emma provides a comeuppance scene that is not to be missed. Dani Marcus plays Harriet with endearing servility and Nick Nakashimi, as her tongue-tied, persevering beau-to-be, Robert Martin, makes us sigh right along with her. ■

INFORMATION

"Emma," staged by TheatreWorks, runs through Sept. 16 at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St. Tickets are \$25 to \$61. For more information, call 903-600 or visit theatreworks.org.

Opera preview lectures begin this week

A series of San Francisco Opera preview lectures will begin at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 4, at Little House in Menlo Park with a presentation on Saint-Saens' "Samson and Delilah."

Timothy Flynn, the 2005 recipient of the Leland Fox Award for Scholarship of the National Opera Association, will give the presentation.

The lectures, organized by the South Peninsula Chapter of the San Francisco Opera Guild, provide insights into the operas staged this season by the San

Francisco Opera.

Other programs are: "Tannhauser," Sept. 11; "Appomattox," Oct. 2; "La Rondine," Oct. 30; "Macbeth," Nov. 6; and "The Rake's Progress," Nov. 13. Speakers are music authorities from various opera companies and educational institutions.

Admission is \$8 for guild members and \$10 for nonmembers. Tickets will be available at the door.

Little House is at 800 Middle Ave. For more information, call 329-1374; e-mail klbprak@hotmail.com; or visit sfopera.com.

Post news and views on **TOWNSQUARE**

www.TheAlmanacOnline.com



You own
your home...

Why not your electricity?

GO SOLAR TODAY!



For a FREE site evaluation,
go to www.akeena.net
or call 888.253.3628

American Camellia Society meets at Filoli; public invited

By Barbara Coates Tuffli
Special to the Almanac

For the first time in more than 30 years, the American Camellia Society will hold its national meeting on the San Francisco Peninsula. On Sept. 8, Filoli, with its internationally known camellia collection, will welcome the ACS board of directors and committee members from across the U.S., and society members from the West Coast.

All Filoli garden visitors are invited to a full day of free camellia programs on Saturday, Sept. 8. Speakers include:

■ John Wang of Orinda, who is recognized for his expertise in hybridizing for yellow color and fragrance in camellias. He will demonstrate the technique of Chinese bark grafting.

■ Gene Phillips of Savannah, Georgia, will share his expertise on "The Importance of Tea in our Gardens." Many tea drinkers are unaware that this beverage comes from the *Camellia sinensis* — an easily grown camellia in our Peninsula gardens.

■ Tom Nuccio of the Nuccio's Nurseries in Altadena, California, will bring camellias with unusual foliage and will demonstrate growing and propagating techniques for camellias.

■ Clayton Mathis from Douglas, Georgia, will demonstrate how to air-layer camellias, a propagation technique whereby anyone can easily "clone" a must-have camellia.

Other local members of the American Camellia Society board of directors are Barbara Glynn of Atherton and Patricia Gregory of Menlo Park.

Demonstration times are: noon-3 p.m., techniques of rooting cuttings and grafting, Tom Nuccio, every 30 minutes; noon- 3p.m., techniques of



About the author: Barbara Coates Tuffli is president of the American Camellia Society, headquartered in Fort Valley, Georgia. She lives and gardens on the family property in Atherton, where she looks after more than 500 camellias on 1.3 acres. Many of the camellias were inherited from her father, Cullen W. Coates, who was a former president of the San Francisco Peninsula Camellia Society.

rooting cuttings and air layering camellias, Clayton Mathis, every 30 minutes; 2-3 p.m., Chinese bark grafting, John Wang.

Lectures in the visitors' center are set for: 11:30 a.m.-noon, bark grafting, John Wang; 1-1:45 p.m., "My Thoughts and Discipline on Camellia Breeding," John Wang; and 2-2:45 p.m., "The Importance of Tea in our Gardens," Gene Phillips.

For more information, go to: www.camellias-ac.org. ■



ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

TOWN OF ATHERTON STATE OF CALIFORNIA

2007 PAVEMENT PATCHING PROJECT PROJECT NO. 07-005

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. September 12, 2007, at which time they will be publicly opened and read, for performing the following work:

Grind and replace approximately 8615 square feet of asphalt to a six-inch depth. This work to include all necessary traffic control and will involve grinding, sweeping, tack coating, replacing asphalt to appropriate depth in an appropriate number of lifts and finish rolling per town of Atherton Standard specifications (see below) and special provisions included in this document.

Bids must be for the entire work, and shall be submitted in sealed envelopes clearly marked: "Bid of (Contractor) for 2007 PAVEMENT PATCHING PROJECT, Project No. 07-005", 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 \$10.00. 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 August 29, September 5, 2007.

Read. Call. Do nothing more.

- Uniformed, Bonded & Insured
- Equipment & Supplies Provided
- Every Cleaning is Inspected & Guaranteed
- Environmentally Safe & Pet Friendly

Call today for a no obligation estimate.
650-368-2102
Most major credit cards accepted.
<http://peninsula.maidbrigade.com>

Locally owned and operated.
Cleaning homes like yours since 1979.

2 GREAT BIKE RIDES

THAT BENEFIT LOCAL EDUCATION

JOIN US FOR THE

TOUR FOR WOODSIDE

A fully supported ride through and around beautiful Woodside,
benefiting the Woodside High School Foundation Endowment

SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 23, 2007

For more information or to sign up, go to
www.tourforwoodside.com or call 650.851.2705



TOUR FOR WOODSIDE

SUNDAY OCTOBER 14 • 4TH ANNUAL TOUR DE MENLO

2 courses, up to
5,000 feet of
climbing

King & Queen of
the Mountain
prizes

Tee shirts
included with all
entries

Early registration
closes Oct. 12 (\$40)

Same day
registration (\$45)

SAG support, major
rest stops, snacks
all day!



www.tourdemenlo.com
BENEFITS ROTARY TUTORING, SCHOLARSHIPS

OBITUARIES

Tulla Bisnar-Bidasha

Former Woodside resident

A celebration of the life of Tulla Bisnar-Bidasha, nee Johnson, a former resident of Woodside, will be held in Grass Valley on Saturday, Sept. 8. The celebration will start at 1 p.m. at the Squirrel Creek Ranch, 12971 Squirrel Creek Road.

Ms. Bisnar-Bidasha died at home in Grass Valley on Aug. 21 after a long illness. She was 53.

Ms. Bisnar-Bidasha was born Sept.



Tulla Bisnar-Bidasha

17, 1954, to Hope and Hobart Johnson in Madison, Wisconsin, but shortly moved to Surrey, England, where she spent her early years.

In 1964, she and her family moved to Woodside, where she attended Woodside Elementary School.

She spent a year in the Philippines and in 1977 was married to her first husband, Bert Bisnar, in Manila. After moving to Redwood City in 1978, she became the mother of four children. In 1991 she moved with her family to Grass Valley.

For 15 years she worked with children who had special needs in the Nevada County School District. "She brightened the lives of all with whom she came in contact, and in turn, grew in her appreciation of all that life offers," said her mother.

She was married to her second husband, Harry Bidasha of Live Oak, California, on March 30, 2007, in Grass Valley. "Her time with Harry was short, but the life that they shared along with their children was joyful and fulfilling," her mother said.

She had many passions, including her art, travel in Asia and Europe, photography, kayaking and camping, and, most particularly, the blues music, her mother said.

She is survived by her husband, Harry; daughters Kaia Bisnar and Tiana Bisnar; son Christopher; son Clinton Bisnar; step-sons Max and Alex, as well as her father, mother, brothers Ben, Fletcher and Hobart Clinton Johnson; and sisters Sonia Cassia and Vangie Shafer.

Memorial gifts may be made at any Citizens Bank branch, to the Tulla Bisnar-Bidasha Memorial Fund, or sent to the Citizens Bank at P.O. Box 1420, Nevada City, CA 95959. Proceeds will be distributed in her memory to Nevada County Special Education programs and the Shasta Blues Society Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Menlo Park antique fair set for Sept. 14

An antique road show is headed to the Menlo Park Gatehouse, as the Junior League of Palo Alto-Mid Peninsula is scheduled to hold its "Trash or Treasure" antique appraisal fair on Sept. 14.

The fundraiser, which started in 2002, invites residents to dust off paintings, furniture, jewelry or any other potential treasures and take them to the event for appraisal.

The event is scheduled to run from 5 to 8 p.m. at the Menlo Park Gatehouse at 555 Ravenswood Ave., adjacent to the Civic Center.

The cost to have one item appraised is \$45, and guests can have up to two additional items appraised for \$10 each.

Proceeds will go to the Junior League of Palo Alto-Mid Peninsula endowment fund.

Appraisal services will be done courtesy of San Francisco-based auction house Bonhams & Butterfields. Wine and cheese will be served at the event.

For more information, call the Junior League office at 321-5026.

Valley Presbyterian starts year-long celebration

Valley Presbyterian Church in Portola Valley has begun a year-

AROUND TOWN

long celebration of its 50th year, which will include concerts, speaker events, theater productions and other activities, says the Rev. Cheryl Goodman Morris, co-pastor of the church.

"We thought we'd treat the whole year as a jubilee year," she says, and everyone is invited to participate. The church will kick off the fall season on Sunday, Sept. 9, with worship in the Redwood grove at the church, 945 Portola Road.

For more information, call the Rev. Mark Goodman Morris, senior pastor, at 851-8282, ext. 107, or go to www.valleypreschurch.org.

Tally Ho Saturday

The 57th annual Tally Ho fundraising event, hosted by the Woodside Atherton Auxiliary, will take place Saturday, Sept. 8, at the Menlo Circus Club in Atherton.

The event, which raises funds for Stanford's Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, starts with a polo match at 3:30 p.m. A live auction begins at 7:30 p.m. at the center stage. A silent auction will run throughout the day. There will be culinary special-

ties and wine from well-known local restaurants, plus music and dancing. Tickets are \$200 per person. Call 1-877-825-5946 for information.

M-A 50th reunion

The Menlo-Atherton High School class of 1957 is planning a 50th anniversary reunion on Saturday, Sept. 15. For information and reservations, call 408-354-4632 or e-mail billbull@ixnetcom.com.

Raise your GPA for College!

- UC-approved HIGH SCHOOL classes
- Private & semi-private instruction
- Open year round

Call **650-321-0550** to register



LYDIAN ACADEMY

815 El Camino Real, Menlo Park
650-321-0550 • www.lydianacademy.com



Palo Alto Medical Foundation

A Sutter Health Affiliate

With You. For Life.

Community Health Education Programs September 2007

Web site • www.pamf.org E-mail • publicaffairs@pamf.org

Events & Lectures

"Hip Replacement Surgery"

Tuesday, September 11, 7 – 8:30 p.m.

James Hartford, M.D., PAMF Orthopedics

Join us to hear a presentation on the benefits and limitations of hip replacement surgery. You will learn what to expect from the surgery and what exercises will enable you to return to your every day activities.

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

"Alternative Medical Treatments of Heart Disease"

Monday, September 24, 3:30 – 5 p.m.

Bob Hu, M.D., PAMF Cardiology

The media is full of stories about non-traditional ways to treat heart disease problems. Dr. Hu will give his thoughts about some of the alternative medical treatments currently in the news.

Classes

"Supermarket Wise," Thursday, September 13, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

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

"Learning About Heart Failure," Friday, September 14, 10 – 11:30 a.m.

This class, taught by a cardiology nurse practitioner, discusses medications used in treatment, dietary requirements, weight monitoring, self-care, activity guidelines, and symptom recognition and reporting, and more.

"Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction," begins on September 24 & 25, 6:30 – 9 p.m.

Free orientation on Monday, September 10, 6:30 - 9 p.m. This program is designed to help people learn how to deal effectively with physical and emotional stress by providing training in breathing, meditation and gentle yoga.

"Managing Your High Blood Pressure," Tuesday, September 25, 6 – 8 p.m.

This class provides information on causes, risks and treatment of high blood pressure, and approaches to successful reduction, such as exercise and medication.

"What You Need to Know About Warfarin," Wednesday, September 26, 2 – 4 p.m.

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

"Taking Charge of Your Body," Mondays, October 1, 6 - 8 p.m.

A six-week course focusing on healthy living and managing your lifestyle through exercise and healthful eating.

Support Groups

Cancer (1st & 3rd Tuesdays) • Diabetes (1st Wednesday) • Multiple Sclerosis (2nd & 4th Mondays) • Sleep Apnea (1st Thursday) • Alcohol and Drug Education (Every Tuesday) • Healing Imagery for Cancer Patients (September 5 & 19)

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

Menlo Park vocalist performs at concert

Vocalist Heidi Fisher of Menlo Park will share her story of her adoption from foster care during a Sept. 14 concert that benefits a Los Altos-based non-profit organization called Help One Child, which recruits, trains and supports those who provide a home or volunteer services for foster children.

Ms. Fisher will perform classical and sacred music selections with a local chamber music trio — pianist David Stein, flutist Eugene Lee and cellist Sue Larson — on Friday, Sept. 14, at

7:30 p.m. at Union Presbyterian Church, 858 University Ave. in Los Altos, says spokesperson Beth Walker.

Ms. Fisher has been the kids/youth music coordinator at Menlo Park Presbyterian Church for nine years.

The Help One Child is conducting a campaign to find 500 homes through 500 churches in 1,000 days, says spokesperson Beth Walker. For more information, call 888-KID-HOPE or go to www.helponechild.org.

DR. RENEE'S PIANO

Enjoy the FUN of PLAYING THE PIANO! Lessons for ADULTS and CHILDREN

DR. RENEE CHEVALIER
(650) 854-0543
www.DrReneesPiano.com

VOTED 10 CONSECUTIVE YEARS "BEST BOUTIQUE"

10% OFF YOUR NEXT VISIT

THANK YOU ALMANAC READERS!

Calla
Clothing • Gifts • Accessories • Shoes
895 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park • 650-322-5524

The Main Gallery
contemporary fine art and crafts

bits and pieces

Photography by Saelon Renkes
Ceramic sculpture by Karen Truesdell

Sept 12 through Oct 14
reception: Sunday, Sept 16, 4 to 7pm

www.themaingallery.org

hours: 11-4 wed-friday, 10-3 sat-sun

1018 Main Street (at Middlefield) Redwood City

Editor & Publisher

Tom Gibboney

Editorial

Managing Editor Richard Hine

News Editor Renee Batti

Lifestyles Editor Jane Knoerle

Senior Staff Writers

Marion Softky, Marjorie Mader

Staff Writers Andrea Gemmet,

David Boyce, Rory Brown

Editorial Intern Natalie Jabbar

Contributors Barbara Wood,

Bryan Wiggan, Kate Daly,

Bill Rayburn, Miles McMullin,

Katie Blankenberg

Special Sections Editors

Carol Blitzer, Sue Dremann

Photographer Veronica Weber

Design & Production

Design Director Raul Perez

Designers Linda Atilano,

Gail Thoreson, Eric Kinnaird,

Nancy Hwang, Joanne Lee,

Laura Don

Advertising

Advertising Manager Neal Fine

Display Advertising Sales

Sandra Valdiosera

Real Estate Account

Representative Donna Berryhill

Advertising Services

Receptionist Renee Meil,

Liz Reiter

Circulation, Classified,

& Legal Advertising Bill Rayburn

Published every Wednesday at

3525 Alameda de las Pulgas,

Menlo Park, CA 94025

(650) 854-2626

FAX (650) 854-0677

e-mail news (no photos please) to:

editor@AlmanacNews.com

e-mail photos with captions to:

photo@AlmanacNews.com

e-mail letters to:

letters@AlmanacNews.com

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.

TOWN SQUARE FORUM

POST your views on the Town Square forum at www.TheAlmanacOnline.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.

Over-reaction in Atherton

It is difficult not to see red flags all over the decision last week by Atherton's interim City Manager Wende Protzman to place Finance Director John Johns on administrative leave just because someone (whose name she refuses to reveal) alleged that he created a "hostile work environment."

The action has all the earmarks of a trumped-up cheap shot against a diligent auditor who may have found more than he bargained for in building department records, and it has put Mr. Johns on the sidelines during the city's important annual audit. In addition, the town's volunteer audit committee is upset, and its members continue to be strong supporters of Mr. Johns, despite the charge.

For the last year or more, Mr. Johns has worked hard to unravel the huge mess in the town's building department following the hurried retirement of former Building Official Mike Hood. Disciplinary action was taken against another building department worker, who remains working for the town. The City Council has refused to make public the results of a personnel investigation based on the expensive work of an outside attorney. And even now, the city continues to spend money on lawsuits resulting from questionable decisions made during Mr. Hood's tenure.

Mr. Johns has told the Almanac that he believes his leave is neither necessary nor appropriate, and he can think of no legitimate reason for the "hostile work environment" charge. He added that he knows of no other example of forced leave being imposed in Atherton during similar investigations.

In fact, Mr. Johns and the chairman of the town's audit committee, Sam Goodman, say that Mr. Johns himself was the subject of harassment as a result of his work.

Over the course of his three-phase building department audit and the subsequent restructuring of the department, Mr. Johns was the focus of strong criticism from users of the department, including residents, developers and contractors, who are now forced to play by the rules.

As Mr. Johns put it to the Almanac, "I don't think you should feel the fear of losing your job just for doing your job. The job of the chief financial officer is not to go along to get along. Chief financial officers occasionally have to question spending practices and perform audits, and that's not always an enjoyable experience."

We couldn't agree more.

Rather than jump to the conclusion that Mr. Johns must be put on leave, the interim manager first should have sought the counsel of the town's audit committee, which works closely with Mr. Johns. Its members have voted unanimously to support Mr. Johns, and would have reassured the interim manager about his character. With that type of backing, the "hostile work environment" complaint could have been investigated without forcing Mr. Johns to take leave.

Mr. Johns is just the kind of straight-shooter that Atherton needs to continue its clean financial audits and establish a building department that plays by the rules. By forcing him to the sidelines while an allegation is being investigated, the town is sending a message to Mr. Johns and other loyal employees that the rug can be pulled out from under them at any time, for any reason.

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

LETTERS

Our readers write

Traffic logjam at Hillview School

Editor:

I wonder if others who live or work in Menlo Park are dreading the return of students to school, as I am. From now until June, twice a day, Santa Cruz Avenue will be log-jammed.

The number of students enrolled at Hillview School is, at present, 659. (The school was originally designed to hold 550.) With this school population, I have seen traffic backed up along Santa Cruz from University Drive downtown, west to Lemon. The cars, bikes, walkers and students are in jeopardy of a serious accident with kids late to school and drivers rushing, or attempting to rush, to work.

I believe this is a serious problem. But, with the school district's decision to make Hillview the only middle school in the city, Hillview's population is anticipated to rise to near 1,000. I can't imagine how any increase in traffic around the school is remotely feasible, and with the huge number of students who will come from east of El Camino to this one middle school,

See **LETTERS**, next page



Jac Audiffred Collection

Our Regional Heritage

The Little Store in Woodside was a popular stop in 1906, when this photo was taken. Today, the small restaurant at 3340 Woodside Road is operated by Dominique Devillez, who continues the long tradition of serving hearty cuisine in one of the town's oldest buildings.

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

it's an alarming picture.

The tragedy of the school district's decision is that there are other choices to handle the increase of children in the district. Encinal School, which is a larger campus than Hillview, could be returned to its original status and be a second middle school. And the district also owns Willow School, currently rented out to non-district pupils. This campus could be returned to a district elementary school, and thus the cross-town commute for many children could be avoided.

The problem is not just at Hillview School. Oak Knoll Elementary School has a dangerous traffic issue too, and the expected enrollment increase there is as large as the one at Hillview.

Surely the school district can see that, in addition to the traffic congestion and safety issues, cramming 1,000 children onto acreage designed to accommodate 550 cannot be good for the students. Limited outdoor space combined with ever-increasing pollution does not lead to the standard of education and quality of life that we are known for in Menlo Park.

Nancy Montague
Hillview Drive, Menlo Park

A plea for housing at El Camino project

Editor:

New plans for the old Cadillac dealership site on El Camino Real in Menlo Park call for lots of retail and office space.

What's missing in this prime transit-oriented development is housing. This is unfortunate because we need both the housing and customers for the shops.

The Cadillac site has the potential to be a premiere mixed-use development that brings all of the essential elements together in a pedestrian, bicycle, transit friendly complex. Isn't that what our "green" city should be promoting?

The 1300 El Camino development should harmonize with and extend our Santa Cruz Avenue shops. Our downtown can't, nor should it, compete with the mega-chain stores at Stanford Shopping Center.

I hope the developer honors the character of downtown Menlo Park and invites unique and independent businesses to rejuvenate our El Camino corridor. By connecting the complex to Santa Cruz Avenue, it will help to make our downtown district a destination.

But Menlo Park will rue the day that housing wasn't a top priority in planning for this and other developments on the El Camino corridor.

Elizabeth Lasensky
Fremont Street, Menlo Park

High-speed rail a big, costly mistake

By Martin Engel

As everyone in California knows by now, the new state budget contains \$20 million for the California High Speed Rail Authority (CHSRA) this year.

Watch for an aggressive lobbying campaign in anticipation of the \$10 billion bond issue to be on the ballot in '08. Meanwhile, it is almost impossible to find articulate objections to this foolish enterprise either in the press or in the urban transit community.

Just to remind you, the final costs for the LA to San Francisco high-speed rail line are now projected to be anywhere from \$37 billion to "under \$50 billion," depending on which article you read. What nobody tells us is that these numbers are likely to triple or more by the time this monstrosity is completed, as they did in Boston's "Big Dig," and the Bay



Bridge renovation.

To keep this discussion as simple as possible, this pork-barrel boondoggle is the last thing California needs for the next 50 years, all the rhetoric about gridlock and ecology to the contrary.

Well, then what is the most needed thing? California does need massive injections of development funds to create intra-city and intra-regional, not inter-city, urban mass transit, particularly in the LA Basin, including San Diego and points east, as well as in the Bay Area, extending east into the most rapidly populating areas toward the Central Valley.

In short, east and west need to be better-connected by transit, not north and south. Even on the Peninsula, we need more east-west connectivity linking commuters to the north-south rail artery, just like an arterial system, all the way out to the capillaries.

If any high-speed line is to be built, how about starting with a San Francisco-Sacramento line in our area and a San Diego-Los Angeles line down south. Costs less, is an opportunity to debug a highly complex technology, and can build support from all of us in California based

upon their success or failure.

If north-south rail needs to meet any real need, it is freight, not middle- and leisure-class tourists and professionals inconvenienced by crowded planes. Containerized freight rail will get the diesel trucks off Interstate 5 and is the most cost-effective mode of land shipment.

Intra-city transit systems cannot, must not, consist exclusively of rail just because the rail-o-crats are pushing harder than anybody else. The Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) is a good example. The MTC is myopic for promoting rail to the exclusion of other modalities when they should be pushing for multi-modal interconnected networks that include, yes, heavy and light rail, but also buses, rapid and otherwise, hybrid-van shuttles and whatever other mode is most appropriate with such highly distributed populations and places of employment.

Hey, MTC, that's your real job, weaving transit connectivity and building a functional system. Get to work.

Martin Engel lives on Stone Pine Lane in Menlo Park.

Are Park Theatre grants available for everyone?

Editor:

It seems to me that the Menlo Park City Council would be overstepping their authority by gifting \$500,000 to the Park Theater development.

They call it a "historical site." Who are they kidding? My home is older, in need of some work and I could use some mortgage relief! Can I get some of the city's funds for my historical site?

Pat White
Santa Cruz Avenue,
Menlo Park

More drama for the Park Theatre

Editor:

This could be the last gasp for the beautiful Park Theatre that will crumble under a leaky roof if someone doesn't step in quickly.

I think people forget that culture, the arts, and the public and pri-

vate avenues that house them are routinely and heavily subsidized through public and private means. Without subsidy, arts and culture would fade away. Membership fees, private donations, public grants, tax revenue, fund drives, and so on are sources of support.

I hope the city of Menlo Park will support the sale and preservation of the Park Theatre in whatever concrete ways they can. Options might include meeting and negotiating with the parties, perhaps offering a low-interest loan if the council is reluctant to make a money grant, and approving variances if needed.

All city councils provide support to private interests that are of great value. Granting zoning changes and variances for parking and building density are among the examples. I hope to again spend my money in Menlo Park to see films in a fully restored theatre. In the meantime, a sensitively designed dance studio that can be converted back to film use is a good alternative to losing

the theater entirely. That a long-time Menlo Park family will use the space seems fitting.

I think developer Andy Duncan, the property owner Howard Crittenden, Menlo Park Mayor Kelly Fergusson and other city

staff members deserve our heartfelt thanks if they can agree to sell, buy, and support a new life for a wonderful Menlo Park jewel — the Park Theatre.

Winter Dellenbach
Palo Alto

ALLIED ARTS GUILD

Open for

ELEGANT SHOPPING

— ~ —

LOVELY EVENTS

Mon - Sat, 10:00 - 5:00

75 Arbor Road, Menlo Park

- at Cambridge -

www.alliedartsguild.org

TechShop
BUILD YOUR DREAMS HERE

You Can Come In and Use Our...

- MILLING MACHINES
- METAL LATHES
- LASER CUTTERS
- METAL WELDING
- PLASMA CUTTER
- 3D PRINTERS
- SEWING MACHINES
- VINYL CUTTER
- PLASTIC CASTING
- CNC MACHINES
- SHEET METAL FAB

TechShop is a membership-based workshop that lets you drop in and use our facilities, tools and equipment to work on your metal, plastic, wood and electronics projects at your own pace in a supportive and creative environment! Membership is only \$100 a month.

Classes at TechShop are typically \$30 and about an hour long, and cover lots of great topics including machining, welding, fabricating, CNC, laser cutting, 3D CAD design, and lots more! Classes fill up very quickly...visit our web site for our class list and to sign up.

TechShop is open 7 days a week from 9 AM until midnight.

Visit TechShop Today!
120 Independence Dr
Menlo Park, CA 94025

www.techshop.ws
1 (800) 640-1975

10 reasons why Burgess Park pools are the center of Menlo Park's active community

1. Open & Lap Swim
2. Masters Swim
3. Masters Water Polo
4. Youth Swim Teams
5. Triathlon Teams
6. Swim School
7. Summer Aquatics Camps
8. Adult Aqua Fitness
9. Snack Bar and Pro Shop
10. Family Picnics and Parties

Menlo Swim and Sport
501 Laurel St., Menlo Park, CA 94025
Burgess Park Pools • 650-328-SWIM (7946)

Information and registration
www.menloswim.com

Property Showcase by HUGH CORNISH

Open Sunday
1:30 - 4:30 PM



2 PARKWOOD DRIVE ATHERTON

Country French Manor

- Five bedrooms, three full baths, and two half baths
- Grand foyer, living room, and formal dining room
- Kitchen, breakfast area, and family room
- Swimming pool, cabana, loggia, and sport court
- Separate apartment above the three-car garage
- Menlo Park School District

Offered at \$4,250,000



2403 SHARON OAKS DRIVE MENLO PARK

Ready to Move Into!

- Three bedrooms and three full baths
- Spacious living room, dining ell, and remodeled kitchen
- Common area with clubhouse and pool
- Private deck off the master and a patio off the living room
- Quiet location conveniently close to shopping
- Las Lomas School District

Offered at \$1,199,000

Open Sunday
1:30 - 4:30 PM



HUGH CORNISH

Top 1% of Coldwell Banker Agents

650-566-5353

hcornish@cbnorcal.com

Atherton

Menlo Park

Portola Valley

Woodside



97 EUCLID AVENUE ATHERTON

Corner on the Market

- Four bedrooms, three full baths
- Beautiful, custom-crafted eat-in kitchen
- Spacious living/dining room and family room
- Flat, approximately 42,355 square foot lot
- Las Lomas School District

Offered at \$4,095,000



For more information on this property and others, please visit my Web site at:

WWW.HUGH-CORNISH.COM



Information deemed reliable, but not guaranteed.