

Menlo Park steps up search
for police officers. Page 5

The Almanac

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

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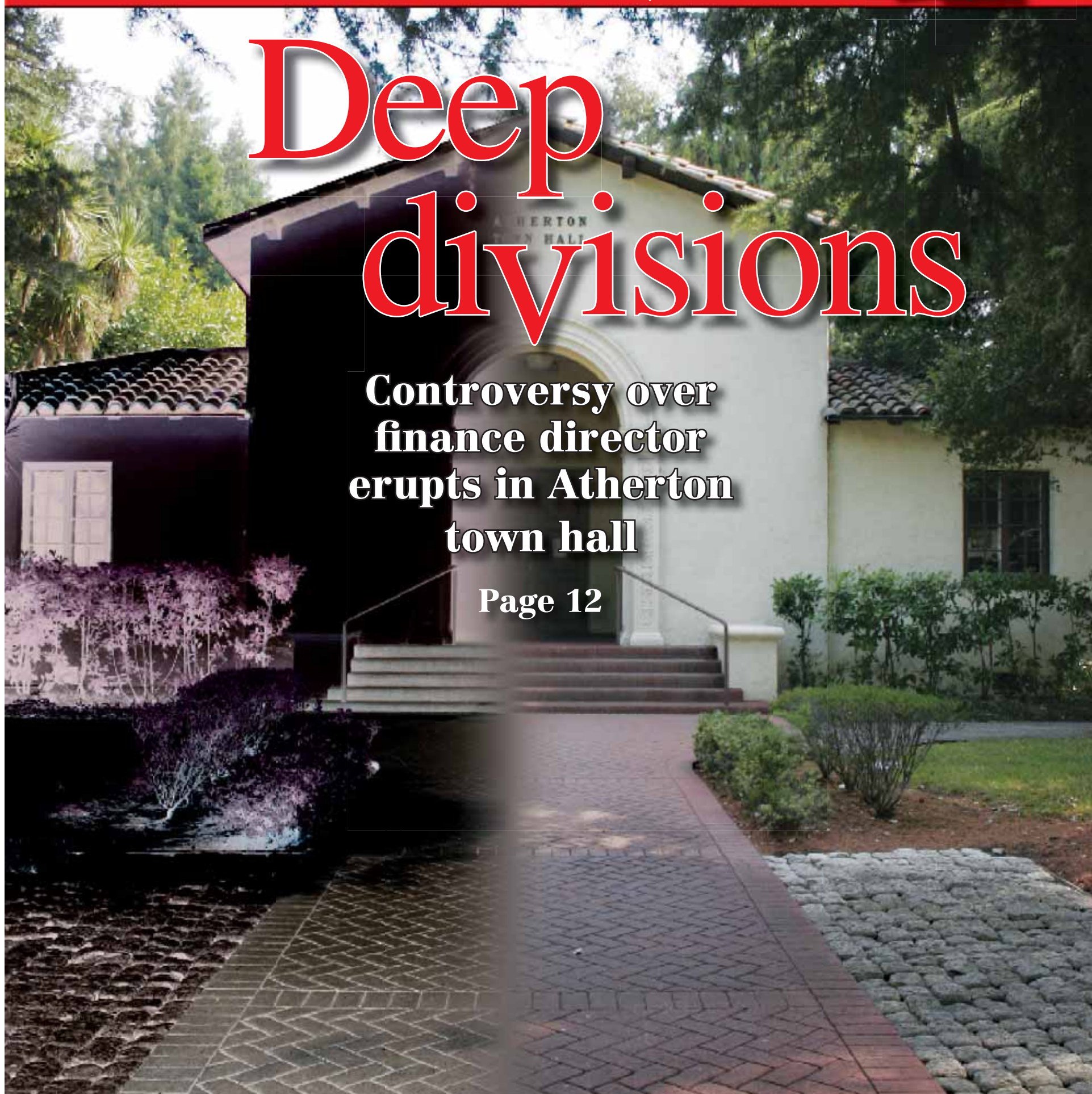


INSIDE

Deep divisions

**Controversy over
finance director
erupts in Atherton
town hall**

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Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

FIRST SHOT



The Almanac/Veronica Weber

Inside the box

Menlo Park artist Mitchell Johnson (lower right) peers into Bloomingdale's department store at Stanford Shopping Center through a patch of clear glass he's yet to paint. Last week, he created a "mural" on the store's front windows — part of an art program sponsored by Bloomingdale's that includes an exhibit of Mr. Mitchell's figurative and abstract paintings. For story, see Page 20.

Menlo Park

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On the cover

It's time for the Atherton's annual audit of town finances, but the finance director isn't at work — he's on paid leave, pending an investigation into a "hostile workplace" complaint. And that's just the tip of the iceberg, as complaints, counter-complaints, reports of threats and questions of integrity bob to the surface. Photo by Veronica Weber and photo illustration by Raul Perez. Story begins on Page 12.

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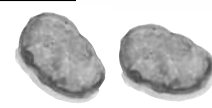
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WINE

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M. Magnien	
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Numeric scores are from Burghound. Wine is limited to stock on hand. Prices are net.

MEAT/SEAFOOD

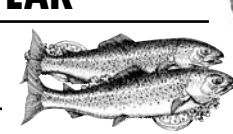
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OICW plays the name game

The Menlo Park nonprofit job training center Opportunities Industrialization Center West is holding its annual open house, complete with a barbecue and live jazz, on Sept. 20.

The event is scheduled for 4 to 7 p.m. at the OICW campus at 1200 O'Brien Drive.

At the event, OICW staff will announce a new name for the nonprofit, which provides job training, counseling, teen services and child development programs at low or no cost. Gosh, it's hard to imagine why they'd want to get rid of a catchy moniker like Opportunities Industrialization Center West.

To RSVP, call 330-6429, or send an e-mail to hhanson@oicw.org.

Roz's Pacific row postponed for a year

"Failure is temporary; it's giving up that makes it permanent."

Roz Savage won't be rowing across the Pacific Ocean this year. The British rower, who lived in Woodside this summer, now plans her solo voyage for next year.

On Aug. 23, Ms. Savage was airlifted from her boat by the U.S. Coast Guard after tempestuous seas damaged several key pieces of equipment in her custom boat.

She says in her blog, RozSavage.com, that the delay caused by leaving her boat, finding it again and repairing it — coupled with forecasts of bad weather — made it necessary to give up this year's attempt.

Last year, Ms. Savage completed a solo row across the Atlantic, and says she's still determined to become the first woman to row alone across the Pacific.

More from the Fab Four

Author Richie Unterberger is bringing a sampling of a treasure trove of rare and unreleased Beatles music and film to the Atherton and Portola Valley libraries on Sept. 17 and 18, respectively. The Beatles expert's new book details everything from fan club recordings to outtakes from the "Let it Be" sessions. Go to www.plsinfo.org for details.

Local News

MENLO PARK | ATHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

City steps up search for police officers

■ Menlo Park has lost 30 officers since 2004.

By **Rory Brown**

Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park police officers are overworked, inexperienced and unhappy, according to a report compiled by Menlo Park administrative and police staff.

Now the City Council is undertaking the ambitious project of getting the department in better shape.

Council members will discuss how the city can recruit and retain more officers at their meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 11. The meeting starts at 7 p.m. in the council chambers at the Civic Center, between Laurel and Alma streets.

The force has lost 30 officers since 2004, beginning with an exodus of veteran officers under former

chief Chris Boyd, and a handful of recent departures on the heels of a racial discrimination lawsuit filed by three black officers who recently resigned.

The department, when fully staffed, employs 50 sworn officers.

Of the 30 officers to leave, 17 — several of whom were veteran officers — resigned to join other police agencies, according to a report co-authored by Assistant City Manager Audrey Seymour Ramberg and Cmdr. Lacey Burt. Officers have cited exhaustion, lack of opportunity, and morale problems, among other reasons, for resigning, according to the report.

Other issues cited in the report include:

■ The police department has got-

See **POLICE**, page 21

Council may settle lawsuit

By **Rory Brown**

Almanac Staff Writer

Before taking on the question of how to recruit and retain more police officers, the Menlo Park City Council, at its Sept. 11 meeting, will consider a proposed settlement between the city and three former police officers suing the city on the basis of racial discrimination.

In a closed session meeting at 5 p.m., the council will consider a settlement between three former black officers who allege they were harassed and discriminated against by Sgt. Ron Prickett when working for

the city's police department.

City Attorney Bill McClure said the two sides agreed to a tentative settlement agreement during a meeting on Aug. 31. He would not comment on, or disclose details of, the settlement.

Mr. McClure said if the council approves the settlement during the closed session, Mayor Kelly Fergusson will announce the decision at the beginning of the council meeting, which begins at 5:30 p.m. for a study session on a fire sprinkler ordinance and at 7 p.m. for the regular meeting.

In a lawsuit filed with the

See **LAWSUIT**, page 8

Deadline looms for open-space proposal

■ Town could chip in \$100,000 toward \$1.6 million purchase price.

By **David Boyce**

Almanac Staff Writer

Two and a half acres of open space may be coming to Portola Valley's Westridge neighborhood if a group of residents can raise the money to pay its \$1.6 million asking price.

The Committee to Protect Shady Trail has already raised \$772,000 in pledges from eight or nine donors to acquire this undeveloped plot and its 0.8-mile trail near the intersection of Golden Hill and Westridge drives, said committee member Ginny Kavanaugh. The five-week-old campaign has to raise another \$828,000 by a Thursday, Sept. 25, deadline.

The Town Council, relying on a recommendation by the town's Open Space Acquisition Advisory Committee, agreed to contribute up to \$100,000 from the town's open-space acquisi-



Shady Trail in Portola Valley may be part of a new open space acquisition in the Westridge neighborhood. A group of residents is trying to raise \$1.6 million to preserve it.

tion fund, Ms. Kavanaugh said.

The list of donors includes an unnamed foundation that made an initial pledge of \$400,000, and a subsequent "matching" pledge of \$100,000 from Bill and Jean Lane, committee member Bev Lipman said.

"I think we're doing very well," Ms. Lipman noted. "I think it's going to work. I hope it is."

In a flier dated Sept. 4, Ms. Kavanaugh described the

■ PORTOLA VALLEY

trail as "rich biologically," and added that Paul Heiple, who chairs the town's Conservation Committee, told her of "dozens of species of native plants" and many bird species attracted to the berries there.

Shady Trail runs just inside the property line, Town Administrator Angela Howard told the Almanac, adding: "I understand that it is a very

nice, tranquil trail."

An easement and a construction setback serve to insulate the trail regardless of who owns the property, she said. Converting the property to open space would prohibit all development on the land.

The trail is a "mostly intact" former dirt road from long ago when the property was part of the 1,400-acre Ormondale Farm, town historian Nancy Lund said

See **OPEN SPACE**, page 8

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Mary Lou Putnam dies at 73

Woodside mother of six active in many charity causes

Mary Lou Putnam, a volunteer and fundraiser for many causes, particularly in the Catholic community, died Sept. 2 at her home in Woodside following a 15-month battle with ovarian cancer. She was 73.

Ms. Putnam, the mother of six children, was the wife of former Woodside Town Council member and prominent business leader, Joseph Putnam.

She was born on a farm near Gregory, South Dakota. Before marrying Mr. Putnam, her high school sweetheart, she taught in a one-room schoolhouse in Gregory. In 1965, the Putnams moved to California, where he opened Putnam Buick in Burlingame.

While raising her six children, Ms. Putnam graduated from Notre Dame de Namur University in 1979. She was active in the community, serving on the boards of the Pacific Legal Foundation,

Sequoia Hospital Foundation and Notre Dame de Namur University. According to Sister Paula Butier, former president of Notre Dame High School in Belmont, in 1977 the Putnam Buick raffle, instigated by Ms. Putnam, put a new roof on the high school building.

Her most recent passion was raising funds for the St. Francis Center in Redwood City, a nonprofit foundation providing food, education and housing to the working poor. She was the force behind the center's annual spring luncheon and auction, raising thousands of dollars each year. At the center, Ms. Putnam also taught English as a second language to the mothers of children who attend the St. Francis Center school and bagged groceries weekly for its food bank.

Ms. Putnam was a world traveler, horse woman, and master



Mary Lou Putnam

gardener, even during her last illness when she raised a bumper crop of heirloom tomatoes and beets, say family members. She opened her home frequently for fundraising dinners, doing all the cooking herself, with the aid of her daughter, Kathleen, a professional baker, they say. She served as a eucharistic minister at St. Pius Catholic Church in Redwood City and as a docent at Filoli.

Ms. Putnam is survived by her husband of 54 years, Joseph Putnam of Woodside; children Mark Putnam of Asheville, North Carolina, Dave Putnam of Woodside, Kent Putnam of Woodside, Marty Putnam of Portola Valley, Lisa Carlsmith of Woodside, and Kathleen Putnam of San Francisco; and 11 grandchildren. She is also survived by her brothers, Ken Kayle and Chuck Kayle, and sisters Maxine Meyers and Evelyn Albers.

Services were held Sept. 6 at St. Pius Catholic Church in Redwood City. Contributions may be made to St. Francis Center, P.O. Box 7134, Redwood City, CA 94063.

Former Portola Valley commissioner, coach, windmill owner dies at 64

By David Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

A memorial service for Dennis Reichardt, a long distance runner, youth soccer coach and former Portola Valley planning commissioner, is scheduled for 2 p.m. Friday, Sept. 14, at the Roller Hapgood & Tinney funeral home at 980 Middlefield Road in Palo Alto.

Mr. Reichardt died Aug. 31 at his home in San Carlos seven years after being diagnosed with progressive supranuclear palsy, relatives said. He was 64.

For a part of their 30 years in Portola Valley, starting in 1969, Dennis and Sharon Reichardt and their family lived on a six-acre lot at the corner of Georgia Lane and Portola Road, Mr. Reichardt's son Reid said.

The familiar roadside windmill, with its nursery school, was part of the property. As an example of his father's determined approach to life, Reid recalled that his father proceeded to paint the then-red windmill a shade of green, despite residents' objections. (It is white today.)

Mr. Reichardt leavened his outlook with kindness, his son

said in recalling the years his father coached him in soccer — an avocation Mr. Reichardt spent 10 years doing for AYSO and CYSA.

"Every time after a game, no matter how the game went, no matter whether we won or lost, he would always tell us how well we did," his son said. "Even though he was strong-willed person, he was encouraging at the same time."

Will power may have been essential to Mr. Reichardt's long distance running, which included regular runs with a family dog up the 1,400 feet of Windy Hill. "That was one of his favorite runs," his son said, adding that his dad had his timing down well enough to tell his kids precisely when to look at the summit through their telescope and see their father waving to them.

He ran four marathons, including twice in San Francisco and once in Phoenix, his son said. All told, Mr. Reichardt accomplished his goal of running the distance



Dennis Reichardt

of the circumference of the earth, his son said.

He served on the town's Planning Commission between 1986 and 1991, relatives said. In 1989, in a spur of the moment decision, Mr. Reichardt took his son to see the Berlin Wall come down, relatives said.

Mr. Reichardt was born in Waukegan, Illinois, graduated from Brigham Young University in 1968, and from Golden Gate University in 1972, where he received a master's degree in business administration.

Most of his 20-year business career dealt with corporate taxes and finances, followed by about five years in real estate development, relatives said.

Mr. Reichardt is survived by his wife Sharon; daughter Randylyn of Walnut Creek; son Reid of San Francisco; and two grandchildren.

Donations may be made in Mr. Reichardt's name to CurePSP.org, an organization that seeks a cure for and assists victims of progressive supranuclear palsy, or to UCSF Memory and Aging Center (memory.ucsf.edu/gift.htm), where Mr. Reichardt was a volunteer and donor for PSP research. ■

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Gloria Darke



Is That Our Fridge?

Q: Dear Gloria, We recently closed escrow on a home in Menlo Park and in our offer we listed the refrigerator as an item we wanted included in the sale. We took possession last week and to our surprise there was no refrigerator. Our agent contacted the seller's agent and they claim they never listed it on the MLS. Is that our fridge?

— M/M Myers

A: Dear: M/M Myers

Even though something may be listed on the MLS, the sales agreement should specify which appliances are included with the property and which appliances are not. Anything that is attached goes with the property unless it is specifically listed as being excluded. Therefore, it is customary that all built-in appliances stay with the property while portable appliances often do not. Certainly, buyers shouldn't expect

to see gaping holes where the oven used to be or the dishwasher once stood. Your realtor did the right thing by stating that the home was being purchased with the condition that the seller must include the refrigerator. It's not customary that appliances like clothes washer and dryers stay with the property. However, once again let me state that in real estate everything is open to negotiation. Since it was not negotiated out of the contract and the seller accepted your offer to include refrigerator then it should've remained in the property regardless if it was not listed in MLS. By the way, this is just one of many reasons that you should always insist upon a walk-through inspection just prior to closing. I assume the listing agent can assist your agent in locating the sellers so that either the refrigerator is returned to you or they replace it with a new one.

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

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Park Theatre proposal: What's the public benefit?

■ Despite public opposition, mayor reaffirms support for using city funds to restore theater.

By **Rory Brown**
Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park resident Andy Duncan is still asking the city for \$500,000 so he can convert the abandoned Park Theatre into a dance studio for the Menlo Park Academy of Dance.

Now it's a matter of figuring out if Menlo Park's taxpaying residents — including a majority of members of the City Council — think Mr. Duncan's efforts to restore the 60-year-old deteriorating theater for a private business are worthy of public funds.

Mayor Kelly Fergusson has been bold in her support for Mr. Duncan's project, arguing that the restoration of the theater, an El Camino Real eyesore since it closed in 2002, is reason enough to grant Mr. Duncan the money.

But a growing chorus of residents is opposed to public funds going to a private business.

"Restoring the Park Theatre may be a great thing, but I think we could be setting a dangerous precedent," said Councilman John Boyle. "If we give public funds to one private business, what keeps

another business from asking for a grant or loan? Where do we draw the line?"

The proposal

Mr. Duncan will try to sell his project to the public at a community meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 12. The meeting — not a city-sponsored event — is scheduled to start at 7 p.m. in the Burgess Recreation Center at 700 Alma St.

Mr. Duncan's proposal includes restoring the exterior of the theater, including the marquee and neon sign, as well as restoring parts of the interior and converting the remaining space into a dance studio.

He said he is \$500,000 short of covering the \$4.27 million total costs associated with buying the property and fixing up the theater, and has requested a \$500,000 grant or no-interest loan to be paid back when he sells the theater.

"[In this proposal], the public gets a restored theater and a historic building — that's the public benefit here," Mr. Duncan said.

"This is a unique and innovative way to preserve some of the city's history without the city having to invest the full costs," Mayor Fergusson said.

son said. "There's going to be a solution, and I think we can get there."

Ms. Fergusson, a civil engineer, admitted that she is a "lover of architecture," and may feel stronger about preserving the look and feel of the theater than other residents, but she stressed that restoring the theater should be a top priority.

Public funds, private business

But a lot of residents don't share the mayor's willingness to use public funds for this proposal, and have opposed the concept since Mr. Duncan first asked the city for financial help last month.

"I'm astonished the city even considered giving money to a private business," said resident Sue Kayton. "I'd like to be somewhere else, too. Is the city going to put aside any money to help me relocate?"

Ms. Kayton isn't alone in her thinking, as the council has received a steady stream of e-mails opposed to the plan, many of them arguing that the restoration of an old theater isn't reason enough to spend taxpayer dollars.

"Residents need to see a tangible benefit other than a new marquee, and as the project stands, I don't see one," said Councilman Andy Cohen.



The Almanac/Kainaz Amaria

The Park Theatre has been vacant since 2002.

Three votes?

With Mayor Fergusson supporting the project and councilmen Boyle and Cline publicly opposed, that leaves the decision in the hands of Councilmen Richard Cline and Heyward Robinson when Mr. Duncan's proposal comes back to the council for a vote later this month.

Both council members have had questions about granting public funds for Mr. Duncan's project, but neither councilman has ruled out the option.

"It should be a priority to preserve some of our older buildings, and

the Park Theatre is one of them," Mr. Cline said. "But at the same time, I'm very hesitant to use public funds for private use."

Councilman Robinson said he also wants to see the theater restored, but has reservations about spending the public funds requested by Mr. Duncan. ■

■ MENLO PARK

Menlo Park resident Andy Duncan will present his plans to convert the Park Theatre into a dance studio on Wednesday, Sept. 12, in the Burgess Recreation Center at 700 Alma St.

OPEN SPACE

continued from page 5

in a written comment.

Contingencies

The town would contribute if an independent appraisal finds the property to be worth at least \$1.6 million and if all the promised money is in the town's bank account by the deadline, Councilman Steve Toben said in an Aug. 23 letter to Ms. Lipman.

Included in the town's proposal is up to \$10,000 to cover appraisal and transaction costs, Mr. Toben said. The town would be the buyer of record, which would make the donations tax deductible and require the town to shoulder site maintenance duties, Ms. Lipman said.

The council proposed spending no more than \$100,000 because the property and trail are not along a "scenic corridor," Ms. Howard said. The parcel is hilly and has a "long, thin entrance" and would be "difficult" to develop, she added. Ms. Kavanaugh called it a

"flag lot" because its dimensions resemble a flag on a pole.

"The town is not looking to buy this property unless someone else pays for (most of) it," Ms. Howard said.

Portola Valley's budget for 2007-08 shows a projected balance of \$1.7 million set aside for the purchase of open space, including about \$210,000 in new revenues from utility user taxes.

All the committee members — Ms. Kavanaugh, Ms. Lipman, Al Shreck and Mary Hufty — live near the trail, Ms. Kavanaugh said.

Support for the campaign has come from the town's Trails and Paths Committee and from the Westridge Architectural Supervising Committee, she said.

The Committee to Protect Shady Trail is setting up a web site at www.theshadytrail.com. For more information, contact Mr. Shreck at 415-392-8971 or chrnm@montgomery-capital.com, or Ms. Lipman at 854-9199 or bevlipman@sbcglobal.net. ■

Fire sprinkler debate returns to Menlo Park

By **Rory Brown**
Almanac Staff Writer

The touchy debate over whether fire sprinklers should be required in more Menlo Park homes will resurface at a City Council study session scheduled for Tuesday, Sept. 11.

The council will discuss an ordinance proposed by Menlo Park Fire Protection District officials that would require sprinklers in the following cases:

■ New single-family homes of more than 1,000 square feet.

■ Homes where more than 50 percent of the structure is to be remodeled.

■ All planned buildings with a basement of more than 250 square feet.

The ordinance would not apply to existing homes, unless they underwent a major remodel. Sprinklers are already required in most new commercial buildings and multi-family homes.

Since the Sept. 11 discussion is a

study session, the council will not vote on the ordinance, but could decide to schedule the matter for an upcoming meeting.

Prickly issue

Although similar ordinances have been adopted in East Palo Alto and Atherton, the sprinkler debate has proven particularly contentious in Menlo Park.

Fire district officials say sprinklers save the lives of residents and firefighters, but some residents and developers have argued that high installation costs and potential water damage outweigh the safety benefits.

In 2004 and 2005, fire district officials pushed the council to adopt the ordinance, but then-council members Lee Duboc, Nicholas Jellins and Mickie Winkler opposed the changes.

After the three council members left office in December, fire district officials urged the new council to take another look at the ordinance.

"This is going to be a prelimi-

nary discussion," said Mayor Kelly Fergusson, who has supported stricter sprinkler guidelines in the past. "If we want to really consider additional fire sprinkler guidelines — and that's a big if — we need to consider how expensive it could be for builders and homeowners."

Councilman Andy Cohen said sprinklers should be required in remodeled homes that add a basement, but wasn't sure about other situations.

Councilman John Boyle said he will go into the meeting with "an open mind," but acknowledged he's "nervous" that a sprinkler ordinance might make it too costly for residents to remodel homes. ■

■ MENLO PARK

The fire sprinkler study session is scheduled to start at 5:30 p.m., in the council chambers at the Civic Center, between Laurel and Alma streets.

LAWSUIT

continued from page 5

San Mateo County Court in October, former officers Keith Butler, Joe Hinkston and Kenneth Clayton allege that Sgt. Prickett

"created an intimidating, hostile, abusive and offensive working environment" through a number of actions, including placing white-supremacist images in the workplace and calling their atten-

tion to them.

The three officers worked under Sgt. Prickett after he was promoted to patrol sergeant in July 2005.

City Council members have had little to say about the case, often

deferring questions to Police Chief Bruce Goitia. Earlier this year, the chief said "outside counsel" has already looked into allegations made by the former officers, and after a six-month investigation,

it was determined there were no signs of racism or a hostile work environment in the police department.

A jury trial for the lawsuit is tentatively set to begin Nov. 26. ■

Hospital rebuild plan moves ahead

■ Health-care district appears ready to help fund the project, and step away from its role in hospital's governance.

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor

The local public agency that first owned and now co-governs Sequoia Hospital in Redwood City appears poised to step away from the hospital's governance under a proposed agreement with the hospital's operator.

But the taxpayer-supported agency, Sequoia Healthcare District, would nevertheless contribute \$75 million toward the projected \$240 million cost of rebuilding and expanding the facility under the proposal.

All the details have yet to be worked out, but all five members of the district board appear to support the overall concept of the proposal, detailed at a Sept. 5 public meeting, that would turn over ownership and governance of Sequoia to Catholic Healthcare West (CHW), which now operates the hospital.

The proposed agreement would require CHW to continue to run Sequoia as a community hospital, not a Catholic facility. It would also require CHW to put in place an electronic patient-record system, and to implement an aggressive doctor recruitment and retention program at the hospital.

The district board meeting came two days after the Redwood City Council approved the massive rebuilding project at the hospital's existing site at Whipple Avenue and Alameda de las Pulgas.

"Last week was a major, red-letter week — the city's approval, and going public with the transaction with the district," said Glenna Vaskelis, the hospital's chief administrator. "We're looking forward to breaking ground," she said, adding that if all goes as planned, that would happen in

November.

The district board is scheduled to meet again to discuss, and possibly approve, a final agreement at 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 25, in the hospital's Sequoia Room.

The hospital is to remain fully operational during the construction project, which CHW hopes will be complete by Jan. 1, 2013.

Sequoia Hospital's owner is under the gun to seismically retrofit the 56-year-old facility to meet a 2013 state deadline. But the need to retrofit led to the decision to also expand the hospital to include a new, four-story building, a parking garage and other new features. The planned new facility will have 167 acute-care beds, Ms. Vaskelis said, and will continue to house a cardiology department that has been one of the hospital's brightest stars.

Funding sources

The health-care district owned Sequoia until, straining under an increasingly heavy debt, it worked out an arrangement with CHW in 1996 to create a nonprofit corporation that would own and govern the hospital. That corporation, Sequoia Health Services, has a 10-member governing board, with five members appointed by the district and five by CHW, which has operated the hospital since that time.

CHW paid the district \$30 million in the deal, and "at that time, the district said 'we're not touching any of it,'" said Kathleen Kane, the district board's president. That money, she said, has grown to \$70 million, a large portion of which will be used toward the district's contribution to the rebuilding project.

Under the proposal, the district would also contribute the revenue from the sale of a medical office

building it owns — estimated to be worth between \$12 million to \$15 million.

The proposed agreement will also allow CHW to absorb the nonprofit Sequoia Health Services.

In addition to the district's contribution to the hospital's construction fund — which will be capped at \$75 million — CHW and Sequoia Health Services will each contribute \$75 million. The remaining \$15 million will be sought in private donations. Under the proposal, CHW will pay for all costs over the projected \$240 million.

Ms. Vaskelis said there also will be a provision in the final agreement that would require approval by the district if CHW wants to sell the hospital before a specified period of time.

Also under the proposal, the district would split any of Sequoia's profits beyond a specified threshold, beginning after the agreement is signed, and it is that money that the district will use to push its contribution up to the \$75 million mark.

Ms. Kane, the district board president, said the district's annual revenue from taxes will continue to be used to support community-based health programs, which include funding for a nursing program offered through Canada College and San Francisco State University; contributions to the county's Children's Health Initiative; and funding for the Samaritan House free clinic and the Fair Oaks medical clinic.

With its responsibility for Sequoia Hospital for the most part at an end, the district will be able to expand its efforts to meet the health-care needs of its residents through community programs, Ms. Kane said.

The district comprises Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley, Woodside, Redwood City, San Carlos, Belmont and nearby unincorporated areas. ■

Menlo Park Fire Protection District remembers 9/11

On Tuesday, Sept. 11, the Menlo Park Fire Protection District will remember the victims of Sept. 11, 2001, by placing 343 American flags on the front lawns of Fire Station 1 at 300 Middlefield Road and Fire Station 4, at the corner of Valparaiso Avenue and Alameda de las Pulgas, in memory of the 343 New York Fire Department firefighters who lost their lives that day.

The fire district is a sponsor of California Task Force 3, a search and rescue team that spent three weeks shortly after 9/11 at the World Trade Center site. The team searched for survivors and assisted in the recovery of victims. Team members will speak Sept.

■ NOTES

11 at Stanford University School of Medicine and San Jose State University.

The honor guard of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District will also lead the Pledge of Allegiance at the Tuesday, Sept. 11, meeting of the Menlo Park City Council.

VTA cuts bus service

Beginning next year, public transit riders will no longer be able to travel from the Menlo Park train station to Stanford and other points south aboard a Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

bus, thanks to the VTA's vote Aug. 30 to end the service.

As part of system-wide changes, the VTA axed Route 22 service to Menlo Park, ignoring pleas of riders and Mayor Kelly Fergusson.

The 22 route loops from the Menlo Park train station to the Eastridge Mall in San Jose, with many stops in between, including the Stanford campus and hospital. But starting Jan. 1, the bus will go no farther north than the Palo Alto Caltrain station.

VTA officials pointed to low ridership: Some 400 people a day board the bus in Menlo Park, and thousands board at other stops, they say.

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CITY OF MENLO PARK PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 24, 2007

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

The following items require a Notice of Public Meeting or Public Hearing:

Use Permit/David Crouch/800 Magnolia Street: Request for a use permit to construct a new two-story, single-family residence on a substandard lot with regard to lot width in the R-1-S (Single-Family Suburban) zoning district, and for excavation into a required side yard setback for a lightwell and egress associated with a basement.

Use Permit/Thomas Jackson/508 Laurel Avenue: Request for a use permit to demolish an existing single-story residence and construct a new two-story, single-family residence on a substandard lot with regard to lot width in the R-1-U (Single-Family Urban) zoning district.

Use Permit/Mary Speiser/160 Garland Drive: Request for a use permit to demolish an existing single-story, single-family residence and construct a new two-story, single-family residence on a substandard lot with regard to lot width in the R-1-S (Single-Family Suburban) zoning district.

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that said Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on this item in the Council Chambers of the City of Menlo Park, located at 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, on Monday, September 24, 2007, 7:00 p.m. or as near as possible thereafter, at which time and place interested persons may appear and be heard thereon. If you challenge this item in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Menlo Park at, or prior to, the public hearing.

Documents related to these items may be inspected by the public on weekdays between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday, with alternate Fridays closed, at the Department of Community Development, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park. Please note that the items listed are only the agenda items that require a public hearing. Please call the Planning Division if there are any questions and/or for complete agenda information (650) 330-6702.

DATED: September 6, 2007
Deanna Chow, Senior Planner,
Menlo Park Planning Commission
Visit our Web site for Planning Commission public hearing, agenda, and staff report information: www.menlopark.org
Published in THE COUNTRY ALMANAC on September 12, 2007.

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Sewer connection fees may rise 67 percent in local towns

■ West Bay Sanitary District includes parts of Menlo Park, Atherton, Woodside and Portola Valley.

By Marion Softky
Almanac Staff Writer

One of the costs of growth in southern San Mateo County is about to hit builders and developers, as the regional sewage plant has to expand to serve new homes and businesses.

The West Bay Sanitary District is considering substantially increasing its connection fees for new homes and businesses to accommodate an almost five-fold increase in the cost of processing its sewage at the regional plant in Redwood Shores.

The cost of connecting a single residence — home, apartment or condo — to district sewers is proposed to increase from \$3,132 to \$5,229, said District Manager Tim Clayton. This reflects an increase in connection costs from the regional plant; these have jumped from \$583 per unit to \$2,750.

Connection costs for non-residential uses will also almost double; they depend on the amount of flow.

The West Bay district serves approximately 55,000 people in parts of Menlo Park, Atherton, East Palo Alto, Woodside, Portola Valley, and unincorporated San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

The board of the sanitary district will hold a meeting to explain the

new fees to the public at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 12, at the district office at 500 Laurel St. in Menlo Park. The board will adopt new fees at a future meeting.

"Our board is committed to pay-as-you go," Mr. Clayton said. "The expansion should be paid for by the new people coming in. They created the need."

The increase stems from the South Bay System Authority (SBSA), which operates the sewage plant that serves some 280,000 people in the South County communities from Belmont to East Palo Alto.

SBSA is increasing the capacity of its plant by two million gallons per day, from 27 to 29 mgd, to accommodate new growth, said SBSA Manager Dan Child. The cost of the expansion is raising the per-gallon cost of treating sewage almost five times — from \$2.65 per gallon to \$12.40 per gallon.

"It's incredible," Mr. Childs said. He attributed the huge increase to a variety of factors: inflation, stricter environmental standards, environmental costs, and construction costs. "Construction costs have skyrocketed," he said. "To add two million gallons per day costs \$24.8 million."

There may be more increases ahead, Mr. Child warned. The

25-year-old sewage plant is wearing out and will need major repairs and upgrades

Fair Oaks district

Residents of the Fair Oaks Sewer Maintenance District, which includes areas of North Fair Oaks, unincorporated Redwood City and Woodside, are paying for the plant expansion through increased sewer service charges.

"We're not looking to increase connection fees," said San Mateo County Public Works Director James Porter. "We're looking at fees for service."

New fees were adopted during the summer after public outreach and community meetings, Mr. Porter said.

Sewer service charges were raised from \$267 per residence in fiscal year 2006-07, to \$400 per year for the next three years, and \$420 per year for the next two years, according to the Public Works Web site.

The West Bay district's sewer service charge is basically rising at \$20 per year, from \$360 for 2006-07, according to Mr. Clayton. It should be \$420 in 2009-10.

For information on the West Bay Sanitary District, call 321-0384; or go to westbaysanitary.org.

For information on the Fair Oaks Sewer Maintenance District, go to co.sanmateo.ca.us, and click on Public Works, and then Flood Control, Lighting, Sewer and Water, and then Sewer. ■

Council meets on Sausal Creek, Town Center interiors

There's water flowing under Town Center in Portola Valley, but for many years, Sausal Creek has been channeled through an underground culvert that begins at the southern end of the 11.2-acre site and ends near Christ Episcopal Church.

With a major redesign of Town Center ongoing, a group of resi-

dents, town staff and consultants has, since the spring of 2006, been pondering the idea of "daylighting" parts of the creek — restoring a natural channel that would bisect parts of the new grassy areas.

A presentation to the Town Council, with council discussion and possible action to follow, is scheduled for an 8 p.m.

meeting on Wednesday, Sept. 12, at the Historic Schoolhouse.

Also on the agenda are a presentation on the interior features of the new library, Town Hall and community center by Town Center project architect Larry Strain; and construction-bid recommendations for the new softball field by the public works director.

Jensen Hauser

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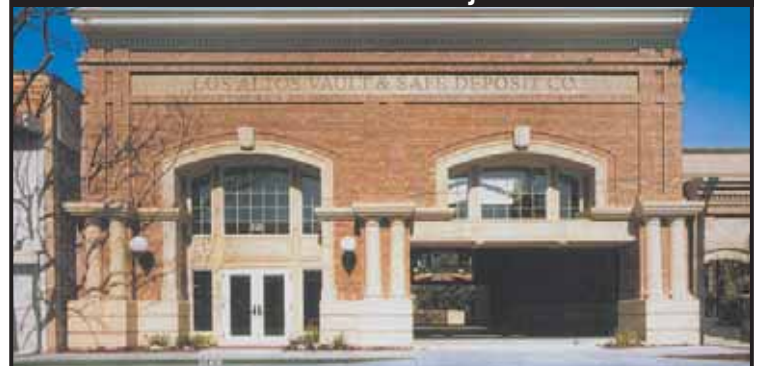
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Deep divisions

Another controversy erupts in Atherton town hall

Atherton Mayor **Alan Carlson** speaks to the audit committee about turmoil surrounding the suspension of Finance Director John Johns.



Just when it seemed as if things were quieting down, Atherton town hall is once again a house divided. This time, the lightning rod at the center of the storm is Finance Director John Johns.

To his supporters, Mr. Johns is a vigilant public servant whose efforts have put Atherton's financial house in order and introduced much-needed controls on how money is handled.

To his detractors, he's an ambitious man angling to get the city manager's job at any cost.

And to anyone who's been following Atherton's municipal soap opera, it all seems to lead back to lingering resentments stemming from the town's troubles in its busy building department.

Finance director suspended

The storm broke on Monday, Aug. 27,

Everyone needs to 'take a step back' and let the investigation of Finance Director Johns Johns run its course.

ATHERTON MAYOR ALAN CARLSON

when Interim City Manager Wende Protzman placed Mr. Johns on paid administrative leave following a complaint that he created a hostile work environment. That same day, outside auditors from Caporicci & Larson arrived to conduct the annual audit of the town's books.

A door had to be installed on Mr. Johns' office so it could be sealed off, and the key is being held in the police department, Ms. Protzman said. The town hired attorney Mary Topliff to investigate the complaint,

and Atherton police opened up their own investigation into a computer in the finance director's office that was allegedly vandalized or destroyed. Both investigations are ongoing.

Mr. Johns said he believes he is being targeted for turning up financial misdeeds in the town, and said that he's been threatened with physical harm on three occasions. He has hired an attorney, and said that the town's handling of the complaint against him may be a violation of

whistleblower protection provisions in Atherton's fraud policy.

Councilman Charles Marsala told the Almanac he believes that Mr. Johns has been using his audits of the Atherton Building Department as a springboard to getting the city manager job. He is accusing Mr. Johns of overstating problems he turned up in the building department last year, focusing on "a few minor errors" instead of finding that staff "had done a great job managing approximately \$1 billion in residential construction under (former Building Official Mike) Hood."

The citizen members of the town's audit committee are staunchly defending Mr. Johns, and questioning why the town suspended him.

Despite being removed from his job, Mr. Johns notified a Caporicci & Larson auditor that he'd turned up problems with employee

expense accounts — including some in the Atherton Police Department.

Outside auditor Brian Kelly of Caporicci & Larson said he had a brief conversation with Mr. Johns outside town offices, but it was interrupted when Mr. Johns received a citation from the police.

Neither Mr. Johns nor police Chief Bob Brennan would comment on reports that Chief Brennan cited Mr. Johns for driving on an expired license on Aug. 29, as he was leaving the town's administrative offices.

The next week, two police officers stationed themselves outside a closed session council meeting, raising the hackles of a group of residents who showed up to comment on Mr. Johns' suspension.

And to top it off, Ms. Protzman and Mr. Johns both said they intend to apply to become Atherton's next city manager, a post that's been vacant since the retirement of Jim Robinson in July. Ms. Protzman, Mr. Robinson's assistant, was tapped by the City Council to serve as interim city manager while a headhunting firm conducts a search for a permanent replacement.

Police affairs

Mr. Johns said he believes the complaints against him are: making verbal threats against a peace officer; and acting in a disruptive or aggressive manner that is creating morale problems.

"If my understanding of the nature, scope and source of the allegations is correct, I'm confident I will be exonerated," he said in a letter to auditor Steve Larson that was distributed to the audit committee.

Mayor Alan Carlson, City Attorney Marc Hynes and Ms. Protzman said they can't comment on the complaint against Mr. Johns, due to the confidentiality of personnel matters.

Mr. Johns told the Almanac that the police department is not being audited, but that he encountered a pattern of "minor infractions of the town's purchasing ordinance. These

observations suggested a tightening up was in order over purchasing controls."

Upon reviewing expense reports in several town departments, the Caporicci & Larson auditors found violations of the town's policies, but the amounts of money were not enough to materially impact the town's financial statements, Steve Larson told the audit committee at its meeting last Friday. Some expense reports submitted by the Police Department and the Public Works Department lacked preapproval, and there were a couple of charges disallowed under town policy — one for valet parking reimbursement and one for the purchase of alcohol.

However, it involved only a couple of thousand dollars and the reports had the required supporting documentation, he said.

"I'd recommend a complete review of all expense reports over the past year," Mr. Larson said, adding that the town should tighten up its expense report policy.

City manager job

According to Mr. Marsala, he met with Mr. Johns in October, as the town was struggling to right itself after a series of embarrassing revelations about the town's building department.

Mr. Marsala, who was serving as Atherton's mayor last year, said that Mr. Johns "said I looked bad as mayor with the problems in the building department and it was because Jim Robinson had not supervised the building department. He suggested I fire Mr. Robinson and name him to replace (Robinson)."

When informed of Mr. Marsala's allegation, Mr. Johns told the Almanac, "I'm not going to dignify that accusation with a response."

At the time, outraged citizens were lining up to ask why the town hadn't kept closer watch over the building department.

A three-phase internal audit conducted by

Mr. Johns from June through October 2006, turned up problems with permits, sloppy and incomplete records, a lack of checks and balances, and a terribly inadequate computer system. It also found the department failed to charge a total of \$134,000 in excavation surcharge fees.

The San Mateo County Civil Grand Jury initiated an investigation, and one employee of the building department revealed that she had been reprimanded following a personnel investigation.

On the other side of the issue, a group of residents and builders joined forces to defend the building department and Mr. Hood, and threatened to hold a recall election against Councilwoman Kathy McKeithen, whose complaints spurred the town's scrutiny into the department.

Councilman's allegations

Mr. Marsala called Mr. Johns' audit findings "inflammatory," saying they implied that favoritism was at play.

"The residents were using the (audit) reports to conclude that corruption was going on," he said.

Mr. Johns should not have been interpreting building codes, and the \$134,000 in uncharged excavation fees can be explained away as an appropriate use of the building official's discretionary authority, Mr. Marsala said. The fate of the uncollected fees became moot when the council rescinded the fee in September 2006 amid threats of legal action.

"So the question is, were the audit reports intentionally presented in a way to discredit both Mr. Robinson and Mr. Hood for the purpose of getting Mr. Robinson's job?" Mr. Marsala said. "No one on ... the finance committee, audit committee or grand jury challenged Mr. Johns' allegations nor asked for worksheets or background informa-

See **ATHERTON**, next page

Key players

John Johns

Atherton Finance Director John Johns is accused of creating a hostile work environment and has been suspended pending an investigation. He has been credited with cleaning up the town's finances and securing a series of "unqualified" audits attesting to its financial health. In 2006, at the City Council's behest, he conducted a three-phase audit of the building department that resulted in a series of changes in its operations.

Charles Marsala

Councilman Charles Marsala said he now believes the building department audits conducted by Mr. Johns in 2006 were flawed. He's accused Mr. Johns of inflating the problems in the building department in order to position himself to be named city manager.



Sam Goodman

The chair of the Atherton Audit Committee, Sam Goodman has staunchly defended Mr. Johns' performance as the town's finance director. He's a former Realtor and an Atherton Civic Interest League director. The audit committee is an advisory body tasked with overseeing the annual outside audit of the town's books, as well as providing guidance to town staff on financial controls throughout the year. It's made of up two council members and five council-appointed residents.



Kathy McKeithen

A councilwoman since 2000, Kathy McKeithen ran for office as an outsider seeking a more open and trustworthy town government. She is one of two council members on the audit committee, and she pushed for the audit of the building department. She supports Mr. Johns and says the council put him in an "untenable position" when it directed him to audit the building department.



Wende Protzman

In August, the council appointed Wende Protzman, the assistant to city manager Jim Robinson, to serve as interim city manager following Mr. Robinson's retirement at the end of July. She said she acted on the advice of the city attorney when she placed Mr. Johns on leave after receiving a complaint about him. A head-hunting firm has been hired to search for city manager candidates; Ms. Protzman has said she is interested in applying for the job.



Sam Goodman, the chair of the audit committee, questions why the finance director was suspended.

ATHERTON

continued from previous page

tion. Whatever he claimed was accepted."

Mr. Marsala sent a four-page letter detailing his position to the Almanac, along with a binder of town staff reports, newspaper clippings and his two public records requests, both denied, that sought background information on the audit findings.

Both Mr. Johns and Sam Goodman, chairman of the audit committee, object to Mr. Marsala's assertions.

"The letter casts aspersions about the financial function of the town, the audit committee and the auditors in an attempt to convince of the accuracy of the letter," Mr. Goodman said.

He accused Mr. Marsala of attempting to influence the personnel investigation of Mr. Johns, and said the findings of the audits were thoroughly reviewed and are not in dispute.

Mr. Johns said that the finance department's audits of the building department were examined by the City Council as well as the audit committee.

"The record will also reflect that the findings were discussed in detail with the former city manager and with the building department," Mr. Johns said in an e-mail to the Almanac. "Additionally there is a substantial body of documentation available that will demonstrate that management was in complete agreement with our findings and fully committed to implementing the recommendations contained within said reports."

On Oct. 18, the council approved a laundry list of recommended changes to the building department, including an expensive permit-tracking software system and new computers, additional staff, a review of zoning codes and building regulations, updated procedures and a division of responsibilities to place checks and balances on the building official. Most of the changes are under way or have already been implemented under the direction of new Building Official Mike Wasmann.

Earlier this year, the council also voted 4-1, with Mr. Marsala opposed, to pursue action against several construction projects identified in the audits that were issued permits but appear to violate town rules. In one case, the owners are now suing the town; in another, the town dropped its abatement proceedings after owners demonstrated that it had been town practice over 14 years to allow other homes with mansard roofs to use the same loophole that they had.

Letter "not helpful"

Councilman Jerry Carlson, who is also a member of the audit committee, said he was perplexed by Mr. Marsala's letter.

"This is dealing with subjects that are either in litigation or under investigation, and I don't think that's correct," he said.



The audit committee, whose members include **Sam Goodman** and Councilman Jerry Carlson (foreground), has worked closely with John Johns and recently commended his work.

Mayor Carlson admonished audit committee members and the public for repeating rumors and speculation, and asked everyone "to take a step back" and let the investigation run its course.

"I don't find the letter by Charles Marsala to be particularly helpful, nor do I find the comments from this committee very helpful," he said. "Nobody is criticizing (Mr. Johns') competence. I understand that what is under investigation is his conduct."

"Untenable position"

Councilwoman McKeithen was in Russia when the controversy erupted. She said that, after working with Mr. Johns for seven years, he has her support and that she hopes the complaint investigation can be resolved amicably.

"I found, without exception, John to be one of the most hard-working, honest, loyal employees, totally without any kind of guile," Ms. McKeithen said. "I've seen him consistently put the town's well-being before his own self-interest."

However, she said the council should have foreseen the potential for problems among town staff when they asked Mr. Johns to examine the building department.

"Without question, he was put in an untenable position," she said. "At the time, he seemed to be the best person to do the job. But who likes having one's actions reviewed by a fellow employee, and potentially reported on?"

According to Mr. Goodman, the audit committee chair, if town employees cooperate with audits, there's no reason for hostility to exist. "After all, audits are conducted for the benefit of the populace that pays taxes," he said.

This month, the audit committee plans to ask the City Council to expand the committee's charter so that it can work more closely with the finance director and help conduct operational audits of town departments, Mr. Goodman said.

"I wish Atherton was a sleepy town that doesn't shoot itself in the foot, but we're not. We keep hurting ourselves," Mr. Goodman said. ■

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Steve Larson, right, of the outside auditing firm Caporicci & Larson, recommends a review of the town's expense reports as Mayor Alan Carlson listens.



Open Letter to the Community *Sequoia Hospital is Rebuilding*

Sequoia Healthcare District is pleased to announce that representatives of the District and Catholic Healthcare West (CHW) have arrived on proposed terms of an arrangement for the future development and operation of Sequoia Hospital, including addition of a new four-story acute care pavilion, to ensure Sequoia's long-term operation for the benefit of all District residents. Under the proposal, the projected \$240 million rebuilding cost would be met by a collaborative financing plan that calls for \$75 million funded by SHD, \$75 million from CHW, \$75 million from Sequoia Hospital, and \$15 million from philanthropic contributions raised by Sequoia Hospital Foundation. There will be no new taxes associated with the rebuild. CHW will assume full responsibility for Sequoia Hospital.

While day-to-day operations of the highly regarded, nationally recognized Sequoia Hospital will remain unchanged, the benefits to the health care needs of the community will be significantly enhanced. Sequoia Hospital will be brought up to state-of-the-art medical standards, aesthetics and seismic safety. Sequoia will continue to attract the best and brightest physicians and staff for many years to come, maintaining its renowned cardiac care program. This arrangement will free the District to focus on community health programs for the needs of southern San Mateo County.

Sequoia Healthcare District Board members will review and discuss the terms of the proposal and reconvene later in the month to consider voting on the proposed terms. Community forums will be held to ensure that all District residents are fully informed. The second community forum will be held on:

Thursday, September 13, at 7:00 p.m.
Red Morton Community Center
1120 Roosevelt Ave
Redwood City, CA 94061

More information on Sequoia Healthcare District and the terms of the proposed agreement is available at www.sequoiahealthcaredistrict.com.



CITY OF MENLO PARK STATE OF CALIFORNIA

ENGINEERING DIVISION NOTICE TO BIDDERS FOR 2006-2007 SIDEWALK REPAIR PROJECT PROJECT NO. 20-011

1. **BID OPENING.** The bidder shall complete and submit the blue copy of the Proposal to the City Council form that is inserted in the Contract Documents. No other copy of the Proposal Section will be accepted. Sealed bids, containing said blue copies of the completed Proposal Section, and subject to the conditions named herein and in the specifications for **"2006-2007 SIDEWALK REPAIR PROJECT"**, addressed to the City of Menlo Park will be received at the office of the Engineering Division up to **2:00 p.m., Wednesday, September 26, 2007**, at which time they will be publicly opened and read.

2. **WORK DESCRIPTION.** The work to be done consists of removing and replacing portions of concrete sidewalk, curb and gutter, handicap ramp, driveway, valley gutter, asphalt parking strip, deeplifting asphalt concrete pavement, and tree root pruning at various locations in the City of Menlo Park; all as shown on the plans and described in the specifications with the title indicated in paragraph 1 above, and on file in the Office of the Engineering Services Manager. Reference to said Plans and Specifications is hereby made for further particulars.

3. **WORKING DAYS.** The work under this Contract is to be completed in **forty (40)** working days.

4. **CONTRACTOR'S LICENSE.** A **Class "A" or "C8"** Contractor's License is required for this work. Tree root pruning work shall be performed by a **Class "D49"** contractor, or class "A" and "C8" under supervision of a licensed arborist. No bid will be accepted from a Contractor who has not been licensed according to Chapter 9, Division 3 of the Business and Professional Code.

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

6. **PERFORMANCE BONDS.** Performance guaranty bonds as set forth in Section 2-3 of the Special Provisions will be required from the successful bidder.

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

8. **GENERAL PREVAILING WAGE RATES.** The Council has ascertained the general prevailing rate of wages applicable to the work to be done. A tabulation of the various classifications of workpersons to be employed and the prevailing rate of wages applicable thereto is on file in the Office of the Engineering Services Manager.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

17. **SHORING AND BRACING.** Pursuant to the provisions of California Labor Code Section 6707, each bid submitted in response to this Notice to Bidders shall contain, as a bid item, adequate sheeting, shoring, and bracing, or equivalent method, for the protection of life and limb in trenches and open excavation, which shall conform to applicable safety orders. By listing this sum, the bidder warrants that its action does not convey tort liability to the City, Engineer and their employees, agents and consultants.

18. **AFFIRMATIVE ACTION.** Each prime and subcontract bidder will be required to comply with the City of Menlo Park Affirmative Action Program as set forth in Council Resolution No. 2340. Guidelines and report forms are provided with the Contract Documents and shall be considered part of any Contract made pursuant thereto. The prime contractor and each subcontractor shall complete the City of Menlo Park Compliance Report and submit it with the bid proposal or within 48 hours of the bid opening if you are the lowest or second lowest bidder.

19. **MINORITY EMPLOYMENT PROGRAM.** Prime contractors and subcontractors must submit their Minority Employment Program (MEP) to the Engineering Services Manager with their bids or within 48 hours of the bid opening.

Dated: _____
SILVIA M. VONDERLINDEN, City Clerk
Published in THE COUNTRY ALMANAC on September 5, 12, 2007.

Traffic delays, detours due on eastbound Valparaiso

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

As street repaving is under way on eastbound Valparaiso Avenue in Menlo Park, drivers can expect traffic delays and occasional road closures through the end of the month.

The repaving project is a joint effort between Menlo Park and Atherton, as the town boundaries run through the middle of the road. The Atherton (west-bound) side of the road was repaved last year.

Duncan Jones, the Atherton public works director, said the Menlo Park side will likely be closed between University Drive and North Lemon Avenue on Sept. 17 and 18 as crews lay down the final layer of new pavement. He said crews are expected to be done by the end of the month — about a week ahead of schedule.

Drivers can also expect delays and brief closures until the end of the month to make way for heavy equipment, Mr. Jones said.

Water main replaced, traffic back to normal

Construction crews have finished replacing a leaky water main under University Drive in Menlo Park, meaning traffic is back to normal near the city's downtown area.

■ MENLO WATCH

California Water Service Co. has installed 2,000 feet of new, larger water mains under University Drive from Santa Cruz to Middle avenues, adding six fire hydrants and connecting the new line to existing water lines, said Darin Duncan, a CalWater district manager.

The downtown area, especially the already congested intersection of University Drive and Menlo Avenue by Draeger's market, has been difficult to navigate since CalWater crews starting digging up the street and redirecting traffic in May.

The new water main will double the water available for fighting fires, Mr. Duncan said.

CalWater serves about 73,800 people in Atherton, Woodside, Portola Valley, and a portion of Menlo Park.

Jury selection to start in Morrow murder case

Jury selection in the trial of Joseph Eli Morrow, 59, accused of killing his wife Donna Morrow, 37, during an argument at their Menlo Park home Dec. 19, 1991, is set to begin Tuesday, Sept. 11, attorneys for both sides agreed last week. The trial has been delayed several times by defense attorney appeals. ■

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THE MENLO PARK CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

The Menlo Park City School District is seeking potential candidates to fill open positions on the Bond Oversight Committee. In June 2006, voters within the Menlo Park City School District boundaries approved the Measure U Bond to modernize and provide new school facilities. The Bond was passed per Proposition 39, which requires the creation of a Bond Oversight Committee. This volunteer committee was created in September 2006 and is responsible for performing oversight activities such as review of bond expenditures and preparation of annual reports as set forth by Proposition 39. The Committee meets at minimum on a quarterly basis. The Committee is comprised of seven people from different segments of the Community. The District is currently seeking to fill two vacant positions. One position is for a person active in a senior citizens' organization and the other position is for a person active in a bona fide tax payers' organization. The person must be at least 18 years old and a resident of the School District. For any further questions, please call Ahmad Sheikholeslami at 650-321-7140. If you are interested in this position, please submit a Letter of Interest as well as background information about yourself and the organization in which you are active to: ahmad@mpcsd.org or to:

Menlo Park City School District
Attn: Ahmad Sheikholeslami
181 Encinal Ave., Atherton, CA 94027
Published in The Country Almanac on September 12, 2007.

Meeting on plans for Ladera Oaks

Ladera Oaks will hold a community meeting on Thursday, Sept. 20, to present information and answer questions about the swim and tennis club's proposal to replace its pre-1958 facilities, such as the clubhouse, children's dressing rooms and pool office.

The meeting begins at 7 p.m. in the clubhouse at 3249 Alpine Road in Portola Valley.

The club has filed an application for a use permit with the San Mateo County Planning Division, which is reviewing the club's proposed plans. The club has made presentations and provided copies of the plans to the Ladera Community Association, planners for the town of Portola Valley, and the San Francisco Creek Watershed Council.

Plans call for replacing structures that are functionally inefficient, lack energy-efficient features, and can't be made compliant with the Americans with Disabilities Act, according to club president Mike Miller.

The new clubhouse would be located approximately 25 feet farther back from Alpine Road and include features to reduce the amount of interior noise heard outdoors. Ten more off-street parking spaces would be added to reduce the impact on the surrounding neighborhood. Existing high-intensity parking lot lights on high poles would be replaced with lower-intensity lights, located closer to the ground to reduce brightness and glare.

For more information, call club manager Jim Gorman at 854-6699, ext. 100.

Atherton wants input on tree plan

The Atherton Tree Committee is looking to spruce up El Camino Real's median strips with new trees. A public meeting, or charette, is set for 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 18, in the Main House at Holbrook-Palmer Park at 150 Watkins Ave.

Town Arborist Kathy Hughes Anderson said the committee is looking for input from residents before taking a conceptual plan to beautify El Camino to the Atherton City Council.

The committee would like to replace the shrubs and small trees in the landscaped medians with larger trees, possibly live oaks or a species of elm tree that's particularly well-suited to growing in Atherton. Caltrans approval is needed, but the agency allowed Menlo Park to do a similar project.

For more information, call Ms. Hughes Anderson at 752-0526.

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Village Stationers

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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
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322.1234

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Cheeky Monkey

640 Santa Cruz Ave
Menlo Park
328.7975

Best Hair Salon

Images of Woodside

3040 Woodside Rd
Woodside
851.7103

Blues & Barbecue festival honors its many founders

■ PORTOLA VALLEY

Portola Valley's annual Blues & Barbecue festival on Sunday, Sept. 16, will focus, as it always does, on fundraising for the purchase of open space. Sharing the spotlight this year will be 34 of the original organizing committee members when the festival began in 1997.

At that first festival, a combo that included resident banjo player Jim Pollock provided entertainment, according to an Aug. 27, 1997, Almanac story. The auction that year included a tour of Sunset magazine hosted by former publisher Bill Lane and, as it does this year, a children's birthday party at the Portola Valley fire station.

The honorees this year — and the committee members from 1997, according to Community Events Committee Chair Carolyn Rogers — are Donna Andrighetto, Zelda Angus, Cathy Behr, Linda Benevento, Kathleen Carr, Sue Chaput, Marissa Currier, Patty Evans, Susan Evans, Chrisi Fleming, Diane Hillier, Diane Hughes, Jean Isaacson, Janet Larson, Nancy Lund, Donna Mason, Ellen Moran, Jayne Mordell, Rose Mosieff, Jan Pieper, Michelle Rapp, Connie Ring, Barb Seipp, Janet Smith, Felicia Snow, Margaret Stone, Susan Thomas, Patty Turnquist, Nancy Vian, Kelly Villareal, Peggy Walker, Nancy Wigley, Robin Willard, and Jane Yates.

With a decade behind it, the organizing committee may be benefiting from experience; the membership this year is just 14.

The festival this year begins at 2 p.m. and goes until 7 p.m. on the grass at the Town Center. Children's activities include pony rides, a reptile petting zoo, jousting and a climbing wall.

The Cajun band Tom Rigney & Flambeau will perform at 3 p.m. The bar, which opens at 2, will offer beers and soft drinks along with wines from the Fogarty winery. Appetizers will be from Bianchini's Market and Amigos Grill, both in Ladera.

The silent auction begins at 4 p.m. with 37 items up for bid. The list includes vacations — including Big Sur, Half Moon Bay and Patagonia — food and drink outings — including the Fogarty winery, the Parkside Grille and the Red Lotus — along with lessons in yoga, horseback riding and high-performance driving, plus children's parties and items for home and garden.

The dinner menu includes barbecued ribs, brisket and chicken, with serving starting at 5 p.m. Table seating is \$65 per person. Seating on the lawn is \$30 for adults and \$10 for children. Admission is \$10 per person if you bring your own food for a picnic.

Toni Bray and Diana Raines co-chair this year's festival; committee members are Beth Bianchi, Michael Bray, Vicki Burton, Sharon Driscoll, Beth Erskine, Janet Lorenzen, Marianne Plunder, Carolyn Rogers, Jason Schmidt, Kris Schmidt, Liz Sweeney and Karin Wick.

■ INFORMATION

The Blues & Barbecue festival runs from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 16, on the grass at the Town Center, 765 Portola Road in Portola Valley. For more information, call 851-1700, ext. 58.



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Tour for Woodside to raise money for Woodside High School programs

By Barbara Wood
Special to the Almanac

Organizers of the second annual Tour for Woodside bike ride, scheduled for Sept. 23, want to combine bicycling and public education in more than one way.

Tour director Jackie Ballinger and Woodside High School Foundation president emeritus Diane Carr have set up shop alongside Canada Road at Glenwood Avenue in Woodside on at least two recent weekends to recruit bicyclists to join the ride, which raises money for Woodside High School.

While they were at it, the two also worked to educate bicyclists by urging them to stop at all stop signs. They plan to further

the education effort at the Tour by handing out information on sharing the road from the League of American Bicyclists, which offers simple rules that motorists and cyclists can follow to make cycling safer.

Ms. Carr said members of the committee working on the Tour are all Woodside or Portola Valley residents and avid cyclists. "We understand first-hand the concerns about traffic safety between motorists and cyclists in town," she said.

Funds raised by the ride go to the Woodside High School Foundation's endowment fund, which helps pay for such programs as college prep for disadvantaged students and peer-to-peer counseling. Foundation grants go to programs ranging

from reading and literacy to the school's new fitness center.

The school has a diverse population of about 2,000 students from Redwood City, Woodside, Portola Valley and East Palo Alto.

In its inaugural year the ride attracted 420 riders and raised \$35,000 for the endowment. This year's goal is to sign up 800 riders and help the endowment reach \$1 million.

The Tour for Woodside features three routes, all going through Woodside and Portola Valley. See TourforWoodside.com for details.

The entry fee, which will go up by 50 percent on the day of the ride, is \$30 for the 32-mile ride, \$40 for the 55-mile ride, and \$50 for the 100-mile ride. The fee covers an end-of-ride feast featur-



Photo by Barbara Wood

Diane Carr, left, of the Woodside High School Foundation, and Jackie Ballinger, Tour for Woodside director, urge bicyclists to stop at a Canada Road stop sign in Woodside as they promote the Sept. 23 ride.

ing food from Draeger's market, prepared and served by Woodside High parents, staff and students.

About 125 volunteers are

See **WOODSIDE TOUR**, page 20

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New locale for 'Taste of Woodside'

This year guests will not be traveling "up the mountain" to "A Taste of Woodside," a major fundraiser for the Rotary Club of Woodside/Portola Valley.

The afternoon of gourmet food and wine will be held from 2 to 7 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 16, in the Grace Memorial Courtyard of Woodside Village Church, 3154 Woodside Road in Woodside. Past festivities were held at the Mountain Terrace on Skyline Boulevard in Woodside.

This year's "Taste" begins with guests visiting different stations in the courtyard to sample hors d'oeuvres paired with local wines. The six food stations will offer a variety of goodies, from Thai noodle salad boxes with chicken satay prepared by Chef Blair Waycott of Parkside Grille to grilled prawns prepared by Chef Jerry Olson of Mountain House.

After the two-hour reception, guests will be seated for a four-course dinner, to include wild mushroom and fig tart (Woodside Bakery), heirloom tomato salad (John Bentley's in Woodside), baked halibut with mango-papaya salsa, New York strip steak over Potatoes Denise (Encore Performance Catering), and chocolate truffle tart (the Mountain Terrace).

Silent and live auctions will raise money for the club's international and community projects. The little club with big ideas has provided \$11,000 in funding to the foundations of Kings Mountain and La Honda schools, and supported the National Center for Equine Facilitated Therapy with both time and dollars, among other causes.

Live auction items include a wine tasting and reception for 30 people donated by Woodside Bakery & Cafe and Ridge Vineyards; a week's stay at a vacation home in Antigua, Guatemala, donated by Joan Fuetsch; and a winemaker dinner for 10 to 12, donated by Encore Performance Catering and Sterling Albert Vineyards.

Restaurants taking part in the fundraiser are Alice's, Buck's, Encore Performance Catering, John Bentley's in Woodside, the Mountain Terrace, Parkside Grille, the Mountain House, Woodside Bakery & Cafe, and Mike's Cafe.

The wines will be provided by Bonny Doon Vineyard, Cinnabar Vineyards, Kings Mountain Winery, Martella Wines, Ridge Vineyards, Storrs Winery, Thomas Fogarty Winery, and Woodside Vineyards.

Tickets are \$150 and may be purchased by calling 508-1697; or go to www.tasteofwoodside.com.

— Jane Knoerle

Mitchell Johnson paints windows at Bloomingdale's

So who was that guy at the Stanford Shopping Center last week electrifying Bloomingdale's storefront windows with strokes of bold color?

You can find out this Thursday, Sept. 13, at a reception to meet the artist, Mitchell Johnson of Menlo Park. It will take place in Bloomingdale's, where a number of his abstract and figurative paintings are on exhibit through Sept. 16.

The reception is from 6 to 8 p.m. in the New View on Level One in the store.

Mr. Johnson will sign copies of his latest book of artwork, "Doppio Binario," which

See picture on Page 3.

includes essays on his work.

His artwork, characterized in part by the use of vibrant color, has been exhibited all over the country and abroad — particularly in Italy and France, where he spends much time at work painting.

His exhibit and window-painting at Bloomingdale's is the fall installment of the store's twice-yearly "Art-Rageous!" series of art shows. The window "mural" is at the store's El Camino Real entrance. It will remain through September, according to a store spokeswoman.

Celebration of Mel Lane's life Tuesday

A celebration of the life of Melvin B. Lane will be held at 4 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 11, at Stanford Memorial Church. A reception will follow at the Arrillaga Alumni Center on the Stanford campus.

Mr. Lane, who died July 28 at age 85 at his Atherton home,

was a leading conservationist; co-owner of Lane Publishing Co., former publisher of Sunset magazine and books; and Stanford benefactor.

Marion Softky obituary on Mr. Lane appeared in the Aug. 8 issue of the Almanac.

New rector at Menlo Park's Holy Trinity

The Rev. Michael Spillane officially becomes the 17th rector of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church in Menlo Park on Saturday, Sept. 15. The installation service, which is open to the public, begins at 4 p.m. at the church, 330 Ravenswood Ave. Officiating

will be the Rt. Rev. Marc Andrus, bishop of California. A reception will follow the ceremony.

Holy Trinity Episcopal Church (www.trinitymenlopark.org) was founded in 1884. For more information about the installation, call the church office at 326-2083.

BOB SWEZEY 1935-2007



Bob Swezey died August 24 in Stanford Hospital after a short illness, at the age of 72. Private services have been held by the family. Bob was a native of Chicago, IL, and a graduate of DePauw University in Indiana. A longtime resident of Menlo Park, he is survived by his wife of 49 years, Sue; son John; daughter Sharon;

son-in-law Dave Clingan, and grandson George Clingan, of Portland, OR; and sister Jan Allbeck of Walnut Creek.

Bob was co-founder and President of Air Filter/Control, a leader in the heating and ventilating industry in Silicon Valley, and served as President of the San JosÃ© Chapter

of the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration, and Air Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE). Since his retirement in 1996 he was also active in Menlo Park civic affairs, serving as President of the Menlo Park Kiwanis Club and member of the Menlo Park Environmental Quality Commission. He also participated in the Language in Action Program for foreign graduate students at Stanford. He and Sue enjoyed traveling in the U.S. and Europe, and his greatest pleasure was time spent with family.

Bob was a generous supporter of autism-related organizations in honor of son John. The family requests that, for those who may wish to do so, donations be made in lieu of flowers to John's long-time program, the Morgan Autism Center, 2280 Kenwood, San Jose 95128, or the Autism Research Institute, 4182 Adams Avenue, San Diego, CA 92116

PAID OBITUARY

DENNIS REICHARDT



Dennis Reichardt, a longtime Peninsula resident, passed away at his home in San Carlos on Friday, August 31, 2007, following a courageous 7 year battle with Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP). He was 64.

Dennis was born May 28, 1943, in Waukegan, Illinois, and first moved to

Redwood City with his parents in the mid 1950's. He attended Sequoia High School with the Class of 1961, graduated from Brigham Young University in 1968, and earned an MBA from Golden Gate University in 1972. On August 23, 1964, he married Sharon Baker, with whom he shared great love and the remaining 43 years of his life.

After a 20 year career in Corporate Finance, Dennis returned briefly to his true passion, Real Estate Development, before falling ill. His service to the community included 10 years of coaching AYSO and CYSA youth league soccer in Portola Valley, and 5 years on the Portola Valley planning commission between 1986 and 1991. An avid long distance runner, Dennis completed 4 marathons, and also

accomplished his goal of running a distance equal to the circumference of the Earth. In 1989, he and his son traveled to Germany to witness the fall of the Berlin Wall, a spur of the moment trip that his family recalls as characteristic of Dennis' strong will and belief in doing what one sees as important in life.

Dennis is survived by his loving wife, Sharon, his daughter and her husband, Randylin and Victor Polich, his son and his girlfriend, Reid Reichardt and Kathy Mok, two grandchildren, Sydney and Tyra, and his Golden Retriever, Curtis. These loved ones were all by Dennis' side at the time of his death. He will be loved and remembered forever.

A memorial service to celebrate Dennis' life will be held at 2:00 p.m., Friday, September 14, at Roller Hapgood & Tinney Funeral Home, 980 Middlefield Road at Addison Avenue, in Palo Alto. There will be a reception to follow.

Gifts of any amount in his memory can be made to the following: CurePSP.org, an organization dedicated to finding a cure for, and helping those afflicted with, Progressive Supranuclear Palsy, or to UCSF Memory and Aging Center at www.memory.ucsf.edu/gift.htm. Dennis himself was a volunteer and donor for PSP research conducted by UCSF.

We would like to thank Ana, Ema, Patrick, Karen, and all others who stood with Dennis and his family as caregiver, nurse, or friend during these last years of his life.

PAID OBITUARY

WOODSIDE TOUR

continued from page 19

expected to help with the event.

Riders will be provided rest stops with food and drinks, route maps, sag vehicles, medical and communication support, and a goodie bag.

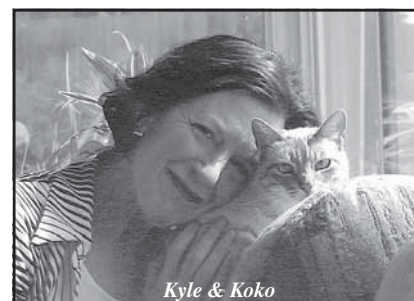
Register online through Sept. 20 at tourforwoodside.com, or

e-mail tourforwoodside@gmail.com or call 851-2705 for more information or to volunteer to help with the event. More information on the foundation is available at www.whsfoundation.org. "Even if you can't ride on September 23, you can still donate," says Ms. Carr. ■

Barbara Wood is on the board of the Woodside High School Foundation.

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■ POLICE CALLS

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

ATHERTON

Burglary reports:

■ Missing items from residence, first block of Callado Way, Sept. 1.

■ Vehicle windows smashed and two purses stolen containing credit cards and \$200 in cash and school ID, first block of Park Lane, Sept. 4.

Grand theft reports:

■ Laptop computer stolen from classroom, Menlo School at 50 Valparaiso Ave., Aug. 24.

■ Liquid-crystal-display projector missing, Aug. 28.

■ Police badges stolen, Adam Way, Aug. 30.

■ Road bike worth \$2,500 stolen from residence, first block of Irving Ave., Sept. 4.

■ Air compressor stolen from construction site, first block of Tuscaloosa, Sept. 5.

Fraud report: Resident contacted by Chicago merchant and advised of someone trying to buy jewelry under resident's account, 200 block of Greenoaks Drive, Aug. 27.

Mail tampering report: Mailbox stolen, first block of Linden Ave., Aug. 31.

MENLO PARK

Burglary reports:

■ Investigation in progress, 1200 block of Henderson Ave., Aug. 26.

■ Window smashed, 1100 block of Bieber Ave., Aug. 30.

■ Computer stolen, 1300 block of Henderson Ave., Sept. 2.

■ Car stereo stolen, 1200 block of Willow Road, Sept. 6.

■ Cash and baseball stolen, 1100 block of Chestnut St., Sept. 6.

■ Back door broken and plasma TV stolen, 500 block of San Mateo Drive, Sept. 6.

Robbery report: Two Hispanic males threatened to assault victim then fled with victim's bike and MP3 music player, 200 block of Bay Road, Aug. 27.

Spousal abuse reports:

■ Report taken, 1700 block of Valparaiso Ave., Aug. 24.

■ Arrest made, 100 block of Durham St., Sept. 2.

Child protective services referral: First block of Beacon St., Sept. 6.

Stolen vehicle report: Beige 2000 four-door Buick Century stolen and recovered, 1300 block of Carlton Ave., Aug. 30.

Fraud reports: ■ Identity thefts, 200 block of Waverley St. and 800 block of El Camino Real and 1500 block of Middle Ave. and 600 block of Cotton St., Aug. 24, 28 and Sept. 4.

■ Student loan taken out in resident's name, 1000 block of Lassen Drive, Sept. 5.

Prowler report: Resident reported white man of middle age and wearing white baseball cap peering into kitchen window at 11:45 p.m., 1100 block of Laurel Drive, Aug. 28.

WOODSIDE

Theft report: Digital camera and diamond necklace stolen from residence, 1000 block of Portola Road, Aug. 28.

Burglary report: ■ Locked vehicle's window smashed and purse and cleaning supplies stolen, 100 block of Harcross Road, Aug. 29.

PORTOLA VALLEY

Burglary report: Jewelry worth \$6,000 stolen from residence after rear-window screen cut, 100 block of Wayside Road, Sept. 3.

LADERA

Fraud report: Unauthorized attempt to cash two of resident's checks for total of \$7,800, 200 block of Erica Way, Aug. 30.

Sports online

With smoke from nearby Lick wildfires shrouding the western hills, four Menlo-Atherton Vikings teams battled the Gilroy Browns in Pop Warner football competition on Sept. 8 at Gilroy High School. Two other Vikings squads faced teams from the powerful Oak Grove (San Jose) Pop Warner program at San Jose City College. Results and details of the six Menlo-Atherton games may be found in the Almanac's on-line edition: www.AlmanacNews.com.

See sports news on
theAlmanacOnline.com

■ OBITUARIES

Shirley Dokken Jorgenson

Longtime community volunteer

Shirley Dokken Jorgenson, who lived with her husband, Jack, in Menlo Park for 55 years before moving in 2003 to The Sequoias in Portola Valley, died Sept. 6 at Stanford Hospital, surrounded by her family.

Born and raised in Los Angeles, Ms. Jorgenson graduated from Occidental College in 1946. The next year, she married John (Jack) Jorgenson, who for some time served as Menlo Park's city attorney.

She worked as a first-grade teacher in Monterey and Palo Alto for two years.

Ms. Jorgenson was an active community volunteer; she was a member of the Palo Alto Auxiliary of the Stanford Convalescent Home, a Stanford Hospital Pink Lady, a volunteer with OICW and the Belle

Haven Children's Center, and a member of the Valley Auxiliary of Family Service. She was a longtime volunteer at Filoli, and was active in committee work at The Sequoias. While her children were in school, she was involved in PTA activities at Oak Knoll School and Menlo-Atherton High School.

She and her husband were members of the Menlo Country Club.

Ms. Jorgenson is survived by her husband, Jack; daughters Lorie Sinnott and Carol Mince; a son, Rob Jorgenson; and five grandchildren.

At her request, no services will be held. The family requests that memorial donations be made to the Palo Alto Medical Foundation, the League to Save Lake Tahoe, or a charity of the donor's choice.



Shirley Jorgenson

ROBERT LOUIS TISCORNIA
1931 – 2007

Beloved husband to Jean Tiscornia for 54 years, loving father to Lynnel and her husband Bob, Lisa and her husband Doug, Tammy and her husband Dan, Tia and her husband David. He was a devoted Papa to Tony, Mia, Jaime, Jenica, Jared, Reilly, Nina, Jessica, Hailey, Ella, Morgan, Cameron and baby Rocco.

Robert was born December 23, 1931 in San Francisco to Rocco and Ella Tiscornia and went to be with the Lord on August 27, 2007 after a long battle with Alzheimer's. He was

born and raised in San Francisco and resided for most of his years in Woodside. He was the Vice President of Williams & Burrows Construction Co. for over 50 years.

Robert was a loving, kind gentlemen who enjoyed traveling and spending time with his wife Jean. He loved our frequent large Italian family get togethers filled with lots of food and laughter. He was passionate about his garden and loved to build and create. He was a true craftsman. Roberts kind and loving presence will be truly missed by all his family and friends.

A Celebration of Roberts life will be held on Friday, September 14, 2007 at 2:00 pm at Menlo Presbyterian Church, 950 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park. Family would appreciate any donations to go to the Alzheimer's Association, Stanford Children's Hospital or Pathways Hospice.

PAID OBITUARY

POLICE

continued from page 5

ten significantly younger and less experienced, as more than half of the city's officers — most of whom do not have prior law-enforcement experience — have been with the city for less than three years.

■ Police officers and dispatchers work an average of seven and 15 hours of overtime per week, respectively. In the 2006-07 fiscal year, the police department paid employees \$1.29 million in overtime — 28 percent more than what was projected.

■ The average commute for a Menlo Park police officer is 40 minutes each way, with some officers living as far away as Modesto, Stockton, and Reno.

Short-term solutions

City Manager Glen Rojas said restocking police staff is a top priority, and he has formed a task force of city staff and police command staff to tackle the issue.

At the Sept. 11 meeting, Mr. Rojas will present two short-term strategies to get more officers to Menlo Park — starting an aggressive recruiting campaign, and forming a referral bonus program so any city employee is rewarded up to \$2,000 for referring a police officer who is

hired and passes the probationary period.

Both of Mr. Rojas' suggestions require council approval.

Long-term problem

Menlo Park is one of several police agencies competing for what Ms. Seymour Ramberg and Cmdr. Burt describe as a "shrinking applicant pool."

Fewer people are entering law enforcement in California, and an influx of retirements is expected by the year 2012 as baby boomers reach retirement eligibility, they say in the report.

"Solving our public safety shortage is a long-term problem," said Mayor Kelly Fergusson. "To really solve this shortage, we need to recognize that it's not going to happen overnight."

Councilman John Boyle said one long-term solution could be to create incentives that reward officers who have long tenures in Menlo Park.

"I think it's worth exploring the idea that the longer an officer stays, the more that officer accrues in a bonus account or a housing subsidy," Mr. Boyle said. "That way, we're not just handing out bonuses. They have to stick around and earn it." ■

HELENE TAMM STEINHART

FIRST PRESIDENT MID-PENINSULA SYMPHONY LEAGUE

Helene Tamm Steinhart passed away on September 6 at Sequoia Hospital in Redwood City. She was 83.

Born in 1923 in Savannah, Georgia, the daughter of May and Henry Tamm, an engineer with the railroad, she moved with her family to Sanford, Florida, as a young girl. She developed a love for baseball working as a front desk clerk at the hotel where the Boston Braves stayed during spring training. During World War II, she worked at the U.S. Naval Air Station in Sanford.

In 1946, she transferred to Letterman General Hospital in San Francisco. She later worked for the bond firm of Stone and Youngberg and the law firm of Steinhart, Goldberg, Feigenbaum and Ladar, where she met her future husband.

Helen married John in 1952 and the couple lived in Palo Alto and Portola Valley.

Active in the community she chaired the annual Tally Ho! fundraiser for the Stanford Home for Convalescent

Children (now the Lucille Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford). She served as the first President of the Mid-Peninsula Symphony League, and in that capacity was one of the early organizers of the San Francisco Symphony's annual Black and White Ball.

She was active in the Westridge Garden Club, a member of the 18 hole group at Sharon Heights Golf and Country Club and was an avid fan of Stanford University athletic teams.

She was an highly skilled fly fisherwoman and an accomplished amateur painter whose works were displayed at local shows.

She is survived by her brother Henry Tamm of Deland, Florida, by five children: Steven Steinhart of Menlo Park, Jessica Curtiss of Manhattan Beach, David Steinhart of Mill Valley, Peter Steinhart of Palo Alto, and John Steinhart of Atherton, by eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren.

Private services will be held.

PAID OBITUARY

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

Contributors Barbara Wood,

Bryan Wiggin, 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,

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Advertising**Advertising Manager** Neal Fine**Display Advertising Sales**

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FAX (650) 854-0677

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editor@AlmanacNews.com

e-mail photos with captions to:

photo@AlmanacNews.com

e-mail letters to:

letters@AlmanacNews.com

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**WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?**

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

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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.

Viewpoint

Ideas, thoughts and opinions about local issues from people in our community. Edited by Tom Gibboney.

Deal will rejuvenate hospital

After years of uncertainty about how to pay for an expensive seismic retrofit and facilities expansion project, Sequoia Hospital officials are close to an agreement that will preserve and upgrade the property at Alameda de las Pulgas and Whipple Avenue in Redwood City.

The proposed deal calls for Catholic Healthcare West (CHW), current operators of the hospital; the public Sequoia Healthcare District, which co-governs Sequoia; and the hospital itself to each contribute \$75 million toward a \$240 million retrofit and expansion that district board president Katie Kane says will assure taxpayers access to first-class, nationally acclaimed medi-

cal care for many years to come. Another \$15 million will come from a hospital foundation, according to the proposal. CHW will shoulder any cost overruns in the project, which could break ground as early as November.

The landmark agreement comes after years of talks about the hospital's future, which was particularly clouded by the continuing plans of the Sutter Health-affiliated Palo Alto Medical Foundation to build a new, 110-bed hospital just a few miles away in San Carlos. Ms. Kane said two teams of analysts concluded that an upgraded Sequoia could succeed financially at its present location. When the seismic upgrade is complete, Sequoia will have 167 beds and a new, four-story hospital wing on the property.

Ms. Kane is enthusiastic about the hospital's future, stressing that it is in good hands with CHW, and that there are plenty of safeguards to protect the public interest. For example, although CHW will have complete oversight, it must share revenues (profits) with the district if certain minimums are met. In addition, the deal will assure upgrades at the hospital, including installation of a long-overdue electronic patient record-keeping system, and a major effort to attract and retain high-quality physicians.

The health-care district, which is governed by a five-member

elected board, includes all of Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley, Woodside, Redwood City, San Carlos, Belmont and unincorporated county areas. Residents pay a 1 percent property tax to the district, which sold the operating rights for the hospital to Catholic Healthcare West in 1996 for \$30 million, but continued to keep a hand in governing the facility through a 10-member board of a nonprofit corporation established to govern the hospital. That oversight will go away under the agreement, which could be signed as early as Sept. 25 at a board meeting at the hospital.

It is fitting that the Sequoia district will be able to pay a portion of its share of the upgrade from a fund that has grown to \$70 million from the original \$30 million it received for the hospital in 1996. In addition, the district owns the medical building adjacent to the hospital, which is worth about \$15 million; under this proposal, the building will be sold and proceeds will make up part of the district's \$75 million contribution to the deal.

Funds generated from the property tax, about \$6 million a year, will continue to be used to support nonprofit programs that prevent disease and promote health and wellness in southern San Mateo County. Beneficiaries include the Children's Health Initiative to provide health care to uninsured youths, Samaritan House and the county-run Fair Oaks medical clinic on Middlefield Road.

Sequoia Hospital has thrived under Catholic Healthcare West, which has grown to become the largest nonprofit hospital provider in the West, with 41 hospitals in California, Arizona and Nevada. And Sequoia, which is a non-sectarian community hospital, has received numerous awards, especially for its highly rated cardiology department. With their commitment to see the revitalization project through, it is entirely appropriate for the publicly elected members of the health-care district to now shift their attention to investing the \$6 million in annual tax revenues in the effort make sure South County residents get the care they need to live healthy and productive lives.

LETTERS

Our readers write

The unparalleled view of Mel Lane

Editor:

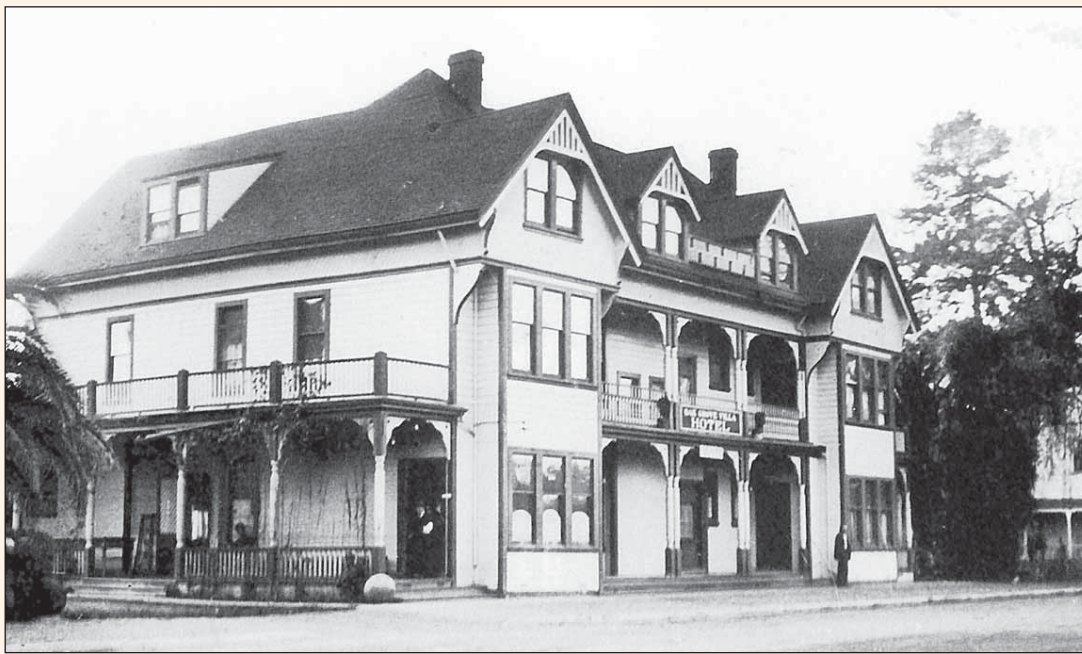
A few weekends ago we drove up and down California's breathtaking coastline, thanking Mel Lane every inch of the way.

It is surprising to not feel more diminished by the recent loss of such a rare man, but his accomplishments have been too profound, too expansive and too permanent to discern anything like absence at all.

Entering the home stretch, we stopped to ponder a beacon of light at Pigeon Point near Whalers' Cove. The signs encourage visitors to stand as their own sentry looking out to all four horizons, and one more within.

Thank you for the lighthouse, Mr. Lane, and everything visible from it, as far as your eye could see.

See **LETTERS**, next page



Menlo Park Historical Association

Our Regional Heritage

The Oak Grove Villa Hotel was built in 1887 at Oak Grove Avenue and Merrill Street, where it became a landmark in downtown Menlo Park. During Prohibition it was one of the area's most celebrated "speakeasies." In its later years the hotel was converted to a boarding house and finally burned to the ground when a fire swept the building in 1965.

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

The Tevis family
Tallwood Court, Atherton
(Editor's Note: A celebration of Mel Lane's life will be held at 4 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 11, at Stanford's Memorial Church.)

What about the bikes at Oak Knoll?

(Editor's Note: The following letter is addressed to the Menlo Park City School District board, which meets on the subject Tuesday, Sept. 11.)

Editor:

I am concerned that the traffic and transportation planning for Oak Knoll School is being done de facto in the site designs, and if these plans proceed, it will be very difficult to modify them to make the site more useful for pedestrians and cyclists.

Last spring at the Oak Knoll presentation, the staff member who designed the school layout said he did not consider bicycle or pedestrian access as part of the design. In the public meetings these issues have been brushed aside as something to be fine-tuned in a transportation study. However, by focusing on the roadway and automobile access in the design, you have limited the pedestrian and bicycle options for the sites.

I ask the school board to recognize that implementing these design features without understanding the impact on pedestrians and bicyclists is a disservice to the children as well as the larger community.

I urge the board to remove the "extended drop off" from the design plans as they are now structured. Instead, I ask the

Neighbor sees pitfalls in Oak Knoll plan

By Nancy Palmer

There is no graceful solution to the Oak Knoll School problem.

A campus which was originally designed for 200-plus students is now asked to serve over 700. The community approved a bond measure for improvements. The question now is how best to use that money and improve the facility.

Since April I have attended three meetings on the redesign of the Oak Knoll site. The plan presented in April included a large multipurpose room out of scale with the neighborhood, a new parking lot accessed from Oak Avenue which required cutting down heritage oak trees, and airport-inspired drop-off lanes off Oak Knoll to try to alleviate street traffic.

Over the months neighborhood pressure has managed to reduce the visual impact of the large multipurpose building, to save the smaller of the two heritage oak trees, and to lessen the appearance of the drop-off lanes. To me these are cosmetic

concessions. The basic plan and placement of buildings has not changed.

So what is conceptually wrong with this plan? First, the play field used by the younger children is gone, traffic is being dumped out onto a busy street, and more of an inadequate piece of land is covered with asphalt and dedicated to vehicle traffic. The

400-year-old heritage oak tree, by virtue of its inconvenient position, is history.



In the morning and afternoon, when school is taking in and letting out, the neighborhood traffic is horrendous for about a half-hour each time. Parents park a couple of blocks away to bring their children to school. The proposed solution, drop-off lanes, cannot begin to handle the volume of cars. Soon some parents

will be tired of sitting in a line of idling cars and will return to the previous solution of parking a block or two away and walking.

In the meantime a playing field is gone and lanes of asphalt remain. As for the increased traffic on Oak Avenue, the planners do not admit to the full use of the new parking lot.

How do delivery trucks get to the new multi-purpose building with its stage and cafeteria? Where is the refuse located?

We are told these are incidentals yet to be addressed. These points are not minor. For me, it is like designing a garden, planting it, and then deciding how one is going to add a sprinkler system to water the plants.

The present general conformation of the school ground works for the neighborhood. Both fields, one for the younger children off Oak Knoll, and the back one for the older students, are used heavily and simultaneously outside of school hours. Traffic is a problem which will only be eliminated when the facility at Oak Knoll is supplemented, as originally intended, by another campus. I urge more consideration be given to the real use of the property before more effort and money is put into a flawed design.

Nancy Palmer lives on Oak Avenue near Oak Knoll School.

(Editor's Note: The school board will consider revised plans for Oak Knoll School at its 7 p.m. meeting Sept. 11 at the district office, 181 Encinal Ave. in Atherton.)

board to instruct transportation planners to look for means to improve the existing auto drop-off, and to look for ways to increase the pedestrian and bike access features at the school. It is in everyone's interest, be they students, parents, teachers or neighbors, to have fewer cars converging at 8:10 a.m. and 2:55 p.m. at the school parking lot.

John Fox
Elder Avenue, Menlo Park

Bottleneck at Valparaiso, El Camino

Editor:

Now that the Valparaiso resur-

facing project is nearing completion, it is unfortunate that plans call for reinstallation of those hazardous traffic barriers in the middle of the road at the eastbound approach to El Camino.

You may recall the lane configuration before the construction started, where eastbound Valparaiso traffic was funneled down to one lane by the barriers, followed by three short storage lanes at the El Camino intersection.

The unfortunate result is that, when the light turns green, the short storage lanes empty out quickly and only the one lane is allowed to move. This situation not only frustrates motor-

ists on Valparaiso, causing long backups during rush hours, but it also exacerbates the overall El Camino traffic bottleneck by inefficiently using the Valparaiso eastbound "green time."

The obvious solution is to extend the three eastbound storage lanes all the way from El Camino to Hoover. This would allow three lanes to flow when the light turns green, thereby eliminating the long backups on Valparaiso, and improving the flow on El Camino, as well.

The cost of this change would be **zero** if the decision could be made before the final lane striping is done in the next few weeks. If it makes sense to you, let your

Atherton and Menlo Park city officials know about it.

Jim Harvey
Cotton Street, Menlo Park

Meat production has big role in warming

Editor:

I was very impressed with Leonardo DiCaprio's powerful documentary "The 11th Hour."

The film depicts the devastating impacts of global warming, including droughts, hurricanes, and flooding of coastal areas. It features interviews with the brightest minds on our planet about the causes of this man-made environmental crisis and possible solutions.

A powerful solution was suggested last November in a report by the UN Food and Agriculture Organization. The report found that meat production accounts for 18 percent of greenhouse gas emissions that cause global warming. That's more than automobiles.

Carbon dioxide, the chief greenhouse gas, is emitted by burning forests to create animal pastures and combustion of fossil fuels to operate farm machinery, trucks, refrigeration equipment, factory farms, and slaughterhouses. Much more damaging methane and nitrous oxide are released from digestive tracts of cattle and from animal waste cesspools, respectively.

The good news is that each of us can do our part to reduce global warming on our next trip to the supermarket. More details are available at www.CoolYourDiet.org.

Malcolm Davidson
Encinal Avenue, Menlo Park

Should the city help save the Park Theatre?

From Paul Collacchi, a resident of another community

"As someone who somewhat reluctantly voted to earmark the \$2.6 million for Sequoia (for the performing arts center at Menlo-Atherton High School), I disagree slightly with Steve's (Steve Schmidt, former council member) assessment. Ours was a quid pro quo. The school district was supposed to guarantee the city hours and amounts of use, and it was meant to replace theater time lost with the demise of the Burgess Theater.

"My reluctance then was whether we were getting enough use and control, and whether or not Menlo Park was really going to be able to fully replace what it lost — Burgess Theater.

"I do not see giving public money to the Park Theater tenant in the same way." (Mr. Collacchi is a former member of the Menlo Park City Council.)

TownSquare

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Posted by What the Heck, a resident of Menlo Park

"So let me get this straight — we want to save an old, run-down building on its last legs (the Park Theatre) — but a perfectly good office building (at 64 Willow Road) had to be taken down all the way up to, and including its foundation, to make way for... **another office building!**
"This does not compute!"

A major leap for Selby Lane School

Posted by Jenny Redo, a resident of West Atherton

"The Selby Education Foundation today announced, a major milestone in its fundraising efforts to support Selby Lane School, a community school serving Redwood City and Atherton. Selby Lane School has been awarded accreditation by the prestigious International Baccalaureate Program, a significant step in the school's four-year transformation effort to support academic excellence."

M-A Jazz Band releases CD

Posted by Perryn Rowland, a resident of the Linfield Oaks neighborhood
 "The Menlo-Atherton High School Jazz Band has just released a new CD, "One Last Time?"

"The band toured Europe this summer, playing gigs at the Montreux Jazz Festival Band Booster parent at perrynkrowland@yahoo.com."

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