

ATHERTON RESIDENTS create their
own wildfire escape plan. Page 6



The Almanac

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

JULY 9, 2008

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FUN AT THE RODEO

Woodside celebrates roping,
riding and racing at the
58th annual Junior Rodeo

{PAGE 10}

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Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

FIRST SHOT



Photo by Kathleen Tiso

New shoes for school

Guests at the "Shiny Shoes" party thrown by local girls, from left, Gina and Teresa Tiso and Hannah and Abigail Grossman, got an unusual request — bring a pair of new shoes to benefit the Menlo Park-based charity My New Red Shoes. The party, held June 25 at Holbrook-Palmer Park in Atherton, netted 140 pairs of shoes that will go to children living at the Haven House family shelter in Menlo Park.

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- Menlo Park culinary and health pro says measured lifestyle changes are more effective, less painful than extreme strategies. **Cover, Section 2**

On the cover

All dressed up in his rodeo best, Armando Fagliano, center, and fellow participants in Woodside's Junior Rodeo watch the festivities on the Fourth of July at the San Mateo County Mounted Patrol grounds. Photo by Veronica Weber. See story and additional photos, **Page 10**.

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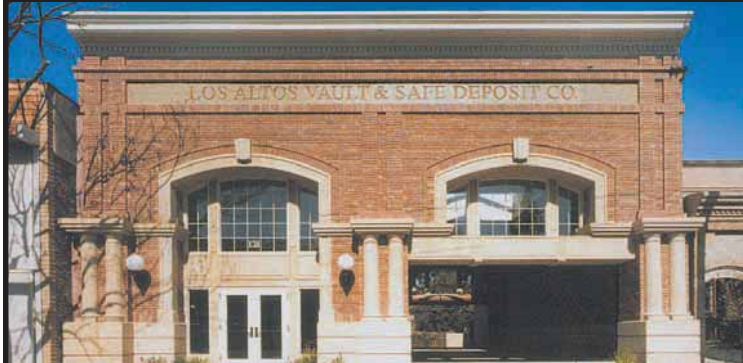
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Wine

B-B-Q BARGAINS

It's summer, time to fire up the "barbie." The spicy, sweet, smoky, robust flavors of grilled foods beg for reds that rich, hearty and quaffable. Here are a few ideas to wet your palate.

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Roberts Tip of the Week

SUMMER CHEESECAKE

Cheesecake can be a cool, summery sensation when you take advantage of the many seasonal fruits available. Kiwi, strawberries, cherries, and raspberries are excellent ingredients for summertime cheesecake that still delivers on decadence and density. Use whole or pureed berries. For crusts, try chocolate cookie, graham cracker, or a fluffy pastry shell. Cheesecakes do best when backed at a low heat. The center may seem soft when the cake is removed from the oven, but it will set during chilling. Refrigerate a cheesecake for at least three hours before serving. While in the refrigerator, protect your cheesecake by topping its pan with a pizza pan or any pan large enough to balance securely on it.



Steakhouse wines are usually only enjoyed hand in hand with a steak. While this, of course, makes sense at ROBERTS MARKET, we urge you to try such wines on their own merits. We can not only provide you with a great "steakhouse wine" but we can provide you with a great steak! We feature the finest produce, meats, poultry, and seafood available in the area, and we have a great selection of marinades which help change the taste of your favorite meats. Don't forget fresh cut flowers from our floral department to grace your table.

Hint: Cut your cheesecake with a knife that has been run under hot water, or use dental floss for clean slices.



Hang up and drive

Atherton Police Chief Bob Brennan said that Atherton gave out zero tickets for cell phone-using scofflaws on the first day of the new California law prohibiting drivers from holding a handset to their ears. One Atherton officer on duty July 1 looked specifically for cell phone violations and did not find any.

"I guess that's a good sign," Chief Brennan told the Almanac.

Fly those flags

It turns out the Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce is behind the new red, white and blue flags flying in downtown Menlo Park.

The chamber's holiday committee, headed by Village Stationers owner Kerry Hctor, came up with the idea of buying the flags and installing them along Santa Cruz Avenue to "add some color downtown," said Fran Dehn, the chamber's president.

The flags will stay up all summer, and the chamber is hoping to buy more flags for the fall and holiday seasons, Ms. Dehn said.

The flags cost \$50 each, and anyone interested in making a donation to the chamber to buy more can send checks to the Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce, 1100 Merrill St.

Flags on wheels

A heavily decorated Thomas the Tank Engine bicycle, piloted by 4-year-old Lucy Leff in Menlo Park's Fourth of July parade, was taken from the lot behind Union Bank on Santa Cruz sometime on Friday. Lucy's parents are hoping that whoever swiped the bike will see fit to return it — call (805) 427-6383.

No motor, no sails

Roz Savage, the British rower who's made her home in Woodside, is back at the paddles. Her attempt to row solo across the Pacific ended abruptly last year with equipment failure and a Coast Guard rescue, but she's back at it. Daily updates are on her blog, www.rozsavage.com.

Local News

MENLO PARK | ATHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Big changes ahead for kids' section at library

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

A new homework center with six computers and Internet access. Improved space for "storytime" and other children's programs. More shelving for books and a new early literacy section.

All these, plus a general facelift, are on the list of improvements planned for the children's section of the Menlo Park Library once the nonprofit Menlo Park Library Foundation meets its \$500,000 fundraising goal.

So far, \$372,000 is in the coffers for the project — \$100,000 coming from the nonprofit Friends of the Menlo Park Library.

A total of \$241,000 will come from the city, most of which was earmarked for the library. That includes \$145,000 of the financial reserves that have accumulated since the main library was renovated in 1992; and \$65,000 from an endowment fund held by the city for the benefit of the library.

Another \$31,000 is from the Public Works Department budget to cover the costs of painting and new carpets.

The rest has come from private donors, with the Turner-Gilliland Family Fund contributing \$25,000 to cover the costs



Photo by Veronica Weber/The Almanac

Dee Ellman sings during a recent "baby storytime" — one of several popular storytime programs at the Menlo Park Library. An improved space for storytime is among the changes planned at the library.

of the planned new Librarian's Center, where children's librarian Michelle Barrese will oversee the activities in the renovated area. She said she's excited about the coming changes — and not only because she'll have a new work station.

"The architects have planned out a better use of space," she not-

ed. "They actually found more shelving space, and they came up with moveable bookshelves so we can set up the storytime area" more effectively, she said.

The family fund contribution comes courtesy of Mary Turner-Gilliland and Clinton Gilliland of Menlo Park, who made their choice of funding the

Librarian's Center "after talking with their daughters, who had especially fond memories of the Menlo Park librarians when they were little girls," according to Jane Wyman, who with Nancy Flowers chairs the foundation's fundraising effort.

See **LIBRARY**, page 8

Quarantine to contain moth not expected to affect food flow from commercial farms

Selena Simmons-Duffin

Special to the Almanac

This summer, area home gardeners will have to keep their bounty to themselves.

A quarantine to contain the spread of the light brown apple moth, a pest that munches on most plants found in the average yard or garden, was extended last week to include all or large portions of every city on the Bay side of San Mateo County.

The first moth found in the county appeared in Belmont last April, county Agricultural Commissioner Gail Raabe said. Since then, whenever a moth was found, a small quarantine area was created.

"It just got to the point where the quarantines were basically joined together," Ms. Raabe

said, adding that joining the quarantine areas "makes it simpler in terms of getting the

'This is an exotic pest; we don't know whether it's going to affect native plants.'

COUNTY AGRICULTURAL
COMMISSIONER GAIL RAABE

message out to people."

Four moths were found in the 2600 block of Alpine Road, in the unincorporated area between Menlo Park and Portola Valley, according to Commissioner Raabe.

People living within the boundaries of the quarantine are asked

not to remove flowers or plants that were grown on their property from the site. Plant clippings, leaves, and other yard waste should be placed in recycling containers or composted on site.

This restriction does not apply to produce and plants from commercial farms and nurseries that are regularly inspected and have signed a compliance agreement. Those businesses are still free to move and sell their produce as they normally would.

The concern over the pest is environmental — the moth has no ill-effect on humans directly. As caterpillars, the moths feed on plants and leaves, rendering them unmarketable. Some fruit, such as grapes and apples, and trees such as cypress and oak, are also on the long list of hosts for

See **MOTH**, page 7

Kepler's plans major changes in bookstore

By Selena Simmons-Duffin

Special to the Almanac

Kepler's Books and Magazines has been through quite a lot in recent years, but in all the bustle, the store has seen few physical changes. That's about to change: Renovations expected to take about six weeks are scheduled to begin in late July. "I think it's one of the most important things that we've done in over a decade," said Clark Kepler, president, CEO, and chairman of the board for the bookstore. The plans for these changes have been in the works since the community rallied to re-open the unexpectedly shuttered store in 2005.

Mr. Kepler said the rolling renovations will consist of major changes to the store's floor plan.

See **KEPLER'S**, page 8

Atherton residents create wildfire escape plan

■ Group says official efforts moved too slowly.

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

An ad hoc group of Atherton residents, worried about the severe fire season, is disseminating a brochure and map showing emergency fire evacuation routes for the rural Walsh Road neighborhood west of Alameda de las Pulgas.

Peter Carpenter, who is on the board of directors of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, said he and his group were frustrated by the slow pace of official efforts by the district and the town. The group worked to get the brochure ready before the holiday weekend, and sent it out before noon on Thursday, July 3, using an e-mail tree to distribute it, Mr. Carpenter said.

"We've been asking for this for the past year, and finally we just decided to do it ourselves," said Mr. Carpenter, who lives across town in Lindenwood.

"I'm not at risk, but I do perceive myself as being a member of this community, and I would deeply regret it if nothing had been done," Mr. Carpenter said.

The group targeted Walsh Road because it has the worst access, according to Mr. Carpenter — but other West Atherton neighborhoods are also in need of detailed evacuation plans, he

To see the fire-evacuation brochure created by residents, go to TheAlmanacOnline.com and look under Local News for the Atherton heading.

said. Over the weekend, a fire causing an estimated \$500,000 in damage broke out at a home on Ridgeview Drive, which is in West Atherton but not in the Walsh Road corridor.

Menlo Park Fire Chief Harold Schapelhouman responded diplomatically to the group's criticism, but said that the district is well prepared to respond to fires in the Walsh Road area and has not been sitting idly by.

"I applaud (Mr. Carpenter's) efforts, but I don't want to get into the politics of it," Chief Schapelhouman said. "Having citizens get information is never a bad thing, but agreeing to the information is the critical piece. Government agencies don't want to get out information that may or may not be accurate."

Fire district and town officials, as well as representatives of California Water Service Co. and the neighborhood, have been meeting and are ready to install signs pointing out evacuation routes. A just-inked agreement with the Menlo Circus Club on Park Lane designates the Atherton country club's

Two-alarm fire damages West Atherton house

Fireworks may be to blame for a two-alarm house fire in West Atherton in the early hours of Sunday morning, July 6, Menlo Park's fire chief said.

An exterior fire burned into the home in the first block of Ridgeview Drive, near the Bear Gulch Reservoir, said Chief Harold Schapelhouman of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District.

It took firefighters an hour and a half to bring the fire under control, he said.

Barking dogs awoke a caretaker, who reported the fire at 3:22 a.m., Chief Schapelhouman said. The caretaker and the dogs got out of the house safely by the time firefighters arrived at 3:26

a.m., he said.

"The acting captain did a great job, and contained the fire to the deck and the rear portion of the home," Chief Schapelhouman said.

The deck had to be knocked down, he said.

The residents had just left for a vacation in Hawaii. They won't be able to occupy their home, due to the damage, estimated at \$500,000, he said.

Forty-five firefighters responded to the fire, Chief Schapelhouman said. The blaze spread to a eucalyptus grove in the yard, but the trees had recently been trimmed, so the fire did not spread to the trees' canopies, he said.

grounds as an emergency evacuation and information center, and this year's firefighter training was held on the Bear Gulch Reservoir property off Walsh Road, Chief Schapelhouman said.

The citizens' Walsh Road evacuation brochure shows a secondary escape route via Reservoir Road that uses a private road by the Bear Gulch Reservoir that's owned by Cal Water. The brochure pinpoints the location of a pedestrian and equestrian tunnel under Interstate 280 leading up to Woodside. Residents are encouraged to consider evacuating on foot if necessary, Mr. Carpenter said.

A paper version of the brochure, printed at the group's expense, will be coming out in a few weeks

with any corrections and amendments, Mr. Carpenter said.

Chief Schapelhouman said that while the Walsh Road corridor is woodsy and steep compared with other parts of Atherton, it's rated only moderate to high risk, unlike areas of Woodside and Portola Valley that have very high risk ratings. The number of wildfires currently burning in the state has people understandably nervous, but the situation here is different, he said.

"(Walsh Road) is protected by a municipal fire department. We have a four- to six-minute response time, and our goal is to get up there and get (the fire) out," Chief Schapelhouman said. "Up in Paradise, in the woods, the response time (for firefighters)

would be 15 to 30 minutes, and things can get out of control in that period of time."

Last month, firefighters canvassed the neighborhood handing out information about reducing fire danger by creating "defensible space" around homes, he said.

Mr. Carpenter, however, clearly doesn't see the district's efforts as adequate. Over the weekend, he sent out an e-mail to the Atherton City Council and his fellow fire board members castigating them for failing to get the plan done before the start of fire season.

"I am proud to serve as part of the citizens group which prepared this plan but I am ashamed to be an elected official whose board has failed to serve my community," Mr. Carpenter's e-mail said. ■

PV reviews wildfire-awareness

Wildfires and a community-wide fire-safety campaign in this time of wildfires and drought will be a topic of discussion at the July 9 Portola Valley Town Council meeting.

"The need for communication with our residents cannot be overstated," Assistant Town Manager Janet McDougal said in memo to the council. Staff is proposing to work with the Woodside Fire Protection District and others "to develop and quickly implement a program to educate residents concerning immediate actions each household should be prepared to take."

The council meets at 8 p.m. on Wednesday in the Historic Schoolhouse at 765 Portola Road.

Also on the agenda: The council may approve a resolution to install a floor in the new community hall using wood harvested from Portola Valley eucalyptus trees.

The council may act on a proposed exception to the town's residential floor-area limits for two properties on Santa Maria Avenue. Both were affected by a landslide and a bank loan to rebuild two homes is contingent upon a minimum size for the new homes.

City rethinks emergency water reservoir

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

In a big win for residents of Menlo Park's Seminary Oaks neighborhood, the city has put on hold its plans to build an underground multi-million-gallon emergency water reservoir at Seminary Oaks Park.

At the July 1 City Council meeting, neighbors put an exclamation point on a tactful campaign against tearing up the three-acre park and cutting down neighborhood trees to make way for the reservoir, which would serve as an emer-

gency water supply for the city.

Neighbors acknowledged that the city needs a backup water supply, but stressed that their neighborhood park isn't the right place for a reservoir, and the city needs to better engage the community to find the right spot for it.

"We all acknowledge the need for an emergency water supply," said Bill Evans, who lives on Santa Margarita Avenue and spoke on behalf of about 70 Seminary Oaks neighbors who attended the meeting. "What we look forward to is ... working collaboratively with the City Council, members

of city staff and whoever else to arrive at a solution that suits the entire community and meets all of our needs."

City Manager Glen Rojas said staff has halted all work on the project, and will come back to the council in August with a list of other locations where the reservoir could be built, and suggestions on how the public can be better engaged in the process.

Springing to action

In December 2005, council members gave the go-ahead

See **MP WATER**, page 17

Ex-finance director reinstates lawsuit against Atherton

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

John Johns, Atherton's former finance director, may have moved to Yolo County but his presence is still being felt.

Mr. Johns is pursuing the \$500,000 wrongful termination

lawsuit against the town that he dropped in March, when a San Mateo County Superior Court judge told him he would have to choose between suing Atherton and avoiding the possibility of incriminating himself in a parallel criminal investigation.

The county District Attor-

ney's Office had been investigating allegations that Mr. Johns used town equipment while doing outside consulting work, but recently determined that there was no basis for criminal prosecution, said Steve Wagstaffe, the chief deputy district attorney.

Mr. Johns originally filed suit against the town in November, alleging that he was fired in retaliation for his activities as a whistleblower for revealing fiscal problems in the building and other town departments.

"This is a warmed-over version of the complaint he dismissed," said Atherton City Attorney Marc Hynes.

The Atherton City Council is

expected to discuss the lawsuit in closed session at its July 16 meeting, Mr. Hynes said.

George Camerlengo, the attorney for Mr. Johns, did not respond to the Almanac's request for comment.

Mr. Johns oversaw Atherton finances without apparent incident until mid-2006, when

See **JOHNS**, page 17

Rotary marks 10 years of tutoring

Menlo Park club members teach reading to third-graders at Garfield School

By Jane Knoerle
Almanac Lifestyles Editor

When Doug Adams of Menlo Park was president of the Rotary Club of Menlo Park, he started a tutoring project at Garfield Charter School. That was 10 years ago and it's still going strong.

The 27 Rotarians who took part in the program at Garfield School this year were honored at the club's annual tutor appreciation luncheon on May 7.

During the school year, the tutors meet weekly with their charges at Garfield, a preschool through eighth-grade school in the North Fair Oaks area of unincorporated San Mateo County.

Their pupils are in third and fourth grade, the time in a student's education when he begins to learn through reading. "If kids aren't reading at third-grade level, studies show they are the least likely to be successful in their later school years," says Mr. Adams.

The tutors work with the same student each week from



Tutor Betty Toguchi, a member of the Menlo Park Rotary Club, with her student, Karla Delgado.

October to May, spending about 45 minutes a session. "It's an excellent opportunity to help on a one-to-one basis," says Mr. Adams.

The program's goal is English literacy, a challenge when the school's population is 96 percent Hispanic. Most of the children come from homes where no English is spoken, Mr. Adams says.

The tutor's teaching materials vary, from phonics books for those who are far behind in their reading skills, to National Geographic books on many subjects. The students like choosing their own subjects from the books available, says Mr. Adams.

The Rotary Club of Menlo Park and the Rotary Club Foundation contribute about \$5,000 a year to the tutoring program. The money has been used for library books, outfitting the tutoring room with supplies, building a playground shelter, re-landscaping the front of Garfield School, funding science camp, a college day at Menlo College for the school's entire seventh grade, and funds for field trips.

In instructions given to new tutors, volunteers are asked to let their student's teacher know if they can't make it to a tutoring session. "The students really look forward to their time with their tutor and are disappointed if they are unaware you will not be there," it says.

It seems the feelings are mutual. "The tutors just love the kids," says Mr. Adams.

For more information about the program, e-mail Mr. Adams at dougadams1@aol.com. ■

Horse owners' gift targets Woodside's horse trails

The budget to maintain horse trails in Woodside is \$5,000 richer with a recent gift from the Woodside-area Horse Owners Association, a program operated by the nonprofit Woodside Community Foundation.

The gift, presented to the Town Council by Trails Committee members Fentress Hall and Donna Poy on June 24, is intended for improving horse trails along Mountain Home, Canada, Kings

Mountain and Woodside roads.

These trails are principal routes for the Day of the Horse celebration scheduled for the second Saturday in October, which will be October 11 this year. Typical attendance is 350 riders and 500 non-equestrians of all ages, Ms. Poy said in a press release.

Day of the Horse, now in its fourth year, celebrates Woodside's equestrian heritage and

ambience on a day of decorated trail stops where there are treats for rider and horse, and a horse fair that includes an equine petting zoo and stagecoach rides, Ms. Poy said.

This gift boosts the association's total contributions to local equestrian causes to \$25,000, Ms. Poy said.

For more information on WHOA or the Day of the Horse, go to www.whoa94062.org.

MOTH

continued from page 5

the caterpillar.

When mature, the moth is a quarter-inch long and tan in color, with some darker brown markings; it reproduces five times a year. "This is an exotic pest; we don't know whether it's going to affect native plants. That's an unknown," Ms. Raabe said.

The light brown apple moth's presence also has economic implications. Mexico and Canada, which do not have the moth, have imposed trade restrictions on produce coming from within the quarantine, negatively affecting

large-scale agricultural exporting areas such as Monterey County.

Commissioner Raabe says she expects the quarantine's economic impact in the county to be on nurseries because those businesses will have to incur the cost of preventive spraying or of eradicating the pest from their own premises.

The light brown apple moth eradication program is run by the California Department of Food and Agriculture. The only eradication efforts currently in the county are in Half Moon Bay and Pescadero. Since February, the area has used twist ties with female pheromones to confuse

male moths so they can't find females to mate with, wiping out the population.

"Right now, no treatments are scheduled for any other cities in the county," Commissioner Raabe said. The state plans to scale up the eradication with the release of infertile moths next spring.

The county staff is not involved in the eradication program. It maintains some of the moth traps and works with businesses and residents to enforce the quarantine.

For more information, call Agricultural Commissioner Gail Raabe at 363-4700 or go to www.smhealth.org/lbam. ■

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



What To Do If You Have Lots of Equity in Your Home

Q: My husband and I are ready to sell our home of thirty years and want to know our options for maximizing our return on the sale. What are your suggestions?

A: If you have lots of equity in your home, you can sell it this year and pay capital gains tax on the difference between your net profit and the cost basis. The law that governs the current capital gains tax rate is due to sunset in the next few years so it may benefit you to sell sooner rather than later to avoid additional taxation. However market factors may mean the property will be more valuable in a few years

and the potential added tax will be mitigated by a higher selling price.

You can rent your house for at least one year and then sell it and purchase another rental property using IRS code Sec. 1031 which allows you to defer the capital gains tax on the transaction. This maneuver only defers the tax but you may wish to do this and sell the property when you really need the income. You can sell your house and buy more than one replacement property and after renting them for a year, move into one of them, converting it to your primary residence. Consult your tax advisor to understand the tax consequences of your decision.

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Changes ahead for library

LIBRARY

continued from page 5

William Harris, president of the Friends of the Menlo Park Library, said in a press release that the group has “enthusiastically endorsed” the renovation project. Its \$100,000 contribution is in recognition of the fact that “more children use the library every year, but the children’s area has had no major renovation since 1992, and it shows.”

In addition to the above changes, the project will move the young adult section into the main area of the library. Ms. Barrese said that the books that will be moved will generally be those meant for high school teens, while those geared more for 12- and 13-year-olds will remain in the children’s section.

Overall, she said, the planned changes will make the children’s section “visually more appealing ... and will open up the room. It will be very bright, welcoming and open.”

The library foundation will continue seeking donations from other major donors and foundations, but will launch a public effort in late August, when the school year begins. Ms. Wyman said the fundraising committee plans to do a mailing to every household and make presentations to local groups.

“We’d like the public to feel they’re a part of this,” Ms. Flowers said.



Photo by Veronica Weber/The Almanac

Jane Wyman co-chairs the Menlo Park Library Foundation’s fundraising effort with Nancy Flowers.

Though there’s a distance to go before the \$500,000 goal is reached, the foundation is optimistic that the public will respond and the project can get under way in 2009.

“We’re hoping to get started the very first of the year,” Ms. Wyman said. ■

■ INFORMATION

Donations to the renovation project may be sent to: Menlo Park Library Foundation, 800 Alma St., Menlo Park, CA 94025. More information about the project can be found at www.foundationmpl.org

KEPLER’S

continued from page 5

The cashier “fortress” and information desk will be scrapped for smaller, department-based stations. The bookshelves will be lowered to improve visibility and flow.

The new arrangement is meant to be more open and inviting, with staff members on the floor, “working side-by-side with the customers,” Mr. Kepler said. The sections will be redefined so that finding books is more intuitive, he said.

The inventory of gifts is set to be expanded as well. Much of the store’s furniture will be put on wheels so it can be moved around to accommodate different types of events.

Future changes, such as another door onto the plaza and changes in decor, will be determined in accordance with customer feedback. “We want to be able to occupy the plaza on the south end more robustly,” Mr. Kepler said, adding that he wanted to complement Cafe Borrone’s business without competing with it.

The bookstore will not close during the renovations. “Our

intention is to remain open, with a ‘pardon our dust’ approach,” Mr. Kepler said. Staff will help customers find what they need while the merchandise is shifted around, he said.

The construction is scheduled to continue for six to eight weeks during the summer. It will be suspended during the winter and begin again next summer.

The renovations are funded primarily by revenue from the Kepler’s Literary Circle membership program, which began in the wake of the store’s closure in 2005. To date, the membership program has helped fund events and community outreach projects. Of the planned renovations, Mr. Kepler said, “We couldn’t be doing this right now without our member support.”

Mr. Kepler declined to say how much the renovation would cost.

Overall, Mr. Kepler said, the renovations will bring the bookstore into the modern age. “Rows of shelves are very 20th century,” Mr. Kepler said. “We’d like to be more accessible not only to literary types, but also to the general public who’s looking to come into a good bookstore and not be intimidated.” ■



This artist’s rendering shows how the new EcoCenter would look with a portion of the 400-mile Bay Trail crossing the front porch of the restored landmark.

Volunteers plan new EcoCenter

By Carol Broadbent Fields

Special to The Almanac

The Environmental Volunteers (EV) organization has embarked upon the most ambitious initiative in its 36-year history: restoring the historic Sea Scout building at the Palo Alto Baylands Nature Preserve as a new community center for environmental education.

The nonprofit officially kicked off its capital campaign June 1 at its annual party held at the Ladra home in Atherton. Executive Director Allan Berkowitz and Campaign Chair and EV board member Susan Hansen told a crowd of hundreds of supporters and community leaders that the EV had reached the half-way mark of its plan to raise \$4 million for expanded science programs and to establish a new community center — called the EcoCenter — by the fall of 2009.

The EcoCenter campaign will restore the historic Sea Scout building, designed in 1941 by famed local architect Birge Clark and funded by Bay Area philanthropist Lucie Stern. The EcoCenter will feature sustainable construction and innovative “seaworthy” design enhancements that will preserve the nautical look of the structure that has made it a beloved landmark for thousands of Bay Area residents.

“It’s the ultimate recycling project,” said Mr. Berkowitz, executive director of Environmental Volunteers. “We are reusing an entire building and incorporating green construction elements such as the lighting, heating, and ventilation systems, enabling our new home to serve as a demonstration of our mission to inspire environmental stewardship.”

The EcoCenter campaign will also restore a broken juncture in the 400-mile Bay Trail that encircles the San Francisco Bay, making the EcoCenter a destination for Bay Area hikers and bikers.

The campaign includes \$800,000 earmarked for new education programs to help the Environmental Volunteers meet the growing demand

About the author: Menlo Park parent Carol Broadbent Fields is a marketing consultant and member of the board of Environmental Volunteers. Previously, she served as co-president of the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation and helped establish its Endowment for Excellence in Teaching.

for its classroom and field-study services.

Every year, 200 trained volunteers deliver 500 hands-on science programs to more than 10,000 elementary school students at 80 schools in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties.

Oak Knoll and Encinal schools in the Menlo Park City School District and the East Palo Alto Charter School are three of the top 10 schools this year, ranked by number of EV services used.

“With education budget cuts and growing enrollment at many schools, there is no more important time for the EV to grow to ensure that our local schools stay strong,” said Ms. Hansen, board

member and campaign chair.

The EV expects to deliver 550 classroom science programs and field trips for 375 teachers next year. In April, the EV “sold out” all of its services for next year in less than one hour, a new record and an indication of the high demand for its programs.

Led by a \$1 million grant from the Packard Foundation, the EcoCenter Campaign needs the community’s support to reach the goal of \$4 million by 2009. A groundbreaking ceremony is set for Sunday, Sept. 14, and construction will begin in October after the breeding season of the endangered clapper rail bird. ■

■ INFORMATION

To learn more or to make a donation online, go to www.EVols.org. Allan Berkowitz, the executive director of Environmental Volunteers, can be reached at 961-0545

Every year, 200 volunteers deliver 500 science programs to more than 10,000 elementary school students in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.



Photo by Veronica Weber/The Almanac

Festive fun at Cafe Borrone

Laura Smith laughs as her custom-made rainbow sombrero get fitted onto her head by balloon hat makers Jonathan and Matthew Zambole outside Cafe Borrone in Menlo Park on June 16.

Layoffs help school balance budget

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

WOODSIDE

Woodside Elementary School should be able to eke out a balanced budget for the coming year, largely thanks to staff layoffs approved earlier this year. The school board voted June 10 to approve a \$7.28 million budget for the fiscal year that began July 1 — 4.5 percent smaller than the current year's budget.

Revenue in the new fiscal year is projected to be \$7.3 million, down 3 percent from the year that ended June 30.

The single-school district trimmed expenses largely because property tax revenues are projected to grow at a slower rate in the 2008-09 fiscal year.

The Woodside district is also

bracing itself for a drop in state funding due to California's budget crisis, but the amount of those cuts is unknown.

"This is the first year we've really faced a challenge," said former superintendent/principal Dan Vinson, who retired June 16. The budget is built on conservative estimates for property tax revenues, which are projected to increase 4 percent, he said.

The district's financial forecasts show the district facing budget cuts not just this year, but in the following two years as well, if property tax revenues continue to grow at only 4 percent. If property taxes climb by 6 percent annually, the district will break even, according to

the analysis.

Plumping up the district's bottom line is a \$1.8 million grant from the Woodside School Foundation, which accounts for almost 25 percent of the district's projected revenues.

A plan to lay off staff, approved by the board this spring, should save the school more than \$300,000 in the new budget. The staff cuts include the elimination of a part-time English learning specialist, changing a full-time counselor to a half-time position, and a small reduction of hours for a science position.

The board also eliminated a full-time accountant, and a full-time network administrator job was replaced by a cheaper technology specialist position. ■

Incident at 7-Eleven

A late night robbery attempt at the 7-Eleven store at 525 Oak Grove in Menlo Park concluded with no injuries and an arrest.

Police arrested and booked into county jail Kenneth Simien, 24, on charges that included robbery, assault with a deadly weapon — an unopened can of an "energy drink" — and making threats, said Nicole Acker, spokeswoman for the Menlo Park Police Department.

Mr. Simien allegedly threw the energy drink at the clerk while arguing about the purchase of alcohol, Ms. Acker said. The throw missed the clerk, who then called 911.

No-parking signs on Tripp Road?

A new reality may be ahead for hikers and joggers with an early morning habit of parking on Tripp Road in Woodside then heading on foot across Kings Mountain Road into Huddart Park.

The Town Council will consider a proposal to install no-parking signs between Tripp Court and Kings Mountain Road at its meeting on Tuesday, July 8, at 7:30 p.m. in Independence Hall.

The hikers and joggers, some of whom arrive at 5:30 a.m., are bothering residents with loud conversations and arrival and departure noises, said Town Engineer Paul Nagengast.

At all times of day, parking

along Tripp Road can make emergency access more difficult, Mr. Nagengast said.

Parked vehicles also encroach on the adjacent horse trail, forcing riders on to the road where they can encounter traffic and a slippery surface, he said.

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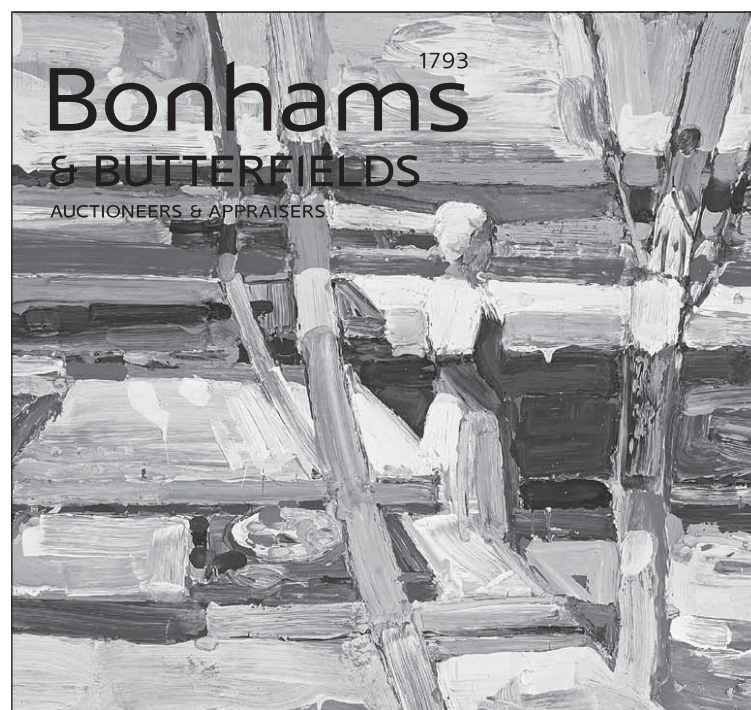
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that it only took youngsters 10 extra minutes to receive instructions about contact-lens use during their fittings. Another study, which involved nearsighted children between the ages of 8 and 11, revealed that 9 children out of 10 had no trouble inserting/removing contact lenses on their own.

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P.S. Contact lenses can help young athletes perform better and more comfortably.

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.



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Clockwise from upper left:

Rodeo fans watch the second round of team roping. A senior division bull rider tries to hold onto a bucking bull. Armando Fagliano teaches a few spectators how to rope a calf. Rodeo clown Willy "Everride" Knoernschild launches T-shirts into the crowd. A young rodeo spectator watches the festivities. Cowboy hats for sale at one of the booths. Children chase after one of 60 pigs during the pig scramble. One of the pigs is caught. A senior division rider races to the finish during barrel racing. A junior division rider and her horse make a sharp turn around a barrel during barrel racing.



FUN AT THE RODEO

Woodside celebrates roping, riding and racing at the 58th annual Junior Rodeo

Photos and story by Veronica Weber

On the Fourth of July, in between the barbecues and watching fireworks light up the sky, kids of all ages came out and strapped on cowboy boots, belt buckles, chaps, and cowboy hats to compete in horsemanship events at Woodside's annual Junior Rodeo.

Begun 58 years ago in La Honda to benefit the CA Fire Brigade, the Junior Rodeo has become the biggest fundraiser for the San Mateo County Mounted

Patrol, attracting roughly 3,000 spectators to the grounds each year.

Youths competing in the rodeo are separated into two divisions:

juniors, who range in age from 6 to 13, and seniors, who range from 14 to 18. Participants compete against their peers in roughly 17 events, set in accordance with the rules of the Northern California Junior Rodeo Association.

Highlights of this year's event included:

■ **Pig Scramble:** Perhaps the favorite event of the rodeo, this features three age groups of children who compete to catch one of the 20 pigs set loose in the arena. Capturing can be relatively easy; holding onto the pig can prove quite challenging.

■ **Barrel Racing:** Riders race to get around three barrels without knocking them over.

■ **Bull Riding:** The most dangerous sport of the rodeo, bull riding features boys ages 14-18 who must

stay mounted onto a bucking bull for a minimum of 8 seconds. They are allowed to hold on with only one hand clutching a braided rope, which is tied around the animal's flank.

■ **Team Roping:** The only team competition in all of rodeo, this timed event pits two riders who work together to rope a steer. The first rider, also called the header, must rope the steer around the horns. The second rider, called the heeler, must rope around the animal's hind legs.





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District tax revenue flat due to Ellison reassessment

By Marjorie Mader

Almanac Staff Writer

■ PORTOLA VALLEY

Portola Valley School District's \$11.48 million budget for the 2008-09 fiscal year is "better than projected" during the dark days of February and keeps school programs in place, said Tim Hanretty, the district's assistant superintendent in charge of finances.

The reassessment of the Larry Ellison's estate in Woodside has resulted in a loss of \$300,000 during the budget year "and it's gone forever," said Mr. Hanretty. "Had this reassessment not occurred, the (property) tax growth would have been close to 5 percent."

The school board at its June 18 meeting unanimously adopted the budget for the year that started July 1.

Board members agreed in February to use \$333,000 from the district's reserve funds to help balance the 2008-09 fiscal year budget instead of making cuts to the education programs that have developed in recent years. They also gave approved cost-cutting measures that reduced operating expenses and increased efficiencies, resulting in a savings of \$500,000.

After the February budget estimates, the Portola Valley Schools Foundation stepped forward and gave \$165,182 to the district.

This gift is on top of \$800,000 raised in the foundation's annual campaign. These campaign funds are used to support music, art and physical education programs at Ormondale for grades K-3 and science programs for grades 4 and 5; as well as music and drama programs at Corte Madera for grades 4-8.

The foundation helps fund instructional aides at both schools and funds programs such as Spanish and Reading Recovery at Ormondale; after-school

sports and Spanish at Corte Madera; and smaller classes (in the low 20s) at Corte Madera.

The district received a big boost in the spring when an anonymous donor gave \$200,000 for tech initiatives that were part of the district-approved strategic plan for the coming school year.

Trustees, concerned that financial uncertainties could continue in the years ahead, formed a budget advisory committee in the spring. The group, made up of parents and other local residents, is charged with analyzing the district's financial picture and suggesting ways to increase revenue to pay for the rising costs of education. The district's \$290 parcel tax — expected to raise \$645,000 this year — expires in 2013.

The budget estimates that revenue during the current fiscal year will increase 4 percent — or \$456,257 — over 2007-08 revenue.

Budget figures could change, Mr. Hanretty cautioned, when the state budget is approved.

Portola Valley schools rely on local funding — property taxes, parcel taxes, foundation contributions and other local income — for about 85 percent of the budget.

The Portola Valley district keeps its property tax revenue rather than receiving per-pupil funding from the state because doing so results in \$3.3 million more in annual income.

The budget estimates that district reserves will amount to \$1.8 million at the end of the budget year on June 30, 2009. That is about 16 percent of the district's annual spending.

The district plans to spend an

See **BUDGET**, page 14

July 5 – July 13

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Town targets road, drainage fixes in \$17-million budget

By Andrea Gemmet
Almanac Staff Writer

ATHERTON

Atherton will trim one police officer position, but the town is poised to pull off a balanced budget with a particularly large sum going toward capital improvements, such as road and drainage projects.

The \$16.9 million budget for the fiscal year that began July 1 includes \$5.1 million in funding for capital improvement projects, and forecasts being in the black by a very slim margin — about \$4,500.

For the first time, the entire sum of parcel tax revenues, projected at almost \$1.9 million, is budgeted for capital projects, said interim finance director Bill Yeomans.

“The City Council’s deciding it wants to improve its infrastructure, and it’s spending the money to do so,” he said.

The budget was passed on a 4-0 vote at the June 18 council meeting.

Police Chief Bob Brennan managed to partially defeat a proposal to eliminate two of the department’s 22 sworn officer positions. The council opted to retain the school resources officer who works at Menlo-Atherton High School, even though the school district is no longer contributing to the cost, as it has in the past.

However, one officer position — the officer was assigned to the county’s narcotics unit — will be eliminated through attrition. Losing the specialty position won’t reduce the number

of patrol officers on the streets, said Mr. Yeomans.

Specialty positions, such as the narcotics detail or the San Mateo County gang task force, offer Atherton officers new skills and new challenges, Chief Brennan told the council at a special budget meeting on June 11. He said he believes that’s the reason that the Atherton police department has seen very little attrition, while neighboring cities such as Menlo Park have had huge turnover.

“It’s a philosophy on my part that you create opportunities for the people who are here,” he said. “If you want to drive people away, losing these specialty positions is the way to do it.”

The police department’s total budget for 2008-09 is \$5.15 million, up about 5 percent from last year.

The proposed budget adheres to the simple philosophy that “general fund expenditures cannot exceed general fund revenues,” said Councilman Jerry Carlson.

The budget assumes that building permit fees will rise in the next six months, and that all revenue from the town’s parcel tax will go toward capital improvement projects.

In past years, about \$650,000 of parcel tax money has gone into the town’s general fund, but in the current budget year Atherton was able to afford shifting that money back into the capital improvement fund, said Councilwoman Kathy McKeithen. ■



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- Sunday, July 27

* INFANT AND CHILD CPR

Parents and other childcare providers will learn the techniques of infant and child CPR and how to avoid choking hazards. Mannequins are used to provide hands-on training.

- Sunday, July 27

* PEDIATRIC WEIGHT CONTROL PROGRAM

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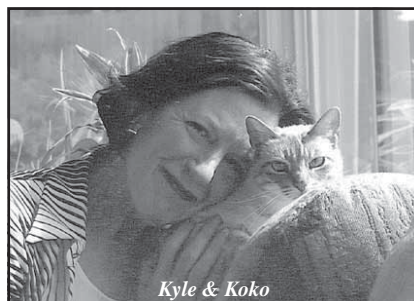


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Performing Type II Micro-surfacing with per Town specifications on the listed park path and street which includes notifications, traffic control, prep work, installation, compaction, sweeping, clean up and follow up. 1 year guarantee. Use of small micro-surfacing equipment is required for this job, as normal sized equipment is not feasible for this application. Specialized equipment with a maximum gross weight of 26,000 pounds or less shall be required.

Bids must be for the total dollar amount for all work listed by the Town, and shall be submitted in sealed envelopes clearly marked: "Bid of (Contractor) for 2008 PARK PATH MICROSURFACING, Project No. 08-003 ", along with date and time of bid opening.

Plans and specifications may be obtained at the Town of Atherton Reception Desk, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton CA 94027, for a non-refundable fee of \$15.00. Additional important information is contained in Town of Atherton Standard Specifications, which are available for and additional \$20.00. If shipping is requested, there will be an additional charge of \$20.00.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Any questions should be directed to the Streets Superintendent, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, CA 94027, telephone (650) 752-0541, preferably no later than 2 days before bid opening.

By: _____
Duncan L. Jones, P.E., City Engineer

Date: _____

Published in THE ALMANAC on July 2, 9, 2008.

Weevils wage war on weeds

Some 5,300 hairy weevils are busy munching on the growing seeds of yellow starthistle in six open space preserves of the Mid-peninsula Regional Open Space District.

This is the fifth year since 1997 that the district has released the weevils to stop the spread of the invasive starthistle and restore native habitats. Weevils are busy chewing in Russian Ridge, Sky-line Ridge, and Monte Bello open space preserves in the northern part of the district, and three more preserves farther south.

The hairy weevil, a native of Greece, has been researched by the U.S. Department of Agricul-

ture as an effective agent for controlling yellow star thistle, according to a district press release.

District monitoring of previous weevil releases shows that some star thistle populations have declined; between 40 and 90 percent of seedheads were damaged. "In some areas last year, the weevils outnumbered the available flowerheads," said resource specialist Lisa Infante. "I expect to see a sharp decline in yellow starthistle this year."

Other methods used by the district to control the aggressive weed include mowing, prescribed burning, cutting, pulling and application of selected herbicides.

BUDGET

continued from page 12

average of \$15,250 per student during the year, up slightly from \$15,171 last year.

Projections show that 748 students — 37 more than last year — will attend district schools when they open Aug. 25. The estimated enrollment is 352 at Ormondale and 396 at Corte Madera. Kindergarten classes will have the largest enrollment of all grades with 98 students, mostly boys, in five classes.

Eighty percent of the budget — \$9.25 million — pays for salaries and benefits of teachers, administrators and other personnel. Salary negotiations for employee groups will begin in November, said Mr. Hanretty.

The budget reflects the cost of adding two full-time teachers due to increased enrollment at Ormondale. A half-time resource specialist position has been eliminated.

The district is committing \$425,893 for strategic planning initiatives, including \$200,000 for technology; \$56,000 for math; \$40,000 for student assessment; \$36,000 for language arts; and \$70,000 to assess education programs. About \$60,000 more will be allocated for staff professional development and instructional support. ■

INFORMATION

The 2008-09 budget is available at the district office, located at Corte Madera School, 4575 Alpine Road in Portola Valley, and on the district's Web site (www.pvsd.net).



PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

FEES DUE FOR GARBAGE, RECYCLING MATERIAL AND, PLANT MATERIAL COLLECTION FOR FISCAL YEAR 2008-2009

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City Council of the City of Menlo Park, California, will hold a Public Hearing to consider the report of the City Manager to place unpaid fees due for garbage, recycling material, and plant material collection services for Fiscal Year July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009, on the San Mateo County property tax rolls, pursuant to Sections 7.06.040 and 7.06.050 of the Menlo Park Municipal Code.

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that said City Council will hold the aforementioned Public Hearing to consider this report in the Council Chambers of the City of Menlo Park, Civic Center - 701 Laurel Street, at 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, the 15th day of July, 2008, or as near as possible thereafter, at which time and place interested persons may appear and be heard thereon.

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that "If you challenge this matter 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 Hearing".

DATED: June 24, 2008 /s/ SHERRY M. KELLY, City Clerk

Published in THE ALMANAC on July 2 & 9, 2008.

New home loan program helps people live, work in San Mateo County

By Marion Softky

Almanac Staff Writer

As skyrocketing gas prices pump up the cost of commuting, the dream of living close to where you work, or to transit, can grow more urgent.

A new homebuyer assistance program, "Opening Doors to Our Community," may help. Commuters to jobs in the county may qualify for the new program, as well as workers already living in the county who want to move their families closer to transit.

Meriwest Mortgage, a wholly owned subsidiary of Meriwest Credit Union, and San Mateo County's Housing Endowment and Regional Trust (HEART) are now taking applications for the new program.

"The program will serve first-time homebuyers who need a small boost to enter the ownership market, as well as 'move-closer' homebuyers who want to cut their commutes to local jobs," said Chris Mohr, executive director of HEART.

The new program pairs a Meriwest first mortgage with a below-market rate second loan offered by San Mateo's HEART agency. The second loan will reduce the interest on the first loan, and prepay the private mortgage insurance. Together, these loans will help reduce the monthly payment.

To qualify, families must,

among other things, have a household income of \$150,000 or less, a debt-to-income ratio of 45 percent or less, and a member who has worked in the county for at least two years. The maximum first mortgage loan is \$679,000, or 97 percent of the purchase price, according to the announcement.

HEART is a public-private collaboration that raises funds from both public and private sources to meet critical housing needs in the county. The county and all cities, except Belmont, participate.

To date, HEART has invested a total of \$5.25 million in four developments providing 487 new units of affordable housing for seniors and working families.

Mr. Mohr continued, "Our goal is to serve vital members of our workforce, from teachers and public safety personnel to employees of startups, from cutting-edge life sciences and clean-tech firms to large high-tech and financial companies."

For more information or to sign up, go to heartofsmc.org; or call 872-4444. Meriwest Mortgage can be reached at 877-637-4937, or meriwest.com. ■

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NOTICE TO CONTRACTORS Bid Proposals Sought for INSTALLATION OF VIDEO DETECTION SYSTEMS AT VARIOUS INTERSECTIONS IN MENLO PARK

The City of Menlo Park invites qualified contractors to submit sealed bid proposals for the construction of the City's INSTALLATION OF VIDEO DETECTION SYSTEMS AT VARIOUS INTERSECTIONS IN MENLO PARK. Work required as part of this project consists of, in general, installing video detection systems at six traffic signalized intersections in Menlo Park, all as shown on the plans and described in the specifications. Performance of this work requires a valid California Contractor's License Class A or Class C-10. Project documents and copies of the prevailing rate of wages can be obtained from the Menlo Park Engineering Division, located in the Administration Building at 701 Laurel St. Sealed bid proposals will be received at the Engineering Division office until 2 p.m. on WEDNESDAY, July 16, 2008, at which time they will be publicly opened and read. Additional information can be obtained from the City's website: www.menlopark.org/cip

Published in THE ALMANAC on
June 25, 2008 & July 2, 9, 2008.



ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

TOWN OF ATHERTON STATE OF CALIFORNIA

STREET RECONSTRUCTION - PHASE 4 PROJECT NO. 08-001

Notice is hereby given that SEALED BIDS will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, California 94027, until 3:00 p.m. JULY 31, 2008, at which time they will be publicly opened and read, for performing the following work:

LAYOUT OF WORK, REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF ASPHALT CONCRETE PAVEMENT ON STREET, REPLACEMENT OF DRIVEWAY APPROACHES, REPLACEMENT OF CONCRETE VALLEY GUTTERS, INSTALLATION OF CONCRETE APRON, INSTALLATION OF GRADED AND ROCK SWALES AND PLACEMENT OF PERMANENT STRIPING FOR THE FOLLOWING STREETS:

- SELBY LANE CUL-DE-SAC (356-374)
- REBECCA LANE CUL-DE-SAC
- JUNIPER DRIVE

Bids must be for the entire work, and shall be submitted in sealed envelopes clearly marked: "Bid of (Contractor) for STREET RECONSTRUCTION - PHASE 4, Project No. 08-001", along with date and time of bid opening.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

By: _____
Duncan L. Jones, P.E., City Engineer

Date: _____

Published in THE ALMANAC on July 9, 2008

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Epidemiology study by Maya Mathur of Woodside nets \$35,000 scholarship

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

Young women are not as knowledgeable as they should be about the human papilloma virus even though they are often involved in making decisions about whether or not to be vaccinated against it.

This finding is from a recent epidemiological study by Woodside resident and 11th grader Maya Mathur; it also happened to bring a \$35,000 scholarship her way in the Young Epidemiology Scholars contest, she told The Almanac.

Maya, who attends Castilleja School in Palo Alto, took as her topic the public health question: If young women are educated about the consequences of contracting HPV, and the efficacy of a protective vaccine, does that affect their decisions to get vaccinated?

HPV is a sexually transmitted infection that can cause genital warts and cervical and other types of cancer, according to the Centers for Disease Control. It cannot be seen, and most infect-



Maya Mathur

ed people don't know they have it, the CDC said, adding that in 90 percent of the cases, the human immune system clears it within two years.

Maya had been vaccinated against HPV without having a choice in the matter, she said. To learn more about it, she read research but found that insufficient. "I thought it was really necessary to conduct a study," she said.

Her random sample of anonymous girls from two local high schools involved 20 questions, either on paper or online, that touched on sexually transmitted diseases, vaccinations and HPV, and included several demographic-oriented questions, including religious practices.

"I was very surprised at the low knowledge that my respondents had, and this pointed out to me that we really need to increase education in this area," she said.

She also discovered that her respondents relied on parents

and health care providers for HPV information more than on advertisements, her mother Dr. Vandana Mathur said via e-mail. Another of her conclusions: The more HPV-awareness there is, the better the chances for enlightened public policy, Dr. Mathur said.

Scholarship is icing

The scholarship — one of two second-place prizes in the contest — came after Maya defended her research before a 12-judge panel that included professors of medicine and epidemiologists from the CDC, Dr. Mathur said. The panel met during an April weekend in Washington, D.C.

The questions asked of her were interesting in that they illuminated areas for further investigation, such as sources of bias, Maya said. "I really liked being grilled by the panel."

She said she entered the contest "mostly because of my interest in science and epidemiology," but the scholarship was welcome.

The contest is sponsored by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the College Board. ■

Left-over donations could seed Town Center endowment fund

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

When the Town Council of Portola Valley asked this community of 4,600 for \$20 million to pay for a new library, Town Hall, activities hall and outdoor recreational facilities, the community opened their checkbooks and came through. The new Town Center complex is expected to open this fall.

Is it now appropriate to create a special reserve that can be drawn upon by the community in planning activities at the new Town Center?

SallyAnn Reiss, a co-chair for the \$20 million campaign, thinks that such a reserve is the next step, and that any left-over campaign money should be used to seed it. That would be consistent with the original campaign goal of providing services at Town Center as well as new facilities, she said.

■ PORTOLA VALLEY

"If there isn't money left over, maybe it's time to create an endowment," she told the Town Council at its June 25 meeting.

The council responded positively to the concept, while noting the importance of establishing a fair system of allocating funds.

The town has 14 volunteer committees advising the council and town staff on matters such as parks and recreation, teen interests, and science and nature. Some of these committees have five-figure budgets, while others get by with much less.

"It's an opportunity to give more energy to our committees," Councilman Steve Toben said.

Such an endowment should not interfere with the annual Blues-and-Barbecue festival, a fundraising event for the purchase of open space, cautioned resident and philanthropist Bill Lane.

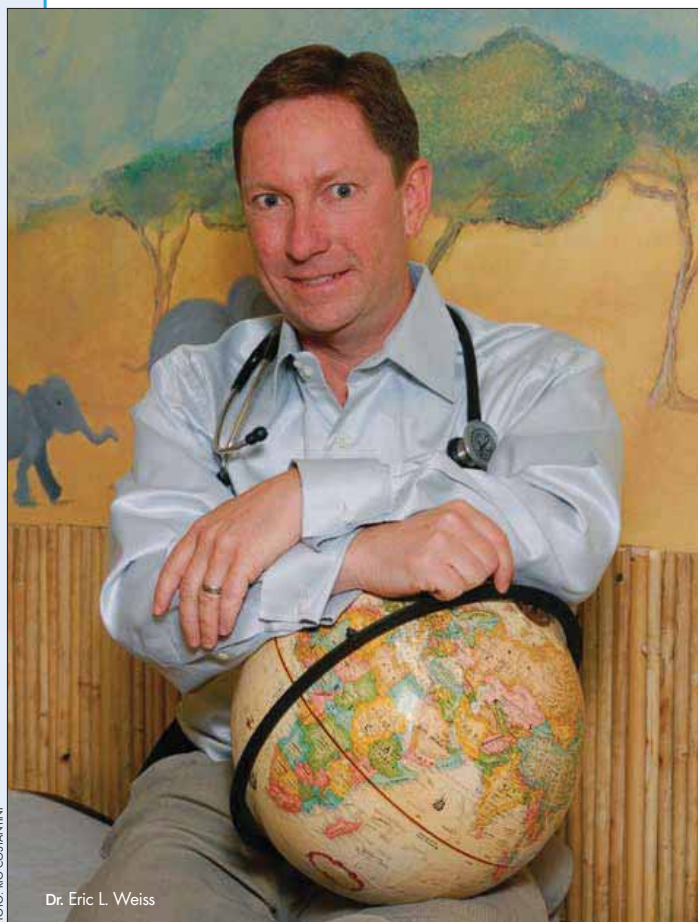
Band celebrates Bastille Day at Cafe Borrone

Simon Dray and his band will celebrate Bastille Day at Cafe Borrone from 7 to 10 p.m. Monday, July 14.

The free concert features French-American singer and

songwriter Simon Dray, Eddie Warner on lead guitar and John Higham on bass.

Cafe Borrone is located at 1010 El Camino Real in Menlo Park, next to Kepler's bookstore.



Dr. Eric L. Weiss



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CONGRATULATIONS to The Village Doctor of Woodside for being named one of the "Top 32 Travel Clinics" in the United States by *Condé Nast Traveler*! The only program recognized in Northern California, The Village Doctor is under the direction of **ERIC L. WEISS, MD, DTM&H** who founded the Stanford Travel Medicine Service. Dr. Weiss boasts a longstanding membership in, and certification by, the International Society of Travel Medicine (ISTM) and American Society of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene (ASTMH) and specializes in both adult and pediatric travel medicine.

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MP WATER

continued from page 6

to study the park — located near the intersection of Seminary Drive and Santa Monica Avenue, adjacent to St. Patrick's Seminary — as a site for a 3.5-million- to 6.7-million-gallon underground water reservoir.

But neighbors weren't formally notified of the reservoir plan until this May, when the city held a meeting about the proposal to bulldoze the existing fields and playground, cut down trees to make way for the reservoir, and build a permanent above-ground pumping station at the park.

Resident Kathy Switky said the lack of outreach on the city's part was "disappointing," as neighbors hadn't been asked for input on the reservoir plans.

"For many of us, the initial reaction was, 'Oh no! We love this park,'" Ms. Switky told The Almanac. "This park has really brought the entire community together."

Neighbors moved quickly to get caught up on the project, requesting meetings with city staff and council members, forming a "Friends of Seminary Oaks Park" group (which now represents about 100 house-

POLICE CALLS

To view local police reports, go to TheAlmanacOnline.com. Look under Local News for Police Calls.

holds), and setting up a blog to keep the neighborhood posted about the project.

Public outreach

At the July 1 meeting, council members said the reservoir project is an example of the city needing to do a better job of reaching out to the public.

"There's been a lot of concern about public outreach on a number of different projects," said Mayor Andy Cohen. "Public entities and private entities — they just don't do the public outreach early enough. ... I want to see us do it better."

Kent Steffens, the acting assistant city manager, said city staff wanted to study the site before notifying neighbors of the possibility the park would be torn up to make way for the reservoir.

"Some members of the public feel that they should have been informed earlier on in the process, and I certainly sympathize with that," Mr. Steffens said. "But we also needed to collect data on the site so we would have information to give them." ■

JOHNS

continued from page 6

the City Council asked him to oversee an audit of the building department. The resulting brouhaha over "irregularities" in permits, procedures and records-keeping engulfed the town for months, raising Mr. Johns' profile and exposing him to criticism over his handling of the audit.

Just when the building department controversy began to settle down, in August 2007 Mr. Johns was suspended over hostile workplace complaints.

He was fired two months later, following a personnel investigation that painted him as a bully who may have improperly done outside work on town time. The report failed to uphold the hostile workplace complaints against him. Mr. Johns called the report flawed and inaccurate.

In February, Judge Marie Wiener ruled that Mr. Johns could pursue his wrongful firing lawsuit, but that he could not block the town from questioning him as part of its defense. Mr. Johns' attorney argued that, in light of the criminal investigation, Mr. Johns' Fifth Amendment right to avoid incriminating himself could be violated. ■

MP election filing period opens July 14

Menlo Park residents interested in running for the City Council — there are two seats up for election in November — can take out nomination papers starting Monday, July 14. The papers must be filed with the city clerk by Aug. 8.

The council seats are currently occupied by Andy Cohen and Kelly Fergusson. Mr. Cohen said he intends to run for re-election, but Ms.

Fergusson hasn't announce her plans.

Those planning to take out papers are encouraged to make an appointment by calling interim city clerk Sherry Kelly at 330-6625 or sending her an e-mail at smkelly@menlopark.org. The city clerk's office is on the second floor of the administration building at the Civic Center, between Laurel and Alma streets.

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650-752-0500
FAX 650-688-6528**

NOTICE OF ELECTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a General Municipal Election, to be consolidated with the Statewide Presidential Election, will be held in the Town of Atherton, on Tuesday, the 4th day of November, 2008, for the following office:

**TWO MEMBERS OF THE ATHERTON CITY COUNCIL
FULL TERM/FOUR YEARS EACH
EXPIRING IN NOVEMBER 2012**

The polls will be open between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. on Election Day.

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that candidates for said office must be residents and registered voters of the Town of Atherton. All nomination papers must be obtained from and returned to the City Clerk (or designee), Town Hall/Administration Building, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, California. The nomination period opens on **July 14, 2008 and closes at 5:00 p.m. on August 8, 2008**. If any incumbent does not file nomination papers by the August 8, 2008, deadline or does not qualify, the nomination period shall be extended for five more calendar days, until 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, August 13, 2008, for all non-incumbent candidates to file nomination papers with the City Clerk.

DATED: July 3, 2008

/s/ KATHI HAMILTON, Acting City Clerk
Town of Atherton

Published in THE ALMANAC on June 9, 2008.



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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.

TOWN SQUARE FORUM

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

EMAIL

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

MAIL

or deliver to:
Editor at the Almanac,
3525 Alameda de las
Pulgas, Menlo Park,
CA 94025.

CALL the Viewpoint desk at 854-2626, ext. 222.

Reservoir plan needs second look

After some 70 people showed up to protest at a City Council meeting last week, Menlo Park city officials have wisely decided to take another look at plans to build a 3 million-gallon-plus reservoir under Seminary Oaks Park, near St. Patrick's Seminary.

In December 2005, council members gave the go-ahead to study the small park as a location for the ambitious project, which would provide a backup water supply for the city's water customers.

But more than two years has elapsed between the council's last discussion of the project in 2005 and the first notification to neighbors about the plans, a lag time that has understandably upset anyone living near the popular park, which would have to be bulldozed and then re-

landscaped if the underground reservoir were installed.

Not surprisingly, the neighbors, led last week by Seminary Oaks resident Bill Evans, have formed an aggressive group to oppose the plan, with a goal of helping the city find another site for the reservoir, which would serve as a backup source of water if supplies from Hetch Hetchy are interrupted in an earthquake or other natural disaster.

During the last two years, the city has studied and discarded alternative sites, including Willow Oaks Park, and also rejected the idea of adding capacity to the existing reservoir in Sharon Heights. But cost and proximity to existing homes convinced city officials to settle on Seminary Oaks Park, which is owned by the city; a reservoir would be 67 feet away from the nearest home and near large water distribution mains.

Ideally, backup water supplies are stored in neighborhoods, where they would be needed in times of emergency. In Mountain View, the city built a large reservoir under a middle school playing field, which was upgraded as part of the project. The school now has an artificial surface running track and many other amenities that it received in return for enduring a long construction period when the field was not available.

At Seminary Park, the neighbors' concerns include the number of mature trees that would be lost if a reservoir is installed, although a few trees on the periphery of the park could be saved. They also say a pump house built near the reservoir would be incompatible with the surrounding homes in the area. And the up to 18-month construction period would be a long time for residents to put up with the noise and dust and other impacts of such a project, which will be large enough to hold more than 3.4 million gallons.

Despite the work already done on the Seminary Park option, neighbors still have time to push the city to examine other alternatives. Flood Park, a much larger county park on Bay Road, is about a mile away and has been mentioned as an alternative reservoir. Others are sure to turn up in a more intensive examination spurred by neighbors.

The Seminary Oaks reservoir project may be a good one, but without buy-in from the neighborhood, it faces an uphill battle. In this circumstance, it is wise for the city to reopen its assessment of possible reservoir sites, and include all surrounding possibilities. That way, even if Seminary Oaks is found to be the best site, neighbors will feel they were heard and had an opportunity to honestly state their opposition. ▀



Woodside Library Collection

Our Regional Heritage

A team of oxen pulls logs to the Dudfield Mill, on the coast side of Skyline Boulevard. Although undated, this photo was probably made about 1916.

What's in the crystal ball for downtown Menlo?

The City Council seems to be stuck on its own agenda

By Reginald W. Rice

One thing I have learned over the years is that anyone who serves on the City Council has good intentions. They just have prior agendas and tend to promote what they perceive as being good for the city, regardless of what most people think.

The present council is facing this problem even though they profess the importance of "out-reach" to the public, deferring action on issues until they feel that consensus has been reached between differing opinions.

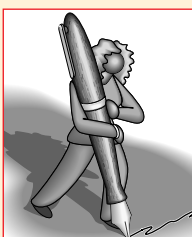
How one determines "consensus" is the hard part and requires considerable diplomacy and standardized procedures in order to make anything happen. Consensus among a group having similar agendas is quite easy, but is it fair to take city-wide action based upon agreement among a small group, even if these are the activists who attend all the public meetings on the issue?

This is the dilemma facing the council now in determining what actions should be taken to implement the various proposals made under phase one of the Menlo Park visioning plan.

For instance, a questionnaire was sent out to about 16,000 people, asking them to rank various problems in Menlo Park from 1 to 5 based upon the need



Architect's concept of downtown Menlo Park with elevated train tracks. Menlo Center is the main building shown at center.



**GUEST
OPINION**

for improvement. The problems included east/west travel across El Camino and the train tracks, the need for a bicycle tunnel, traffic

congestion on El Camino, and so on. About 2,000 people responded. The top-ranked problem was the need to improve traffic flow on El Camino. It was the only problem ranked in the No. 1 category.

And, yet, when we discussed El Camino Real at the public meeting before the Planning Commission, seven out of eight tables felt that El Camino was fine the way it was. This meant that the "consensus" among the

80 activists was that El Camino congestion was **not** a problem.

According to the consultants running the show, nothing needed to be done to improve traffic flow on El Camino, but a bicycle tunnel was definitely needed under the tracks.

I don't know how the council will sort out the El Camino conflict, nor the other controversial issues among the visioning proposals. I do think and hope that they will put aside the agendas of various activists (including my own) and do what is right for Menlo Park as a whole. Perhaps they can send out a city-wide questionnaire asking for votes on each visioning proposal that is being contemplated before deciding what action to take. ■

Reginald W. Rice is a member of the Menlo Park Transportation Commission and lives on Tioga Drive.

Ideas for city's future

By Elizabeth Lasensky

Mercedes Benz has announced that in seven years it will no longer manufacture cars that run on gasoline. Other car makers will surely follow suit.

So how will we respond now to this post-oil future? Can we be bold enough to think beyond the single-occupant, gas-guzzling SUVs? Are we brave enough to rethink our lifestyles?

We can be a community where solar panels are on every available rooftop, where convenient, green and inexpensive (maybe free?) public transit is available to all. We can encourage building higher-density housing near transit and conveniences and

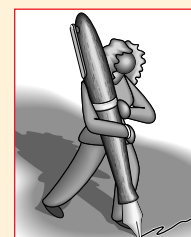
we can make ours a community of walkers and bikers, transit-takers and carpoolers. Let's consider dedicating a lane on El Camino in each direction for transit and bikes, and begin putting solar panels over parking lots and garages, connected to hookups for electric cars and motorcycles to recharge. People-powered taxis could be the future, just

as they are the present in Cuba, Asia and Europe.

Wind generators and biofueling stations anyone? Imagine life without that pervasive plastic because plastic will be a thing of the past. Our oil-less future will change the ways crops are grown and sold, leaving petroleum-based agribusiness behind as local organic farming becomes the sustainable food source of tomorrow. Lawns are out, edible and drought-tolerant gardens are in.

While we watch in horror as our planet convulses in catastrophic climate change, we can be doing something, each of us. And while we wait for our Menlo Park City Council to decide on our El Camino process, we can be making our personal choices to walk, bike, take transit, buy a hybrid or an electric car or scooter and support efforts to create the post-oil world of our future — now. ■

Elizabeth Lasensky served on a Downtown Visioning committee and lives on Fremont Street in Menlo Park.



**GUEST
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with experts to engage in a discussion about difficult community issues such as homelessness, post-traumatic stress disorder, gang violence, and the childhood obesity epidemic. Was this important dialogue occurring in Sacramento or Washington, D.C. No, the venue was the Menlo City Council.

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