

PLANS STALLED for General Motors auto mall
on Bayfront Expressway in Menlo Park. Page 5

The Almanac

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

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** Source: DataQuick 1997-2007

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Historical performance and data provided is not necessarily an indication of future performance.

Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

FIRST SHOT



Photo by Veronica Weber/The Almanac

Breaking new ground

Menlo Park officials rest on their shovels at the Feb. 28 groundbreaking ceremony at the site of what will be a 3,800-square-foot police substation at the corner of Willow Road and Ivy Drive. Officers will be stationed at the new facility, and residents will be able to obtain police reports and parking permits, and pay tickets and water bills there. From right are: Mayor Andy Cohen, Councilman Richard Cline, City Manager Glen Rojas, Councilman Heyward Robinson, Councilwoman Kelly Fergusson, developer Gary Moiseff and Police Chief Bruce Goitia.

Atherton

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Going Green

The Going Green stories in **Section 2** merely scratch the surface of local efforts to conserve resources and reduce greenhouses gases. We will be publishing more stories online and in print. If you know of exceptional initiatives, please post the information on TheAlmanacOnline.com. Check the links under the Town Square heading on the home page. You can also e-mail information to managing editor Richard Hine at RHine@AlmanacNews.com.

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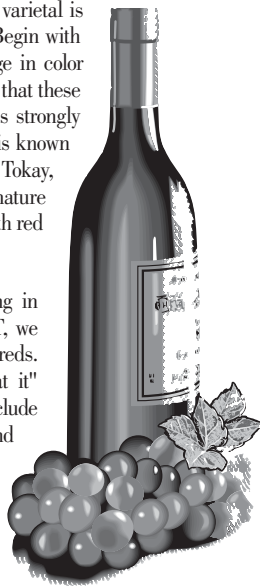
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Shades Of Gray

Whether called Pinot Grigio or Pinot Gris, this white wine varietal is known for its chameleon-like ability to transform itself. Begin with the fact that these grapes cloak themselves in skins that range in color from grayish blue to brownish pink. Similarly, the styles of wine that these grapes produce vary even more widely. This is a grape that is strongly influenced by soil and climate. In northern Italy, Pinot Grigio is known as a neutral, crisp white wine. In Alsace, where it is known as Tokay, Pinot Gris emerges as a rich, highly textured wine with its signature aroma of honey and flowers. These wines are often compared with red wines as food companions.

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HINT: Pinot Gris from California and Oregon have personalities of their own, borne of their unique climates, soils, and wine-making styles



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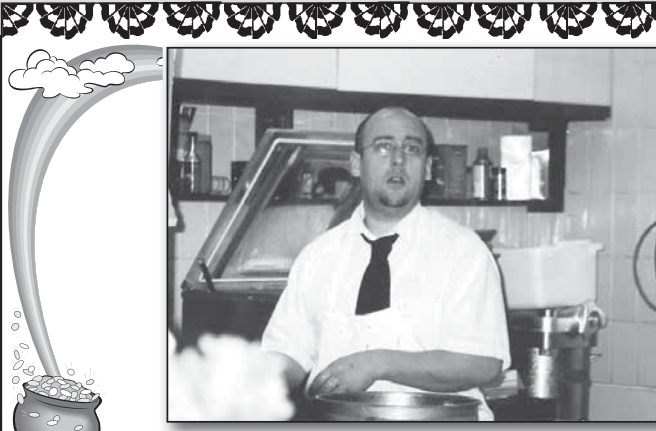
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WINE

Pinot Gris / Pinot Grigio

Whether you prefer the French pronunciation Pinot Gris, or Italian, Pinot Grigio, the wine should be fresh and delicious. Pinot Gris rarely sees oak, so they tend to be pure expressions of place and grape. Here are a few suggested examples from around the globe.



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'06 St. Michael - Eppan Pinot Grigio, Alto Adige. <i>A classic Italian example that's superior to Santa Marg.</i>	Reg. \$16.99 Sale \$14.99
'06 Shaky Bridge Pinot Gris, Central Otago, NZ. <i>Nectarine, white peach, and melon. Juicy and delicious.</i>	Reg. \$18.99 Sale \$16.99
'06 Palmira Pinot Grigio Alisos Vnyd, Santa Barbara <i>Crisp and pure with lime, melon and mineral complexity.</i>	Reg. \$18.99 Sale \$16.99
'06 Willakenzie Estate Pinot Gris, Willamette Valley <i>A riper, richer, fruitier style.</i>	Reg. \$19.99 Sale \$17.99
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Local News

MENLO PARK | A THERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Menlo cyclist confronts driver who struck her

■ Walter Sorensen sentenced to eight months in jail for injuring MaryAnn Levenson.

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

It's been 15 months since the arrest of an intoxicated Hillsborough man whose pickup truck struck Menlo Park resident and bicycle racer MaryAnn Levenson, severely injuring her. The driver, 77-year-old Walter Sorensen, reportedly attempted to leave the scene, but was blocked by another driver's vehicle.

During the months-long interval as she attempted to recover after being dragged 35 feet under Mr. Sorensen's truck and suffering a fractured pelvis, broken vertebrae,

shattered larynx, extensively damaged foot and continuing numbness in her lips and her jaw, Ms. Levenson has had plenty of time to prepare remarks.

She delivered on Friday afternoon, March 7, in San Mateo County Superior Court in Redwood City at the sentencing hearing for Mr. Sorensen, who had pleaded "no contest" in January 2007 to charges that included felony drunken driving.

The hearing was the first time Ms. Levenson has had the opportunity to say anything to him. She addressed Mr. Sorensen before Judge Clifford Cretan sentenced him

'There was just pure anger. I was not going to give him any tears.'

MARYANN LEVENSON



was just pure anger. I was not going to give him any tears."

Ms. Levenson's husband, Scott, who was in the courtroom, said his wife called Mr. Sorensen a coward and completely irresponsible, told him how the Dec. 23, 2006, accident had ruined her life and damaged the lives of those around her, how her lips could no longer feel the kisses she gives her sons, how she has to cover her mouth when eating to keep from spraying food, how her voice fails if she talks too loudly or for too long.

No remorse?

Ms. Levenson said that Mr. Sorensen did not apologize and tended to look away as she

to eight months in county jail, followed by five years of supervised probation and loss of driving privileges, 300 hours of community service, fines of at least \$366,000 and other penalties, said Chief Deputy District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe.

"I wrote it out, just in case I wasn't able to say it," she told The Almanac. "There

Continued on page 7

Gang of youths attacks pedestrians in Menlo Park

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

A gang of six young men and boys are in police custody in connection with two attacks on pedestrians and a robbery at the Safeway store on El Camino Real in Menlo Park.

One victim, a 60-year-old Menlo Park man who was walking along O'Brien Drive east of the Bayshore Freeway about 6 a.m. on Feb. 24, was hospitalized with a blood clot on his brain and fractures to his jaw, nose and eye socket, according to San Mateo County Deputy District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe and Sgt. Jim Simpson of the Menlo Park Police Department.

The second attack occurred about 50 minutes later near the intersection of Newbridge Street and Carlton Avenue in the Belle Haven neighborhood. A 37-year-old man suffered

bruises from being punched and kicked, Sgt. Simpson said.

Both victims were taken to Stanford Hospital and were expected to recover, Assistant District Attorney Karen Guidotti told the Almanac.

The two were robbed of their cell phones, Sgt. Simpson said. To protect their safety, police are not releasing their names.

The District Attorney's Office did release the names of four suspects in the case: John Persius Stanley Mahe, 17, Malakai Mataele, 18, and Holomesi Tuineau, 19, all of East Palo Alto, and Sipukako Tony Vailala. The names of the younger suspects are being withheld. The 17-year-old has been charged as an adult, Ms. Guidotti said.

In addition to robbery, the charges include assault and causing great bodily injury, Mr. Wagstaffe said.

See **ATTACKS**, page 7



Photo by Veronica Weber/The Almanac

Wanted: bees (some travel required)

About 14,000 daffodils live on Village Hill in Woodside, having been planted there by the Woodside Landscape Committee, and many of the yellow and white flowers are now in bloom. The committee's mission: "To beautify the town-owned open spaces in Woodside," which includes areas near the library, community museum, Pioneer building, Roberts market and Town Hall.

Plans stalled for General Motors auto mall on Bayfront Expressway

By Rory Brown
Almanac Staff Writer

General Motors' plans to build a Menlo Park auto mall have been put on hold.

A GM spokesperson said the automaker is still committed to building an auto mall on Bayfront Expressway at Willow Road, but due to slumping auto sales and an uncertain economy, the project isn't going anywhere quickly.

"We're still in discussions with the city, but the market's

changed," said Susan Garontakos, dealer and field communications manager for GM. "We don't have any definitive plans for the site right now."

In October 2006, GM came forward with its proposal to build an auto mall at the property, which was then part of the Tyco Electronics campus. The project includes plans for 8.5 acres of the property to be allotted for GM dealerships, and the other 13.5 acres designated for non-GM dealerships or other retail uses.



General Motors has purchased 22 acres from Tyco Electronics to build an auto mall on Bayfront Expressway at Willow Road.

GM officials said if all went well, the GM dealerships would

be up and running by late 2008, but that doesn't look likely.

"It's a completely different environment in the industry and the economy right now compared (with) several years ago," Ms. Garontakos said. "We want to make sure [the auto mall] is successful, and that means doing this right." She said GM currently has no timeline for the project.

Last year, GM officially purchased the property from Tyco for "in excess of \$20 million," according to Menlo Park Business Development Manager

David Johnson.

He said planning an auto mall is no easy feat, as GM has to draw independent dealers (both GM, and non-GM) to the site. But he said he's still confident the automaker will make its plans a reality.

"I fully expect them to see this project through," Mr. Johnson said. He noted that GM has "bigger issues" to take care of at the moment, including reports of a multi-billion dollar deficit for its 2007 fiscal year, and

See **AUTO MALL**, page 7



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AT STANFORD



Woodside School faces budget cuts

By Andrea Gemmet
Almanac Staff Writer

The Woodside Elementary School District is facing a \$380,000 budget gap and the school board is likely to authorize staff cuts at its Tuesday, March 11, meeting.

Superintendent Dan Vinson blames the budget shortfall on "normally increasing operating costs at a time when revenue growth is relatively flat." He said the problem is not limited to the upcoming school year, but is ongoing.

Mr. Vinson is proposing that the K-8 school eliminate its computer network administrator, assistant principal, and one

of its accountants. The science specialist would drop from full time to part time, ending the school's science pull-out program for grades 3-5. A school counselor and an English language development specialist would each be reduced from full time to half time positions under his proposal.

The Woodside school board is also contemplating an overhaul in the district's administrative structure, triggered by Mr. Vinson's upcoming retirement at the end of the school year in 2009.

State budget cuts and lower than normal growth in property tax revenues are taking their toll

on the district. In a report to the school board, Mr. Vinson said the district is expecting a 4 percent increase in property taxes, down from a historic average of nearly 8 percent. Woodside is also anticipating a 10 percent cut in state funding, and no increase in its grant from the Woodside School Foundation, he said.

Cost increases faced by the district include a 2.5 percent rise in staff salaries, an increase of 2 to 4 percent in non-staff expenses, and \$22,000 in annual leases of new technology equipment.

The board meets at 4 p.m. in the Wildcats Room at Woodside School, 3195 Woodside Road. For information call 851-1571. ■

Menlo Park cyclist confronts driver who struck her

Continued from page 5

was speaking to him, an account backed up by her husband and by former Menlo Park mayor and cycling enthusiast Steve Schmidt, who attended the hearing.

Before sentencing, Judge Cretan noted that Mr. Sorensen "did not appear to have any remorse for his criminal conduct," Mr. Wagstaffe said.

Mr. Sorensen had been advised to remain silent, his Palo Alto attorney James Blackman said in an interview. Courtrooms in cases like this one tend to have a lot of anger in the room that can lead to apologies being misinterpreted, Mr. Blackman said, adding that a courtroom is an "artificial" environment and "not a place to share deep emotions."

Was Mr. Sorensen in fact remorseful? "Oh yes. Absolutely," Mr. Blackman said. "He expressed remorse at every opportunity" to probation officers, his attorney, prosecutors, family and friends.

"Some people can verbalize that kind of emotion more effectively than others," he added. Mr. Black-

man explained this to the judge, who said he would consider it as another opinion, Mr. Blackman said.

Mr. Levenson remained unconvinced. "Having someone express some feelings, some caring about what happened rather than sitting in your chair and rocking would have been very therapeutic," he said in an interview. "Just the words 'I'm sorry, I made a mistake,' would have been very helpful. He had the last word and he chose not to say anything."

Mr. Sorensen "got what he deserved," Ms. Levenson said in an interview. "I felt like I was the one behind bars, and now he's there. It was such a relief to see him carted off the same day."

At the end of the hearing, Mr. Sorensen was led away by the bailiff.

Among those who testified at the hearing was one witness to the accident who explained how she had held Ms. Levenson in her arms and wondered if she was about to die.

As she was being held, Ms. Levenson said, she had been preoccupied with the parts of her body that, after being dragged and hav-

ing her clothes raked off, could have been exposed to passersby.

The witness reassured her in court. "I just want to let you know that I kept you covered," she said, for which Ms. Levenson said she was most grateful.

Being safe

In a comment on the proceedings, Mr. Schmidt, the former mayor and cyclist enthusiast, said he felt that justice had been served.

The publicity of the sentence "will serve strong notice to motorists that they can't expect to get off easily or at all when they injure pedestrians or bicyclists," he said. "People who drink and drive should be punished. I don't care if you're 95 years old. ... To drink and drive is the worst, absolutely the worst."

"Everybody needs to take a deep breath and get off their cell phones" and pay attention to the road, said Ms. Levenson, who is gradually returning to bike racing and is also a member of Menlo Park's Bicycle Commission. "How do you make people more safe on the road? Educate the cyclist; educate the motorist." ■

ATTACKS

continued from page 5

The suspects are being held on \$200,000 bail. A preliminary hearing is set for 2 p.m. Tuesday, March 18, in San Mateo County Superior Court.

The two attacks followed a 5:40 a.m. robbery on the same day (Feb. 24) at the new Safeway store at 525 El Camino Real, where thieves tangled with a security guard, Sgt. Simpson said. Whiskey and a six-pack of beer were taken.

Police connected the three incidents after an investigation over the next several days turned up "significant evidence" and arrests were made, Sgt. Simpson said. ■

AUTO MALL

continued from page 5

possible production cuts due to striking workers at auto part factories.

Tax sharing deal

The previous City Council voted unanimously in November 2006 to approve an agreement with GM that would evenly split — between the city and GM — the sales tax revenue generated from GM auto sales at the auto mall.

Under the deal, the city would share sales tax revenues for 15 years, or until GM receives \$10 million. At the time, GM

estimated first-year sales tax revenue from its dealerships at \$1.5 million, meaning the city would get \$750,000.

The auto mall project still requires environmental review and approval by the City Council. ■

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by Gloria Darke



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of the showings that matter most. Having an open house where it is largely neighbors and people walking or driving by is far less important than showing to serious buyers. Usually the more serious buyer will be shown the home through an agent who has seen the home through the Multiple Listing Service. However, make sure all your bases are covered and that you do use the internet, newspapers and mailings. And you never know what calls will be generated from the sign in your yard! It goes without saying that the house must also be in good shape for showings, inside and outside, and that it is priced correctly for the market conditions.

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

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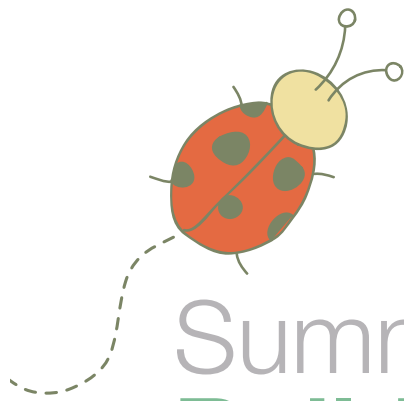
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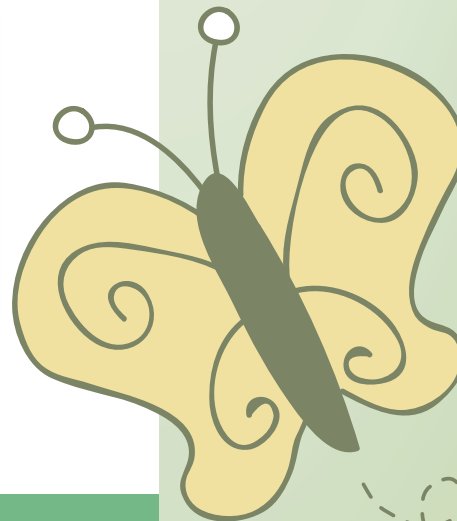
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COMMUNITIES OF DISTINCTION

Stanford drops plan to dump fill on former Christmas tree farm

By Marion Softky

Almanac Staff Writer

Faced with a long and expensive fight, Stanford has withdrawn its application to dump large amounts of fill, generated by its campus expansion, on the former Christmas tree farm along Sand Hill Road, west of Interstate 280 and across from the Horse Park.

On March 4, the San Mateo County Planning Department received Stanford's request to withdraw the application to place 300,000 cubic yards of fill over 10 years onto its 143-acre property between Sand Hill Road and the Stanford Linear Accelerator, according to planner Lisa Aozasa.

"It would be a lengthy and pretty expensive process; it didn't make sense to continue," said Jean McCown, Stanford University community relations director. "We have a number of other locations to dispose of fill."

Ms. McCown defended the project as providing environmental benefits by restoring land that has not recovered from years of growing Christmas trees.

"We haven't changed our mind," she said. "We genuinely felt this could be done in a very positive and environmentally responsible way that would have resulted in an improved condition at the site and no detriment to the surroundings or neighbors."

The application had stirred up concerns and opposition from neighbors and environmental groups, including Portola Valley and the Committee for Green Foothills.

Concerns focused on the visual impacts of the project, biological impacts on San Francisquito Creek and Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve downhill

from the site, and the prospect of thousands of trucks entering and leaving the site, and traveling on Sand Hill Road over 10 years.

The county planning department sent a four-page letter to Stanford on Nov. 21 listing additional information and studies it would need before bringing the application to a public hearing. This included studies of the wetland crossing of the creek, impacts on the endangered San Francisco garter snake, potential hazardous materials, and traffic issues.

Where then?

Stanford is still considering where to put the thousands of cubic yards of dirt being generated by the addition of almost 5 million square feet of building approved by Santa Clara County in 2000. Because the campus is already densely built, much of the new construction appears as

basements and underground parking — which generate the fill that needs to be disposed of.

Ms. McCown noted that Stanford is studying a number of options to dispose of its fill.

Lennie Roberts of the Committee for Green Foothills has suggested that Stanford use its fill to help restore the former salt ponds ringing the Bay to active tidal marsh. Inner Bair Island, at the end of Whipple Avenue in Redwood City, needs 1 million cubic yards of fill over five years to raise it enough to open the levees, she noted in a guest opinion in *The Almanac* on Nov. 14.

Restoring salt ponds and rebuilding levees in Menlo Park and East Palo Alto will also need fill, Ms. Roberts noted. "Providing this fill from Stanford's nearby projects would yield fewer CO2 emissions than those resulting from trucking fill in from distant locations." ■

Lennie Roberts of the Committee for Green Foothills has suggested that Stanford use its fill to help restore the former salt ponds ringing the Bay.

Creek 'daylighting' plan wins council OK

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

Sausal Creek may never again take its original free-running northerly path across 11.2 green acres of Portola Valley's Town Center, but it's now likely that the part of the creek that flows through the center will be liberated from the 60-inch concrete pipe in which it has been buried for decades.

The Town Council gave its unanimous approval on March 4 to a consultant's plan that has the creek emerging from the pipe into a gently bending streambed about 300 feet long and designed with gradually sloping sides along a meadow of native grasses.

The undergrounded creek crosses the Town Center's northern border and continues, as a free-running stream, on to the property of Christ Episcopal Church.

■ PORTOLA VALLEY

The council's 4-0 vote — Councilwoman Ann Wengert was absent — included approval of a budget of about \$613,000 to pay for the first of two phases of the \$1.4 million creek daylighting project.

Phase 1 includes extensive grading; building concrete walls to support two bridges, one for pedestrians and the other for vehicles, and a wall at the site where the creek emerges; building the vehicular bridge itself; and a rerouting of Town Center utility lines under that bridge.

Phase 2, at an estimated cost of \$787,000, includes constructing the creek bed and stabilizing it with native vegetation, and installing the pedestrian bridge, landscaping and irrigation.

The creek plans are scheduled to go out to bid on March 12, the same day as the final bid package for the new \$20 million Town

Center complex that includes a library, Town Hall and community hall. For that project, all but \$3 million was raised through donations from town residents.

The creek project is also being paid for with donations, with about \$425,000 already raised and another \$100,000 expected soon, fundraiser Alex Von Feldt told the council. About \$900,000 is still to be raised.

The council did not approve the budget for phase 2 of the creek project, deciding instead to wait for the bid process to run its course and see how the fundraising goes.

The new Town Center complex is likely to be completed in November or December. If the creek project proceeds on schedule, it should also be complete at the end of the year, said water resource management consultant Jorgen Blomberg of San Francisco-based Philip Williams & Associates. ■



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MP council starts budget talks

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

Building more than 1,400 feet of new sidewalks, and redesigning a downtown parking lot.

Improving facilities at the Onetta Harris Community Center, and continuing efforts to revamp El Camino Real.

These tasks are among the list of priority projects Menlo Park staff is suggesting the City Council fund during the fiscal year that starts July 1. Council members will discuss that list when they kick off 2008-09 budget talks at their meeting on Tuesday, March 11.

The meeting, devoted to discussing projects the city should fund next fiscal year, is scheduled to start at 7 p.m. in the council chambers at the Civic Center, between Laurel and Alma streets.

Council members have the final say on what projects get funded, but city staff has identified 54 projects that various commissions and the council itself have shown an interest in pursuing. Finance Director Carol Augustine has recommended that the council approve 38 of those projects for the coming year.

Some of the more costly projects include:

- \$975,000 to redesign the downtown parking plaza between Doyle and Curtis streets, adjacent to Su Hong To Go.

- Up to \$750,000 to create a plan to revamp properties along El Camino Real.

- More than \$1 million in citywide sidewalk repairs and construction, including building 1,400 feet of new sidewalks.

Recreation

City staff is also recommending a slew of recreation projects for next fiscal year, including moving ahead with plans to build a new Burgess Gym, and allotting \$575,000 to study building adult-sized fields at Kelly Park.

Other upgrades include improvements for the Nealon Park softball field, building a shade structure over the Belle Haven Child Development Center playground, replacing outdated equipment in the Onetta Harris Community Center weight room, and spending \$110,000 to fix landscaping, playground equipment, and park benches at various city parks. ■

Workshop on El Camino Real draws 100

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

Efforts to revitalize El Camino Real in Menlo Park got off to a lively start on March 6, as about 100 people packed the Burgess Recreation Center to pitch their ideas to fix up the city's main thoroughfare.

The big turnout was good news to City Council members who have pledged to make revamping El Camino Real a top priority, and say the efforts greatly depend on buy-in from residents and local businesses and property owners.

"We got a good crowd here tonight, and I think we heard some great ideas," Councilman Richard Cline said. "Hopefully things will take off, and by the next meeting (in April), we'll get double the people."

Participants at the meeting ranged from longtime council watchers to brand new residents, and they told a city-hired consultant what the city should consider when drawing up a new plan for El Camino Real.

■ MENLO PARK

Ideas ranged from improving the aesthetics of El Camino Real with new parks, public plazas, or a city square, to

Among proposed changes: build city square, attract green businesses, rework nearby streets.

reassessing a rejected plan to build a bike tunnel under the Caltrain tracks, or figuring out where high-density housing could be built.

Longtime resident Reg Rice, a member of the Transportation Commission, got the crowd buzzing when he suggested that the city could ease traffic congestion on El Camino Real by working with Palo Alto to connect Alma Street to Menlo Park with a bridge.

Councilwoman Kelly Ferguson was one of several residents to build on that idea, suggesting that the city look at making it easier for residents to bike and walk — as well as drive — between the two cities.

Other ideas included widening sidewalks, putting downtown and El Camino Real utility lines underground, and figuring out what to replace abandoned auto dealerships with — such as a new grocery store, houses, offices, green businesses, playing fields or a dog park.

Now, it will be up to city staff and the consultant to make something of the suggestions, and create some preliminary designs and plans for a reimagined El Camino Real by the next workshop in April.

"This is kind of a neat process to get people engaged," said Oliver Koehler, a one-year resident. "The key will be to get some consensus, to get something we all like rather than diving into the contentious issues that have been hashed out before." ■

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Menlo Park school district may tap into reserves

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

The Menlo Park City School District is expecting to have to dip into its reserve funds to shore up next year's budget.

Rising enrollment, cuts in state funding, and a smaller than usual increase in property tax revenues are the culprits, said Superintendent Ken Ranella.

"We're working in worst-case scenarios now, but it's such a preliminary analysis, it's not accurate," Mr. Ranella.

He said he expects that the needed amount of reserve funds, or "fund balance," will be "a modest amount."

SCHOOLS

Check TheAlmanacOnline.com for news updates.

At the moment, the district doesn't know how much money in state funding will be lost due to California's budget crisis.

Property tax revenues, the district's chief source of income, are expected to rise only about 5 percent, a lower rate than in the past, Mr. Ranella said. Last year, property tax revenues were up more than 9 percent, he said.

The district is also facing bigger expenditures due to rising enrollment. Kindergarten enrollment is higher than anticipated, although that could be due to this year's push to get children

enrolled during the February priority registration period, Mr. Ranella said.

Children can register for kindergarten at any time, but an opportunity to enroll in the new bilingual Spanish immersion kindergarten class is limited to children who registered by Feb. 29. Getting first dibs on transfers in the wake of the district's new attendance boundaries for the three elementary schools is another likely motivation.

As a basic aid district, Menlo Park has to absorb the costs of adding classes for a growing student body with little in the way of additional funding from the state. That means that while Menlo Park is protected from the brunt of state cuts in education funding, it is also subject to the whims of the local

real estate market, in terms of its impact on property tax revenues.

Mr. Ranella said layoffs are anticipated only at Hillview Middle School, mostly due to returning employees who have been on leave. One specialist who teaches an elective class will have hours reduced, because there aren't enough students enrolled in that particular class, Mr. Ranella said. ■

MEETING

The school board is scheduled to meet on Tuesday, March 11. Board meetings start at 7 p.m. and are held at the district office, located at Encinal school, 181 Encinal Ave., Atherton.

Woodside to review EIR for county parks

The Woodside Town Council is scheduled to review the final environmental impact report for the Huddart-Wunderlich parks master plan and issue a town position on the EIR to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors.

The council meets at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, March 11, in Independence Hall.

An earlier draft of the master plan elicited complaints from Woodside residents over the increased traffic and noise that could result from a proposed new visitor's center and community building at the Zwierlein group picnic area in Huddart Park. Weddings could be much more frequent and parking could overflow on to roadsides, they said.

Equestrians also complained about the possibility of creek crossings being closed to horses.

At the Tuesday meeting, the council also expects to hear an update on the design of a three-story apartment complex for faculty and staff of Canada College.

A subcommittee of Mayor Ron Romines and councilmen Peter Mason and Dave Tanner had planned to meet with officials from the college and Redwood City to resolve Woodside's concerns over the scale of the project.

Derry project may depend on state funds

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

The O'Brien Group, the San Mateo-based developer behind the Derry condominium project proposed for downtown Menlo Park, says it needs state funding, or its 108-condo development may not get built.

Citing rising construction costs and sub-prime mortgage trends, the O'Brien Group will ask City Council members in the next 60 days to sign off on an application to the state's Housing and Community Development Department

for up to \$3.78 million to help get the project built. The estimated total cost of the project is \$34 million.

The project is proposed for a 3.4-acre site bounded by El Camino Real, Oak Grove Avenue, and the train tracks.

The O'Brien Group is applying for funds recently made available by the state for transit-oriented development — multi-home projects near transit stations.

"[The O'Brien Group] has determined that there is a significant risk that the Derry project will not be viable without transit-oriented development

housing program funding," said Arlinda Heineck, the city's community development director, in a staff report.

Jim Pollart, spokesperson for the O'Brien Group, could not be reached for comment by The Almanac's deadline.

The grant would not cost the city anything, but a majority of council members must sign off on the application by May 5 if the project is to be eligible for state funds.

Council consideration of the grant application is not yet listed on the council's tentative schedule. ■

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County certifies vote: turnout 59.3%

The San Mateo County Elections Office has certified the Feb. 5 election results and reported March 4 that the turnout was 59.3 percent, far exceeding the 48.6 percent turnout in the 2004 presidential primary.

Of the 357,075 registered voters in the county, a total of 211,697 cast ballots, said Chief Elections Officer Warren Slocum.

While the highest in several years, the turnout was not a record and fell short of Mr. Slocum's pre-election estimate

that the turnout "may reach as high as 71 percent." The presidential primary turnout has not exceeded 60 percent since 1980, he said in a press release.

Of those who voted, 45.3 percent cast their ballots by mail.

Before certifying the vote, the Elections Office conducted a manual hand count of 1 percent of the precincts, selected at random. The manual tally matched the machine tally exactly, Mr. Slocum said.

Two vie for seat on Atherton council

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

Two candidates are running in a June 3 special election to complete the City Council term of Alan Carlson, who resigned in December when he moved out of Atherton. His term expires in November 2010.

With the candidate filing period closing March 7, the two candidates are Elizabeth Lewis, a 10-year Atherton resident and member of the town's

general plan committee, and James Dobbie, a member of the Atherton Planning Commission and chair of the general plan committee, an advisory body that deals with development and land use policy.

(Mr. Dobbie filed earlier and a story about him ran in the Feb. 27 issue of The Almanac, available on TheAlmanacOnline.com.)

Elizabeth Lewis

Ms. Lewis has been a commer-

cial real estate agent with Cornish & Carey since 1985. With her husband, she owns Orchard Commercial, a San Jose-based development, property management and commercial operations company, she said.

"The events of the past year spurred me to feel that we need a more balanced council... to represent citizens from all the neighborhoods of Atherton, and all points of view," she told The Almanac.

Ms. Lewis said there's a need to encourage environmentally sound or "green" building techniques. If elected to the council, she said, she would work to increase the council's outreach efforts and encourage Atherton residents to become part of the process. Finding a steady source of revenue for the town is also a priority, she said.

About the town's controversial historical artifact preservation law, she said she'd like to see the town's heritage preserved without compromising property rights.

The current ordinance is "not a positive way to go about preserving our heritage," she said. "I think there are other ways to go about it, and provide more education to the public... instead of a punitive set of laws."

She is a native of Kentucky who moved to Palo Alto in 1964, she said. She graduated from Palo Alto High School and attended San Francisco State University, she said.

Her volunteer work includes three years on the board of Miramonte Mental Health Services. She also was a member of the Committee for Better Schools in Palo Alto, a grassroots group, and served on the Measure W committee to pass the Atherton parcel tax. ■



PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

NOTICE OF INTENT TO INCREASE THE EXISTING SOLID WASTE / RECYCLING RATES FOR COMMERCIAL AND MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS WITHIN THE CITY OF MENLO PARK

The City Council of the City of Menlo Park hereby gives public notice of its intent to increase the existing solid waste / recycling rates for commercial and multi-family residential customers within the City of Menlo Park for the collection of solid waste and recyclable materials. The increase, if approved, would be retroactively effective as of January 1, 2008. The City Council plans to consider these rate increases at a public hearing on March 25, 2008 at 7:00 p.m., or as near as possible thereafter, in the City of Menlo Park Council Chambers Building at 701 Laurel Street - Civic Center.

What are the new rates:

Several rate increase levels will be considered at the public hearing. The maximum rate increase under consideration is 18.6% higher than current rates. A detailed listing of the proposed rates can be obtained from the Finance Department located on the second floor at City Hall, 701 Laurel Street, on-line at http://www.menlopark.org/departments/dep_finance.html, or by calling 650-330-6644.

Necessity for new rates:

The intended new rates are necessary due to the terms of the City's existing contract with Allied Waste Company which provide for fees to be set at a level which gives the Contractor a rate of return based on approved costs. The Contractor's costs have increased in the current year primarily due to increased labor and disposal costs. The City's costs of providing billing services and environmental programs that support reductions in solid waste have also increased in recent years, and rate increases have not kept pace with this combination of rising costs.

If you wish to file a written protest to these fee increases, please send a letter addressed to Solid Waste Rates, c/o City Clerk, City of Menlo Park, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025. Your letter must identify the real property you own by street address and the assessor's parcel number. Your letter must be legibly signed by any one of the current property owners. Your name should be set forth as it appears on your tax bill. The City of Menlo Park must receive your letter at City Hall by 5:00 p.m. on March 21, 2008, or it must be presented at the City Council meeting March 25, 2008, prior to the close of the public hearing on the matter.

Any person interested, including all solid waste / recycling collection customers of the City of Menlo Park, may appear at the public hearing and be heard on any matter related to the proposed increase in rates.

Dated: March 3, 2008

/s/ SHERRY M. KELLY, City Clerk

Published in THE ALMANAC on March 12, 19, 2008.



PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

NOTICE OF INTENT TO DEFINE THE SERVICE AREA AND INCREASE THE EXISTING SOLID WASTE / RECYCLING RATES FOR SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS WITHIN THE CITY OF MENLO PARK

The City Council of the City of Menlo Park hereby gives public notice of its intent to define the service area and increase the existing solid waste / recycling rates for single-family residential customers within the City of Menlo Park for the collection of solid waste and recyclable materials. The increase, if approved, will be effective on July 1, 2008. The City Council plans to consider these rate increases at a public hearing on March 25, 2008 at 7:00 p.m., or as near as possible thereafter, in the City of Menlo Park Council Chambers Building at 701 Laurel Street - Civic Center.

What are the new rates: Several rate increase amounts will be considered at the public hearing. The maximum rate increase under consideration is 18.6% higher than current rates. The maximum annual new rates are as follows:

Size of Containers (In Gallons)	SERVICE LEVELS AND RATES					
	CURBSIDE SERVICE			BACKYARD SERVICE		
	20	32	45	20	32	45
Rate for single container used	\$76.44	\$162.32	\$267.69	\$114.98	\$243.56	\$381.71
Rate per container when more than one container is used - 1st	N/A	201.02	267.69	N/A	282.24	381.71
2	N/A	402.03	535.38	N/A	564.50	763.43
3	N/A	603.03	803.06	N/A	846.74	1,145.15
4	N/A	804.05	1,070.76	N/A	1,129.00	1,526.87
5	N/A	1,005.06	1,338.45	N/A	1,411.25	1,908.58

Necessity for new rates:

The intended new rates are necessary due to the terms of the City's existing contract with Allied Waste Company, which provide for fees to be set at a level which gives the Contractor a rate of return based on approved costs. The Contractor's costs have increased primarily due to increased labor and disposal costs. The City's costs of providing billing services and environmental programs that support reductions in solid waste have also increased in recent years, and rate increases have not kept pace with this combination of rising costs.

If you would like additional information on the proposed rates, please visit the Finance Department located on the second floor at City Hall, 701 Laurel Street or call 650-330-6644.

If you wish to file a written protest, please send a letter addressed to Solid Waste Rates, c/o City Clerk, City of Menlo Park, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025. Your letter must identify the real property you own by street address and the assessor's parcel number. Your letter must be legibly signed by any one of the current property owners. Your name should be set forth as it appears on your tax bill. The City of Menlo Park must receive your letter at City Hall by 5:00 p.m. on March 21, 2008, or it must be presented at the City Council meeting March 25, 2008, prior to the close of the public hearing on the matter.

Any person interested, including all solid waste / recycling collection customers of the City of Menlo Park, may appear at the public hearing and be heard on any matter related to the proposed increase in rates.

Dated: March 3, 2008

/s/ SHERRY M. KELLY, City Clerk

Published in THE ALMANAC on March 12, 19, 2008.

Help for seniors

Saturday, March 15, is the deadline to request assistance from the annual Realtor Service Volunteer Program (RSVP), which offers seniors free assistance with household tasks.

RSVP week will take place May 5-10 when teams of volunteers perform cleaning and household maintenance work, including changing light bulbs and furnace filters, installing house numbers, cleaning windows, or installing new smoke detector batteries.

Volunteers will also rake leaves, trim overgrown hedges, do some vacuuming, and move items from hard-to-reach shelves.

The program is sponsored by the Silicon Valley Association of Realtors. For information, call 408-200-0100.

Remembering Father Egon Javor

Father Egon Javor, one of seven Benedictine monks from Hungary who founded the Woodside Priory monastic community and then Woodside Priory School in Portola Valley 50 years ago, was remembered last week by members of the religious and Hungarian community, as well as students, alumni, parents and friends.

Father Egon, a refugee from Hungary, dreamed of founding a Benedictine school in the United States, and lived to see the school celebrate its 50th anniversary this school year. He called it "an American miracle."

He died on Sunday, March 2, at age 91 at the Priory, where he lived his life dedicated to the Benedictine tradition of helping students become lifelong learners and good stewards to humanity, said his colleagues.

More than 600 attended the Mass of Resurrection for Father Egon on March 5 at St. Pius Catholic Church in Redwood City.

Father Egon's casket was attended by 50 members of the Sovereign Knights and Dames of Malta, wearing their official robes. He was a longstanding member of the order as a chaplain.

Retired San Francisco Archbishop John R. Quinn was the main celebrant. Participating in the service were Auxiliary Bishop of San Francisco Ignatius Wang, Hungarian Consul Gabor Kaleta from Los Angeles, and Pastor Gabor Magyari-Kope of the Hungarian church in Redwood City. Abbot Matthew Leavy traveled from St. Anselm's Abbey in New Hampshire to give the homily.

Among former Benedictine school alumni speaking were John Fisher of Atherton and Greg Hampton, also a former teacher at the school.

Priory obituary

Much of the following information is taken directly from an obituary prepared by Woodside Priory School.

After World War II, the communists occupying Hungary began confiscating Benedictine property and closing schools. Father Egon and the six other monks who eventually founded Woodside Priory joined many others in leaving Hungary.

Father Egon, a scholar with a doctor's degree in theology and a member of the religious community at historic St. Martin Archabbey in Pannonhalma, Hungary, had been immersed in editing medieval missals from the 13th and 14th centuries. He had expected to continue doing this, but, as he often said, "God had another plan for me."

Father Egon was instructed by his Benedictine order to leave Hungary. He had been impris-



Father Egon Javor at Woodside Priory School

2006 photo courtesy of Eva Soos

OBITUARY

Note: Much of this story is taken from an obituary on Father Egon Javor submitted by Woodside Priory School.

oned before, and the monks received information that he was being targeted again.

He escaped on a cold November night across a mined and well-guarded border by taking small steps, listening for the footsteps of the guard, then taking a few smaller, careful steps until he successfully crossed a wide, moonlit meadow.

In 1948, he found refuge on the East Coast of the United States along with six others from the Hungarian Archabbey: Fathers

Emod Brunner, Christopher Hites, Benignus Barat, Leopold Hoffer, Stanley Jaki and Achilles Horvath. All were experienced high school and university teachers.

As the likelihood of going back to their homeland diminished, the group focused on learning English and attaining citizenship. Soon they were ready to consider what to do next. They opted to seek their own community and a school where they could transplant their academic tradition.

Father Egon took the lead in finding the right location. He started driving across the country with a few potential sites to check but in

See **FATHER EGON**, page 14



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TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY
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WORKSHOP ON HOME ENERGY CONSERVATION AND GREEN DESIGN

The Town of Portola Valley is responding to the challenge of climate change. On April 5, the Town Council invites residents to a community workshop on home energy conservation and "green design". The purpose of the workshop is to share ideas for moving the Town forward on practices to save energy, conserve water, and use sustainable materials in our homes.

We will begin from the premise that home energy conservation and green design offer many benefits to homeowners, including cost savings, durability, creative use of materials, and lifestyle enhancements.

The workshop will include presentations and an interactive exercise. Participants will explore ways to improve the energy performance and resource efficiency of existing homes and examine the Town's potential adoption of flexible green design standards for new homes and major remodels.

The workshop will take place in the Corte Madera School MUR from 9:00 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. At 2:00 p.m., interested participants can tour a new "green home" in the Portola Valley Ranch.

We hope you can join us!
Green Design Workshop
April 5, 2008
9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.
Corte Madera MUR

Published in THE ALMANAC on March 12, 2008.



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PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE OF VACANCY

Notice is hereby given that the Town of Atherton encourages residents to apply for a position on the Transportation/Traffic Sub-Committee to fill an unexpired term of a Committee Member as noted below. The position has been vacated.

TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC SUB-COMMITTEE

Robert Huber appointed 04/03 vacated 03/13/08

The Transportation/Traffic Sub-Committee advises the City Council on matters regarding traffic and transportation issues within the Town

The Committee consists of two Council Members and three resident advisors who are appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the City Council. Currently, terms are for one year; however, Committees/Commissions are under review by the City Council and terms are subject to change. Regular meetings are scheduled quarterly on the second Tuesday, at 6:00 p.m., in the Council Chambers, at 94 Ashfield Road.

Applications are available on the Town website at www.ci.atherton.ca.us under "Town News" and will be accepted in the Town Administrative Offices, 91 Ashfield Road, until Monday, March 31, 2008.

Dated: March 7, 2008

Kathi Hamilton, Acting City Clerk

Published in THE ALMANAC on March 12, 2008.

FATHER EGON

continued from page 13

the back of his mind was thinking that California could be it.

When he reached the Bay Area, Father Egon was warned that Archbishop John J. Mitty in San Francisco might not be happy to see him, since the diocese already had many schools to support. When he made the obligatory visit, however, Father Egon quickly discovered that the two had in common the experiences of being military chaplains. The visit turned into a warm welcome.

The archbishop agreed to the type of school Father Egon envisioned — small, self-supporting, boys-only, and a boarding school, with an emphasis on developing character and values that would prepare each student to be a successful parent, citizen and individual. He pictured the student body would include international students, Catholics, non-Catholics willing to study the teaching of their own faith, and Catholics who might eventually choose a religious vocation.

Father Egon recalled in an interview with *The Almanac* that Emmet Cashin of Fox and Carskadon was driving him around the hills in 1956 when they came upon a small ranch house on an 18-acre barren site off Portola Road. He liked the site and it was the cheapest property — \$80,000. The monks

had only \$18,000 among them and borrowed \$5,000 for the down payment on the Gilson property.

The monks lived their motto, "Ore et Labore" (pray and work), as they moved into the ranch house and built the monastery and school from the ground up. The first students — 14 boys — arrived in September 1957.

The school has grown to include a middle school, added in the mid 1990s; coeducational day and boarding programs; a new performing arts center; and arts, science and computer labs. On-campus housing has been built for about one-third of the faculty and staff.

The history of the Priory was chronicled by Father Egon in two published books: "Beginnings: The Founding of the Woodside Priory" and "Being Benedictine: 50 Years of Woodside Priory School."

"Father Egon never dwelled on his personal contribution," commented Tim Molak, head of school. He preferred "to tell the stories of all of the people who helped the school thrive."

The Father Egon (Javor) Endowed Scholarship Fund has been established at Woodside Priory School. Contributions may be sent to Woodside Priory School, 302 Portola Road, Portola Valley, CA 94028.

Developing open space: Let voters decide?

By Marion Softky

Almanac Staff Writer

A broad coalition of environmental groups wants to qualify an initiative in Redwood City to require two-thirds of city voters to approve any new development in the city's open space areas.

Members of the Open Space Vote Coalition launched their initiative to amend the city charter at a press conference in front of City Hall March 6.

"The protection and restoration of the Bay has long been a priority of Redwood City voters," said Ralph Nobles, who has already led two successful referenda blocking Bayfront developments of Bair Island and Marina Shores. "This measure ensures that Redwood City residents have a say in any development of our parks and open space, now and in the future."

The "Open Space Vote Initiative" will require signatures of 15 percent of Redwood City's registered voters to qualify for the November ballot. The charter amendment will take a simple majority vote to pass.

The most obvious, though

nor the only, target of the initiative is a proposal by Cargill Salt and DMB Associates to develop 1,433 acres of retiring salt ponds between Bayfront Park in Menlo Park and Seaport Boulevard into a mixture of uses including housing, recreation and open space.

manager of DMB Redwood City Saltworks.

DMB is developing a specific plan based on a 50/50 concept, Mr. Bruno said. This will restore at least 50 percent of the site as wetlands and natural open space, and utilize the remaining 50 percent for a mixture of developed uses.

Mr. Nobles and the Open Space Vote Coalition want to see all the property returned to the Bay. "Destruction of our limited open space harms our precious environment and denies our children an opportunity to connect with nature," he said.

"Today our Bay shoreline is under assault, and tomorrow the threat could be to our city parks and hillsides," said Lennie Roberts of the Committee for Green Foothills. "Voters should have a say on massive development on our baylands, just as we voted to save Bair Island, Bayfront Park, and the Palo Alto Baylands."

Supporters of the initiative include Friends of Redwood City, Save The Bay, Committee for Green Foothills, and the Sequoia Audubon Society. ■

A target of the initiative is a proposal to develop 1,433 acres of retiring salt ponds between Bayfront Park in Menlo Park and Seaport Boulevard.

DMB has been engaging Redwood City residents for almost two years in an extensive outreach effort to devise a plan for the property that would have solid public support. "A strong majority advocates a balance of uses — including both wetlands restoration and development," said John Bruno, vice president and general



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Community

NEWS OF LOCAL PEOPLE AND EVENTS IN THE COMMUNITY

Little House hosts 'Growing Up Chinese'

A multi-media program with lectures, plays, music, art, a little Tai Chi, and two panel discussions, all focusing on "Growing Up Chinese," will be held Saturday, March 15, at the Little House activity center in Menlo Park.

Sponsored by Little House and the Menlo Park Library, the program will run from 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. and includes lunch.

People of all ages are welcome to the program, part of a series honoring major immigrant groups in the area by providing education about the immigrant experience and the cultural gifts each group has contributed, said Little House program manager Wendy Lewis-Rakova. An ear-

lier program focused on "Growing Up Jewish."

Among the program's highlights:

■ Mark E. Lewis, Stanford professor of Chinese culture, will give a lecture on "Swordsmanship in Ancient China." He recently gave this lecture to the International Olympics Committee in London, Ms. Lewis-Rakova said.

■ A San Francisco musical ensemble, Melody of China, will play traditional Chinese instruments.

■ Jane Pittsinger, a local physical therapist and expert on Chinese art, will give a lecture and slide show on "Taoism and the Healing Arts." She is a retired

Asian Art Museum docent.

■ Cynthia Wilcox, a Woodside resident and member of the Peninsula Volunteers who grew up in China, will moderate a panel of other locals who immigrated here as adults. She is the author of a memoir, "The Love of Lotus."

Chinese nationals who are students at Menlo College will serve lunch, said Ms. Lewis-Rakova.

The cost, which covers lunch, is \$40 per person and \$35 for Little House members. There are discounts for multiple members of the same family. Little House is at 800 Middle Ave. in Menlo Park.

For tickets or more information, call 326-2025.

Menlo College's Hawaii Club to hold luau Saturday

The Hawaii Club of Menlo College will host its 17th annual luau on Saturday, March 15, in the Haynes-Prim Pavilion. Doors open at 4 p.m.

The buffet dinner, featuring kalua pig, will be served at 5 p.m. with a Polynesian dance show to follow at 6 p.m. After the dance show, there will be a reggae concert featuring Coastal Sage and Sideaction.

The MC will be Lina Girl from the KCCN (FM 100) Morning Jam radio program in Honolulu. The Polynesian dance show will feature members of the Hawaii Club.

Tickets to the luau are \$50 reserved seating, \$40 general admission, and \$20 for college students and children. For more information, call Hawaii Club adviser Mary Robins at 543-3735 or Hawaii Club president Asti Merino at 808-255-4650.

CHC domino tourney at Menlo Circus Club

The 46th annual Children's Health Council domino tournament, set for this Saturday, March 15, at the Menlo Circus Club in Atherton, is dedicated to the late Roger May of Portola Valley.

Mr. May, who died unexpectedly Nov. 21 at the family ranch in Colorado, was a charter participant in the domino tournament, and played every year since the tournament was launched in 1962.

Registration for the tournament, which is sponsored by the Children's Health Council Auxiliary, starts at 8:30 a.m., with play beginning at 9:30 a.m.

AROUND TOWN

Both a continental breakfast and buffet lunch will be served.

Fees are \$140 for advanced players and \$70 for novice players. The event includes tourna-

ment play prizes and thank you gifts. Advanced players will be eligible for grand prizes, including a 1951 New York Giants jersey signed by baseball great Willie Mays.

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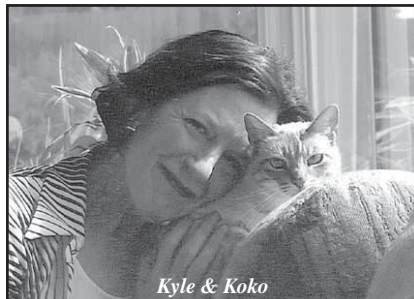
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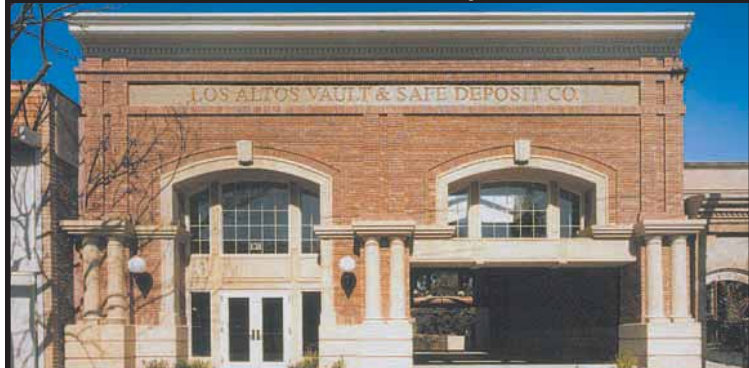
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Big meeting Wednesday on Burgess Gym

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

Members of the public can get a first look at ideas to build a new Menlo Park Burgess Gym at the Wednesday, March 12, meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission.

San Francisco-based Field Paoli Architects, the firm hired by the city to redesign and rebuild the 34-year-old gym,

will present four basic plans at the meeting, scheduled to start at 6 p.m. in the Burgess Recreation Center at 700 Alma St.

Field Paoli is seeking feedback from parks commissioners and members of the public regarding four conceptual plans:

- Building a new gym for gymnastics, basketball, volleyball, other sports groups and drop-in users at the site of the existing gym.
- Renovating the existing

gym into a gymnastics facility, and building a separate gym near the Burgess Recreation Center.

- Renovating the existing gym and building a separate gymnastics facility near the recreation center.

- Building a new gym in conjunction with building a new recreation center, both of which could house gym and gymnastics programs.

The gym project is expected to be funded by a bond issue authorized by Measure T, the \$38 million recreation bond measure approved by voters in 2001. The city will collect roughly \$9 million from the bond issue, according to city staff's latest estimates.

Parks commissioners and City Council members plan to further discuss Burgess Gym in coming months. ■

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PORTOLA VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT PARCEL TAX CITIZENS' OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE REPORT ON USE OF MEASURE C FUNDS 2006-07 School Year

The Portola Valley School District Parcel Tax Citizens' Oversight Committee held two meetings on January 30, 2007 and January 28, 2008 to review the use of Measure C funds for the 2006-07 school year. Committee members include: Chairperson Hilary Giles, Mr. Joseph Androłowicz, Ms. Jan Avilla, Ms. Carolyn Billheimer, Ms. Patty Pope, Mr. Stan Smith and Mr. Andy Thorson.

The Committee has reviewed the Portola Valley School District's 2006-07 budget, audit report, general ledger financial reports and parcel tax utilization data and has determined that Measure C funds have been used for the following purposes:

Class-Size Reduction – Grades 4 – 8*	\$430,000
Staffing for Science, Math, & Reading Support	168,682
Classroom Materials	27,455
Staff Development	16,035
Math Curriculum Development	4,500
TOTAL	\$646,672

*Note: Class Size Reduction Funding for Kindergarten through 3rd Grade is provided by the State of California.

The Committee further finds that these expenditures are aligned with the purposes approved by the voters in Measure C in March 2004.

Copies of the records of the Parcel Tax Oversight Committee may be reviewed at the Portola Valley School District Office, 4575 Alpine Road in Portola Valley or on the District's web site at www.pvsd.net.

■ POLICE CALLS

ATHERTON

Burglary report: Laptop computer and wallet stolen from residence with unlocked front door, 100 block of Heather Drive, Feb. 29.

Theft reports: Satchel and contents valued at \$3,000 stolen from unlocked vehicle, first block of Faxon Road, March 6.

MENLO PARK

Stolen vehicle reports:

- First block of El Camino Real, Feb. 29.
- 2002 Volkswagen Jetta, 100 block of Newbridge St., March 2.

- Unattended 2000 Jeep Grand Cherokee with keys in it stolen from gas station, 200 block of El Camino Real, March 4.

Burglary report: Vehicle window smashed and purse and keys stolen, 1600 Marsh Road, March 6.

Grand theft reports:

- Jewelry valued over \$40,000 stolen from residence, 1000 block of Lassen Drive, Feb. 29.

- Camera equipment stolen from vehicle, 800 block of Coleman Ave., March 2.

- Computer stolen from office, 1100 block of Alma St., March 4.

WOODSIDE

Embezzlement report: Unauthorized use of credit card for over \$100,000 in charges in Bay Area, 600 block of W. Glen Way, Feb. 29.

Theft report: About \$2,000 stolen from unlocked safe, Canada College at 4200 Farm Hill Boulevard, Feb. 29.

Arson report: Car reported stolen from Tracy found burned on a horse trail, Manzanita Way and Sand Hill Road, March 1.

PORTOLA VALLEY

Assault report: Soccer player punched someone during handshake ritual at end of game, 3000 block of Alpine Road, March 2.

WEST MENLO PARK

Burglary report: Silverware and jewelry worth \$5,700 stolen from residence, 200 block of Stanford Ave., Feb. 29.

Theft report: Catalytic converter worth \$300 sawed off Toyota 4 Runner, 1000 block of Wendy Lane, March 1.

LADERA

Burglary report: Vehicle window smashed and purse stolen, Lawler Ranch Road, March 3.

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OBITUARY

Bernice Daseking

70-year Atherton resident

Bernice Janssen Daseking, a long-time Atherton resident and mother of eight, died Feb. 29 at the age of 86.



Bernice Daseking

Ms. Daseking was born in Oakland, the daughter of Emma and Arthur Janssen. In 1937 the family moved to Atherton into a home on Austin Avenue that Mr. Janssen, an architect, designed. Ms. Daseking graduated from Sequoia High School and San Jose State College with a bachelor of arts degree. She was a member of Allenian sorority, which later became Kappa Kappa Gamma.

She met her future husband, William Daseking, when he came

to work in her father's architectural firm. They were married in 1944.

Before her marriage, Ms. Daseking worked at the White House department store in San Francisco. After her children were born, she was involved in their schools, serving as a room mother, PTA president, Boy Scout leader and Girl Scout leader.

Their home in Atherton, which Mr. Daseking designed, was a hub of activity, say family members.

A dedicated member of Redeemer Lutheran Church in Redwood City, Ms. Daseking was first a member of the Mary Martha Circle and Friday Nighters, then continued with Ladies Guild activities, including decorating and cooking for luncheons, receptions and bazaars. She helped with the Altar Guild and led a women's Bible study group.

Ms. Daseking is survived by her eight children, Carol Fisher of Dayville, Oregon, Barbara Young of Alamo, Hal Daseking of Palo Alto, Janet Smith of Chagrin Falls, Ohio,

Nancy Lanzafame of Pittsburg, Jon Daseking of Los Altos, Bruce Daseking of Danville, and Wendy Van Gaasbeck of Mountain View; a brother, William Janssen of San Carlos; a sister, Barbara J. Smith of Menlo Park; 18 grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. Her husband, William H. Daseking, preceded her in death in 1996.

Memorial donations may be made to Redeemer Lutheran Church, 468 Grand St., Redwood City, CA 94062.

Line down

Ford A. Wade of Los Trancos Woods shot

this picture of a power line down on Los Trancos Road, where he lives. He said a dump truck didn't lower the truck bed and it caught the wire. "I noticed a flash out my window and the power went out," he says.



Photo by Ford A. Wade

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New vision welcome for El Camino

Menlo Park officials who are making a major effort to get the public involved in a plan to spiff up El Camino Real, the city's main thoroughfare, have to be pleased with the turnout and wide range of ideas presented at a workshop last week.

Suggestions for filling the unsightly gaps left by vacant auto dealerships on either side of the historical boulevard ranged from affordable housing and parks to public art and a promenade along the railroad tracks. The opinions came from a varied

EDITORIAL
The opinion of The Almanac

group of residents, including Reg Rice, a perennial fixture in city politics, and City Council member Kelly Fergusson.

Mr. Rice struck a nerve when he suggested that the city approach Palo Alto about building a bridge to connect Alma Street in Menlo Park to Alma Street in Palo Alto, which he said would ease traffic congestion on El Camino Real; Ms. Fergusson also endorsed the idea of breaking down the barriers for all modes of transportation between the two cities.

Others picked up the "green" theme by urging more amenities for pedestrians and cyclists, like wider sidewalks and a bike bridge, and it was suggested that underground utilities would take away the visible clutter on the busy road. Another good, but costly, idea to solve the challenge of grade separations at the Caltrain tracks is to put the trains underground.

Building affordable housing, senior housing and more park space also were mentioned, and the consultants discussed possible

mixed retail and office or housing combinations already proposed for the former Cadillac dealership near Glenwood Avenue.

A consultant has organized two walking tours of El Camino and sent out thousands of surveys to every home and business in Menlo Park to facilitate the community soul-searching for this project. So far, more than 1,800 surveys have been returned, a response that has pleased city staff and council members.

It is hoped that after extensive public hearings, the council will approve a development blueprint for El Camino that will entice property owners to move forward with projects that fit the guidelines. Ideas that differ from the city plan could still be advanced, although we presume the council would be very reluctant to step outside their guidelines, at least at the beginning of the process.

All of this means that now is the time for residents who have a vision, whether "outside" or "inside" the box, of El Camino Real to come forward and speak up at these sessions. We see a firm commitment from the city to complete this process and get on to the next step, unlike prior efforts that fizzled out before the work was done.

In many ways, the city is fortunate that four dealerships, which represent a considerable swath of El Camino frontage, have chosen to leave at roughly the same time, leaving prime areas ready for a new beginning. It is a golden opportunity that apparently is not lost on the 100 or so people who attended last week's workshop.

It is time for anyone who hopes to see improvement in the city's downtown to step up and make their views known. The next public workshop, the second in a series of five, will be held April 3. ■

LETTERS
Our readers write

Are the French smarter than we are?

Editor:

I was disappointed in the "no-can-do" attitudes about high-speed rail expressed in your editorial and also in the guest opinion by Jack Ringham last week. "It costs too much. It will lose money," you said.

An article in the Feb. 23 Economist magazine states that the French national railroad SNCF is profitable, and the TGVs (high speed trains) are very profitable. Are the French smarter than we are? Perhaps we should invite SNCF to construct and operate our high-speed rail.

More disturbing to me is that Menlo Park, with its ever-increasing NIMBY attitude, is trying to pretend that it is not part of a large metropolitan area in a very large state. An example of this is Mayor Andy Cohen's remark that he will not support any transit improvement that does not directly benefit Menlo Park residents.

This is one of the most narrow and selfish statements from a

politician that I have heard in a long time.

Robert Cronin
Marmona Drive, Menlo Park

Rail critics live next to the tracks

Editor:

I noted with interest in last week's high-speed rail article that you identified which of the system's critics live near the Caltrain tracks.

It turns out to be most of them. Even Martin Engel, the rail critic in your "Ups and Downs" opinion piece lives on Stone Pine Lane, a short street which dead ends at the tracks (a fact both you and he failed to mention).

Those residents who live near the proposed grade separations will suffer mightily and disproportionately during what promises to be a long period of construction. It is valid that they should feel unfairly penalized for merely living on a certain street or near a certain intersection, because the disruption to their lives will be so much greater than to those of us who must endure only the mess when trying to navigate around it.



Portola Valley Archives

Our Regional Heritage

This little building, a converted dance hall, was known as St. Catherine's Catholic Church. It stood on the side of today's Our Lady of the Wayside on Portola Road in Portola Valley from 1902 to 1912.

I have great compassion for the plight of these neighbors and friends. However, while acknowledging them, I believe we must consider the potential safety and traffic benefits which all Menlo Park and Atherton residents can reap from grade separations. Most importantly,

I urge everyone to remember that we have a stake in the larger community, with the Peninsula, the Bay Area and all of California facing both transportation gridlock and environmental nightmares.

See **LETTERS**, next page

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

I am not sure that the high-speed rail project as proposed is the answer. But I am sure that staying focused on the short-term drawbacks will ensure that we never find one.

Marta Morando
Berkeley Avenue, Menlo Park

City should look for rail compromise

Editor:

There will be a time in the not too distant future when Californians will not only want but actually need a more efficient means of travel between north and south.

The affordability and availability of gasoline is in question as is the time-consuming, cattle-car experience of the flights connecting the Bay Area with LA/San Diego. If Menlo Park is to talk the green talk, we should be willing to support action on building alternatives to these established and soon-to-be obsolete airport and freeway paradigms.

Rather than attack the high-speed rail concept as absolutely and unacceptably disruptive and costly, Menlo Park residents, The Almanac and the City Council should take the lead in building consensus with other communities between San Jose and San Francisco on a compromise system that utilizes an electrified Caltrain infrastructure within the existing right-of-way.

Time to act on greenhouse gases

By Carol McClelland and Mitchel Slomiak

We thank the Menlo Park City Council for voting to develop a Climate Action Plan (CAP), which will guide our community's effort to address the climate crisis over the coming decades. As a community we must work together to reduce the half-million tons of greenhouse gas emissions Menlo Park produces each year.

The 2007 Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to scientists for establishing that human-caused emissions of greenhouse gases are the key contributor to the climate crisis and to former Vice President Al Gore for galvanizing governments, institutions and individuals to act.

Unless the Earth's temperature stays within 3.5 degrees Fahrenheit of current levels, climate change will reach catastrophic levels. "Business as usual" will warm the Earth far above this level and degrade the quality of life for generations to come. To avoid undesirable consequences, greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced by at least 80 percent below 2005 levels over the next 40 years, or by 2 percent per year.

In 2007 more than 100 local citizens from many walks of life participated in the Menlo Park Green Ribbon Citizens' Com-

mittee. Working together, we researched the likely impacts of climate change in Menlo Park and recommended actions our community can take to do our part in addressing this global crisis. Our report, with 130 recommendations and 32 high-priority items, was accepted by City Council in November 2007.

While action at the municipal level is a critical part of addressing climate change, each sector of our community and each individual has a part to play. During the nine months the climate action plan is being developed, we can start building new habits regarding our transportation choices, electric and natural gas consumption, and waste generation. For those who desire to have a larger impact, we invite you to become involved in the local efforts supported by the green ribbon committee.

In 2008 the committee will engage with five community sectors to provide education and tools to reduce their greenhouse gas footprint: schools, businesses, communities of faith, building professionals, and homeowners/neighborhood associations. In addition, we will continue research and public education efforts regarding sustainable building, energy, waste reduction, transit/transportation, and green business. As a group with knowledge about the sub-

ject matter and our community, we will continue working with the City Council and staff to support and monitor existing and new city initiatives.

If you would like to reach out to community sectors, research ways to reduce emissions, or engage with the city's initiatives, there are volunteer opportunities for you. Actions we are contemplating include:

- Schools: Energy efficiency, zero waste lunches, walking/biking to school, solar rooftops;
- Businesses: PG&E energy efficiency rebates, recycling, eliminate bottled water;
- Communities of faith: Green sanctuary program, energy retrofits;
- Building professionals: Green certification, deconstruction over demolition;
- Residents: Energy audits, recycling, replace incandescent light bulbs, drought-tolerant landscaping;
- Events: Educational forums on long-term issues, including transit, renewable energy, and sustainable building.

How effectively the Menlo Park community reduces the impacts of climate change depends on everyone. If you are ready to take action, please visit this Web site for contact information: <http://menlogreen.typepad.com>.

Carol McClelland and Mitchel Slomiak are the co-chairs of the Menlo Park Green Ribbon Citizens' Committee.



A four-track system is unnecessary if this high-speed train used the current tracks and traveled between San Jose and San Francisco at the same speed as the existing popular "Baby Bullet." The added benefit of keeping the existing rail con-

figuration is that grade separations, which may be desirable for other reasons, would no longer be required.

High-speed rail chairman Quentin Kopp, who bears considerable responsibility for the unnecessarily costly and gran-

diose BART extension to Millbrae, should be reminded that residents of the Midpeninsula expect and want progress in rail service in California and that we support the high-speed rail concept if it is done without gouging the heart out of the Peninsula's

communities. Of course high-speed rail costs money. If we do nothing, what alternatives will we have in 20 years for travel within California?

Steve Schmidt
Central Avenue, Menlo Park

Budget crunch will hit all public schools

By Eric Hartwig

The next several months are crucial for public schools in California, as our lawmakers cope with the \$16 billion state budget deficit projected for 2008-09. While the immediate implications for many of the districts in the Almanac's circulation area are not as dire as for most of the other districts in the state, I believe it is very important for us to stay closely involved and help protect all public schools from unnecessary cuts and future uncertainty.

At the center of current negotiations between the governor and the legislature is the question of whether to suspend Proposition 98, the law that guarantees a minimum level of funding for K-14 public schools.

Proposition 98 is an initiative passed into law by voters in 1988 to help even out the wide fluctuations of funding available to public schools that occurs during typical economic cycles. Voters wanted schools to be able to plan and budget



responsibly from year to year. Proposition 98 was designed to assure that a minimum — not optimal — level of funding is available to schools during good times as well as bad times.

During the last fiscal crisis in 2004, when Gov. Schwarzenegger came into office, he negotiated with the Legislature and education advocates to suspend Proposition 98 for the first time; this freed up money to be used for other purposes but resulted in a highly contentious debate about how to restore that funding over the next two years. Now the governor is proposing to suspend Proposition 98 again, and this time legislators and advocates for education are resisting.

Why aren't lawmakers just going along with the governor this time around? Because suspending Proposition 98

defies its very purpose: to protect public education from the "feast or famine" environment that can occur when our lawmakers don't develop far-reaching and responsible spending and revenue plans to support public programs.

Suspending Proposition 98 again will have two very negative effects: first, it will permanently erode the fiscal safety net for public education that voters intended; and, it will be treating local school districts as if they were the state's secret bank account, to raid whenever the state cannot balance the budget.

Some might ask why schools should be exempt from sharing the pain of an economic downturn or of shortsighted legislative leadership. I would answer that schools do share the pain, even under Proposition 98. Schools manage from year to year on a guaranteed minimum funding level that, although it is sometimes augmented in good years, is still one of the lowest in the nation (46th) on a per-pupil basis. But at least that level is relatively predictable, and schools can

develop effective programs and attract the best teachers.

Under Proposition 98, programs and staff aren't slashed one year and then hastily reinstated a few years later. It is one thing to slow down a highway project when the economy stumbles, but it's a totally different thing to say to millions of children that we just can't provide a minimum level of education this year. Proposition 98 keeps this from happening.

On Feb. 25, the Las Lomas School District trustees passed a resolution opposing the suspension of Proposition 98. I and other educators around the state are urging voters to let their legislators know that they strongly oppose suspending Proposition 98. For sure, Proposition 98 is not perfect, and our state needs to undertake a complete reform of education funding, as recommended recently in Stanford University's exhaustive "Getting Down to Facts" study. Until we get down to reforming education finance in California, we need to stay the course with Proposition 98 — it's the best we've got.

Eric Hartwig is superintendent of the Las Lomas School District.

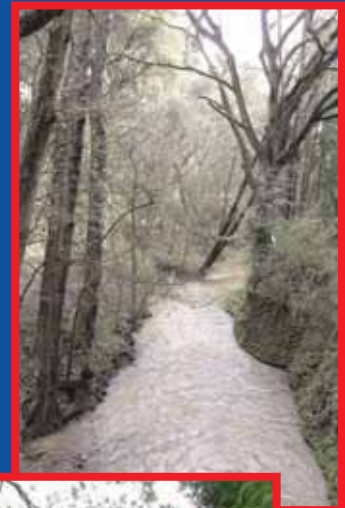
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