

ATHERTON: Police chief's complaint led to
finance director's firing. Page 5

The Almanac

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



See
Home &
Garden
Inside

NOVEMBER 14, 2007

www.TheAlmanacOnline.com | VOL. 43 NO. 11

Leading *by* example?

Schools are
excused from
climate change
mandates.
Locally, some
are acting
anyway.

— Page 12.



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Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

FIRST SHOT



Prancing to victory

The Woodsider, an American Saddlebred gelding, bred and raised by Bob Facciola of Woodside and ridden by Jackie Tanner of Kentucky, finished a winner at the recent World Championship Horse Show in Louisville. It was the second year running that The Woodsider took the iWorld Reserve Park Horse Championship title. Mr. Facciola said he hopes to show The Woodsider's 2-year-old little brother at next year's event.

Courtesy Nan Chapman

Atherton

■ Police chiefs complaint led to finance director's firing. **Page 5**

Menlo Park

■ Safe routes to Laurel School: Council sets special meeting. **Page 10**

Portola Valley

■ Town may act this week on new creek-setback rules. **Page 9**

Sports

■ M-A wins first PAL football championship in 15 years. **Page 9**

Also Inside

Calendar	31
Editorial	22
Elections	16
Letters	22
Obituaries	7, 21
Police Calls	21

Health

■ Sequoia Hospital rebuild could be authorized within weeks; League of Women Voters raises questions, calls for an election. **Page 20**

Schools

■ Woodside High teacher assaulted near school. **Page 9**

■ Big topics for Menlo Park school meeting: master plan, Spanish program. **Page 11**

■ Turkey Trot family event at Ormondale School on Saturday. **Page 30**

Viewpoint

■ Guest opinion: A better use for Stanford dirt, by Lennie Roberts. **Page 23**

On the cover

Public schools would seem apt venues for teens to tackle global warming. Students are a captive audience, such a complex issue needs an academic approach, and the social issues are potent topics of discussion. The state's sweeping actions on climate change give K-12 schools a pass, but some local school communities are taking up the reins. Story begins on **Page 12**.

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Cranberry Sensations

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



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

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

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WINE

Thanksgiving Wines

Perhaps no other meal has as many complex flavors, or aromas, as the Thanksgiving Day meal. This means that no single wine will complement all the different tastes and textures. This is a great opportunity to serve whatever wine(s) you like best. I always recommend Pinot Noirs for adaptability, but this year I'm focusing on Grenache and Pinot Gris. This year, try something different. Here are a few suggestions.

- 2006 Hendry Pinot Gris, Hendry Ranch, Napa **\$18.99**
- 2006 Palmina Pinot Grigio, Alisos Vnyd, Santa Barbara **\$18.99**
- 2006 Willakenze Pinot Gris, Willamette Valley. **\$19.99**
- 2003 Dom. Ostertay Pinot Gris "Fronholz", Alsace. **\$38.99**
- 2004 Ethan Grenache, Vogelzang Vnyd, Santa Ynez **\$21.99**
- 2005 Unti Grenache, Dry Creek Valley **\$27.99**
- 2005 McPrince Myers Grenache, Santa Barbara Co. **\$31.49**
- 2005 Broc Cellars Grenache, Dry Stack Vnyd. **\$34.99**
- 2004 Dom. La Barroche "Pure", Chateauneuf-du-Pape **\$56.99**

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- 1 OZ. AMERICAN HACKLE CAVIAR** **\$20.50 oz.**



Atherton mayor plans to leave council

Atherton Mayor Alan Carlson told the Almanac Thursday that he will be leaving town in the midst of his third term on the City Council. His four-year term ends in November 2010.

There's been a good deal of speculation among council watchers ever since Mr. Carlson put his home up for sale at the beginning of September.

"My wife and I have sold our house, and we're going to be leaving town at some point," he said. "I do have plans to leave Atherton in the future, but not in the near future. I have some time."

Mr. Carlson said he did not yet have a moving date, and he declined to say where he and his wife would relocate. He did say that he was not retiring.

Mr. Carlson is an employment attorney with Littler & Mendelson in San Jose, and he has served on the City Council longer than any of the current members.

Free lead tests for toys

Cheeky Monkey Toys in Menlo Park is offering free lead testing, so people can bring in toys to determine if they are contaminated with lead.

The Santa Cruz Avenue toy store is renting an X-ray fluorescence machine that checks for lead on the surface of toys, said owner Dexter Chow.

People can bring up to five toys from home to the store, located at 640 Santa Cruz Ave., on two dates: Sunday, Nov. 18, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.; and Tuesday, Nov. 20, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

All purchases made at Cheeky Monkey Toys will also be checked for lead, Mr. Chow said.

People can also make an appointment to test toys for lead anytime before Dec. 3, although they will be charged a fee, Mr. Chow said.

Police chief's complaint led to finance director's firing

■ John Johns seeks \$500,000 in wrongful-dismissal claim.

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

The revelations just keep coming. Atherton's ex-finance director, John Johns, is seeking \$500,000 in a wrongful termination complaint against the town, and Police Chief Bob Brennan has revealed that he made the initial complaint against Mr. Johns that led to his firing.

Mr. Johns was suspended Aug.

27, pending an investigation of a hostile work environment complaint, and then fired on Oct. 29 by interim City Manager Wende Protzman. No cause for his firing was given.

Mr. Johns has denied that he created a hostile work environment, and said he was targeted for rooting out infractions of the town's fiscal policies. Last week he won a temporary restraining order blocking the release of the

investigator's report.

In a legal claim served on the town of Atherton on Nov. 5, Mr. Johns alleges that Chief Brennan treated him with "anger and hostility" and threatened him after he raised "legitimate fiscal issues" pertaining to the police department. Mr. Johns also claims that the chief, former city manager Jim Robinson and others spread malicious lies about him, accusing him of failing to act in the best

■ AHERTON

Judge blocks release of report on ex-finance director. **Page 8**

interest of the town.

According to Mr. Johns, Chief Brennan shook his fist in Mr. Johns' face, screamed at him in front of other people and frightened him.

Chief Brennan flatly denied Mr. Johns' allegation. "I did have a heated conversation with him, but I never pointed my finger at him, shook my fist or threatened him in any manner. I directed my comments to him through the city manager,"

See **POLICE**, page 8

Carbon-footprint program finds local buyers

■ For a few dollars a month, you can offset your household gas and electricity use.

By David Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

As the human origins of global warming and the likelihood of devastating impacts seep further into the general consciousness, a few companies have learned to trade on the idea that we can neutralize, or offset, greenhouse gas emissions we create every day by driving, flying and generally living in a fossil fuel-powered society.

The offset programs offer individuals and organizations a way to pay companies whose specialty is investing in ventures presumed not to be part of the global warming problem, such as windmills and tree-planting projects. The amount you pay depends on how much greenhouse gas your activities generate — your carbon footprint. The investment is meant to prevent the emission of an equivalent amount of greenhouse gas.

Agents in this enterprise include TerraPass.com and e-bluehorizons.com, both for-profit companies, and non-profits such as LiveNeutral.org and Carbonfund.org.

A new player entered in June, one we all know well. Pacific Gas & Electric Corp., through its ClimateSmart program, will calculate your electricity and natural gas emissions, charge you an

extra fee, typically less than \$5 a month to offset 100 percent of your emissions, PG&E says. The company invests that money in a green venture.

On PG&E's list of approved green ventures are efforts to protect California forests and to increase the capture of methane gas at dairy farms. Next in line but not yet ready for investment are projects in urban forestry and clean-air transportation, said Gail Slocum, the ClimateSmart interim product manager and an attorney and former Menlo Park mayor.

The Environmental Protection Agency lists methane as about 20 times more potent than carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas, and second to CO₂ in terms of its atmospheric impact.

Of the 2,100 dairies in California, just 20 have systems in place to capture the methane from manure pools on the farms, Ms. Slocum said.

ClimateSmart is drawing attention from PG&E customers. In September, the company began advertising ClimateSmart "in earnest" and as of Oct. 23, has signed up 13,062 customers, including 167 in the Almanac's circulation area, PG&E environment communications manager Keely Wachs said.

"These are the earliest of early adapters," Ms. Slocum



Almanac photo by Veronica Weber

Former Menlo Park mayor

Gail Slocum stands in front of PG&E's main office on Beale Street in San Francisco. She is a manager in PG&E's ClimateSmart program.

said. "That's a very good response for a new program that's basically asking people to pay a small amount more."

Of the local total, 165 are residential customers, she said, and two are businesses: one large and one small.

A breakdown, based on PG&E numbers and 2006 population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau, shows Menlo Park leading with 123 ClimateSmart customers, or 0.41 percent of the population; Portola Valley with 19, or 0.43 percent; Woodside with 14 and a participation rate of 0.25 percent; and Atherton bringing up the rear with 11, or 0.15 percent.

The company predicts that

after three years, the program will have cut CO₂ emissions by 2 million tons, equivalent to taking 350,000 cars off the road for a year. Two new coal plants in Nevada would nullify those gains, she added.

The bigger picture

Comparing household energy use with numbers of cars on roads is a meaningful measuring stick in California. In this state, vehicles are a major problem.

Transportation, Ms. Slocum said, is the cause of most of California's greenhouse gas emissions: 42 percent from vehicles and 10 percent from oil refineries.

The other large CO₂ emission source in California is natural gas, which fuels about half the state's electricity needs and was responsible for 88 percent of 2004 household emissions from gas furnaces and water heaters, according to the California Energy Commission.

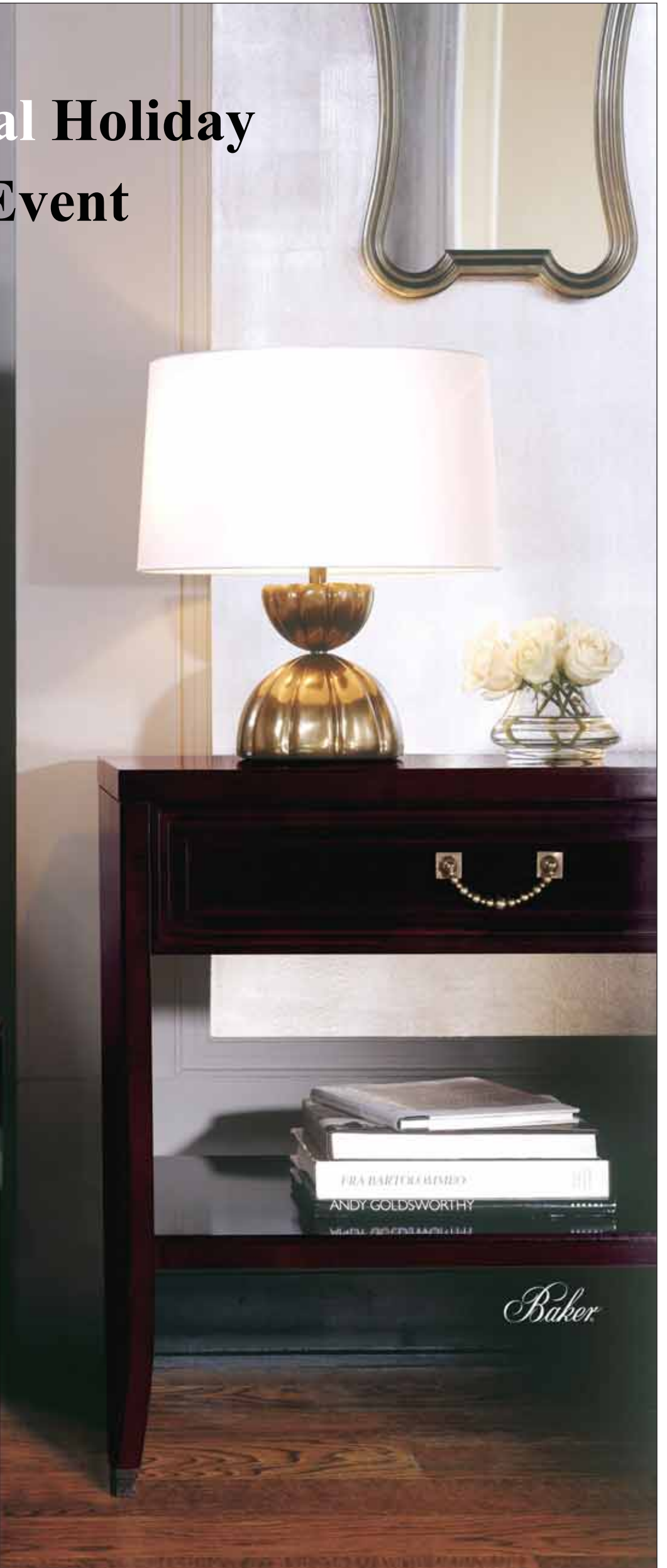
"When somebody is trying to reduce their carbon footprint, they need to look at their natural gas usage," Ms. Slocum said.

In the Bay Area, electricity from the grid tends to be "cleaner" since 52 percent of it comes from non-fossil-fuel sources, including dams and the Diablo Canyon nuclear plant, Ms. Slocum said.

To reflect electricity's "clean" advantage, ClimateSmart charges

See **PG&E**, page 8

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Baker

DNA sample leads to arrest in 1974 murder of Menlo Park woman

■ Washington state man charged in murder of M-A graduate Barbara Jean Rocky.

A DNA sample from the 1970s has led authorities to arrest a 56-year-old man in the 1974 murder of a Menlo Park woman, who was found shot to death 33 years ago in the Big Cottonwood Canyon area of Utah.

On Nov. 7, the Salt Lake County district attorney charged Gerald Walter Hicker of Washington state in the death of Barbara Jean Rocky, who was 21 and a student at Brigham Young University in 1974. Mr. Hicker, who was a fellow BYU student and an acquaintance, was arrested last week in Tacoma, Washington.

Ms. Rocky, a 1970 graduate of Menlo-Atherton High School, lived with her parents, Gene and Olga Rocchi, also known as Rocky, on Trinity Drive in Sharon Heights, according to a 1974 story in the Redwood City Tribune.

In a statement released Friday by a family friend, Olga Rocky, 81, of Palo Alto said she wished her husband was still alive to "realize there is justice

in the world," the Associated Press reported.

Her husband, Gene Rocky, died of a brain tumor a year after their daughter was found dead. Mr. Rocky was the owner of Sunnyvale-based bike shop Rocky Cyclery Co.

"If it wasn't for Salt Lake County sheriff's department unflinching efforts and perseverance, this case would have remained cold forever," Olga Rocky said.

She said she planned to attend Mr. Hicker's court hearings in Salt Lake City.

"I need to be there ... for Gene," she told NBC11.

DNA clue

The Barbara Rocky murder case was cold for 33 years until last month when a Salt Lake County detective took a soil sample from the crime scene to a laboratory, according to the Salt Lake Tribune. The lab found a skin or nail sample matching a DNA sample from Mr. Hicker, a police affidavit says.

Ms. Rocky was last seen alive



Barbara Jean Rocky was 21 and a student at Brigham Young University in 1974 when she was found murdered in Utah. Last week, Gerald Walter Hicker was arrested in connection with the murder.

on March 11, 1974, pawning jewelry at a Salt Lake City business. Three hours later, Mr. Hicker filed a missing person report with Brigham Young University security officers, the Tribune reported. He told police at the time he found a letter in her car saying she was leaving school to be with new friends, according to the police affidavit.

The following day, a utility worker found her body about two miles above the mouth of Big Cottonwood Canyon.

Police at the time said she was shot several times in the back and forearm by a large caliber pistol.

Longtime Woodside firefighter dies at 71

John Clifford "Cliff" Andrews, a firefighter with the Woodside Fire Protection District for 33 years, died Oct. 12. He was 71.

Mr. Andrews was a longtime resident of Woodside. He joined the Woodside fire district as a "sleeper" in 1953, aiding firefighters with nighttime emergencies in exchange for pay and living quarters.

He became a full-time professional firefighter in 1958, and was promoted through the ranks to engine company lieutenant, and then fire captain in 1977.

When California passed a law banning outdoor debris burning, Mr. Andrews saw an opportunity and started the Andrews and Sons vegetation debris-removal service. Working with his son Matt, he had clients that owned numerous estates in Woodside and Portola Valley,



A 1973 photo of John Clifford "Cliff" Andrews during his days as a Woodside firefighter.

family member said.

His debris-removal service turned into a valuable asset for the fire district's emergency mapping program, since his regular access to large estate properties allowed him to constantly update the maps.

Mr. Andrews retired from the Woodside Fire Protection District in September 1986, though he remained close with his former colleagues and went on annual hunting trips with them. He is remembered as well-respected firefighter with a strong work ethic and deep commitment to his profession and community, family members said.

He is survived by his wife Marilyn Andrews of Hillsboro, Oregon; his stepchildren Lisa Montealegre of Hillsboro, Oregon, Lori Alonso of Pleasanton, Scott Stoneback of Sausalito, and son Matthew Andrews of Aurora, Colorado; and two grandsons.

In lieu of flowers, the family prefers memorial donations be made to the Oregon Humane Society, P.O. Box 11364, 1067 NE Columbia Blvd., Portland, OR 97211-0364.

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Plan for More Energy Independence

Update on a previous topic: version to solar energy could ease the situation considerably.

Since my article that appeared on 10/31/07, "Residential Solar Power Expanding" the City of Berkeley has approved a plan whereby the City would finance the cost of solar heating systems for residential owners. They are the first city in the country to enact such a plan and other cities and towns are considering plans of their own. If this idea begins to multiply, renewable solar heating systems will grow exponentially. With oil prices approaching \$100 a barrel, and supply lines precarious, con-

If solar energy becomes a more common source for residential use, buyers will come to expect it and may discount properties that rely only on traditional gas heating. More importantly, buyers may be willing to pay a premium for properties that use solar energy, especially in this early stage of solar energy adoption. If you are building a house, using solar energy is a sound economic decision. For more information on rebates for installing solar panels go to www.gosolarcalifornia.ca.gov.

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



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CITY OF MENLO PARK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AGENCY BOARD

Mid-Term Review of Las Pulgas Community Development (Redevelopment) Project Area
Five-Year Implementation Plan

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Community Development Agency Board (Redevelopment Agency Board) of the City of Menlo Park, California is scheduled to hold a public hearing on the following item:

Mid-Term Review of the Redevelopment Implementation Plan for the Las Pulgas Community Development Project Area (Redevelopment Project Area).

The hearing will be held in the Council Chambers of the City of Menlo Park, located at 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, California on **Tuesday, December 11, 2007 at 7:00 p.m.** or as near as possible thereafter, at which time and place any persons wishing to comment may appear at the hearing and will be afforded an opportunity to be heard. The hearing may be continued from time to time until completed.

The hearing is being conducted to receive testimony of all interested parties for the purpose of: (1) Reviewing the Redevelopment Plan and the corresponding Five-Year Implementation Plan (fiscal years 2004-05 through 2008-09) for the Redevelopment Project Area; and (2) Evaluating the progress of the Redevelopment Project Area.

The Redevelopment Plan was originally adopted in 1981, as amended. The Redevelopment Agency's current Five-Year Implementation Plan for the Redevelopment Project Area was adopted in December 2004.

The Agency's current Five-year Implementation Plan sets forth for the five year planning period the specific goals and objectives of the Redevelopment Agency for the Redevelopment Project Area, potential programs and projects, estimated expenditures proposed to be made during the planning period, and an explanation of how the goals and objectives, programs and expenditures will eliminate blight in the Redevelopment Project Area, and implement the affordable housing requirements of the California Community Redevelopment Law (Health & safety Code Section 33000et seq.).

This hearing is being conducted pursuant to Health and Safety Code 33490 (a) and (c) and presents an opportunity for a mid-term review of the current Five-Year Implementation plan, and a progress evaluation of the Redevelopment Project Area.

Copies of the Redevelopment Plan and the current Five-Year Implementation Plan will be available prior to the public hearing for public inspection and copying at a cost not to exceed the cost of duplication at the offices of the Redevelopment Agency, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, California 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. To obtain a copy of these documents, or for further information regarding this hearing, please call **Dr. Douglas Frederick, Housing Manager**, at 650-330-6724 or email at dfrederick@menlopark.org.

DATED: November 1, 2007

Silvia M. Vonderlinden, City Clerk

Visit our Web site for public hearing, agenda, and staff report information:
<http://www.ci.menlo-park.ca.us>

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Judge blocks release of report on ex-finance director

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

The interested, the affected and the merely curious are going to have to wait until the end of November to find out if an investigator's report on Atherton's ex-finance director, John Johns, will be released to the public.

Interim City Manager Wende Protzman fired Mr. Johns on Oct. 29 without stating the reason for his termination.

Mr. Johns, an employee with the town since 2001, was suspended over a hostile workplace complaint on Aug. 29, while an investigation was conducted. The investigation was concluded on Oct. 25.

On Tuesday, Nov. 6, San Mateo County Superior Court Judge Robert Foiles granted Mr. Johns a temporary restraining order blocking the release of the 35-page report by attorney Mary Topliff, the investigator hired by the town.

The complaint filed with the court calls Ms. Topliff's report "one-sided,

inaccurate, incomplete and misleading." Mr. Johns said that the report contains "material misstatements of fact and omissions" and said that he was forced to act to protect his family's financial interests and his own professional reputation.

He denied the allegations that he created a hostile work environment, and said he himself has been the victim of retaliation over his work to uncover improprieties in the building department and with employee expense accounts, including in the police department.

Last week he filed a wrongful termination complaint with the town and is seeking \$500,000 in damages.

Attorneys for Mr. Johns and the town of Atherton will be back in court on Friday, Nov. 30, to argue over whether a preliminary injunction should be granted to prevent the report's disclosure.

The Almanac submitted a public records act request for a copy of the investigator's report on Mr. Johns, as

■ ATHERTON

well as the report from an investigation conducted last year of former Building Official Mike Hood.

The judge's decision also may hold up the release of the investigator's report on Mr. Hood, said Atherton City Attorney Marc Hynes.

"It's not covered by the court order, but it's tied in with the proceedings, so I don't know yet (whether the Hood report can be released)," Mr. Hynes said.

Almanac publisher Tom Gibboney said the newspaper should have been involved in the hearing on the temporary restraining order.

"The Almanac has not yet decided whether we will intervene in the case," Mr. Gibboney said. "We have standing in the case because it's our public records act request."

Jim Ewert, an authority on public records law who serves as legal counsel

for the California Newspaper Publishers Association, said the public's interest in the release of the investigator's report has to be considered by the court.

A recent state Supreme Court decision clearly shows that public employees do not have a reasonable expectation of a right to privacy, Mr. Ewert said.

The fact that Atherton officials had intended to release the report on Mr. Johns is a dramatic change from last year, when even City Council members had to fight to get access to an investigation into the conduct of building department staff.

Mr. Hynes told the Almanac that recent judicial decisions paved the way for public disclosure of reports on management employees such as Mr. Johns and Mr. Hood, but not of rank-and-file employees.

When asked whether council members have seen the report on Mr. Johns, Mr. Hynes said he could not answer the question. ■

Police chief's complaint led to Johns firing

POLICE

continued from page 5

Chief Brennan said.

In response to Mr. Johns' allegations, Chief Brennan released to the Almanac a 2 1/2-page memo detailing his own allegations against Mr. Johns, calling his behavior "argumentative and hostile" and accusing Mr. Johns of creating a secret file of information intended to discredit the police department. The Almanac had been seeking the memo through a public records act request.

"He's a liar and a corrupt public official — that's my opinion," Chief Brennan told the Almanac. "I'm not going to have this guy questioning my integrity and credibility."

The documents acquired by the Almanac reveal a picture of a fractious relationship between two top members of Atherton town staff, and a city manager who was either unwilling or unable to intervene.

The memo from the police chief to then-City Manager Robinson is dated May 6, 2007, and entitled "hostile work environment." The next day, May 7, Mr. Robinson announced his retirement to town staff.

The Almanac was unable to reach Mr. Robinson for comment.

Mr. Johns traces his problems with the police department back to his discovery of problems with police expense records, including reimbursements associated with Chief Brennan's trip to a law-enforcement conference in Boston in October 2006.

Mr. Robinson signed off on the trip, but apparently failed to get the

City Council's approval, a technical violation of Atherton's expense reimbursement policy adopted in April 2006. Other expenses that appear to violate town policy include \$195 in valet parking fees and \$19.70 for three glasses of wine ordered with meals.

Chief Brennan said that, while it wasn't clear on the reimbursement forms, he paid for the wine out of his own pocket, and that he had no choice but to use valet parking because it was the only kind of parking the hotel offered.

"My police department and its expenses are open to anybody that wants to come look at them," Chief Brennan said. "I'll stand out in front of anything that anybody wants to say about me and my police department."

Chief Brennan said that Mr. Johns allegedly kept a "secret file" on the police department and waved it at Lt. Glenn Nielsen, saying he had the "smoking gun" on the police chief.

Things between Mr. Johns and Chief Brennan got so bad that earlier this year, the police chief walked out of a staff budget meeting and later refused to attend any meetings that Mr. Johns attended.

On May 2, Chief Brennan e-mailed Mr. Robinson ask-

ing to be contacted only by phone, e-mail or in his office in the police department, saying, "Because of repeated attacks on me and the members of my police department, I do not feel comfortable on the Town Hall side of the facility." The Almanac acquired the chief's e-mail in a public records act request.

For his part, Mr. Johns is accusing Chief Brennan of treating him with "hostile conduct" for the past two years. Mr. Johns said his fears of police retaliation were realized when he was thrown out of Town Hall and cited for driving on an expired license on Aug. 29, two days after he was placed on paid administrative leave. Mr. Johns said he was merely returning town property after reading in the local newspapers that police opened an investigation into a missing and a vandalized laptop computer.

Mr. Johns' claim against the town includes \$50,000 in financial damages, \$250,000 for severe emotional distress, and \$200,000 in damages to his reputation.

"This is not something I wanted to do; this is something I felt I had to do," Mr. Johns told the Almanac. ■

PG&E

continued from page 5

more to offset gas-generated BTUs. Customers pay 25 cents to offset 100 kilowatts of electricity, for example, versus \$6.53 for the same amount of energy generated from gas.

Using 2007 figures calculated by the nonprofit Sustainable San Mateo County, a typical local household wanting to offset a year's worth of gas and electricity would pay \$154 in Atherton and \$52 in Menlo Park.

PG&E itself pays ClimateSmart around \$500,000 a year for office operations, Mr. Wachs said.

One ClimateSmart goal is to get more participation from the commercial sector, Ms. Slocum said. A business, compared to a household, has much more activity and a consequently greater impact when businesses buy CO2 offsets and become more efficient.

Kepler's Books in Menlo Park looked at itself and changed, she said. After an energy audit, Kepler's spent about \$2,000 to redo the lighting. The new lights cut between \$1,000 and \$2,000 a month in electricity usage, paying off the investment in less than two months, she said.

Which green ventures?

When determining how to

spend ClimateSmart funds, PG&E solicits bids only for green ventures approved by the Climate Action Registry, Mr. Wachs said.

The Climate Action Registry sets standards for forest protection and methane capture ventures, and is working on standards for urban forestry and clean-air transportation projects.

To ensure that investors achieve the greenhouse gas reductions they pay for, a Registry team studies a technology like methane capture and sets performance standards that are "rigorous and transparent," said spokeswoman Nancy Whalen. "It's an arduous process," she said.

Once the Registry completes its urban forestry standard, ClimateSmart funds could find their way back here, Ms. Slocum said. If the city of Menlo Park were to plan to increase the number of city trees, it could bid for ClimateSmart funds. ■

■ INFORMATION

For information on the ClimateSmart program, call 1-800-743-5000 or go to pge.com/climatesmart.

Eleven Portola Valley teachers, aides honored for 125 years of service

The Portola Valley School District and the Parent Teacher Organization will recognize 11 teachers, aides and staff members with a cumulative 125 years of service to the district during an awards program Tuesday, Nov. 13, at 5 p.m. in the Corte Madera School

multi-use room.

Being honored for their 15 years of service are: Denise Falzon, fifth grade teacher; Nancy Matthews, classroom aide; and Jerry Nickel of the maintenance team.

Receiving awards for 10 years of service are: Carolyn

Schwartzbord, the district's director of special education; teachers Catherine Castillo, kindergarten; Debbie Grech and Jenny Lebsack, second grade; Wayne Rickert, third grade; Rupal Sutaria, math; Jeanne Rusch, science; and Kristen Berman, classroom

aide in various grades.

This traditional event celebrates the recipients' contributions with stories, tributes, photos and humor. It has been rescheduled to Tuesday from the previously announced date (Nov. 15). Hors d'oeuvres will be served.

Woodside High teacher assaulted

A Woodside High School teacher who tried to advise an aggravated youth to relax and ease up on his use of profanity has had one of his teeth knocked out and another loosened after a single punch from the unidentified youth, who then left the scene.

The incident occurred about 3:20 p.m. Monday, Nov. 5, across the street from the school in a crosswalk at the intersection of Hull Avenue and the Alameda de las Pulgas, according to a report from the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office.

The teacher, whose name the Sheriff's Office is withholding to avoid reprisals against him, will require about \$5,000 in dental work, including steel pins to help stabilize his teeth, the report said.

Deputies are using yearbook photos and seeking witnesses to identify the suspect, who may or may not be a Woodside student, the report said. The suspect, who is black, was wearing black sweatpants and a black shirt with red and yellow writing on the front of it, the report said.

The teacher had been walking home when he noticed what looked like an argument among students, including one youth "acting aggressively and yelling profanities at everyone walking past him," the report said.

The teacher advised him to "calm down, there is no need to use profanities," but it had the effect of increasing his aggressiveness, the report said. Others at the scene held the youth back

and informed him that he'd been talking to a teacher, but it had no calming effect, the report said.

As the teacher attempted to leave, the youth confronted him and punched him without warning, knocking him to the ground. The teacher had had his hands full with workbooks and a backpack and so could not defend himself, the report said.

The teacher had the presence of mind to pick up his tooth from the ground, then walked home and called the Sheriff's Office, the report said.

The Sheriff's Office is asking anyone with information about the incident to call the anonymous tip line at 1-800-547-2700.

M-A wins first PAL grid title in 15 years

The Menlo-Atherton Bears won their first Peninsula Athletic League football championship in 15 years Friday when they defeated Woodside, 48-7.

The Bears (7-0, 9-1) clinched the Bay Division crown, thus ending Aragon's hopes for a co-title. Aragon had won the

past four division titles.

M-A senior running back Will Latu rushed for 209 yards on 10 carries and scored on runs of 46 and 79 yards. Senior quarterback Troy McCabe completed fire of eight passes for 146 yards and a pair of touchdowns.

On Sunday, the Bears received the No. 1 seed in the CCS Large School Division playoffs. In the first round, M-A will host No. 8 Homestead (8-1-1) on Saturday at 1 p.m.

Check TheAlmanacOnline.com for more information.

Town may act on new creek-setback rules

The Portola Valley Town Council may adopt new rules for construction along creeks following a public hearing on the topic on Wednesday, Nov. 14, in the Historic Schoolhouse.

The hearing will be the first item of business at the 8 p.m. meeting. The council is required by law to hold hearings on amendments to zoning ordinances.

The new creek setback rules would apply to properties along Los Trancos, Corte Madera and Sausal creeks, and are the result of years of consideration by

■ PORTOLA VALLEY

the Planning Commission and members of the public.

Among the goals of the rules: to keep new buildings safe from creek bank failure and flooding, to allow room for bank maintenance, to allow natural plant and animal life to thrive, and to reflect the town's longstanding interest in healthy creeks.

The five-member Planning Commission unanimously approved the regulations on Oct. 17, with Commissioner

Leah Zaffaroni recusing herself because she lives on a creek and Commissioner Nate McKitterick absent.

Also at the Nov. 14 council meeting, the council plans to discuss and may act on an analysis of traffic fees for construction vehicles, and on a resolution concerning the purchase of an open-space parcel that includes the Shady Trail.

Staff reports are available online at www.PortolaValley.net. Click on the "Town Government" and then the "Town Council" links.

Pop Warner football: Vikings drop championship game

By Jim Gallagher

Vikings Boosters

A fourth quarter holding penalty that wiped out their potential go-ahead drive cost the Menlo-Atherton Vikings an 18-6 defeat on Nov. 11 at the hands of the Delta Bay Buccaneers at Yerba Buena High School in San Jose.

The winning Pittsburg team captured the Peninsula Pop Warner Conference Pee Wee championship and a berth next Sunday in the regional finals against the

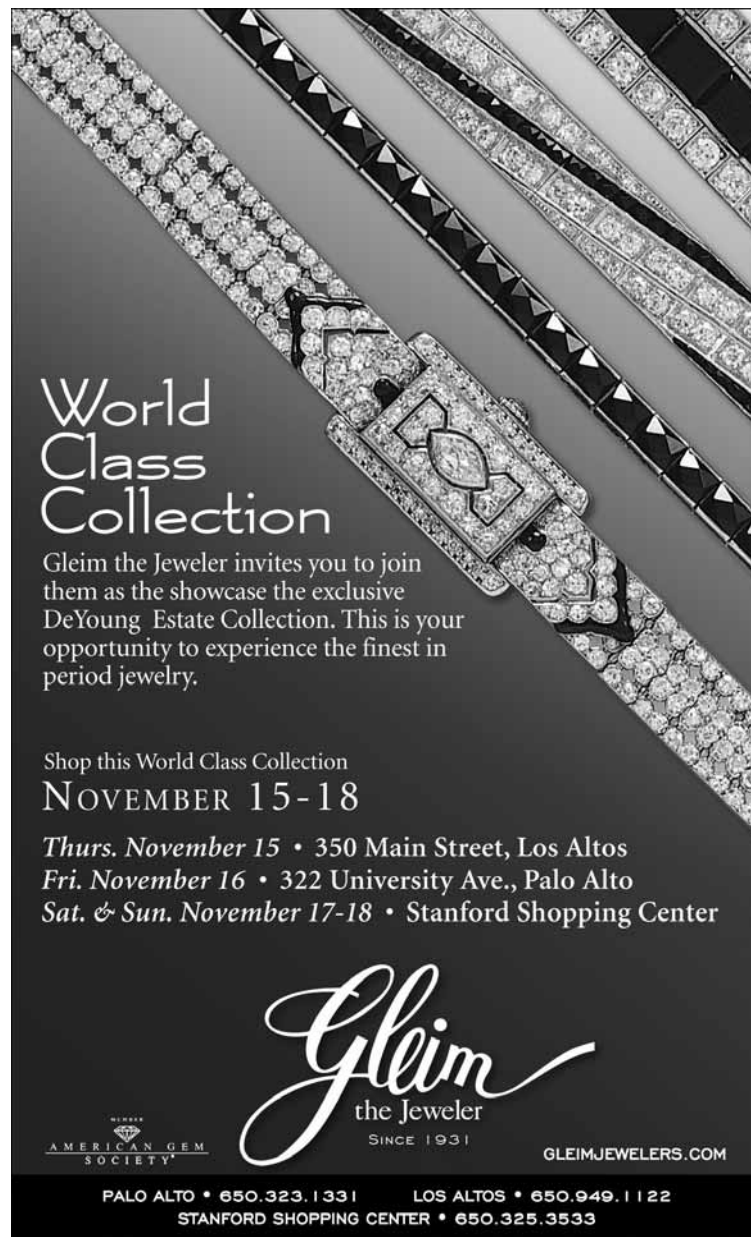
Redwood Empire champions.

Trailing 12-0 after giving up a pair of Delta Bay scoring passes, the Vikings fought back behind Khalil (Lil) James' 75-yard kick-off return and were down just 12-6 at the half.

Moving for an equalizing score in the fourth quarter, the Vikings were hit with a fourth-down penalty inside the Buc 20 that killed the drive. A subsequent late score sealed the victory for Delta Bay, and ended the M-A season at nine wins and two losses.

Swift, rangy and powerful, the Buccaneers mounted a relentless inside running game that opened critical passing lanes for the early scores. James and two-way standout Landon Baty, however, led a stubborn effort that kept the Vikings in the contest until the waning moments.

Despite the final disappointment, most of this season's Vikings Pee Wees move up to the Junior Midget level in 2008 with high hopes for another run at the conference title. ■



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Safe routes to Laurel School: Council sets special meeting

■ MP council likely to pull Coleman Avenue out of plan's scope at Friday special meeting.

By Rory Brown
Almanac Staff Writer

With a deadline for state funding approaching, the Menlo Park City Council will hold a special meeting on Friday, Nov. 16, to reconsider a previous decision regarding how the city should go about making it safer for kids to walk and bike to Laurel School.

The meeting is scheduled to start at 1 p.m. in the council chambers at the Civic Center, between Laurel and Alma streets.

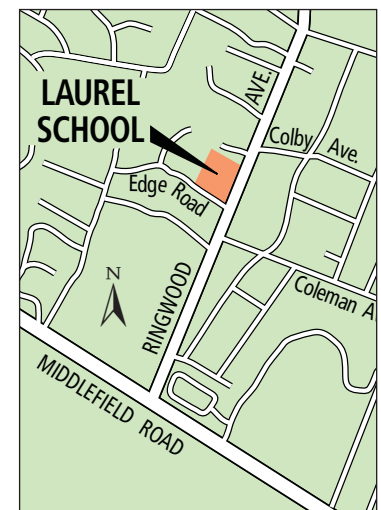
At the meeting, council members will likely reconsider the 4-1 vote taken last week to approve a Safe Routes to School plan for Laurel School and apply for a \$300,000 grant from the state to make the plan a reality. The deadline to submit the grant request is Nov. 16, the same day as the special meeting.

The bulk of the council's vote will likely stick — council members will still approve a plan that widens sidewalks, add crosswalks and slows traffic near the K-2 school. But at the Friday meeting, council members are expected to discuss pulling Coleman Avenue from the list of streets pegged for safety improvements.

Laurel School parents have labeled Coleman Avenue, a street which stretches from Willow Road to Ringwood Avenue, one of the more dangerous streets for children who walk and bike to school. They say the street is too narrow to handle pedestrians, bicycles, and cars.

But Coleman Avenue residents have opposed changes to their street, and recently submitted a petition signed by 16 of 19 Coleman Avenue homeowners that says changes to the road would ruin the "rural character of the neighborhood."

Last week, the bulk of council members said the safety concerns overwhelmed neighborhood opposition, but Mayor Fergusson said the council should



The Laurel School safe routes plan hit a speed bump when residents who live on Coleman Avenue said they didn't want changes to their street.

reconsider its approach.

She and Councilman Heyward Robinson recently met with members of the Board of Supervisors, and they decided that any changes to Coleman Avenue could be resolved in negotiations separate from the safe routes plan.

Mayor Fergusson said Supervisor Rich Gordon has already been in talks with neighbors to add a path for bikes and pedestrians on Coleman Avenue, and she's confident a compromise can be reached that "retains the character of the neighborhood and provides safety for children."

According to city staff and a transportation consultant hired by the city, it's also in the city's best interests to drop Coleman Avenue out of the list of streets pegged for safety improvements in the safe routes plan.

Last week, both parties said that if there is opposition to the proposed safe routes plan, the state is not likely to fund it — an outlook echoed by Councilman John Boyle when he voted against the council's decision to include Coleman in the study.

Although Laurel School is located at the intersection of Ringwood Avenue and Edge Road in Atherton, the city of Menlo Park is leading the project because about 80 percent of the students live in Menlo Park. ■

Career con artist avoids prison

A 64-year-old Menlo Park man who prosecutors say is a career con artist avoided prison last week at his sentencing for passing bad checks in 2004.

A San Mateo County jury in June convicted Roger Steven Miller of passing fraudulent checks to banks in Menlo Park and San Jose totaling about

\$14,000. On Nov. 9, Judge Joseph Scott sentenced Mr. Miller to three years' probation. The judge agreed with Mr. Miller's attorney that prison was no place for a man in ill health who is now actively engaged in volunteer work. For more information, go to www.TheAlmanacOnline.com.

Big topics for school meeting: master plan, Spanish program

The Menlo Park City School District's complete master plan for facility projects at the four schools will be presented at the Monday, Nov. 19, board meeting that was rescheduled from Nov. 15.

The meeting begins at 7 p.m. in the board room at the district office, 181 Encinal Ave. in Atherton.

Ahmad Sheikholeslami, the district's program manager/planner, will present the master plan that includes architectural specifications, a multi-year timeline, and a master budget for both the \$91.1 million in bond funds and \$15 million in ancillary state funding.

Spanish program

Superintendent Ken Ranella will propose including Spanish as a part of the education program, taught by specialists in elementary grades. Specialists now teach physical education, art and music.

If adopted, this initiative would require modifying the instructional schedule and increasing the school day in grades 3-5, he said.

Trustees also will discuss the

option of launching a Spanish-immersion program to begin in the primary grades and possibly authorize moving ahead on the planning phase, said the superintendent.

Reconfigure

The big topic—changing school attendance boundaries to implement the district's reconfiguration plan—is scheduled for discussion at a special meeting on Monday, Nov. 26. A district task force will present its findings and recommendations.

Under the plan, Encinal School, with the smallest enrollment and largest campus, will grow from a grade 3-5 school to a K-5, beginning when school starts in August 2008, when kindergarten classes will be added.

Laurel School, now crowded as a K-2, would become smaller by reducing the number of kindergarten classes this coming year and later adding third grade.

Earlier plans have called for "capping enrollment" at Oak Knoll School, which now has more than 700 students in grades K-5.

Forum on Emerald Lake Hills future

People interested in shaping the future of unincorporated Emerald Lake Hills — not residents of Woodside or Redwood City — may be interested in a community forum Wednesday, Nov. 14, from 7 to 9 p.m., in the multi-use room of Clifford School, 225 Clifford Ave. in Redwood City.

The San Mateo County Planning and Building Department is putting on the forum to hear from community members about current building and design standards and how they might be improved.

At issue are the rules that shape a community: regulations on land uses; setbacks; lot sizes and configurations; height limits; home sizes; grading; architectural design; permit requirements; and review

procedures.

The meeting will be facilitated by the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center.

The county hopes to learn whether the community wants to update the regulations and what kind of changes residents would support. The last meeting on the subject, in May, 2006, focused on recommendation by the Emerald Lake Hills Homeowners Association.

Any proposed changes to existing standards would need to be approved by the county Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

For information, call Steve Monowitz, 363-1855; or William Gibson, 363-1816, at the Planning and Building Department.

Woodside Priory opens 'green' theater center with a classic

Woodside Priory School will open its \$14.1 million Performing Arts Center this week with a Shakespearean classic: "A Midsummer's Night Dream."

The private school has transformed its entire 400-seat theater into a forest for the romantic comedy, performed by a student cast in the audience as well as on stage.


Show times are 7 p.m. Thursday, Friday and Saturday, Nov. 15-17, and 2 p.m. Saturday. Tickets are \$5 for students and \$7 for adults, and may be purchased in advance at the Priory's school store during the week or at the theater on the night of the performance.

This is the Priory's first production involving both middle and

high school students. Heading the production is John Sugden, the Priory's theater director.

Keith Drotar, a newcomer to the Priory, is the technical director. He also teaches a class in set design and has involved students in the design and construction of the set.

Students from the Priory orchestra will provide music.



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Designed for children two years of age and older, this class prepares siblings for the emotional and physical realities of the arrival of a newborn.
- Sunday, December 9
- * **INFANT SAFETY CLASS**
This class prepares new parents, grandparents and other newborn caregivers for environmental and transportation safety as well as many other forms of injury prevention.
- Monday, December 10
- * **NEW FAMILY PROGRAM**
This program features a selection of support groups designed to help families throughout the first nine months after birth, offering something for everyone. Enrollment includes participation in Mother & Baby Mornings, Fathers' Nights, Working Mothers' Groups and the new Couples Coffee.

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Leading by example?

State-mandated climate change regulations are coming, but school districts won't feel the pressure. Locally, some schools may not need it.

By David Boyce Almanac Staff Writer / Photos by Veronica Weber Almanac Staff Photographer

If any age group might be expected to be paying close attention to the issue of global warming, teens would seem good candidates. Adulthood is in their sights and they can grasp what's happening to the world they will inherit.

At cosmopolitan Menlo-Atherton High School, the majority of students appear to be otherwise occupied. Most M-A students are "not informed" about climate change, says junior and Portola Valley resident Anna Murveit, who heads M-A's new student environmental committee.

"It's frustrating when people don't

understand how important it is," she says. Administrators and staff, she adds, are understandably too busy with traditional school priorities to be talking about climate change. "That's why it's so important to get kids passionate about this," Anna says.

But student heedlessness may also be understandable. Global warming is an abstract and scientific issue and it carries with it a built-in problem for people wanting to warn us. You can't take a satellite photo of it as if it were a hurricane or a wildfire, nor can you see it coming your way like a tornado or a flooding creek.

Global warming may already be increas-

ing the potency of these calamities, but it's been hard to get people to listen. One possible way of changing those odds: talk to a captive audience.

Students are captives for several hours a day during the school year. They're also impressionable, they can be passionate, they're a point of leverage in their families — as advertisers know — and scientists say that global warming threatens their future and that of their children.

And schools would seem an ideal venue for addressing this issue, both in the classroom and through administrative decisions that showcase green construc-

tion and maintenance practices.

Should curriculums address global warming beyond ad hoc showings of "An Inconvenient Truth"? Are school facilities being built with climate change in mind? Is muddling through, as we have been doing in the wider culture, the right answer for schools as well?

The Almanac looked at classroom activities related to global warming and public school operations. There are no mandates and none on the horizon that would require schools to measure and control greenhouse gas emissions, nor do curriculum changes seem in the cards, but parents, students and some teachers and administrators are



'It's frustrating when students don't understand how important global warming is.'

ANNA MURVEIT, HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE AT MENLO-ATHERTON HIGH SCHOOL ►

finding their own way.

Missing curriculum

At Woodside High School, environmental science is available in two advanced-placement courses that meet University of California "lab science" standards, and three regular courses that don't meet that standard and tend to be seen by college-bound students as a waste of valuable class time.

"For a high school course to really hold its weight, it must be accredited by the UC as 'worthy,'" says M-A science teacher Lance Powell. "This is bad news for environmental education."

To earn a UC stamp, Mr. Powell has had to repackage a chemistry class as "Environmental Analysis through Chemistry." He says he will be spreading the word about his success to other schools.

The California Environmental Protection Agency, at the direction of the Legislature, is drawing up an environmental curriculum for a 2010 release, but it will remain optional, says Crystal Harden, an environmental education consultant working for the Department of Education.

Given the increasing news coverage of global warming, schools can create their own courses, but with no standardized test available from the state, not many schools do, Ms. Harden says.

The Department of Education's K-12 science curriculum isn't due for editing until 2014, and it's unlikely that the department would act in the meantime without direction from the Legislature, she says.

The global warming issue is still being debated in the media, she says, adding: "We're looking at science from the total perspective. We're making sure that students are not getting someone's opinion."

No obligation

All new construction in California, public schools included, is governed by Title 24, the state's decades-old and periodically updated energy efficiency standard. Recent greenhouse gas initiatives add to the regulatory burden but exclude K-12 schools.

In 2004, Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger issued an executive order creating the Green Building Initiative, which applies to state buildings and has a goal of cutting energy use by 20 percent by 2015 by methods that include analyzing the return on investment in green building elements and using standards set by the National Green Building Council.

AB 32, the greenhouse gas emissions legislation enacted in 2006, will require heavy emitters, including power and cement plants, refineries, universities, maybe even breweries, to cut emissions by 11 percent by 2010, 25 percent by 2020 and 80 percent by 2050.

But AB 32 does not apply to K-12 schools

because they are "cash-strapped," says Air Resources Board spokesman Stanley Young.

Schools are also low emitters, with building emissions that average 1,200 metric tons of greenhouse gas per year, well below the 25,000-ton minimum that the Air Resources Board is considering in this round of regulations, says San Mateo County supervisor and board member Jerry Hill.

"That doesn't mean they will be exempt from a threshold of regulation in the future," Mr. Hill says.

Every new school building plan must be vetted by the Division of the State Architect, which has comprehensive "sustainable schools" advice at its Web site, but all measures are voluntary, State

Architect David Thorman says.

"We're not pushing them that hard because the cost of building a school is so high," he says. "The general feeling, in terms of the governor's office, is that they don't want to enforce anything on the school districts that will cost more money."

Asked about this issue, Assemblyman Ira Ruskin, D-Redwood City, says he supports sustainable design and that he would be thinking about it as it applies to schools. "These are complex issues," he says.

Mr. Ruskin and state Sen. Joe Simitian, D-Palo Alto, noted that Proposition 1D of 2006 earmarks \$100 million for school

Continued on next page



School communities take up climate change on their own

By David Boyce Almanac Staff Writer

California's official campaigns against global warming may be taking a hands-off approach to K-12 public school greenhouse gas emissions, but without much fanfare, local school communities are building their own bandwagons.

In the Las Lomas Elementary School District, 20 parents have decided to challenge themselves to reduce their CO₂ emissions at home and in daily life, district resident Karen Grove tells the Almanac.

Once a month, she says, this "Cool Campaign" group will look at their progress and pose themselves a new challenge based on a model developed by Acterra, the Palo Alto nonprofit.

Ms. Grove says that a similar project at Peninsula School in Menlo Park last year was "community building, educational, awareness-raising and a lot of fun."

Trenea Joi, a sixth- and seventh-grade science teacher at Corte Madera Middle School in Portola Valley, wrote two greenhouse gas-related grants recently.

A \$10,000 "A+ for Energy" grant from BP paid for kits and supplies to study fuel cells, while another \$1,500 grant from National Wildlife Federation Community Action will go toward the purchase of some watt meters and a classroom set of the book, "Low Carbon Diet: a



Sixth-graders Kyle Cahners, left, and Zach Armsby observe thermal energy and convection currents at work in Trenea Joi's Corte Madera middle school science class.

30-Day Program to Lose 5,000 pounds." One project for the watt meters: measure what it takes to charge a cell phone.

Meanwhile at Portola Valley's Ormondale Elementary, third-graders have "audited" trash bins before and after lunch, and shared the results with the school. They are promoting "no-garbage" lunches and planning a "no-garbage" week, says teacher Deena Bertolina in an e-mail.

Ormondale students are avoiding bottled water and will be writing letters to Green Waste, the local waste hauler, to explore the possibility of a compost bin for biodegrading their hot-lunch containers, Ms. Bertolina says.

About 60 PTA parents from Woodside Elementary School met recently to "brainstorm what we see as a green school," says Dan Vinson, the

superintendent and principal of the one-school district.

They met during the day in a community room, but used only the available light from outside. "It worked fine," Mr. Vinson says.

The group will be exploring options for solar panels on school roofs, a green-buddy program between older and younger students, making do with less light when possible, and talking with the food vendor about using more recyclable containers, Mr. Vinson says.

High school efforts

At Woodside High School, the teachers and staff on the "Greenies" environmental task force have a mission: to reduce energy use, recycle and raise "awareness of the environmental consequences of choices we make at school,"

says science teacher Ann Akey.

The group has opportunities for students — a few students are members, Ms. Akey says — and parents are invited to join.

The topic of global warming is also "very popular" in senior essays, Ms. Akey says.

Students may be more active at Menlo-Atherton High, where the leadership class's environmental committee has been busy since its inauguration in September:

■ Recycling bins are now in every classroom and are emptied every other Friday, says committee chair Anna Murveit.

■ The committee sells reusable plastic bottles for \$5 each to wean kids off bottled water. In California, 53 percent of the 7.8 billion plastic water and soda bottles sold annually are not recycled, says Department of Conservation spokesman Mark Oldfield.

■ Students who ride bikes to school on the last Wednesday of the month are treated to a free breakfast of bagels and juice, paid for in part from the sale of the school's recycled waste.

Improbable as it may seem for seven students without independent financing, the committee has a goal of having solar power at M-A before the close of the 2008-09 school year. ■

Trenea Joi, a science teacher at Portola Valley's Corte Madera middle school, has received global-warming education grants and includes lessons on the topic as part of a standard science curriculum that only occasionally touches on it.

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Chloe Songer and Scott Swartz, members of the environmental committee at Menlo-Atherton High School, sort through re-usable plastic bottles available to students for \$5 each. In California, 53 percent of bottles from commercially bottled water end up in landfills.



**NOTICE OF INTENT TO ADOPT A
MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION
AND
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
CITY OF MENLO PARK PLANNING
COMMISSION MEETING OF
DECEMBER 17, 2007**

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

Use Permit, Architectural Control, Tentative Map, Environmental Review/1906 El Camino Real, LLC/1906 El Camino Real: Request for a use permit, architectural control, tentative parcel map, and environmental review to demolish an existing one-story, 5,750 square-foot commercial building (formerly The Acorn Restaurant) and construct a new two-story, 9,825 square-foot office building for medical/dental office use and the related site improvements at 1906 El Camino Real located in the C-4 (General Commercial applicable to El Camino Real) zoning district. The applicant also requests 49 parking spaces based on the use-based parking guidelines where 59 parking spaces would otherwise be required in the C-4 zoning district. The proposed project would require the following approvals:

1. Use Permit for construction of a new building and the number of parking spaces based on the use-based parking guidelines;
2. Architectural Control for design review of the new building and related site improvements;
3. Tentative Parcel Map for the creation of four medical/office condominium units within the buildings; and
4. Mitigated Negative Declaration to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project.

The proposal requires the preparation of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). The Initial Study prepared for the project identifies less than significant impacts for the following categories: Aesthetics, Agricultural Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Cultural Resources, Energy and Mineral Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Land Use and Planning, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, and Utilities. The Initial Study prepared for the project identifies potentially significant environmental effects that can be mitigated to a less than significant level in the following category: Transportation/Traffic. The Initial Study for the project did not identify areas of potential environmental effects that are significant and unavoidable. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires this notice to disclose whether any listed toxic sites are present at the location. The project location does not contain a toxic site pursuant to Section 6596.2 of the Government Code.

Copies of said project plans and Mitigated Negative Declaration will be on file for review at the City Library and available for distribution at the Community Development Department, Civic Center, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025, on **Thursday, November 15, 2007**. The review period for the Mitigated Negative Declaration has been set from **Thursday, November 15, 2007 through Friday, December 14, 2007**. Written comments should be submitted to the Community Development Department no later than 5:00 p.m., **Friday, December 14, 2007**.

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, December 17, 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 these items 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.

The City Council will also conduct a meeting regarding the proposed project. The project is tentatively scheduled for the City Council meeting of January 8, 2008. A separate public hearing notice will be mailed in the future with the confirmed hearing date and time.

Documents related to these items may be inspected by the public on weekdays between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday, with alternate Fridays closed, at the Department of Community Development, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park. Please call Lorraine Weiss, Contract Planner, if there are any questions or comments on this item. She may be reached at (415) 921-5344 or email at lorraine@lorraine-weiss.com.

Published in The Country Almanac on November 14, 2007.

Leading by example?

Continued from previous page

incentive grants for “environmentally friendly construction.”

Grabbing the bull

The Woodside Elementary School District recently completed a \$13 million upgrade to classrooms and staff offices and included waterless urinals, new high-performance heating and cooling systems, and an artificial-grass soccer field that will save 1.5 million gallons of water annually.

It could have been greener had the school calendar not imposed “a very, very fast track,” and had the entire campus been rebuilt instead of just part of it, allowing buildings to be reoriented with respect to the sun, says project architect Carter Warr, who describes himself as “highly motivated and highly interested” in green practices.

Had Mr. Warr sought a score for the project from the National Green Building Council, it would have been judged “certified,” the lowest possible of four rankings but still green, he says.

The Menlo Park City School District sought advice from the Collaborative for High Performing Schools in planning the green elements of its \$91 million in projects at Hillview, Laurel and Encinal schools.

CHPS is a joint effort among major California utilities and school districts and state agencies involved in school construction. The American Institute of Architects endorses CHPS, including its

goal to improve student performance through “better designed and healthier facilities.”

One common design element is air conditioning. The Menlo Park district will use it sparingly — in labs, gyms and high-occupancy rooms — says facilities program manager Ahmed Sheikholeslami.

“Mostly, we’re going to rely on natural ventilation and cooling,” he says. That methodology will include vented skylights, operable windows, fans to send hot air up in summer and down in winter,

Global warming is still being debated in the media, so ‘we’re making sure that students are not getting someone’s opinion.’

STATE EDUCATION CONSULTANT
CRYSTAL HARDEN
ON WHY GLOBAL WARMING IS NOT EMPHASIZED IN THE STATE’S SCIENCE CURRICULUM

and a monitor that senses open doors and windows and shuts off cooling after a delay, he says.

The district could do more, but it gets costly, he says. “We’re kind of headed in the right direction.” All appliances the district buys exceed Energy Star ratings and each school has some kind of composting and recycling program, Mr. Sheikholeslami says.

At M-A, the new \$30 million performing arts center with sweeping solar-panel-free rooflines is being built to Title 24 efficiency requirements, but the project will

not be overtly green, says Assistant Superintendent for Administrative Services Ed LaVigne.

Mr. LaVigne describes himself as an 8 on a scale of 10 in terms of his interest in environmental issues, noting that of the district’s 35 buses, eight were converted to compressed natural gas at a cost of \$165,000 apiece in grant money. The rest were fitted with “very expensive” exhaust particulate filters, he says.

He also requires custodians to use a “team cleaning” approach to minimize the number of rooms with lights on at any one time.

Will water-conserving native-plant landscaping weigh heavily on his mind for the new theater? He’ll think about it, he says, adding: “What weighs heavily in my mind is to make the front of the M-A campus very attractive.”

The costs of building green can be “prohibitively expensive,” he says, and tradesmen aren’t always familiar with the practices.

Would he welcome direction from the state? “Only if they’re going to increase the money that goes along with the new mandate,” he says. “If they don’t increase the money, the answer is a resounding ‘No.’”

Gregory Kats, a principal at Washington, D.C.-based clean-energy consultant Capital E and the author of a 2006 national study called “Greening America’s Schools,” found that green schools use 32 percent less water and 33 percent less energy than conventional schools.

The savings over time for a \$3-per-square-foot premium for green alternatives yielded a financial benefit of \$70-per-square-foot, Mr. Kats says. The lower energy usage also results in lower CO2 emissions. ■

Transit-oriented housing is topic of Menlo talk

Before Menlo Park officials open the debate regarding what should replace abandoned auto lots along El Camino Real, a consultant is scheduled to talk about one potential, although likely controversial, solution: transit-oriented housing.

MENLO WATCH

Dena Belzer, president of Berkeley-based consulting firm Strategic Economics, plans to give a presentation on transit-oriented development — building a mix of high-density homes and commercial space near transit corridors — on Wednesday, Nov. 14, at 6 p.m. in the council chambers at the Civic Center, between Laurel and Alma streets.

Environmentalists have pushed Menlo Park to build more apartments and condos near El Camino Real and the Caltrain tracks to prevent suburban sprawl and preserve open space.

But many residents have voiced concerns regarding the potential impacts on traffic and schools caused by a sudden influx of housing near the city's downtown area.

Ms. Belzer is expected to discuss how other communities have gone about planning for transit-oriented projects, and the opportunities and challenges in building similar projects along El Camino Real in Menlo Park.

Applicants sought for finance panel

Menlo Park is seeking three residents to join the Finance/Audit Committee, an advisory body formed to help improve public understanding of, and access to, city financial information.

To apply, go to MenloPark.org, select "City Commissions," and click on "commission vacancies." Applications are also available at the city clerk's office in the administration building at the Civic Center, 701 Laurel St.

Council members voted 5-0 on Oct. 9 to create the new committee, which is expected to review the city's annual audits and make sure taxpayers know the city's fiscal status.

Two committee seats will be for two-year terms and one for three years. The deadline to submit an application is Nov. 27.

Councilmen John Boyle and Richard Cline will also be on the committee.

Meeting canceled

The Menlo Park City Council will not hold its regular meeting on Nov. 13. Meetings are scheduled to resume Nov. 20.

The Almanac

Your community newspaper

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Judith Mendelsohn elected to Portola Valley school board

■ Candidate Steve Humphreys leads by 17 votes for second seat.

By Marjorie Mader
Almanac Staff Writer

Judith Mendelsohn was the top vote-getter Nov. 6 among three candidates for two seats on the Board of Trustees of the Portola Valley School District.

Ms. Mendelsohn, who teaches math at a new charter high school in San Jose and who has served as the chair and a member of the schools' site councils, garnered 812 votes, according to the latest count by the San Mateo County Elections Office.

Coming in second with 713 votes was Steve Humphreys, a Silicon Valley entrepreneur and CEO who is an active volunteer in Portola Valley Schools. He leads Brad Turner, an entrepreneur who serves on the board of the Portola Valley Schools Foundation, by 17 votes.

The Elections Office still has to count some paper, provisional and mail-in ballots that arrived on election day. The final count may be released on Wednesday,



Nov. 14, said David Tom, elections manager.

The two seats are for four-year terms on the five-member board.

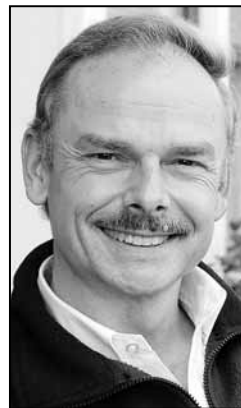
While there are 4,944 registered voters in the Portola Valley School District, only 1,334 ballots were counted as of Nov. 12, or 27 percent of registered voters.

Election wrinkle

The Portola Valley election has become a saga of twists and turns.

Unexpectedly, Trustee Donna Carano resigned from the board Oct. 17, less than three weeks before the Nov. 6 election.

After an extended discussion, the current board — made up of trustees Teresa Godfrey, whose term expires



Portola Valley school board candidates, from left, are Judy Mendelsohn, Steve Humphreys and Brad Turner.

next month; Don Collat; and Ray Villareal — decided to have the next school board (with the newly elected members) appoint someone to fill the two remaining years of Ms. Carano's term.

However, current board members as well as the new ones would participate in interviews of prospective candidates during a public meeting.

Another wrinkle: Trustee Karen Jordan, whose term expires next month, has recused herself from the

appointment discussions because she may apply for the appointment.

The appointment would be "provisional" because voters in the district have 30 days from the appointment to petition the county school superintendent to overturn the appointment and call a special election. Under the Election Code, this could be done with just 74 valid signatures by registered voters — equal to 1.5 percent of the number of registered voters at the time of the last

governing board election.

Timeline

Superintendent Anne Campbell developed a timeline for the appointment procedure that was approved by the board on Oct. 25, but now the application deadline has been extended to 5 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 5.

Candidate interviews will be held from 9 a.m. to noon Friday, Dec. 7, during a public session at the district office.

Any registered voter in the district may apply for the two-year appointment. Applications are available at the district office at 4575 Alpine Road in Portola Valley, or may be downloaded from the district's Web site: www.pvsd.net. Candidates must complete an application form and submit a letter of interest stating their experience and commitment to educational, youth and community activities.

All current board members are willing to talk with prospective candidates about the duties and time commitment involved in being a board member. ■

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Challenger takes seat from incumbent on Menlo Park fire district board

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor



Peter Ohtaki will take a seat next month on the five-member Menlo Park Fire Protection District board of directors after winning more than 2,000 votes more than incumbent John Osmer in the Nov. 6 election.

Mr. Ohtaki and incumbent Bart Spencer won the three-way race for two seats. The unofficial vote count as of Monday: Mr. Spencer, 3,660 votes; Mr. Ohtaki, 3,407; and Mr. Osmer, 1,220. All three men live in Menlo Park.

Turnout was extremely light. Out of the 40,570 registered voters in the district — which serves Menlo Park, Atherton, East Palo Alto and nearby unincorporated areas — only 4,991 ballots were counted as of Nov. 12, according to the San Mateo County Elections Office.

Mr. Osmer last week attributed his defeat to his failure to do “the right mix of campaigning.” For one thing, unlike Mr. Spencer and Mr. Ohtaki, he didn’t submit a candidate statement to the county for the official voters’ guide.

Atherton resident Bob Jenkins, an Atherton Civic Interest League stalwart who is involved in emergency preparedness programs in the district, agreed that Mr. Osmer “didn’t do much in running a campaign.”

Mr. Jenkins and Peter Carpenter, the only fire board member who lives in Atherton, both endorsed Mr. Ohtaki for the position. (Board members Ollie Brown, Bart Spencer and Rex Ianson endorsed Mr. Osmer.)

“I thought he was extremely well-qualified, not only in his prior career in finance ... but also in his current job,” Mr. Jenkins said of Mr. Ohtaki, who heads the regional office of Business Executives for National Security, a nonpartisan, national organization promoting homeland security, including natural disaster preparedness.

Mr. Jenkins said he was involved in Mr. Ohtaki’s campaign, which included postcard mailings to absentee voters and “high-probability voters,” he said.

Mr. Ohtaki also spoke to a number of community groups, including Atherton’s emergency preparedness committee, Mr. Jenkins said.

Raised in Menlo Park, Mr. Ohtaki attended La Entrada and Woodside High schools. He recently moved back to town,

an MBA from Stanford, and worked early in his career in the field of finance.

During his campaign, he stressed the need for communities in the fire district to be better prepared for natural or other disasters.

Mr. Osmer said that he will miss working with the board

Continued on next page



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P.S. According to the survey mentioned above, only 46% of respondents said they cleaned their lens case (as recommended) after each use, and 49% indicated that they wore their contacts longer than recommended.

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

SHE GRADUATED FROM WASHINGTON STATE UNIVERSITY (GO COUGS!) AND FROM SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY WITH A MASTERS OF ARTS IN MUSIC (Voice Performance).

She's held a variety of interesting jobs, including working as a Tour Guide for the state capitol building in Montana, minor-league ballpark waitress, and, as a "soda jerk" at an old-fashioned Ice Cream Parlor.

She believes that she's learned more as a teacher than she ever did as a student.

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Challenger wins fire board seat

Continued from previous page

on the district's business, as well as the contact he had with the district's firefighting and administrative staff, whom "I have the utmost respect for."

"I wish Peter (Ohtaki) well, and congratulate him, and thank him for the commitment he'll be making to the community," Mr. Osmer said.

Mr. Spencer, a former firefighter and paramedic who worked for a number of years with the county's Office of Emergency Services, works for a company that issues "text alerts" for emer-

gencies and other events. He will begin his third term on the board next month.

Measure G

Voters overwhelmingly passed the fire district-sponsored Measure G, which raises the limit on the amount of money the district can spend each year from \$25 million to \$40 million.

The vote as of Friday was 3,585 (74.3 percent) yes; and 1,239 (25.7 percent) no. The measure, which did not authorize new taxes, needed a simple majority to pass. ■

Woodside elects four to council

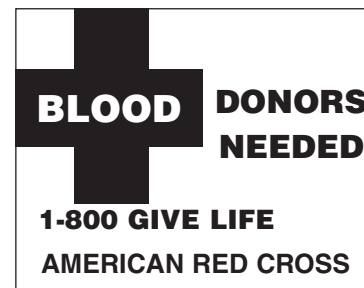
There aren't any surprises in the results for the Woodside Town Council election, where there was a single candidate for each of the four seats up on

the seven-member council.

Elected were incumbent Ron Romines in District 1; incumbent Sue Boynton in District 3; Dave Burow in District 5; and Peter Mason in District 7.

Woodside is divided into seven councils districts. Council members must reside in the voting district they represent, although they are elected in a town-wide vote.

The newly elected council members will be sworn in at the Tuesday, Nov. 27, meeting.



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Slow election night returns blamed on security measures

By Andrea Gemmet
Almanac Staff Writer

The days when San Mateo County could tally election day votes within a couple of hours of the polls' closing are over.

County elections manager David Tom said that Tuesday's election, when votes cast at polling places weren't counted until around 1:30 a.m., is the new norm, thanks to a number of new security measures the state requires.

San Mateo County used to be among the first to report unofficial election returns, often only two or three hours after the polls closed at 8 p.m.

"Those 10:30 p.m. or 11 o'clock nights are over," Mr. Tom said.

The California secretary of state handed down 36 new requirements to improve security and increase voter confidence in the handling of ballots and voting



machines, Mr. Tom said. County elections offices aren't required to put them into place until the February presidential primary, but San Mateo County got an early start with this election.

"We wanted to get a head start and work out some of the kinks," Mr. Tom said. "Hopefully, by February, we will gain some more efficiency."

Besides the new security mea-

asures, the Nov. 6 election was also the county's first election in which electronic voting machines were used exclusively. Mr. Tom said that 23,129 votes were cast electronically at the polls — that's the unofficial tally — and about 2,300 paper ballots were cast on election day.

As of Thursday, 17,000 mail and provisional ballots remained to be counted, he said. He said he hoped to complete the ballot count in six days or so. Because of a number of close races, including the Portola

Valley School District board's nail-biter, the elections office will be issuing updates every two days, he said.

Turnout for the election was disappointing, Mr. Tom said. In a county with 309,513 registered voters, only 67,652 ballots were counted as of Nov. 12, or 22 percent of registered voters.

"Local elections have much more of a day-to-day impact on citizens than the state or federal elections," he said. "These are the people you talk to with your traffic issues or your school issues." ■

One incumbent, one newcomer elected to Los Trancos water board

There will be a new face on the board of the Los Trancos County Water District and it looks like it will be retired Hewlett-Packard executive Mike Ward. If the current election results don't change, Mr. Ward will join incumbent Charles Krenz, who was re-elected Nov. 6 by a large margin.

The count as of Nov. 9 shows Mr. Krenz garnered 163 votes in the tiny water district, which serves some 260 households in the hills south of Portola Valley.

Mr. Ward received 103 votes, and his slate partner Richard Swan, 95 votes. The San Mateo County Elections Office says it may finish counting all votes by Nov. 14, including the mail-in, paper and provisional ballots that arrived on elec-

tion day.

Mr. Swan is a self-styled computer geek and software company founder.

Whoever comes in third still stands a chance of joining the board.

Incumbent Frazier Miller has announced his resignation after the board's next meeting on Dec. 6, and the board plans to appoint a replacement to finish Mr. Miller's term.

At that meeting, the board will swear in the election winners, and then ask for applicants to fill the vacancy, said Craig Breon, recording secretary for the board.

Mr. Swan is an obvious possibility, but there may be other applicants for the board to interview. Mr. Breon expects an appointment early next year.

Workshop on development of Redwood City salt ponds

Redwood City Industrial Saltworks will hold this week the first community workshop to plan for future development of the 1,433 acres of salt ponds between Seaport Boulevard in

Redwood City and Bayfront Park in Menlo Park. The workshop is scheduled for 6 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 15, at the Veterans Senior Memorial Center, 1455 Madison Ave. in

Redwood City.

To RSVP or get more information, send an e-mail to info@RCSaltworks.com or call 366-0500.



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Any interested parent or community member must send a completed application form and a letter of interest stating his/her experience in and commitment to educational, youth, and community activities.

Application forms are available at the Portola Valley School District Office at 4575 Alpine Road, Portola Valley, CA or online at www.pvsd.net. Completed applications and a letter of interest must be submitted by **December 5, 2007, at 5:00 p.m.**

Application and letter should be sent to:
Ms. Anne E. Campbell, Superintendent
4575 Alpine Road
Portola Valley, CA 94028

or via e-mail to: acampbell@pvsd.net

Interviews will be held on Friday, December 7th, between 9 and noon.

An applicant must reside within the Portola Valley School District boundaries and must be a registered voter. The Governing Board meets every third Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.
For further information, contact Anne Campbell at (650) 851-1777, ext. 3010 or at acampbell@pvsd.net.
Published in THE COUNTRY ALMANAC on November 14, 21, 28, December 5, 2007.

Jensen Hauser

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Sequoia Hospital rebuild could be authorized within weeks

■ League of Women Voters raises questions, calls for an election.

By Marion Softky
Almanac Staff Writer

The board of the Sequoia Healthcare District is still working out final details in the sweeping agreement to rebuild the 57-year-old Sequoia Hospital to meet state earthquake-safety standards, and turn over its governance to Catholic Healthcare West.

A final vote to launch the \$240 million project is expected at the board's next meeting, to be scheduled soon. At a study meeting Nov. 7, board chair Kathleen Kane promised to give 72 hours' notice of the meeting.

The board has been fine-tuning the 33-page agreement announced Aug. 30 and ham-

pered out among the district, Catholic Healthcare West (CHW), and Sequoia Health Services (SHS), the legal entity that controls the hospital.

The proposed agreement calls for a three-way split of the cost of rebuilding and expanding the hospital. The health-care district, CHW, and SHS would each put up \$75 million. The other \$15 million would come from private funds to be raised by the Sequoia Hospital Foundation.

Under the agreement, the district would give up its five seats on the 10-seat governing board when the hospital (SHS) merges with CHW on Jan. 1, 2008. CHW will appoint a new community board of 10 to 15

members. Sequoia will continue to be run as a community hospital by CHW for 40 years after completion of the new hospital.

At the end of the study session, there was only one speaker. Former district board member and Redwood City Mayor Brent Britschgi said, "I think we're going in the right direction."

League questions

On Nov. 6, the League of Women Voters of South San Mateo County circulated a letter questioning the proposal to provide \$75 million for rebuilding Sequoia Hospital and permanently selling all interests to CHW. It asked for more transparency, more community oversight, and an election.

"The League is concerned that public funds are to be spent on improving a hospital while a pri-

vate entity assumes total control without unbiased local oversight," said League President Jamie Shepard in an e-mail.

On Nov. 7, members of the board said they had not seen the letter. Director Malcolm MacNaughton noted that an election is not legally required. The election in 1996 approving transfer of the hospital to CHW covered the present actions, he said.

Ms. Kane noted the board has been doing outreach to the community. It held two public forums (poorly attended), placed newspaper ads, sent a letter to all residents, and posted all information on its Web site. "I spent a day at a street fair," she said.

Ms. Kane also noted that the board was not giving the money to rebuild the hospital; it was

investing it. The 40-year term of the agreement represents the length of time for the district to get back its investment, she said. The district contribution also includes transfer of a medical office building to CHW.

Even under CHW ownership, Sequoia will continue as a non-religious, community hospital, under the agreement. "We insisted on that," Ms. Kane said.

Other concerns

Another major concern in rebuilding Sequoia Hospital is the ability to recruit and maintain physicians in an increasingly competitive health care environment.

While the award-winning hospital ranks in the top 5 percent nationally, it also faces tough competition if the Palo Alto Medical Foundation builds a new hospital in San Carlos.

Ms. Kane said the financial studies for rebuilding Sequoia Hospital took that possibility into account. "Sequoia still will run a profit even with PAMF, possibly not as high a profit."

Hospital President Glenna Vaskelis discussed the hospital's program to keep its physicians happy. It is reactivating its Physician Advisory Committee, and has prepared a seven-page paper on "Physician Engagement Strategies."

"Physicians are independent," she said. "We should provide the best place for physicians to come."

Supervisor Jerry Hill has another concern about the new hospital — and the present one: how to meet the health needs of the uninsured and those who don't have enough money to pay for health care.

"This is a key issue," he said. "Building a community hospital that only insured residents can go to doesn't meet the needs of thousands of uninsured residents."

Mr. Hill said he hopes to work with the board to solve these problems. "My goal is to work things out for the future," he said.

Ms. Kane agreed that serving the uninsured is an important issue, but not part of the present negotiations. "It's kind of an orange in an apple basket," she said. "I'm willing to discuss the uninsured with him." ■



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■ INFORMATION

For information, call the Sequoia Healthcare District at 482-6115, or go to sequoiahealthcare-district.com; or call Sequoia Hospital at 369-5811, or go to sequoiahospital.org.

■ 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

Grand theft report:

■ Apple iPhone stolen from Sacred Heart Prep student's backpack, Betty Lane, Oct. 29.

Burglary report: Purse and money from wallet stolen from residence, first block of Fairfax Ave., Nov. 7.

Fraud reports:

■ Check written under false pretences for purchase over \$500, Menlo College at 1000 El Camino Real, Oct. 30.

■ Unauthorized debits to account, Bel-leau Ave., Nov. 3.

■ Check received may be part of pyramid scheme, first block of Stockbridge Ave., Nov. 5.

MENLO PARK

Burglary reports:

■ Black light, mask, DVD player, radio, cell phone and wallet stolen from vehicle, 1000 block of Ringwood Ave., Oct. 28.

■ Skill saw, jackhammer and tile cutter stolen from garage, 900 block of Woodland Ave., Oct. 28.

■ TV, sunglasses, camera and plastic container stolen, 2900 block of Sand Hill Road, Oct. 30.

■ Handicapped placard stolen from vehicle, 1000 block of Lassen Drive, Oct. 31.

■ 700 block of Santa Cruz Ave., Nov. 5.

■ Shed broken into, 4000 block of Campbell Ave., Nov. 5.

■ Wallet, cell phone and hand-held digital device stolen, 400 block of Oak Court, Nov. 5.

■ Stereo stolen from vehicle, 300 block of Sharon Park Drive, Nov. 7.

Stolen vehicle report: 2007 silver and gold Mercedes, 400 block of Oak Grove Ave., Oct. 27.

Fraud reports:

■ Unauthorized use of credit card, 1100 block of O'Brien Drive and 1100 block of Marcussen Drive and 700 block of El Camino Real, Oct. 30 and Nov. 1 and Nov. 2.

■ Identity theft, 300 block of McKendry Place, Nov. 2.

■ Money stolen from checking account, 400 block of Concord Drive, Nov. 5.

■ Internet fraud, 2400 block of Sharon Oaks Drive, Nov. 6.

■ Check fraud, 1300 block of Madera Ave., Nov. 8.

Accident report: Forklift accident at construction site sends one victim to hospital, 2800 Sand Hill Road, Nov. 5.

Grand theft reports:

■ Laptop stolen, 400 block of Pope St., Nov. 5.

■ Purse stolen from unlocked vehicle, 100 block of Bay Road, Nov. 6.

■ Groceries worth \$600 stolen, Draeger's supermarket at 1010 University Drive, Nov. 8.

Spousal abuse report: 1100 Berkeley Ave., Nov. 3.

PORTOLA VALLEY

Burglary report: Wallet and two lunch-box coolers stolen from locked vehicle, 500 block of Portola Road, Oct. 26.

Incident report: Boy 13 years old asked if he wanted to go for ride in beat up red pickup truck, Alpine Road near Portola Road, Oct. 31.

WEST MENLO PARK

Vandalism report: Corrosive liquid sprayed onto vehicle hood and fender, 100 block of Stanford Ave., Nov. 1.

■ OBITUARY

Spencer S. Voyné

Retired Pacific Telephone employee

Services will be held at 1:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 17, at the Pleasant View Church of Pleasanton for Spencer S. Voyné, a resident of Menlo Park since 1964 who died Nov. 4 after a short bout with cancer. He was 80.

Mr. Voyné was born in Oakland and moved to Southern California as a small child. He attended Lowell High School, Whitman College and the University of Southern California.

From the age of 19, he worked for Pacific Telephone Co., retiring in 1986, his family said.

In midlife, he became a baseball umpire and was a member of the Old Time Athletes Association.

In his later years, he traveled extensively in China representing China Products, an import/export firm started in the 1970s. The firm imported tea, chili peppers, honey, down, and other products. He often entertained Chinese businessmen when they came to this country, said family members.



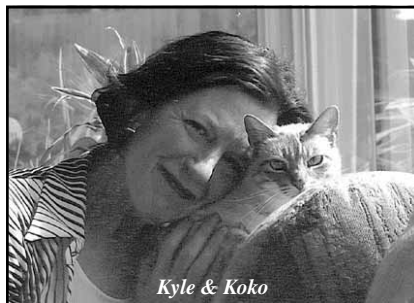
Spencer Voyné

Mr. Voyné is survived by his wife of 60 years, Gladys of Menlo Park; sons Stephen Voyné and Michael Voyné; and three grandchildren.

The family prefers donations in Mr. Voyné's memory to the Salvation Army or to the Pleasant View Church in Christ in Pleasanton.

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Guest Speaker: Sue Dinwiddie

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Tuesday, November 27

9:00-9:25 am

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9:30-11:30 am

Presentation

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Learn how to practice positive speaking and new ways to listen in order to encourage children to "hear" us when we speak. Gain new ideas of what to do when children are not following directions and understanding limits.

Reservations required. Adults only. Call 650-854-5897

There will be a discussion group on Fri., Nov. 30 at 9:30 am in Bethany's Fireside Room for parents to further discuss the topic in a smaller more intimate setting. Sue Dinwiddie will lead the discussion group.

SUZANNE CLARK PLOUGH



Sue ("TuTu") passed away in Palo Alto on November 7, 2000 of natural causes. She was a Montessori teacher with an advanced degree in education from Butler University in Indianapolis, and volunteer for the Alzheimer's Association.

A 2nd generation California native,

member of Alpha Phi at Cal Berkeley and avid Bears' supporter, she had a strong love of life and family.

She is survived by her husband Ron, brother Robert Clark, children Dave and Tia and grandchildren Kelsey and Avery. A private burial will be held.

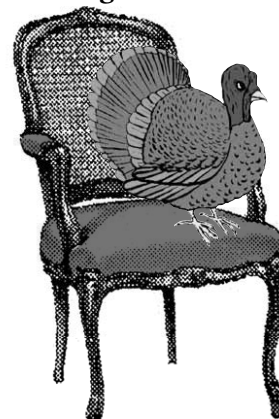
The family has asked that in lieu of flowers a donation be made to Pathways Hospice: 585 N. Mary Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94085.

Her warmth and generosity will forever be remembered by those who met her.

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THE CITY OF MENLO PARK

NOTICE OF ADOPTION

The City Council of Menlo Park adopted Ordinance No. 959 at its regular City Council meeting of November 6, 2007. The Ordinance was introduced on October 30, 2007, and adopted on November 6, 2007, by a 5-0 vote. The Ordinance is effective January 1, 2008, and is summarized as:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF MENLO PARK AMENDING TITLE 12 [BUILDINGS AND CONSTRUCTION] OF THE MENLO PARK MUNICIPAL CODE TO ADOPT AN UPDATED CALIFORNIA BUILDING CODE, CALIFORNIA MECHANICAL CODE, CALIFORNIA PLUMBING CODE, CALIFORNIA ELECTRIC CODE, AND AMENDMENTS THERETO

• The Ordinance adopted the updated California Building Code, California Mechanical Code, California Plumbing Code and California Electrical Code and deleted Chapter 12.07 of the Menlo Park Municipal Code regarding Uniform Housing Code Amendments. Because of the City's unique geologic and topographic conditions (i.e. location in Seismic Risk Zone 4 and location in an area containing highly combustible dry grasses, weeds, brush and trees), the City also adopted amendments to the California Building Code.

The full text of the Ordinance and all exhibits are available at the Office of the City Clerk and/or may be viewed on the City of Menlo Park website at www.menlopark.org.

/s/
Silvia M. Vonderlinden
City Clerk
Dated: November 7, 2007
Published in THE COUNTRY ALMANAC on November 14, 2007.

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



WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

All views must include a home address and contact phone number. Published letters will also appear on the web site, www.TheAlmanacOnline.com, and occasionally on the 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.

A shock in Belle Haven

Last week's revelation that a state social services agency has found serious safety violations at the Belle Haven child care program should sound an alarm for top Menlo Park officials.

The worst charge was that a child threatened another child with a knife, which went unnoticed by teachers in the program. But the state investigators also found four other infractions at the center, which serves about 50 children from ages 5 to 12 in a large portable building near the Belle Haven Senior Center.

Among the other problems cited were not having enough teachers on duty for a portion of the day; two employees who lacked proper fingerprint clearance; and one employee who was under the age of 18, but was counted as a person permitted to supervise children.

The problems at Belle Haven immediately raised the question of whether the city made the right decision when the longtime supervisor of the Belle Haven program, Vanessa Carlisle, was moved to the Burgess child care program in March. Ms. Carlisle's transfer outraged some parents at the Belle Haven Center, including Marcia Dore-Perez, an East Palo Alto resident who has one child in the program.

"Is there a connection with these violations and Vanessa not being there? Of course there is," she told the Almanac.

It is her belief, she said, that "the people entrusted to direct the after-school programs safely simply do not know the state regulations." Given the state citations, we agree.

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

LETTERS

Our readers write

Theater owner's interests not public's interests

Editor:

Andy Duncan's proposal might be in his and Park Theatre owner Howard Crittenden's best interests, but let's not confuse that with being in our best interests. While restoring the theater would be a public benefit, it would mostly benefit the part of our public who take dance lessons.

Isn't it curious that Mr. Crittenden is suddenly interested in the lack of parking for a renovated movie theater? When Landmark ran the Park Theatre as a movie house, it had exactly the same amount of parking.

Mr. Crittenden is the very same person who kicked out Landmark Theaters, allowed his building to become an eyesore, secretly chopped off the neon sign and boarded up the building. He now cares about the trees in front of the theater? Please.

Of the two proposals, Mr. Hilgoss' plan is the winner. It would bring much-needed life and culture to downtown Menlo Park without seeking city funding.

Elizabeth Lasensky
Fremont Street, Menlo Park

Our Regional Heritage

Since the Menlo Circus Club's beginning in Atherton in the 1920s, horses and riding have been important activities there. In the early days, club members raffled off a pony, like the one here, which went to a happy new owner in June 1921.



Atherton Heritage Association

Troubled by theater owner's parting shot

Editor:

I was troubled by Howard Crittenden's recent Guest Opinion column, particularly the last sentence, which read: "... we should be prepared to have this vacant boarded-up building greet those coming into Menlo Park for years to come."

I believe it was Mr. Crittenden's decision to terminate Landmark Theaters' lease in July of 2002, leaving the building vacant. A

month later he also defaced the building by illegally removing the historic sign, leaving the theater the eyesore it is today. Perhaps if he had been more thoughtful with his actions he would have more support from residents for proposals involving his property.

Jim Stoneham
Westfield Drive, Menlo Park

County should refuse Stanford's plan to dump fill

Editor:

Last week's article regarding

Whether it is Vanessa Carlisle or someone else, it is clear that the Belle Haven center needs an experienced child care administrator to take over the staff and make sure all city and state regulations are followed.

When teachers do not know that a student has pulled a knife on another student, or whoever is in charge is not making sure all staff members are properly certified to supervise children, something is wrong and must be fixed. In postings on the Almanac's Town Square forum last week, parents claimed that a 6-year-old was left waiting for over a half-hour — one said over an hour — on a street corner by staff members who forgot him.

The city needs to apply a sense of urgency to cleaning up the operations at the Belle Haven center. Both City Manager Glen Rojas and Community Services Director Barbara Santos George agreed that the citations are "serious matters."

But then, Ms. George unfortunately appeared to downplay the seriousness of the problem, when she said, "There are all kinds of things that occur in child care programs all the time. If you start looking for issues, you are going to find issues. ... We do run a very safe, well-supervised program in Belle Haven, and we're going to keep doing so."

We can understand why Ms. Santos George wants to stand up for her troops, but to downplay the serious findings of state investigators is not the way to go. The city needs to take immediate steps to right the ship in Belle Haven. The parents and the children there deserve a standard of care equal to what they would receive at the Burgess center.

Stanford University's proposal to dump soil on the former Christmas tree farm should be of concern to all Menlo Park residents, and not simply because of the usual traffic impacts.

Stanford claims that its 10-year plan to haul up to 30,000 truckloads of dirt through Menlo Park will satisfy a need to restore the former Christmas tree farm along Sand Hill Road. Last week, from my Sand Hill Road vantage point, I could see that the land was heal-

See **LETTERS**, next page

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

ing itself from the environmental damage created by Stanford's allowing the Christmas tree farm operation over 20 years ago. Until that operation ceased, the growth of native vegetation was prevented by terracing, road grading, mowing, planting and harvesting of non-native conifers. Today numerous adolescent native oaks and shrubs are thriving throughout the 143-acre site. Such is the value of benign neglect.

Let's be clear: This dumping of dirt will destroy most of the existing juvenile and mature native oaks on the site. Prime foraging habitat for raptors will be disrupted for years. Once the 300,000 cubic yards of dirt are spread over the site, Stanford will make an effort to replant the very trees and shrubs that will be removed if the hauling and filling permit from San Mateo County is granted.

The second but equally distressing issue is that Stanford's application for a grading permit involves large dump trucks using Menlo Park streets for 10 years, an excessive and unprecedented request. Accepting a negative declaration for a 10-year project of this magnitude is negligent. An environmental impact report must be required to analyze the project, including the accumulated effects of the daily transport of dirt in large trucks for such a long period.

The city of Menlo Park and its residents should join San Mateo County to demand that every option to this dangerous, disruptive and unsightly hauling and fill operation be explored, including options that minimize

A better use for Stanford dirt

By Lennie Roberts

Stanford University is seeking a permit that would allow the deposit of up to 300,000 cubic yards of excavated dirt on its 143-acre "Christmas tree farm" site along Sand Hill Road, west of Highway 280, over the next 10 years.

Blanketing these scenic hills with up to seven feet of surplus diggings from expansion of the campus, hospital, shopping center, and other construction projects would be unattractive both in its process (10 years of hauling along Sand Hill Road, a quarry-in-reverse operation that's out of character with the natural setting) and its outcome (an altered landscape).

The Committee for Green Foothills proposes a far better alternative. This same excavated earth is badly needed just a few miles away, in the restoration of Cargill's former industrial salt ponds. By partnering with the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay

National Wildlife Refuge, Stanford has a golden opportunity to put its extra fill to beneficial re-use.

An Almanac feature story (Aug. 22) on the future of the Cargill salt ponds highlighted the impressive bay restoration project, the largest on the West Coast. As it happens, the wildlife refuge needs up to a million cubic yards of clean fill at Bair Island to raise the salt ponds to the proper level as the first step in re-establishing historic marshes and other habitats.

Refuge manager Clyde Morris projects that raising the subsided areas by 2-1/2 feet will take three to five years. After completion, the old levees will be opened

up to restore tidal action to the former baylands. This marsh restoration has multiple environmental benefits, including increased habitat for many wildlife species, protection from flooding as sea levels rise, and reduced pollution from natural marsh

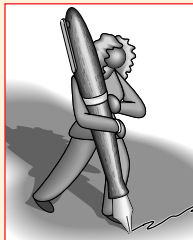
filtering of urban runoff.

Fill will also be needed for many more years to restore former salt ponds along Menlo Park's Bayfront Expressway and rebuild levees in Menlo Park and East Palo Alto, all part of the ambitious South Bay salt pond restoration project. Providing this fill from Stanford's nearby projects would yield fewer CO2 emissions than those resulting from trucking fill in from distant locations.

Stanford has been at the forefront of many environmental initiatives, including the Woods Institute for the Environment and Jasper Ridge's Leslie Shao-ming Sun Field Station. The field station has won awards for sustainable design using green building materials, and energy efficiency with its net-zero carbon emissions.

By applying these same principles of sustainability to the disposition of its excess fill, Stanford can achieve an environmentally superior result. We hope Stanford officials will consider this proposal.

Lennie Roberts is the legislative advocate for the Committee for Green Foothills.



GUEST OPINION

environmental damage and more fully utilize the internal Stanford road network.

Steve Schmidt

Central Avenue, Menlo Park
(Steve Schmidt is a former City Council member and mayor of Menlo Park.)

Disappointed by Stanford's dumping plans

Editor:

I read with horror and disappointment the article about Stanford's proposal to dump 300,000 cubic yards of fill between Sand Hill Road and the linear accelerator.

Stanford commented in the article that the old Christmas tree farm land is left with stumps and furrows, adding that "the land is

not in such great shape."

Shouldn't Stanford or the farm operator have done the simple restoration steps for these defects when the farm was abandoned? Restoration could have been done much easier then, or even now, than the proposed fill deposition.

I believe only a fraction of the land area proposed for fill was the Christmas tree farm. The article stated that "six big, unhealthy trees would be removed and many more trees planted." Today, much of the area is dotted with at least 250 oaks and other parts are in natural succession toward oak woodland as coyote brush establishes itself.

It is hard to believe much of this natural vegetation will survive the deposition of at least two to five feet of fill. The proposal seems

to be a blatant attempt at cost savings under the guise of restoration. It is a very disappointing example of land management.

Bill Gomez
Atherton

League urges go-slow approach to hospital transfer

Editor:

The League of Women Voters of South San Mateo County, based in Menlo Park, has monitored the Sequoia Healthcare District for many years. The district's decision to provide \$75 million for the rebuilding of Sequoia Hospital as well as to permanently sell all interests in the hospital and surrounding property to Catholic Healthcare West is of major concern to all taxpayers.

Our league is not satisfied that the letter recently sent to district residents provides enough information for the residents or voters to understand the implications of this potential action.

There is no doubt that Sequoia Hospital is a vital resource for our community; but it was created to serve public hospital purposes. The hospital rebuilding is important to carry on the health services of our South San Mateo County community. Yet, how this is done and the resulting community oversight is equally important and not clearly defined in the letter.

We urge the healthcare district board to make the details of the proposed agreement fully available and the decision-making process fully transparent. Clearly, this decision should be submitted to the voters as it was in 1996.

Jamie Shepard, president
League of Women Voters
of South San Mateo County

Bike entry points left out of Encinal, Laurel plans

Editor:

I have just seen the proposed site plans for Encinal and Laurel schools and my wife and I are very concerned that there are no safe bike access points to the schools.

Not only is biking fun and healthy but it also reduces school traffic, so it benefits all. In the Encinal plan, the one bike rack shown is placed where the car pick-up line is, which is not a safe way to enter the school on a bicycle. It would be great if one could enter the school on a bike without crossing a parking lot or an entry to a parking lot, neither of which are very safe places for bikes.

Ideally, there would be some sort of bike path around the perimeter of the school, with an entry at both Encinal and Middlefield roads.

The site plan for Laurel School does not provide a safe way for bikes to enter from Edge Road. The only mention of bikes is that bike racks will be placed near the entrances. From Ringwood, if the bike racks are near the gate, it would be easy to enter and park a bike there. However, from Edge Road, the only two entrances are into the parking lot and car drop-off line.

There needs to be some way for bikes to enter the campus and reach a bike rack without entering the high-traffic area of the drop-off line. There are many families who live within biking distance of both schools. Every child who can ride safely to school would reduce two car trips per day to the school. Is it too late to include a bike safety plan?

David Hirschberg
Mills Court, Menlo Park

An apology from the mayor

By Kelly Fergusson

I wish to reiterate my earlier public apology to Paula Maurano, Parks and Recreation Commission chairwoman, and the full PRC.

I am sorry for my intemperate remarks at the Oct. 30 council meeting, and for placing the chairwoman in a position where she could not complete her comments during the commission reports portion of the meeting. I sincerely appreciate your volunteerism, dedication and advice. I deeply regret my mistake.

The City Council has made a number of changes in procedures this year to improve the openness and welcoming atmosphere of our meetings, as well as in the involvement of city commissions in council decision-making. I regret the lack of

decorum at the Oct. 30 meeting.

Fortunately, the council immediately grasped the PRC's concerns. I appreciate that you accepted my request to submit your full list of concerns in writing.

As you now know, the city has ceased its negotiations regarding the Park Theater.

It is unfortunate that I did not know in advance about the PRC's short-notice special meeting, nor about your desire to report your thoughts to the council. I certainly would have been better prepared to allocate time on

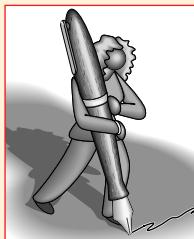
a very full agenda, as we had for the other commission chairs (Bicycle and Library) who had made advance arrangements.

It also is unfortunate that neither the project applicant Andy Duncan nor property owner Howard Crittenden were present at the PRC meeting, nor were members of the City Council's theater subcommittee, or city staff knowledgeable about the theater proposal.

My hope as mayor is that we all work diligently to ensure an informed, robust, and civil civic discussion of controversial issues. Better decisions are made when all voices and viewpoints are part of the public dialogue.

Thank you again for your service to our community. I truly appreciate it.

Kelly Fergusson is mayor of Menlo Park.



GUEST OPINION



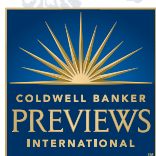
WHISKEY HILL ROAD
WOODSIDE

PRICE UPON REQUEST

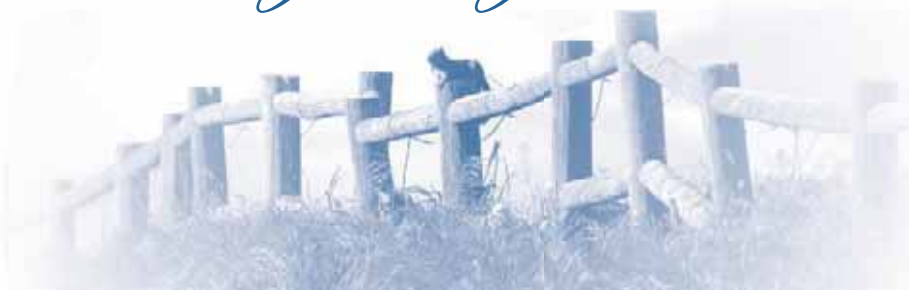
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