

LA ENTRADA and Corte Madera named 'Blue Ribbon' schools by U.S. Department of Education. Page 9

The Almanac

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

SEPTEMBER 17, 2008 | www.TheAlmanacOnline.com

VOL. 44 NO. 3

SEE PAGE 17

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Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

FIRST SHOT



Photo by Veronica Weber/The Almanac

Remembering fallen firefighters

Ian Gould, 6, of Redwood City, pauses among the 343 flags placed on the lawn outside the fire station on Alameda de las Pulgas at Valparaiso Avenue on Sept. 11. The flags commemorate the 343 firefighters who died at the World Trade Center on Sept. 11, 2001 — each flag bearing the name of a fallen firefighter. Similar memorials, sponsored by the firefighters' union and the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, were also placed outside two other fire stations.

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On the cover

Charles "Chuck" Everson, who was recently honored by his alma mater, had an impressive career as a landscape architect, contractor, planner and developer during the building boom following World War II. Photo by Veronica Weber/The Almanac. **See Page 17.**

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Roberts Tip of the Week Judge a Wine By Its Bottle Shape

By recognizing traditional European-style wine bottle shapes, consumers can draw some conclusions about the wines inside. The high-shouldered Bordeaux bottle is generally used to distribute the major varieties of red wine from the Bordeaux region, including Cabernet Sauvignon, Merlot, Malbec, and other blends. Additionally, the Bordeaux bottle contains the primary white wines from Bordeaux, including Sauvignon Blanc and Semillon. The slope-shouldered Burgundy bottle generally contains Chardonnay and Pinot Noir, the two grape varieties that are predominantly used to make the red and white wines from the region. Lastly, the tall Hoch bottle is used in Germany and Alsace to hold grape varieties such as Gewürztraminer and Riesling. These shapes have been adopted the world over.

The varying shapes of bottles of wine represent the varying wines themselves! At ROBERTS MARKET, we can help you choose the perfect bottle of wine. More importantly we want you to discuss wine with us, we love nothing more than a great conversation about wine. Come browse our great selection of different bottle types. Don't forget that we are your source for specialty foods, including Indian, Asian, European, and other specialties.

Hint: While the concave indentation on the bottom of wine bottles (the punt) used to be necessary to ensure the stability of hand-blown bottles on the table, they are now largely regarded as an indication of quality.



DELI

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But can she skin a moose?

A review of the account books for the Menlo Park City School District's last budget prompted board member Terry Thygesen to crack, "This is a bigger budget than Sarah Palin presided over."

"Therefore, I am pleased to announce that I am running for vice president of the United States of America," Ms. Thygesen said grandly, drawing herself up in a manner that would do any politician proud. Her outburst prompted chortles from her fellow board members, who reminded her that she lacks an important qualification: the ability to dismantle a dead moose.

Grand Old Party

Someone who probably isn't cracking jokes about moose-skinning is Atherton Councilman Charles Marsala. Mr. Marsala reports that, while at the Republican National Convention, he accepted the post of chair of the San Mateo County California Business Leaders for McCain.

Earlier this year, Mr. Marsala chauffeured another presidential hopeful, Rudy Giuliani, when he visited the Bay Area.

But are they old enough to vote?

Election season's in full swing, but is there an important demographic that the major parties are overlooking? Recently spotted on a car outside Trader Joe's in Menlo Park was a bumper sticker: "Republicans for Voldemort."

Forget about the youth vote, the soccer moms, the hockey moms, or the Nascar dads. What about the Harry Potter vote?

Way to go, NFO

Atherton's neighbor to the north, the unincorporated North Fair Oaks neighborhood, had record attendance this year, according to an estimate by the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office. Over 40,000 people came to the parade and fair, held Aug. 24.

"It was just a sea of people," said Atherton police Chief Glenn Nielsen. Chief Nielsen was there to drive the department's vintage Mustang D.A.R.E. car in the parade.

Local News

MENLO PARK | ATHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Residents celebrate opening of Town Center

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

The parked vehicles spilled out on to both sides of 765 Portola Road on Sunday, Sept. 14, as the town of Portola Valley gathered for the annual Blues & Barbecue festival, overlaid this year with the grand opening of a celebrated \$20 million community complex that includes a new Town Hall, library and community hall and, still under construction, a part of Sausal Creek that will be freed from its underground culvert.

The complex is being celebrated for its greenness — it is likely to earn the highest rating from the U.S. Green Building Council — the novel method of financing — residents gave \$17 million to complement the \$3 million from the town's reserves — and the community's participation in the design, though occasionally grudging participation from some who preferred the 1950s-era school buildings.

The recycled redwood exteriors of the new buildings, for example, capture the native California character of the project, but with a difference. "We didn't cut down a single redwood tree to make this building," said an exultant Larry



Photo by Dave Boyce/The Almanac

Portola Valley's new community hall — one of three new buildings in a Town Center complex — officially opened Sunday. Hundreds of residents celebrated the grand opening of the environmentally designed complex as part of the town's annual Blues & Barbecue festival.

Strain, a Portola Valley native and the project's chief architect, to a crowd of several hundred seated and standing in the new plaza in front of the library.

Since the groundbreaking in April 2007, the project has generated about a third of the carbon dioxide that would have resulted had the construction been done

with typical 20th-century methods, Mr. Strain said.

"An abiding ethic in this town is to live in harmony with the land," Councilman Ted Driscoll said in his address, and emphasized his point by noting the relative absence of walled mansions and their prevalence in other communities populated by Silicon

Valley movers and shakers.

"I'm enormously proud of this community," he said in closing. "We did it. We did it together."

Mr. Driscoll was a key member of the team of architects, town government and staff that kept the project on time and on budget —

See PV CENTER, page 8

Why are some students falling behind?

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

The latest STAR — standardized testing and reporting — results are in, and not surprisingly, the Menlo Park City School District's students did very well overall, rating an enviable API score of 915.

However, not all of the district's demographic groups tested well in English and math, and that's provoking some soul-searching among school board members and administrators.

"What we've got to ask ourselves is, is it acceptable that 72 percent of our African American students are below proficient (in English and language arts)?" said district

See STAR, page 22

Dumbarton Rail will likely lose funding

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

Unless there's a drastic change of events, it looks as if the Dumbarton Rail project will see \$91 million of its funds diverted to plans to extend BART a step closer to San Jose.

The seemingly inevitable transfer of funds throws a wrench in the longstanding goal to connect Menlo Park and Redwood City to the East Bay via rail service along a restored Dumbarton Rail Bridge.

The Metropolitan Transportation Commission's Programs and Allocation Committee recommended on Sept. 10 to divert the Dumbarton Rail funds, collected through Regional Measure 2, to efforts to extend BART to Warm Springs. (Warm Springs is in southern Fremont, just north of the Santa Clara County border.)

The committee's decision is the latest chapter in a fight between BART and Dumbarton Rail for

limited Bay Area transit dollars.

In July, members of the Dumbarton Rail Advisory Committee, made up of public officials from communities and agencies that would be served by the rail service, denounced the proposed transfer. They argued that moving the funds — even on a temporary basis — would delay, and effectively kill, efforts to get the estimated \$600 million cross-Bay train line built.

The full Metropolitan Transportation Commission is expected to vote on the matter on Sept. 24.

'Not a disaster'

Under the current Dumbarton Rail plan, six trains a day would take commuters from the East Bay to the Peninsula via a new bridge before connecting to the Dumbarton line through East Palo Alto and Menlo Park. Trains would connect to the Caltrain tracks in Redwood City, and would return to the East Bay in the evening.

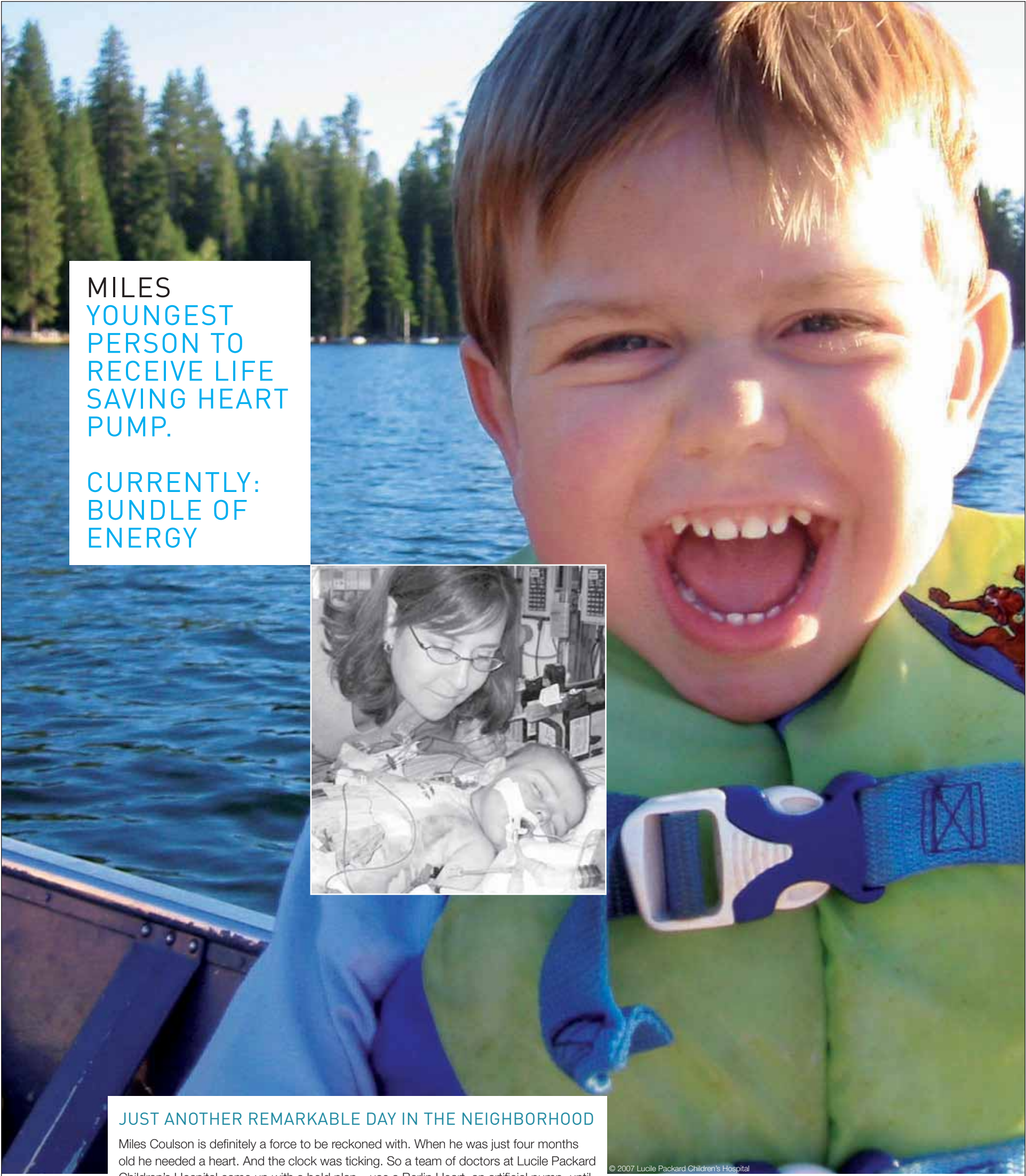
Although the project was already

\$300 million short of covering its estimated costs, it was originally slated to be built by 2012. The \$91 million transfer, expected to be finalized Sept. 24, would further delay construction, but at least one supporter of the project is still optimistic.

"This isn't a complete disaster," said Sue Lempert, the lone person on the MTC committee to vote against transferring the funds to BART. She noted that environmental analysis will still move forward on the project, and other commissioners seem to share enthusiasm for getting Dumbarton Rail funded in a somewhat timely manner.

"As soon as the Dumbarton Bridge gets jammed up [with traffic], people are going to be asking what our options are, and Dumbarton Rail is the best option out there," she said. "We'll see what happens, but I'm hopeful. I'm optimistic."

See DUMBARTON, page 8



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Lennie Roberts to be honored for 30 years of conservation

By Marion Softky
Almanac Staff Writer

When Lennie Roberts was first honored by the Committee for Green Foothills in 1986, Anna Eshoo — then president of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, now a representative in Congress — called her “one of our most precious natural resources.”

After 22 more years of consistent, persistent efforts in behalf of preserving hills and open spaces and wild creatures in the county, she is being honored once again by one of the Peninsula’s leading conservation organizations.

“Celebrating Lennie Roberts: Nature’s Inspiration” will honor Ms. Roberts’ “30 years of continued volunteer leadership” on Sunday, Sept. 28, from 4 to 6:30 p.m., at a private estate in Los Altos.

Actually, Ms. Roberts has been pushing environmental issues large and small for more than 40 years. As a young mother in Ladera, she plunged into the movement to “Save the Bay” from being filled for development. She took posters by Ladera School kids to Sacramento to help pressure the Legislature into passing a law to protect the Bay and control development along its shores.

“We involved children — which is what you always need to do,” she says in an interview in the garden of her Ladera home.

In 1968, Ms. Roberts joined the board of the Committee for Green Foothills; in 1978, she became its legislative advocate for San Mateo County. Since then, she has been the voice of the committee from the grass roots to the halls of government. She has been so effective that the San Mateo County Times once called her “the sixth member of the Board of Supervisors” — the other five are elected.

Over those 40 years, San Mateo County — and much of the Bay Area — has undergone a tectonic shift, as the environmental movement gained momentum. Development plans were blocked and new institutions formed. Elected



“We involved children — which is what you always need to do,” says Lennie Roberts of one of her successful campaigns to save the Bay.

officials began to listen and go along.

“Now it’s almost mandatory to be green,” Ms. Roberts says proudly. “County elected officials have got the message.”

Supervisor Rich Gordon, who will introduce Ms. Roberts at the celebration, says, “For multiple decades, Lennie has been the go-to person, and leader on all environmental issues in this county.”

Saving land

Many of Ms. Roberts efforts have gone into creating solutions rather than fighting to stall projects. She takes particular pride in helping to create the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District in 1972 to buy and manage land for open space. She pushed for its expansion into southern San Mateo County in 1976, and to the Coastsde south of Pacifica in 2004. The district now manages more than 55,000

acres of permanent open space in three counties.

Ms. Roberts is also proud of the 1986 passage of Measure A — with 64 percent voter approval — to protect the Coastsde from sprawling development. The measure’s 38 policies that can only be changed by a county-wide vote include a provision prohibiting on-shore oil facilities to support oil drilling off the county coast. “That’s hot again,” she notes.

But the special triumph of Ms. Roberts, Olive Mayer of Woodside and the conservation community is the success in pressuring Caltrans into building a tunnel to bypass Highway 1 along Devil’s Slide, which occasionally falls into the Pacific.

Their 35-year fight to prevent Caltrans from building a multi-lane bypass through Montara Mountain — which would open the Coastsde to development — culminated in 2005 with a groundbreaking for a two-bore, two-lane tunnel through Montara Mountain.

When the first excavations were made for the actual tunnel, Caltrans selected Ms. Roberts to don a hard hat and drive the earth mover for the first drill.

“It was quite amazing; Caltrans went from enemies to friends,” Ms. Roberts says. “If you can change Caltrans, you can change the Pentagon.” ■

INFORMATION

Tickets to “The Celebration of Lennie Roberts: Nature’s Inspiration” start at \$100 if still available. For information, call 968-7243, ext. 314; or make reservations online at greenfoothills.org.

Rich Gordon on Lennnie Roberts

San Mateo County Supervisor Rich Gordon, who will introduce Lennnie Roberts at the Committee for Green Foothills celebration Sept. 28, describes her as the “go-to” person on all environmental issues in the county.

“Lennie has been effective because she is able to identify what’s important, when to draw a line in the sand, and where to

compromise or negotiate,” he says. “She gives you good information. She always has her facts well-prepared, which makes her reliable and someone you can count on.”

Speaking as an elected official, Supervisor Gordon adds, “When you can trust information, it assists in decision-making.”

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Falling Interest Rates

Q: Is the Federal Government’s takeover of Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac going to help the real estate market?

good lenders. Lenders may require higher down payments than in the past; in some cases 25 or 30 percent, but this should not pose a problem for most buyers.

A: The takeover announced this past weekend should help the mortgage industry function more normally and already interest rates have gone down considerably. Buyers who are in the marketplace now should find rates to be more attractive than they were a week ago. No one knows how long it will be before the mortgage crisis subsidies and the real estate market stabilizes, but buyers with good credit should not have trouble getting well-priced loans from

Some parts of the country where house prices have declined substantially may not come back for years. Here on the San Francisco Mid-Peninsula, our market has been fairly stable and strong in recent months. Because of overall uncertainty however, our area is not likely to rise significantly for a while. This means that this is a very good time to buy. When the market here does begin to rise, those who bought when it was flat will benefit.

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

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Big high-speed rail questions remain unanswered

■ Local impacts of proposed passenger train line to stay unknown leading up to Nov. 4 vote.

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

When Menlo Park and Atherton voters cast their ballots this fall, they'll have the chance to stand for or against Proposition 1A — the \$9.95 billion bond measure that would provide the first wave of funding to run high-speed passenger trains between San Francisco and Los Angeles.

But although the trains are proposed to zoom through Menlo Park and Atherton, voters won't have any idea what impacts the all-electric train system would have on their two towns until after they vote.

Nearly 200 people crowded the Menlo Park City Council Chambers on Sept. 9 for a high-speed rail study session. State officials fervently defended plans to shoot the all-electric trains up the Peninsula via the Caltrain corridor as a way to simplify travel and cut greenhouse gases. Opponents of the project (the majority of the crowd) either questioned or downright blasted the estimated \$45 billion project as too expensive, and too harmful to local communities.

Missing at the study session were answers to the specific impacts high-speed rail could have on Menlo Park and Atherton — answers that officials from the California High Speed Rail Authority

say they won't have anytime soon.

Opponents of the project painted a worst-case scenario of the state bulldozing hundreds of trees and seizing land to widen the Caltrain corridor in order to build a 30-foot-tall concrete berm to run trains down the heart of the two cities.

Although it's likely that the project will require additional tracks and grade separations — separating the train tracks from the roadway — at local intersections, state officials have pledged to work with the two cities to minimize impacts.

But questions about whether the existing train tracks would be raised or lowered, how close trains would run to nearby homes and businesses, and how the construction and traffic impacts would be handled, have gone unanswered. State officials say the issues will be addressed, but studies won't start until the state approves a budget, and if and when Proposition 1A passes.

"You may not be perfectly comfortable, but you'll be reasonably comfortable," said Rod Diridon, an authority board member, of the inevitable construction of the Caltrain corridor if the bond measure wins a majority vote in November. "We're going to figure out a way to meet your needs."

Mr. Diridon's comments were

Where was public discussion on lawsuit?

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park City Council members say they joined a lawsuit against plans to run high-speed trains up the Caltrain corridor to protect the city's interests, but now council members are catching some flak for not giving the public a chance to weigh in on that decision.

The current council majority's political opponents are asking how council members who have made repeated promises of vetting decisions by the public, could hastily join a lawsuit in a closed session meeting.

The council voted 2-1 (with John Boyle opposed, Heyward Robinson absent and Andy Cohen recused) in closed session on Aug. 5 to join a lawsuit against the California High Speed Rail Authority. The lawsuit opposes the authority's selection of the Pacheco Pass and the Caltrain corridor to connect the Bay Area to the Central Valley as part of plans to run high-speed trains between Northern and Southern California.

Council members Richard Cline and Kelly Fergusson, who voted in favor of joining the suit, have stressed that the action gives the city leverage in efforts to minimize local impacts from the proposed train

system. But due to an Aug. 8 deadline to join the lawsuit, council members cast their vote a month before a Sept. 9 study session devoted to high-speed rail — this council's first public discussion on the matter.

"The public didn't have an opportunity to chime in on this," said Councilman John Boyle. "It's unfortunate we took a significant stance like this when there wasn't a public discussion first."

City Manager Glen Rojas said it would have been "preferable" to wait on the vote until after the high-speed rail study session, but that wasn't possible due to time restrictions. He said the item was discussed in closed session because it concerned potential litigation — a frequent closed-session topic.

"I'm not entirely sure it was appropriate, but we had to do it," said Councilman Cline said. "A deadline was placed upon the city to look at [the lawsuit]."

Mr. Cline said that by joining the lawsuit, the city has garnered the attention of state officials who were previously unresponsive to requests for information about the potential local impacts of high-speed rail.

"Our job is not to give things up for the greater good," Mr. Cline said. "Our job is to stand up for the community." ■

met with moans and jeers from a crowd full of residents who live near the tracks, and aren't convinced the rail authority will follow through on its promises.

"The technology is dazzling, the dream is great, but I don't believe what I'm being told," said Menlo Park resident Don Barnby.

"I think there are too many unknowns for those of us (who) are really going to be impacted," said Atherton resident Robin Smith.

'Disrespectful event'

Even with a lot of unknowns yet to be studied about the high-speed rail project, recent polling results released by the authority suggest the bond measure will pass.

Judge Quentin Kopp, chairman of the authority, called the Menlo Park study session a "shabby" and "disrespectful" event, and said Menlo Park and Atherton are the only two cities along the proposed

route to oppose the project.

As currently planned, northbound trains from Los Angeles would connect to Gilroy from the Central Valley, then shoot up the Caltrain corridor. Judge Kopp and other proponents have pointed to the short ride times (Los Angeles to San Francisco in 2.5 hours) and low cost (one-way tickets are estimated to cost \$55) as motivating factors to support the bond measure and start construction. ■

DUMBARTON

continued from page 5

The MTC committee also recommended that funding be put aside to increase bus service across the Dumbarton Bridge as a short-term solution to ease traffic congestion, as well as provide an opportunity to study cross-Bay ridership.

Susan Robinson, one of many Menlo Park residents keeping a close eye on Dumbarton Rail, has a different take on the committee's

vote. She said she's happy to see an increase in bus service, but still questions that if the rail project is built, funds will be available to mitigate potential noise and vibration impacts of trains rumbling by Menlo Park homes.

"Dumbarton Rail is getting more and more expensive, and there's less funding available," Ms. Robinson said. "With a bigger gap in funding, it'll be less and less likely that neighbors' concerns will be addressed." ■

Atherton meets on high-speed rail initiative

Wondering why Atherton officials are opposing the California High Speed Rail initiative? The City Council is hosting a special study session meeting at 6 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 24, that promises to deliver knowledgeable testimony on the pros and cons

of building a high-speed rail line connecting the Bay Area to Los Angeles via the Peninsula's Caltrain corridor.

A \$9.95 billion bond measure to fund the initial stage of the massive project is on the November ballot as Proposition 1A. The council

is hoping to provide valuable information to voters as well as hear public comments, said Vice Mayor Jerry Carlson.

The meeting will be held in the Pavilion at Holbrook-Palmer Park, 150 Watkins Ave., Atherton.

PV CENTER

continued from page 5

and it actually came in under budget, Public Works Director Howard Young said in a brief exchange with an Almanac reporter.

"It's such a good feeling," Councilman Steve Toben said in an encounter in the library.

Asked if he is anticipating the end of the day and the end of the hoopla and the return of business as usual, he replied that he would prefer festivities to go on and on. "Not every day is like this. It's a wonderful occasion."

Resident Rachel Gaeta and her husband Pete perused the library's archive containing historic documents from the town's past, including original maps, deeds and mortgages, and the will of Maximo Martinez and Damiana Padilla de Martinez, a 19th-century Mexican couple who once owned most of the land that is now Portola Valley.

Ms. Gaeta attended Portola Valley's first one-room schoolhouse, a model of which sits on a table in the archive room. "It was a great place to be a child and it is a great place to be able to come back to," she said. ■

M-A offers tours of theater site

Menlo-Atherton High School is inviting the public to tours of the \$32 million performing arts center that's under construction at the corner of Ravenswood Avenue and Middlefield Road in Atherton.

The open house is scheduled for 3 to 5 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 21. The free event includes hors d'oeuvres and music by the M-A jazz band, said school spokeswoman Mona Sowiski. The tour may include a look at software used to visualize the building in three dimensions ahead of its actual construction.

Although opening day is still a

year away, the dramatic lines of the 494-seat, 32,000-square-foot theater are already evident. The 63-foot-high "fly tower" visible from Middlefield Road will be used to raise, store and lower theatrical backdrops to the stage.

Funding for the building is coming from voter-approved construction bonds and a contribution of up to \$2.6 million from the city of Menlo Park in exchange for the right to share in the use of the theater.

School officials chose the design by Culver City-based Hodgetts

+ Fung Design and Architecture in a design competition with five other firms in the spring of 2005. Hodgetts + Fung also designed a canopy for the Hollywood Bowl and an 18,000-seat amphitheater for the Minnesota Orchestra.

Acoustics for the theater will be by Paul Scarbrough, head of Connecticut-based Akustiks LLC. He was the principal designer and project manager for a \$36 million renovation of Cleveland's Severance Hall and led the renovation of the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

To RSVP or for more information, contact Marci Coggins at cogginshouse@aol.com.

Residential building rules may clash with state law on solar

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

WOODSIDE

Rural character is part and parcel of Woodside's essence. The residential design guidelines, overseen by the town's Architecture and Site Review Board, help maintain that character by encouraging residents to use natural colors and build structures that are "subordinate in appearance to the land."

Horse paddocks and vineyards should not be screened from view, the guidelines say, but accessory structures, such as "barbecues, fountains, satellite dishes and solar collectors," should be.

That last item may be off the list at some point. Solar panels, with their metallic reflectivity and grid-like surface, aren't known for organic beauty, but the state's 2005 Solar Rights Act gives them standing nonetheless, even in communities where they clash with the rural ethic.

The law instructs local agencies, including town governments, not to subject proposed solar-panel

projects to "unreasonable barriers," including "design review for aesthetic purposes."

SolarCity, a solar-panel installer based in Foster City, is citing this law in calling for changes to Woodside's municipal code, Town Manager Susan George told the Town Council at its Sept. 9 meeting.

Town staff is investigating. If code changes are necessary, the council would have to approve them, Ms. George said.

In a helpful gesture, SolarCity has even studied the town's code and prepared language to be inserted where regulations could clash with the state law. "They're very accommodating," Ms. George said lightly.

In an interview, she added, just as lightly, that while SolarCity is not taking an overbearing attitude, "(they) see almost everything as aesthetically based."

SolarCity did not respond to requests for comment by press time.

California Health and Safety Code, Section 17959.1. (a), allows an agency to reject a solar installation if it can prove that it would have a "specific, adverse impact upon the public health or safety" with no way of mitigating that impact.

The Solar Rights law came up during a discussion between the town and SolarCity about a ground-mounted solar array proposed for a steep Woodside slope with "questionable soil conditions," Ms. George said. The system would be mounted on piers extending well into the ground.

After what she called "a good discussion," the town and SolarCity agreed to an installation pending a soil study paid for by SolarCity, she said.

SolarCity came to local prominence in 2006 after arranging a group discount in exchange for installing solar panels on 78 homes in Portola Valley. Using a similar incentive, SolarCity installed panels at 42 homes in Menlo Park and Atherton and 20 in Woodside in 2007, according to the company's Web site. ■

Two schools named 'Blue Ribbon' winners

By Marjorie Mader
Almanac Staff Writer

Portola Valley's Corte Madera School and La Entrada School in the neighboring Las Lomas School District gained national recognition Sept. 9 when the two middle schools were named "Blue Ribbon Schools" by the U.S. Department of Education under the "No Child Left Behind" law.

They are the only schools in San Mateo County and among 27 state-wide to receive this recognition this year by the federal department, which calls them "national models of excellence." The recognition is given for academic achievement or for showing dramatic gains in achievement.

Both schools have students in grades 4-8. La Entrada, with 619 students, is in Menlo Park. Corte Madera, with 389 students, is in Portola Valley.

"This is a huge honor for La Entrada that goes way beyond test scores," said Eric Hartwig, superintendent of the Lomas School District. "Yes, La Entrada's very high STAR scores and API ranking earned the school an invitation to apply, but the selection was also based on a wealth of other accomplishments so ably detailed in the application."

"We're thrilled," said Anne Campbell, superintendent of the Portola Valley School District.

Besides having a "good solid academic program," she said, Corte Madera has classes in art, music, Spanish and physical education; a strong science program; and ample access to technology.

Both schools were invited to submit applications for the award after being named California Distinguished Schools by the California Department of Education.

La Entrada

"Success of our school results from our extraordinary teachers and staff who set the bar high for their students and themselves," wrote Pattie Dullea, La Entrada assistant principal, and Su Logie, sixth-grade core teacher, in the application they prepared for the "Blue Ribbon" award.

La Entrada has benefited, they said, from a continued emphasis on writing and standards-aligned science at all grade levels; a strong and comprehensive academic program; lab science classes and math classes designed to meet the differing needs of students; and classes in three foreign languages. Safety nets also are in place to support struggling students and close the achievement gap.

"All of these academic efforts are intertwined and connected to education about character, empathy, service, health, integrity and independence," said Ms. Dullea.

A sampling of programs that address La Entrada students' social/emotional needs are: involvement with the "S.O.S." the Stressed Out Students program, through Denise Clark Pope from Stanford University and parent Jim Lobdell; school-wide activities, sponsored by the student council, that promote service to the local and global community; and the Kent award-winning "Renaissance Kids" program, which sponsors character education, service and student-recognition programs.

Corte Madera

Joel Willen, former Corte Madera principal who retired last June, was the first to e-mail the news about the school's award to Superintendent Campbell and Corte Madera's new principal Carol Piraino. Mr. Willen, along with Marcy Barton, fourth-grade teacher, completed the lengthy "Blue Ribbon" application during his fourth and final year at the school.

The credit for the award goes to Mr. Willen for his leadership and to teachers, students, staff and the supportive community, said Superintendent Campbell.

Mr. Willen launched extra math-support classes for students having difficulties with math. He also supported addi-

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NEWS

Park named for former city manager

By Rory Brown

Almanac Staff Writer

Bayfront Park is now "Bedwell Bayfront Park." The Menlo Park City Council voted 5-0 on Sept. 9 to rename the 160-acre park in honor of Michael Bedwell, the city manager from 1964 to 1991. Mr. Bedwell, 77, died March 9 after a fight with heart and lung problems.

Mr. Bedwell was the driving force behind the creation of the park, which is built atop a capped landfill near the intersection of Marsh Road and Bayfront Expressway. Council members also directed city staff to look into building a story-board at the park to outline the transformation of the area from

a landfill into a popular spot for walking, kite flying and bird watching.

"It would thrill Mike to know that he's held in high regard by so many people in the community," said Carleen Bedwell, Mr. Bedwell's wife, referring to the letters in support of renaming the park sent to council members. Mayor Andy Cohen initially proposed naming the park after Mr. Bedwell, and the Parks and Recreation Commission endorsed the idea on a 6-0 vote in June.

In approving the name change, council members opted to over-



Mike Bedwell

ride a council policy that says a person must be dead for at least five years before a park or facility can be named in his or her honor. Council policies serve as guidelines, but are not legally binding, meaning the council can ignore them with a majority vote.

"[Mr. Bedwell] has been retired from the city for 17-18 years," said Councilman Heyward Robinson. "It doesn't make any sense to wait another five."

Councilman John Boyle was hesitant to break from the policy, and suggested the city should simply dedicate the park to Mr. Bedwell rather than rename it. He made a motion to that effect, but that suggestion received no support, and he went along with renaming the park. ■

Three burglaries in Willows area

Three burglaries were reported over the weekend in Menlo Park's Willows neighborhood, an area bordered by Willow Road, Woodland Avenue and U.S. 101 that has been the site of many burglaries in recent months.

On Friday, Sept. 12, someone

broke into a house in the 600 block of Woodland Avenue, according to the incident log prepared by the Menlo Park Police Department.

Two more burglaries occurred Sunday, Sept. 14, including one in the 900 block

of O'Brien Drive in which someone forced open a back door and stole ice cream valued at \$40, the report said.

Also on Sunday, police reportedly arrested three juveniles on charges related to a burglary at East Palo Alto Academy High School, a charter school located at 475 Pope St. in Menlo Park.

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Lucia Soto: From student to spokesperson for Project Read

By Rory Brown
Almanac Staff Writer

Three years ago, Lucia Soto lost her job, and decided on a whim to try to improve her English skills through Project Read-Menlo Park, the city-sponsored adult literacy program run through the city's libraries.

Three years later, Ms. Soto isn't just a Project Read success story — she's become a spokesperson for the program and the city's libraries.

Ms. Soto, a 19-year resident of the city's Belle Haven neighborhood, was unanimously appointed to the Menlo Park Library Commission by the City Council on Aug. 26.

She's the only member of the commission from the city's Belle Haven neighborhood, and she's the first Project Read student to be named to the seven-person commission.

"I want to help my community — especially the Belle Haven community," said Ms. Soto, explaining why she applied for the commission in the first place.

"I really want to push people in Belle Haven to pay more attention to their libraries and schools, and the programs [they offer]. I want them to get involved."

Getting involved is what Ms. Soto has done for the past three years, working with Project Read tutors to better her own reading, writing, speaking and computer skills, and putting her improved English to use by helping the popular — but thinly funded — literacy program fundraise and plan events.

"She's taken what she's learned, and applied it on behalf of the libraries and Project Read," said Roberta Roth, the city's literary outreach specialist.

Ms. Roth noted that Ms. Soto has served as master of ceremonies for Project Read events, and spoken about the program to the Friends of the Library, the library's main source of fundraising.

Ms. Soto was also one of the first Project Read students to graduate from the Adult Learner Leadership Institute, a monthly program offered through the Santa Clara City Library that aims to help English learners



Photo by Veronica Weber/The Almanac

As a **library commissioner**, Lucia Soto hopes to make the city's libraries more accessible to Spanish speakers.

improve their speaking skills.

"It's been a lot of community work, and I've worked with a lot of people," Ms. Soto said. "I've learned a lot."

On the commission

As a member of the Library Commission, Ms. Soto said

she wants the city to make the libraries more accessible to native Spanish-speakers.

"Some people don't read English very well," Ms. Soto said. "We need more resources that are in Spanish."

Kristi Breisch, a member of the Project Read advisory board,

said Ms. Soto will provide a fresh perspective to the commission.

"She has this passion and this drive to really be part of the community," Ms. Breisch said of Ms. Soto. "She knows the Belle Haven community and the Belle Haven Library. She's going to be great." ■



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Bohannon project: what benefits for city?

Menlo Park developer David Bohannon wants a general plan amendment and a zoning change to build a 1-million-square-foot hotel and office project off Independence and Constitution drives in eastern Menlo Park.

Now, two City Council members will try to figure out how to go about making sure the city would get proper benefits in return for approving a project of that magnitude.

Council members voted unanimously on Sept. 9 to appoint Mayor Andy Cohen and Councilwoman Kelly Fergusson — both of whom are up for re-election Nov. 4 — to a subcommittee to tackle the Bohannon project. The project includes plans for a 245-room hotel and several eight-story office buildings. Some Menlo Park residents opposed the project, arguing it's

■ MENLO PARK

too big and too dense.

The subcommittee is expected to discuss what types of benefits the city would receive in exchange for approving the project, and bring back suggestions to the rest of the council early next year.

A draft environmental impact report for Mr. Bohannon's project should be released later this

year, according to city staff.

Free compost

Free compost for Menlo Park residents will be available just inside the entrance to Bayfront Park, at the intersection of Bayfront Expressway and Marsh Road, on Friday, Sept. 26, from noon to sunset. Residents need to bring their own shovels and containers.

BLUE

continued from page 9

tional training for fourth- and fifth-grade teachers to help students struggling with reading and to mentor other teachers of the language arts.

Another plus for Corte Madera, said Superintendent Campbell, is the opportunity for

students to take part in a broad range of electives.

The school's emphasis on service learning projects has added another dimension beyond Portola Valley for students, including sending funds and clothing to support Budd Mackenzie's Trust in Education projects to start schools and help families in war-torn Afghanistan. ■

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Tues, Sept 30: 9:30 am

Junior Congregation: 9:45 am
Young Children's Service: 10 am
Tashlich walk: 4 pm, Byxbee Park, Palo Alto Baylands

Wed, Oct 1: 9:30 am
(at Kehillah JHS, not Cubberley)

Yom Kippur

Wed, Oct 8: Kol Nidrey: 7 pm
Collection of nonperishable food for Ecumenical Hunger Project

Thurs, Oct 9: 9:30 am
Junior Congregation: 9:45 am
Young Children's Service: 10 am
Afternoon workshops and
Jonah play
Mincha, Yizkor, Ne'ilah: 5 pm



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Neighbors await action on pellet-gun killing of cat

■ Mayor hopes to bring incident before the Town Council.

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

In the aftermath of the recent pellet-gun killing of a cat in Portola Valley, and neighbors' outcry that something needs to be done, the response by county agencies seem to be off to a slow start.

Maryann Raab, the owner of Singh-Singh, the Bengal cat that died Aug. 30 from complications of being shot by a pellet, said that, as of Sept. 12, she has yet to hear back from the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office. The incident was given a case number, she said.

An officer with the Peninsula Humane Society told her he is willing to knock on doors and ask questions about the shooting when he has the time, Ms. Raab said in a phone interview.

Mayor Maryann Derwin said the incident will be a topic at her weekly meeting with Town Administrator Angela Howard and vice mayor Ann Wengert. "It's absolutely something that we need to talk about," Ms. Derwin said, adding that she hopes to address the matter at an upcoming Town Council meeting.

The shooting came up at a meeting of the Westridge neighborhood garden club, which Ms. Raab said she attended. "The consensus there was that there is no place (in Portola Valley) for pellet guns," she said.

Having received Singh-Singh's ashes, and with her voice breaking, Ms. Raab grieved for her cat. "I just don't understand why someone would do that," she said. "I just don't. I just can't grasp it. Especially with this

■ PORTOLA VALLEY

little guy. He was just a little love machine."

Municipal codes in Woodside, Menlo Park and Atherton prohibit the firing of weapons, including pellet, BB and air guns, though there are exceptions that include self-defense and practice at firing ranges.

The Portola Valley ordinance does not refer to specific types of weapons, Ms. Howard said.

Pellet not traceable

Contrary to a Sheriff's Office comment in last week's Almanac story, investigators cannot match pellets to the guns that fired them based on rifling

marks left by passage through a gun barrel.

Rifling spins a projectile on its way out of the barrel, thus improving its accuracy, Sgt. Jim Tanner of the Sheriff's Office said. Pellet gun barrels are smooth-bored, not rifled, he said.

"I don't know if there's anyone who could prove that a pellet came out of gun that is smooth bore," he said. Mr. Tanner coordinates fire-arms training for Sheriff's Office deputies.

Lacking evidence that would tie the pellet that killed the cat to a specific gun, would the Sheriff's Office investigate based on residents' suspicions?

"By all means, they should contact the detective in charge of the case and give him (or her) that information and the detective can follow up," Mr. Tanner said.

Anyone with information on this case can call Detective Ben Hand at 363-4192. The case number is 08-4815. ■

Forum on Sudden Oak Death this week

A public forum on the continuing presence of Sudden Oak Death in Woodside and Portola Valley is set for Thursday, Sept. 18, from 7 to 9 p.m. in Independence Hall at 2955 Woodside Road in Woodside.

The event will include a presentation on results of an SOD field-sampling-and-analysis campaign in these communities last May, said Fire Marshal Denise Enea of the Woodside Fire Protection District.

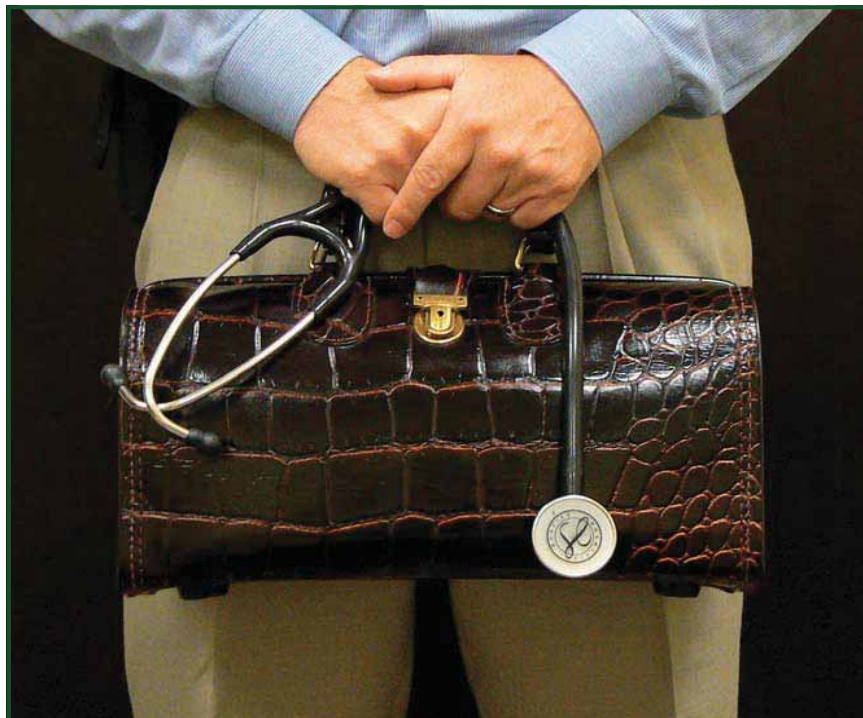
Expected to speak are Matteo Garbelotto, an environmental science professor from the University of California, Berkeley; Katie Palmieri from the Oak Mortality Task Force; and fire

behavioralist and arboriculturist Ray Moritz, who will talk about fire and SOD.

A representative of Agri-Fos, a chemical treatment that "helps to ward off" SOD, will be on hand to take orders. A group order can result in a substantial discount, Ms. Enea said.

At the forum will be a "limited number" of videos on how to treat a tree, she said. "The individuals who are spraying their trees, the same trees on a continuing basis, aren't losing their trees," she said.

For more information, go to www.suddenoakdeath.org. For questions about this forum, call 851-6790.



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Stanford Hospital Health Notes

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Seeing Disease Sooner – and Stopping It Quickly, Cell by Cell

Before Michelle Philips found radiologist Dr. Daniel Sze at Stanford Hospital & Clinics, her options were few.

In 2002, the Sunnyvale mother of two had been diagnosed with a very rare malignant brain tumor. Two surgeries and radiation treatments removed it, but in 2007 new tumors emerged in her liver and lungs. And they kept coming – 30 new ones were found in her liver just months after a surgery that spring.

“We were told over and over that there was nothing that anyone could recommend that had any chance of getting rid of the tumors in my liver, including the experimental therapies we asked about,” Philips said.

A defined attack on cancer

But Sze offered Philips a chance at a cutting-edge procedure available at fewer than 100 U.S. hospitals. It is a non-surgical, highly-localized two-step intervention that directs millions of microscopic, radiation-loaded spheres into the arteries of the liver that feed the tumors. The result is two-fold: the spheres block the blood supply that feeds the tumors and the cancerous cells are fatally bathed in radiation.

Not only does this approach replace long hours of surgery and weeks of recovery, it can also help patients where surgery cannot. The procedure also eliminates the destruction of healthy tissues



Michelle Philips' healthy and active lifestyle made her a good candidate for a special procedure at Stanford Hospital.

in clinical medicine. What they all seek to do is overcome the boundary of skin, muscle and bone that, for centuries, made the interior of the human body a mystery. Understanding disease through dissection after death did little to advance knowledge. The modern age of imaging did not begin until 1895, with the discovery of x-rays' ability to “see” inside the body.

Philips is an example of the leading edge of imaging knowledge. Sze carefully examined the 46-year-old before accepting her for the outpatient procedure.

– an unfortunate side-effect of external treatments.

This more sophisticated and defined attack on cancer has only recently been available, made possible by rapidly developing technology that has enhanced the ability of CT and MRI scanners to create sharper and more detailed views of ever smaller parts of the body. The FDA approved the procedure Sze used to help Philips just six years ago, but for metastatic colon cancer. Using it for other types of tumors has become widely accepted, Sze said. “It is still a new enough technology that we are still learning about how to optimize its use.”

Focused on the future

At Stanford, however, physicians and patients are in an environment focused on the future of imaging. Dr. Gary Glazer, chair of the Radiology department at Stanford University, oversees some 200 scientists and research staff who want to see their ideas expressed

To her advantage was her active and healthy lifestyle and, Sze said, she “had so much to live for.” She would have to be careful about the radiation that would be active inside her body, he told her. For a week, she would need to stay an arm's length away from children and pregnant women. For three nights, her husband would need to sleep in a separate bed to keep him a safe distance from the radiation.

“We now have very good treatment options that allow us to manage cancer as a chronic disease.”

– Dr. Daniel Sze, Interventional Radiologist, Stanford Hospital

“The tumors Michelle had were very thirsty for blood,” Sze said. “When we administered the radio-active microspheres, whatever was the thirstiest got the most radia-

Did you know?

- Stanford radiologists are developing computer models to improve understanding of cancer activity.
- The Stanford Breast Imaging program has been instrumental in making new MRI techniques available to at-risk patients far in advance of commercial availability.
- Stanford interventional radiologists were the first in the Bay Area to perform radioembolization of liver malignancies.

- Stanford Hospital radiologists specializing in sports injuries interpret imaging studies for athletes from the San Francisco 49ers and Stanford University.
- Stanford's Radiology Department has one of the largest 3D medical imaging laboratories in the U.S. and averages 900 exams per month. The lab converts CT and MRI scan information to a 3D format to improve diagnosis and treatment planning.
- The functional MRI group is developing strategies to help people mitigate pain,

- depression, addiction and impulse control. These MRI techniques provide real-time feedback of the brain during an exam.
- The cardiovascular imaging group pioneered non-invasive imaging of heart and blood vessels in the body. Studies that once required catheterization can now be conducted non-invasively.
- The Department of Radiology is home to three National Institutes of Health Centers of Excellence in MRI Technology, Molecular Imaging and Nanotechnology in Cancer.

To schedule an appointment at any of the imaging locations, contact the Stanford Radiology Call Center at **(650) 723-6855**. For more information, visit www.Imaging.StanfordHospital.com.

tion – the tumors hogged it, they gobbled it up.”

A remarkable image

Three months later, Philips' liver was scrutinized with another MRI. The image was remarkable: the MRI showed that the 30-something tumors in her liver were either dead, meaning they appeared black on the scan, or simply no longer there. “We were all shouting and literally jumping up and down for joy,” Sze says about that day. “I looked like a complete lunatic in my office.”

A year ago, Philips set up a Yahoo Group for people diagnosed with the kind of tumor she had and

she's in touch with about 70 people worldwide who want to share the rapidly evolving treatment options. In August, Philips had another MRI that verified the tumors in her liver were still dead.

“We will be able to see things better. Our confidence in diagnosing disease earlier will continue to increase.”

– Dr. Gary Glazer, Stanford Radiology Department Chair

“Even when the cancer has spread and is unlikely to be cured,” Sze said, “we now have very good

treatment options that allow us to manage cancer as a chronic disease.”

Glazer believes that the future of medical imaging is so bright because the rate of improved performance in CT and MRI machines mirrors the speed of Moore's law of progress in computer capacity, which postulates it will double every two years.

“They are going to get more and more powerful,” he said. “We will use them for routine assessment of disease and we will be able to see things better. Our confidence in diagnosing disease earlier will continue to increase.”

Windows of opportunity

Most of the diseases radiologists look at now, from arteriosclerosis to cancer, “have been developing over many years,” Glazer adds. “So there are windows of opportunity that we have to be smart about.” Stanford, he said, is setting the pace for the future of radiology with molecular imaging programs that study cellular and molecular functions in living systems. “We hope over the next five years to de-

velop a number of novel molecular probes to go into the human body and detect and characterize lesions at much earlier points than today without resorting to biopsies.”

The Stanford Radiology department includes four imaging centers at Stanford Hospital & Clinics, Blake Wilbur Outpatient Clinic, Stanford Advanced Medicine Center and the newly opened Stanford Medicine Imaging Center in Palo Alto on Sherman Avenue. A fifth imaging center at the Stanford Medicine Outpatient Center in Redwood City is scheduled to open in early 2009.

“People coming to these centers should expect that they will get the most advanced imaging possible anywhere in the world, with studies performed and interpreted by expert radiologists on the Stanford faculty,” Glazer says.



Michelle Philips is once more enjoying her garden.



Michelle Philips and her husband Mark relax at home.



Radiologist Dr. Daniel Sze in the operating room where procedures similar to Philips' are performed.

Stanford Hospital & Clinics is known worldwide for advanced treatment of complex disorders in areas such as cardiac care, cancer treatment, neurosciences, surgery, and organ transplants. Consistently ranked among “America's Best Hospitals” by U.S. News and World Report, Stanford Hospital & Clinics is internationally recognized for translating medical breakthroughs into the care of patients. The Hospital is part of the Stanford University Medical Center, along with the Stanford University School of Medicine and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford.

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FROM LINFIELD OAKS TO SAUDI ARABIA



Above: Charles and Betty Everson, left, visit a camel market with friends near Jubail Industrial City in Saudi Arabia in the early 1980s.

Photo by Veronica Weber/The Almanac
Left: Charles "Chuck" Everson at the Menlo Common complex in Menlo Park. Recently he was awarded the 2008 Distinguished Alumni Award from the Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning Department at his alma mater, Utah State University.

Right: Business partner David Barwick



Charles Everson designed landscapes, homes, and a new city in the desert

By Marion Softky

Almanac Staff Writer

Charles "Chuck" Everson holds California Landscape Architect's License #158, dated June 1, 1954.

California didn't even register landscape architects when Mr. Everson started work in 1951 with a fresh degree from Utah State University.

Linfield Oaks, one of Menlo Park's early subdivisions surrounding Sunset magazine, provided the first job out of college for Mr. Everson and David Barwick, his close friend and colleague for 61 years.

That first job was also a shock. "We went to work with a pick and shovel, landscaping and digging foundations for houses," says Mr. Everson. They thought of re-enlisting in the Army Air Corps.

Pretty soon, the two of them expanded to architecture and were designing houses in Linfield Oaks as well as landscaping them. "They went up awfully fast and sold awfully fast," Mr. Everson recalls. The most expensive went for \$26,000. "That's a lot of money when you're working for \$300 to \$400 per month."

Mr. Everson and Mr. Barwick both went on to impressive careers as landscape architects, contractors, planners and

developers during the building boom following World War II.

Mr. Barwick left Menlo Park for Southern California in the early 1960s. There he was landscape architect for Rossmore Leisure Village. He left that to join Bechtel and become landscape architect for Calabasa Park, a development project for 3,000 acres once owned by film magnate Jack Warner. It had provided the location for many famous films, including "The Good Earth," "Burma Road," "National Velvet," and several Robin Hood movies that needed a Sherwood Forest.

For Mr. Everson, the high point of his career was three years in Saudi Arabia, where he helped design, plan and build a new city in the desert.

From 1982 to 1985, Mr. Everson worked for Bechtel Corp., building "Jubail Industrial City" on 200,000 acres beside the Arabian (Persian) Gulf. He was project manager in charge of medical facilities, landscaping, recreation and parks. He supervised the planting of more than a million trees and shrubs, and literally made the desert bloom.

"That was the high point of my career. It's not often you get to build a new city," he says.

In April, Mr. Everson and Mr. Barwick were reunited at their alma mater in Utah to receive the 2008 Distinguished Alumni Award from the Landscape Architecture and Environmental Planning Department.

Riding the boom

Chuck Everson was born to a pioneering family that moved to Idaho two years after

the Civil War. "My grandmother remembered seeing Lincoln," he says.

Mr. Everson entered the Army Air Corps in 1943, and spent the next two and a half years in a bomber crew, loading and unloading the planes before and after missions. He remained in the Air Force Reserve after the war, and retired in 1985 as a major and civil engineering officer.

Chuck Everson met Dave Barwick when they entered the landscape design program at Utah State University in 1947 under the GI Bill. They were roommates and classmates there, and have stayed close ever since.

After graduating in 1951, they headed off to California together. "He had a 1939 Buick, and I had \$100. And that was about it," Mr. Everson says with a chuckle.

Within three days of reaching the Bay Area, the two budding landscape architects had jobs with Claude Lindsay, developer of Linfield Oaks — jobs using a pick and shovel.

"Wow! What a letdown," Mr. Barwick said in his recent speech at Utah State. "However, it was the best thing that ever happened to us. ... We learned more about plant materials than we ever would behind a drafting table."

From Linfield Oaks, their careers took off, along with the boom in development and housing that was sweeping the Bay Area and the country.

Working for a variety of companies, Mr. Everson selected sites for development, and planned for housing, industry — "the whole works."

Among many projects, he remembers: serving as director of planning for early

'That was the high point of my career. It's not often you get to build a new city.'

Charles 'Chuck' Everson

senior retirement communities in the Southwest; master planning 32,000 acres of eastern New Orleans; representing the owner in building a high-rise office building in Kansas City ("not the one that fell down"); and being project manager for the first condos in San Francisco, built along Embarcadero around Pier 39. "They started selling at \$50,000; now they're around \$2.5 million," he says with a chuckle.

One frustration: T. Jack Foster got to convert Brewer's Island into Foster City.

When the marshy island was still a hayfield, Mr. Everson remembers riding horseback around it, and seeing the possibilities for developing a new city. At the time, he worked for Utah Construction Co., which had two big dredges that had excavated for the Oakland Airport and Bay Farm Island across the Bay.

Utah wasn't interested, he says, so T. Jack Foster got to build San Mateo County's first major city into the Bay.

Meanwhile, Mr. Everson married a local girl, Betty Wolfe, and began raising a family. They have two children and five grandchildren, and now live at Menlo Commons.

See **EVERSON**, page 18

Ivan is off to work.

But he'll be back after his summer job at a global management consulting firm to mentor kids like young Chase at the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula. Ivan Martinez, 18, returns because the Club helped *him* beat the Opportunity Gap that defeats so many kids in his neighborhood. Caring staff and volunteers coached Ivan in academics and in life skills, and now he's a sophomore at San Jose State University. Most of all, Ivan says, the Club inspired him to expect more of himself. That's why we know Ivan will earn his college degree and that one day he'll be off to work at his dream career in music production.



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Sarah Palin is coming to Woodside

Republican vice-presidential candidate Gov. Sarah Palin of Alaska is scheduled to visit the Portola Road estate of Woodside residents Tom and Stacey Siebel for a fundraising reception and lunch starting at noon Thursday, Sept. 25.

The basic ticket price is \$1,000 per person. A "McCain 2008" lapel pin will be yours for a contribution of \$2,500, according to a summary of the event from the

California GOP Web site.

One photo opportunity, a two-person reception with the candidate and four tickets to lunch are available for "hosts" who donate or raise at least \$10,000, the summary said.

Donations and reservations must be received by Monday, Sept. 22. For additional information, contact Caitlin Ashlock at 310-309-2101 or ashlock@mccain08hq.com.

EVERSON

continued from page 17

On June 13, 1990, The Almanac's cover featured a photo of three generations of graduates from Los Lomitas School: Betty Everson, with her daughter and granddaughter.

Making the desert bloom

Building Jubail in the Arabian desert was probably the best — and easiest — project Mr. Everson ever undertook. "There was a lot of money behind it. We could do anything," he says.

The city includes a port, an oil refinery, a steel mill, numerous other factories, and one of the world's largest desalination plants, which also generates electric power.

It has been listed in the Guinness Book of World Records as the largest public engineering and construction project in the world.

In this mammoth enterprise, Mr. Everson was project manager for health services, which involved building a hospital and clinics, as well as recreation facilities, including football and soccer fields, and parks.

The work included his first love, landscaping. He was in charge of turning sand dunes into green landscapes with fields, trees and orchards fed by desalinated water. "It's delicious water," he says.

The scale of the work at Jubail was staggering. "We moved enough sand for a strip one yard high and nine yards wide completely around the world," he says. There could be more than 30,000 people working on the site at one time.

Mr. Everson had abundant resources to work with, thanks to the oil wealth creating the new city. There would be "3,500 guys doing the landscaping in one area," he says.

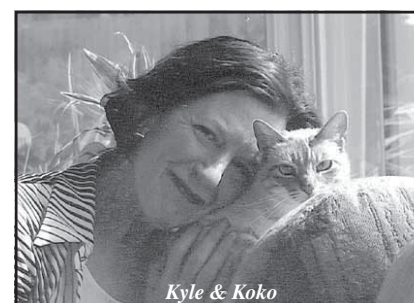
"We would fill a Boeing 747 with palm trees. We'd plant them, and they'd grow like mad," he adds. "Palm trees lower the temperature. The figs are delicious. The dates are huge."

As for working or traveling in Saudi Arabia, he advises, "Just mind your own business and obey the laws of the land, and you're OK."

"We had a very good time in Arabia," Mr. Everson says. "The Saudis are very friendly people. I still have friends there." ■

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Sacred Heart fashion show this Saturday

"Wish Upon a Star" is the theme for Sacred Heart Preparatory's 20th annual senior fashion show on Saturday, Sept. 20, at the school's aquatic center. The entire senior class of 130, along with their parents, will model fashions from 18 local stores, including Bloomingdale's at Stanford Shopping Center. The seniors will also perform in student-choreographed dance numbers. Festivities begin at 5 p.m.

The dinner, prepared by Continental Catering, will feature filet mignon with potatoes au gratin and asparagus. The surprise dessert will be provided by Sibby's of San Mateo. Sacred Heart Prep students will act as servers for the event.

Inspired by its "Wish Upon a Star" theme, the center will be decorated in shades of blue, twinkle lights, "stardust," and ivy topiaries. Guests will receive a program book with photos of all the seniors.

Chairpersons for the show are Stephanie Harman, Jayne Mordell, and Kim and Katherine Aitken-Young. Kim Selby will choreograph the runway show, which 800 guests are

expected to attend.

The first fashion show was held 20 years ago by Rich Dioli when he was principal of Sacred Heart Prep. He is now director of Sacred Heart Schools, which includes St. Joseph's School of the Sacred Heart for grades preschool through 8.

Proceeds from the fashion show will be used to support many senior activities for the year and help fund the Senior Legacy Scholarship, says Mr. Dioli.

Sacred Heart Schools are

located at 150 Valparaiso Ave. in Atherton.

Higher Notes Music

Bethany Lutheran Church in Menlo Park is now offering an after-school music program in partnership with the West Bay Academy of Music.

The program offers vocal and instrumental training, chimes, bells and a kids' rock ensemble. Linda Ponce, a Conservatory of Music graduate from the

University of the Pacific, will instruct, assisted by other teachers from West Bay Academy.

All classes are on Tuesday afternoons and begin this month. Kindergarten through second-grade students will be offered chimes and choir instruction.

Third- through eighth-grade students will be offered bell ringing, choir, vocal and instrumental training, and Camp Rock, where they learn to play and sing in a pop-rock group. The music will be modern pop Christian. To join Camp Rock, students need to be enrolled in

vocal and instrumental classes.

Bethany Lutheran Church is located at 1095 Cloud Ave. in Menlo Park. For more information, contact Laurie at: higher notes@bethany-mp.org.

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Jazz benefit for Horse Park

Olympic silver medal equestrian Gina Miles will be a guest at "An Evening of Jazz" on Friday, Sept. 19, at the Miller Design offices in Woodside. The event, which starts at 7 p.m., will benefit The Horse Park at Woodside, where Ms. Miles teaches.

"We wanted to do something for the community. The Horse Park at Woodside is a perfect fit," says Robert Miller of Miller Design. "They are an important part of Woodside's heritage and in need of financial support."

Highlights of the evening will be live music by "Octobop," an eight-piece jazz group, and an equestrian display by Emily Joubert. Supper-by-the-bite will be provided by Grace Street Catering, with wine pairings from Martin Ranch Winery, and dessert by Woodside Bakery & Cafe.

Ms. Miles has been riding and competing for many years at the Horse Park at Woodside and works with the park's Pony Club children. Ms. Miles was the only American equestrian to receive a medal in three-day eventing at last month's Olympics.

Miller Design Co. is located at 2934 Woodside Road in Woodside. Tickets to "An Evening of Jazz" are \$100 per person and must be purchased in advance. To order, call 529-2700.

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Achieving success in two worlds

Science and sculpture play major roles
in Martin Katz's life

By Jane Knoerle
Almanac Lifestyles Editor

Martin Katz of Menlo Park brings as much enthusiasm and drive to his avocation as a sculptor as he did to his career as senior vice president in charge of pharmaceutical research at Syntex.

About 20 years ago, thinking about what he would like to do in retirement, he happened on a newspaper notice about a week-long sculpture class in Santa Cruz. "How that 3-inch story caught my eye, I'll never know," he says.

That was the beginning. After many workshops and classes with leading sculptors, the culmination is a distinguished career as an artist.

His work is currently featured at Interior Niche gallery in San Francisco. His bronze interpretation of the Torah scroll, considered the core representation of Judaism, is one of 12 of his

works being shown at the gallery, where a reception will be held at 2 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 21.

The Torah, however, has another destination. It will have a place of honor in the new meditation garden at Congregation Beth Am in Los Altos Hills. It is Mr. Katz's gift to the temple, where he and his wife, Lee, have been members for 40 years. He hopes the garden will be completed by Yom Kipper, which begins at sundown, Oct. 8.

Interior Niche gallery at 3535 Sacramento St. in San Francisco is owned by former Atherton resident, Cheryl Lea Hogan. Acrylic paintings by Joe Santandrea are also being featured at the gallery.

Background in business

Martin Katz was born in New York City, growing up near Coney Island, where his family operated penny arcades. He

Continued on next page

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Clos de la Tech hearing postponed

The public hearing scheduled for T.J. Rodgers' proposed Clos de la Tech winery near La Honda has been removed from the Sept. 24 agenda of the San Mateo County Planning Commission. It is tentatively rescheduled for the commission's Oct. 22 meeting.

The extra time is needed to allow the county planning staff to analyze the comments on the draft environmental impact report that were submitted by the Sept. 5 deadline, according to planner Michael Schaller. The delay will allow the staff to prepare a report to circulate it to the public with enough time for people to review it before the hearing.

Mr. Rodgers has planted a vineyard for pinot noir grapes on 166 acres off Langley Hill Road, west of Skyline. He has excavated three caves 300 feet

into Langley Hill to house the winery.

The draft EIR analyzes the impacts of Mr. Rodgers' application to build a winery in the caves to produce 13,000 cases of wine a year. The draft includes an application to create a new zoning category for scenic wineries above 1,500 feet in elevation that would be allowed to produce 13,000 cases per year, much higher than the county's current limit of 2,500 cases.

There have been two well-attended public hearings on the draft EIR, which have drawn extensive and detailed comments.

The Planning Commission may make a decision on whether to accept the EIR at its October meeting. Any zoning change would be decided by the Board of Supervisors after further hearings. ■

Canada College entrance to close temporarily

The entrance to Canada College from Canada Road in Woodside will close for two weeks starting Monday, Sept. 15, for road construction.

For more information, call

Jose Nunez, the vice chancellor for facilities planning, maintenance and operations, at 358-6836 or write to him at nunezj@smccd.edu.

Continued from previous page

graduated from high school at 14 and raced through college, starting with a degree in pharmacy from St. John's College in Brooklyn, accumulating two master's degrees, and concluding with a doctorate in pharmaceutical sciences from the University of Sciences in Philadelphia.

He and his wife, Lee, moved to California with Syntex in 1964, when its headquarters were relocated to Palo Alto. During his quarter of a century at Syntex, Mr. Katz became, as he says, "the uncle of the birth control pill, the uncle of Naproxen (Aleve), and the grandfather of topical corticosteroids."

He left Syntex in 1985 to become senior vice president of research and development at Advanced Polymer Systems. He retired from the company in 1990.

Retirement for Martin Katz has meant another world of challenge. When he took up sculpturing, his first goal was to render a figure realistically and correctly. His second goal was improving on the figures by improving his technique.

A third expressionist, abstractive mode arose over time. He explains it's abstractive, not abstract, in that it explores the

planes, concavities and convexities that are conveyed by the figure. He says the abstractive mode has strongly influenced his wood and stone carvings.

The Katz home in Sharon Heights is filled, not only with his sculptures, but the works of many other artists.

"Wherever Lee and I travel we like to bring back something," says Mr. Katz, gesturing toward a large display of primitive African Art in the family room. "I came home from Africa loaded down like a pack horse."

"Here's a piece that blows my mind," he says, picking up an African sculpture of three natives in a canoe. "Just think of an untrained native creating this out of a piece of ebony."

There are triptychs from Japan, paintings by Danny Garcia in Mexico, a commissioned bronze bas relief of a street lamp by Charles Citron, Lee's cousin who lives in Amsterdam.

Mr. Katz's own work is displayed in the entry, living room and family room. A striking bronze trio of a saxophone player and a young couple dancing, entitled "All That Jazz," displays a discrete price tag of \$9,900.

Take a class

To other would-be artists who



Sculptor Martin Katz, shown with a bronze Torah he created for Congregation Beth Am, will be honored at a reception at Interior Niche gallery in San Francisco on Sept. 21

say, "Oh, I've always wanted to paint or sculpt," Mr. Katz's advice is: "Take a class. Otherwise, you'll never do it!"

That first sculpture workshop 20 years ago was so encouraging, he says. He still takes classes at the Pacific Art League in Palo Alto. "If you know you have class at 9 a.m. each Wednesday morning,

you make time for it," he says.

Working as a sculptor is heavy work. It involves hammers, chisels, drills, all sorts of safety equipment. With his early bronzes, he worked with a "boutique" foundry in San Jose learning every part of the molding and casting process. Today, his work is produced at

Monterey Sculpture Center in Marina.

Although a hard worker, Mr. Katz doesn't keep to a schedule in his Sharon Heights home studio. "I have a totally erratic schedule," he says. "You know, there are a lot of 'Honey, do' projects to take care of around here, too." ■

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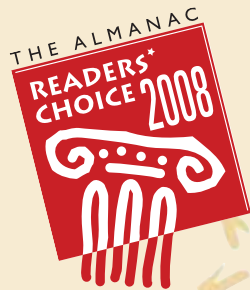
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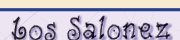
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STAR

continued from page 5

school board member Jeff Childs at the board's Sept. 9 meeting.

Board members said that they've been aware for years that minority students from the Ravenswood district who transfer to the Portola Valley, Woodside elementary or Las Lomitas school districts perform better academically than the students who transfer to the Menlo Park district. They just don't know why.

"Two kids get on a bus from Ravenswood, and one goes here and one goes there, and at the end of their (school) careers, theirs is doing better than ours," said Bruce Ives, the school board president.

It's time that the Menlo Park district ask what other districts are doing differently, and why it seems to be working, Mr. Ives said.

"In all the years we've been looking at it, ours are always worse, significantly worse," said board member Terry Thygesen.

STAR results

According to a breakdown of the entire district, students in the socio-economically disadvantaged group — whose parents don't have a high school diploma or who qualify for free or reduced-price school lunches — fared the worst on the STAR test, with only 27 percent proficient or advanced in English and 30 percent proficient or advanced in math.

African American students scored only slightly better, at 28 percent in English and 33 percent in math.

Latino and Pacific Islander scores fell in the middle, at 42 percent and 46 percent for English, and 38 percent and 42 percent in math,

respectively.

White and Asian students are doing far better on the tests than other groups, with nearly 90 percent of Asians and whites scoring at or above proficient in English. Ninety-four percent of Asians, and 87 percent of whites scored at or above proficient in math.

The scores were based on the test results from 1,266 white children, 119 Asians, 46 African Americans, 127 Latinos, 33 Pacific Islanders and 81 socio-economically disadvantaged children in the district.

The STAR test, given annually to California students beginning in second grade, measures proficiency in key academic skills, and the results are used to calculate the Academic Performance Index (API), a score between 200 and 1,000. Districts officials want to see a steady annual increase in the number of students who test at the proficient or advanced level, and there are penalties for districts that fail to meet target numbers.

The STAR test numbers presented to the board don't show at what point in their academic careers the students are falling behind, said Assistant Superintendent Jo Sauer Mitchell.

School board members asked for more analysis of the scores and a comparison of the various student groups' performance with that of other local school districts. That information is expected to be presented at the next school board meeting, set for Oct. 7. ■

■ INFORMATION

2008 Academic Performance Index (API) scores:

- Menlo Park City School District, 915
- Encinal School, 913
- Laurel School, 880
- Oak Knoll School, 924
- Hillview Middle School, 919

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The Almanac

Budding scientists are semifinalists in science fair

Did you see the movie "The Hunt for Red October?" Christopher Sauer, then a seventh-grader at Portola Valley's Corte Madera School, did. Intrigued by the passing mention of a "magnetohydrodynamic drive," he looked it up on the Internet.

One thing led to another, and he and classmate Jonathan Zdasiuk began working on their school science project, entitled "An Engine with Nothing Inside? Building a Magene-tohydrodynamic Drive."

They built a number of prototypes, tackled various issues along the way, and succeeded in constructing a magnetohydrodynamic drive that propelled a toy boat across an aquarium filled with saltwater.

The boys' project advanced from the school fair to the San Mateo County Science Fair, where it won first place in the Electronics and Electromagnetics division. The project also won an award from the Institute of Electrical & Electronics Engineers, Santa Clara County Chapter.

Next stop for the boys was Los Angeles, where they headed last May with their science teacher Trenea Joi to compete in the California State Science Fair. After being interviewed by 12 judges, they were awarded first place in the Aerodynamics/Hydrody-



Photo by Julie Fouquet

Jonathan Zdasiuk, left, and **Christopher Sauer** are semifinalists in a national middle-school science fair to be held in Washington, D.C., in October.

namics middle school division.

Last week Christopher and Jonathan learned they have been named semifinalists for a national middle school science fair, conducted by the Society for Science and the Public, and to be held Oct. 18-21 in Washington, D.C. A total of 300 semifinalists have been named.

"Both the boys love building stuff and put their hearts and souls into their projects," said Karen Peterson, Christopher's mom. They began their inventive ventures when they were fifth-graders at Corte Madera.

Along the way, they had support and encouragement from science teacher Trenea Joi and their parents, Karen Peterson and Gerry Sauer, and Julie Fouquet and George Zdasiuk, of Portola Valley. ■



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A two-hour seminar, based on the book, "Smart Discipline for Parents," by Larry Koenig, will be held from 7 to 9 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 25, at Bethany Lutheran Church, 1095 Cloud Ave., in Menlo Park.

The free seminar, for adults only, will be presented by the program's national spokesman, Dale Hancock. He will discuss ways to help children take responsibility and control of their behavior. The presentation will focus on how parents are the main influence on positive self-concepts in their children.

To reserve a seat, call 854-5897, ext. 217, or e-mail lindab@bethany-mp.org, by Thursday, Sept. 18.

Children's author at Menlo Park library

Newbery Award winner Kate DiCamillo will talk about her new book, "Louise, the Adventures of a Chicken," at 2 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 27, at the Menlo

Park Library.

Ms. DiCamillo's previous works include: "The Tale of Despereaux," a Newbery Medal winner, "The Miraculous Journey of Edward Tulane," "Tiger Rising," and the Mercy Watson series. "Louise" is illustrated by Harry Bliss.

The free event is sponsored by Kepler's bookstore and the Menlo Park Library. "We particularly welcome families with children in grades K-5 to join us," says Michelle Barrese, head of youth services at the library, located at 800 Alma St. in Menlo Park.

Opera talk

Mitchell Morris, associate professor in the musicology department at UCLA, will share his insights about Erich Wolfgang Korngold's opera, "Die Tote Stadt," at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 16, at Little House, 800 Middle Ave. in Menlo Park.

The event is sponsored by the South Peninsula chapter of the San Francisco Opera Guild. Tickets are \$8 at the door for members and \$10 for others. For more information, call Karen Prak, 329-1374.



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■ OBITUARIES

Louise Spain*Certified public accountant*

Harriet Louise Spain, a resident of Portola Valley since 1972, died at home on Sept. 5 after a courageous struggle with lung cancer. She was 66.

Ms. Spain was born in Philadelphia in 1942. During World War II, the family lived in Washington, D.C., later settling in Wauwatosa, Wisconsin, where Ms. Spain grew up. She loved the outdoors — canoeing in the Minnesota boundary waters or ice skating on the Menomonee River — and golf, say family members.

She graduated from the University of Wisconsin and received a master's degree from Stanford University. She moved to Portola Valley, where she met her future husband, Steve Spain.

While Ms. Spain was working in drug research at Syntex from 1967 to 1975, the company sent her to Santa Clara University, where she received a master's degree in business administration.

She worked as a certified public accountant at Ledwith Houghton & Co. from 1982 to 2008, specializing in personal taxes, estates and trusts, and family law litigation support. She enjoyed working with non-profit organizations, including the Woodside and Portola Valley school foundations, family members said.

Sports were important to Ms. Spain, said family members. During the 1970s and 1980s, she was an enthusiastic doubles tennis player. During the 1990s, she returned to her childhood sport of golf and, at age 65, still had a single-digit handicap.

She and her husband, Steve, also enjoyed backpacking, skiing, camping and hiking. They

traveled to Nepal, Morocco and India.

Ms. Spain is survived by her husband, Steve; children David and Rebecca; and sister Joan Bahn.

Ynes Vasquez Warren*Descendant of early California family*

Ynes Vasquez Warren of Palo Alto, who lived in Atherton from the late 1950s until the early 1970s, died Sept. 4 at Stanford Medical Center after a short illness. She was 86.

Ms. Warren was born in Carmel Valley. Her father was a rancher whose family had lived in California since 1775. Her mother's family came to California during the Gold Rush of 1849; they were among the first pharmacists in the state, according to family members.

Ms. Warren attended Munson Business School in San Francisco and worked, mainly

in the medical field, during her business career. She was employed as office manager at Palo Alto Medical Clinic, as an administrative assistant in the dermatology department at Stanford Medical School, in human resources at Dynapol and as an administrative assistant at Beckman Instruments. She retired in 1987.

Ms. Warren also earned a degree in interior design at DeAnza College. "She was always redecorating her mother's house and mine," says her sister, Carole Clarke. She also enjoyed photography, growing plants, the outdoors and her pets, say family members.

Surviving members of her family are sisters Carole Clarke of Menlo Park and Peggy Renton of Reno; brother George Vasquez of Reno; and many nieces and nephews. Services have been held. Burial was at Alta Mesa Cemetery in Palo Alto.

■ POLICE CALLS

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

ATHERTON

Residential burglary report: Padlocks cut and tools stolen from construction site, 200 block of Polhemus Ave., Sept. 7.

Theft report: Apple iPod stolen from student vehicle, Menlo-Atherton High School, 555 Middlefield Road, Sept. 11.

MENLO PARK**Theft reports:**

■ Two potential thieves fled after discovered attempting to steal toolbox from truck, 700 block of Coleman Ave., Sept. 5.

■ Apple iPhone stolen from unlocked vehicle, 1000 block of El Camino Real, Sept. 10.

Auto burglary report: Wallet stolen after forced entry, 1500 block of San Antonio St., Sept. 10.

Fraud reports:

■ Bad check passed, 1200 block of Crane St., Sept. 5.

■ Identity theft, 1200 block of Bellair Way, Sept. 10.

Child protective services report: 700 block of Central Ave., Sept. 10.

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Woodside names assistant town manager

Kevin Bryant, hired in February 2008 as an assistant to Woodside Town Manager Susan George, was named the new assistant town manager as of Sept. 4, Ms. George said in a report to the Town Council.

Mr. Bryant's move to Woodside was a lateral one; he had held the same position in Sausalito, Ms. George said.

A year earlier, Mr. Bryant had been a finalist in interviews for the assistant manager position, Ms. George said. That position was filled by Hope Sullivan, who was also the planning director at the time and who resigned in June 2008.

When Mr. Bryant came to Woodside in February, Ms. George told him she would reconsider him for the assistant manager position "after he had shown me what he was made of," she said.

■ WOODSIDE NOTES

"Well, he has (shown me)," Ms. George told the council. "Kevin was a wonderful addition to the staff and has taken on an eclectic array of day-to-day and special assignments. My initial reservation that he did not have sufficient financial experience has been completely squashed by his ability to learn quickly and to grasp the big picture with relative ease."

Applicants sought for Planning Commission

The town of Woodside is seeking applicants to serve on the Planning Commission for District 1, which includes Hobart Heights, a portion of Jane Drive, the Woodside Glens and the western side of Canada Road

opposite the Glens.

District 1 Commissioner Sara Jorgensen resigned Aug. 29, in part due to constraints on her time, Town Manager Susan George said in a Sept. 9 report to the Town Council, which appoints Planning Commission members.

The Planning Commission addresses land-use and development policies, grants and oversees conditional use permits, reviews variance applications and matters related to zoning and subdivisions, and advises the council on general plan issues.

The deadline for applications is 5 p.m. Monday, Oct. 6. For more information or to apply, call Town Hall at 851-6790 during normal business hours or download an application from woodsidesidetown.org/employment.html. Click on the "Volunteer Committee Application" link.

Woman to pay \$174,500 to victims

Menlo Park resident Audrey Leonard, who pleaded no-contest to embezzlement and elder abuse charges in April 2008 and is serving a five-year sentence in state prison, has agreed to make an initial payment of \$174,500 in restitution to her victims, according to court records.

Her attorney filed the agreement in San Mateo County Superior Court on Sept. 9.

Judge John Grandsaert ordered Ms. Leonard to pay a total of \$151,035 to 10 individual victims, \$10,182 to the Fork and Spoon Productions Co., and \$13,301 to the Stanford Federal Credit Union, according to report on courts actions from Chief Deputy District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe.

Restitution to the San Jose After School All-Stars is yet to be determined, Mr. Wagstaffe said.

Following her arrest in September 2007 on an alleged fundraising scam, police said they believed that Ms. Leonard had defrauded more than 70 people of more than \$1.4 million since 1999, but that the three-year statute of limitations for fraud crimes prevented prosecution of many of her alleged actions.

Board vote on charter school

A petition to establish Everest, a new four-year charter high school modeled on Summit Preparatory Charter High, is scheduled for an up-or-down vote by the trustees of the Sequoia Union High School District on Wednesday, Sept. 17, at the district office at 480 James Ave. in Redwood City. The meeting starts at 5:30 p.m.; the petition is the next-to-last item on the agenda.

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Pop Warner football

Menlo-Atherton Vikings PeeWees struggled to a 12-12 tie with the West Bay Rams at Menlo-Atherton High School last weekend, and that was the good news for the local Pop Warner team. Other Vikings squads fell victim to the swift and efficient visitors from San Bruno. For details, go to TheAlmanacOnline.com

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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?

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Lennie Roberts has made a difference

The Peninsula might be a very different place without Lennie Roberts. When the young mother from Ladera began trekking to Sacramento in the mid-1960s to help save San Francisco Bay from rampant filling, official plans for San Mateo County showed a future far different from what exists today. Development served by new freeways extended down the Coast and into the Bay, beyond the airport. Landmark San Bruno Mountain was topped by a city, and the South Bay was dammed to create a freshwater lake.

Ms. Roberts has been a key player in the environmental movement that blunted those early plans. Thanks to the efforts of thousands, San Mateo County is now blessed with some of the most beautiful open space in a

major metropolitan area in the world.

Ms. Roberts joined the board of the Committee for Green Foothills, a leading environmental group on the Peninsula, in 1968. In 1978, she became its volunteer legislative advocate. For 30 years she has pressed for open space, natural environment, and sensible planning. She has worked with agencies large and small, from local cities and the county, to the state and federal governments.

The Committee for Green Foothills will recognize her service with a special event, “Celebrating Lennie Roberts: Nature’s Inspiration,” on Sunday, Sept. 28, in Los Altos.

Supervisor Rich Gordon, who will introduce Ms. Roberts at the celebration, says, “For multiple decades, Lennie has been the go-to person and leader on all environmental issues in this county.”

Besides fighting developments effectively, Ms. Roberts has pushed for positive solutions. Most important are: creation and expansion of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District; passage of Measure A in 1986, which established rules limiting development on the Coast; and drilling a highway tunnel through Montara Mountain to bypass the dangerous section of Highway 1 along Devil’s Slide.

The open space district protects land permanently by buying

and managing it for open space, habitat, and agriculture. Ms. Roberts was a leader in forming the district in 1972 in Santa Clara County, annexing southern San Mateo County in 1976, and annexing the Coastsides in 2004. It now has protected more than 55,000 acres.

Ms. Roberts led the fight in 1986 to pass Measure A, which sets strict rules to control development in the coastal zone — including no on-shore facilities to support off-shore oil drilling. These rules can be changed only by popular vote.

The unnel, set to open in 2011, culminates a 35-year battle to prevent Caltrans from slashing a four-plus-lane bypass through Montara Mountain that would have opened the Coast to more development.

Beyond her specific accomplishments, Ms. Roberts sets an example for activists in how to be effective. Her lessons include: do your homework and get accurate information; know the process and the people who make decisions; get all the allies you can find, and never burn bridges; and always be respectful. “If you lose your cool, you lose your cause — especially representing an organization,” she says.

The Almanac shares Ms. Roberts’ view of today’s challenges. Many of yesterday’s fights over limiting growth, saving open space, and protecting the Bay have been won. Today’s challenges focus more on guiding the growth that is still coming so that communities work; and — most important — facing global climate change.

Growth is coming, so communities need to be designed to make it easy to use public transit; new housing and jobs need to be near where transit serves them.

Global warming is the biggest challenge. Every land-use decision should be made with climate change in mind. In this area particularly, we should be thinking of a sea level that could rise 3 feet or more over the next century. Is it wise to approve new development near the shore of the Bay that would need expensive protection or face damage or destruction if the worse scenarios evolve?

Thank you, Lennie, for your service and your wisdom.

Our Regional Heritage

John Orton and Nan McDonnell don’t look very happy in their roles of King and Queen of the May in this photo taken in front of the old Portola School on May Day 1904. The gates and fence behind them are long gone, as is their school.



Portola Valley Archives

Improve 'comprehensive' schools; put the brakes on charter schools

By Henry Organ

I was an appointed member of the Board of Trustees of Sequoia Union High School District, serving for a brief period in the late '60s. I read with interest The Almanac's editorial in the September 3 issue: "What to do about charter schools."

I have no direct personal interest in the charter school currently operating in the district, or the one petitioning for trustee approval. My interest is more about the charter school concept in general. My reflections on the subject are greatly influenced by involvement in the civil rights movement on the Peninsula during that era.

An important event occurred in that movement when the U.S. Supreme Court decided in 1954 that racially segregated schools are unconstitutional. The abolition of segregated schools was unsettling to many white communities. New suburbs were created, and the population of existing suburban communities increased, fostering

de facto-segregated schools in the wake of the decision. Thereupon began an erosion, diversion and dilution of support of public schools across the nation.

Almost concurrently, various educational initiatives (some based on reasons other than race) began to surface in legislatures. One of the early initiatives was tax-supported vouchers, which could be redeemed at private schools, sectarian and non-sectarian. Also surfacing was charter schools, tax-supported, too.

The trustee's primary responsibility is to the so-called "comprehensive schools," first, if not solely. These schools are clearly being placed in competition for limited funds by charter schools, a zero-sum, no-win game for "comprehensive schools."

If the existing "experimental school" is doing as well as editorialized, then data from that school should be collected and analyzed; positive and transferable results should then be incorporated into the "comprehensive schools."

There should not be a need for yet another (or probably more) experimental school.

Finally, public schools were created with noble purposes in mind by the nation's early leaders. For a new nation, "...to form a more perfect Union..." "promote the general Welfare..." etc., the establishment of a public school system was essential and prophetic. There were dreams at that time, too, of "...one nation, indivisible..."

At the present time, however, the nation is hemorrhaging, if not near civil war, because of immigration, diversity, xenophobia, religious fundamentalism and extremism. If there was ever a time when the nation should be brought closer together, it is now. What better forum to bring this about than its public school system. This cannot be realized with further fragmentation and fund-dilution of the public school system.

The trustees should declare a moratorium on charter schools, and focus their attention on the improvement of the "comprehensive schools."

Henry Organ lives on Euclid Avenue in Menlo Park.



LETTERS

Our readers write

It's up to us to bring about change

Editor:

I am a liberated woman, teacher, mother and grandmother who is very concerned with the future of all children and grandchildren. I am also not fooled by the media blitz of this last week in picking the future leaders of our country.

The last I heard was that Barack Obama and John McCain are the ones running for president. I would ask the media to help them stay on the issues and demand answers to the hard questions about: the 6 percent unemployment in America, the 500,000 jobs lost this August, health care for families, energy for our future and affordable housing for all families.

The question is: Do we want more of the same or are we willing to be part of the change that has to take place to bring our country back to its original vision? It is up to us to bring this about. Barack Obama with our help can achieve this. Let's care enough to make this happen.

**Anita Dippery
Santa Rita Avenue, Menlo Park**

Same-sex marriage benefits society

Editor:

Same-sex couples have a legal right to marry in California. Among the thousands wedded so far are San Mateo County Supervisor Rich Gordon and his partner of nearly 26 years, Dennis McShane, as you reported on September 3. Mr. Gordon stated that they were gratified to be "treated equally fairly as any other couple who gets married in the state." More marriages will follow, at least until November, when the proposal to take away this right will go before the voters in Proposition 8. They should choose to keep it.

To understand why, consider the extraordinary benefits to society and to the married couple. Marriage is not just a contract between two people; it is a contract that the couple makes with their community, which is why there is always a witness. This is a bountifully fruitful bargain for society. The partners agree to take care of each other so the community doesn't have to. In exchange they are deemed a family, binding them to each other and to the society with a myriad of legal and social ties. Marriage makes people, on average, healthier, happier and wealthier. For a couple raising kids, marrying is likelier to make them healthier,

happier and wealthier, too. Marriage is our best line of defense against financial, medical and emotional meltdown. It stabilizes communities by formalizing responsibilities and creating kin networks (aunts, grandparents, cousins). Its absence can be calamitous, whether in inner cities or gay ghettos.

Because parents want happy children, communities want responsible neighbors, employers want productive workers, and governments want smaller welfare loads, society has a powerful interest in recognizing and supporting married same-sex couples.

Rather than as an offense to some religion's doctrinal concept of the ideal family, imposed on all of us even though we are not a member of their religion, the better way to see the legal marriage of Supervisor Gordon and Dennis McShane is that it is the end of something radical. It is the end of a radical experiment in which committed couples must live in a culture without marriage and the bonds of mutuality and kinship networks that go with it. It is the end of a shadowy world on the outskirts of the law marked by heightened fear of loneliness or abandonment in a crisis or in old age. It is the end of an uncivilized world, because marriage is the foundation of civilization.

America needs more marriages, not fewer, and the best

Beware marketing tactics of the high-speed train

By Martin Engel

We heard Rod Diridon's sales presentation of the high-speed train in the City Council study session last Tuesday.

California's problems are huge, complex and very hard to solve. The continuing current budget crisis is testimony to that.

You know the rest: water, education, health care, the infrastructure, declining economy, huge debt. All difficult, expensive, challenging.

And, as we should all know, there are no easy, simple solutions.

We Californians are desperate for a quick and easy fix. Isn't that what Americans do? We fix things. (Usually in one hour.) That's what the American school system called TV teaches us.

Well, some people do have a solution. Have no fear, because here come the high-speed salesmen with a miracle panacea, a cure-all. It's not just some complicated solution of more policies or an array of political or economic decisions. This solution is an actual tangible thing you can see and touch and get into.

All we voters have to do is buy it. It will cost us hardly anything, and it will solve most of California's problems. And, guys will love this. It's hardware. It's noisy. It's slick, shiny, and fast, fast, fast.

And, it costs only \$9.95 billion in bonds. Know why it's \$9.95 billion? For the same reason things cost 99 cents instead of a dollar. It sounds like less.

Like politicians, the train salesmen promise no new taxes. The federal government and private investors will pay whatever it's going to cost. It's not our pocket book; it's OPM, other people's money!

Folks, this is the solution that will fix everything. Job losses? This train can fix it. Environmental deterioration? This train can fix it. High fuel costs? This

train can fix it. Traffic congestion? This train can fix it. Dependence on foreign oil? This train can fix it. Bad economy, this train can also fix that.

They promise that it's safe, reliable, inexpensive, and easy to use. With it, you will no longer need those old-fashioned clogged arteries, like highways and runways that cost so much more. This is the bargain of the century! Mr. Diridon says so.

Think. What does that sound like? Late-night TV infomercials. Buy this gadget and watch those pounds disappear. Buy these pills and solve all those awful problems. Easy to use, no shipping and handling charges. Listen to all the satisfied customers, like the train riders in Europe or Japan.

Do you know what a "crap detector" is? The term comes from a book: "Teaching as a Subversive Activity," by Postman and Weingartner (1969). Crap detecting is critical thinking. It's careful analysis. It's close and careful reading. It's being on the alert for exaggerations, distortions, mis- and disinformation. It's one of the most important intellectual tools you should have. Well, this train project should alert your crap detector to work overtime. This miraculous project is, in short, just too good to be true.

One more point: You all know what a business plan is. If you were a VC company, would you lend somebody \$10 billion for a start-up without a budget or business plan based only on marketing hype? The high-speed rail people have no up-to-date business plan, even though one was required in the bond issue legislation on Sept. 1. And, they are not going to write one. Are we going to borrow \$10 billion so we can buy snake oil?

Let the buyer and voter beware. Caveat emptor!

Martin Engel lives on Stone Pine Lane in Menlo Park.



way to encourage marriage is to encourage marriage, which is what we are doing now by bringing same-sex couples inside the tent. On the other hand society can be denied its stabilizing benefits and same-sex couples can be sent back to their shadowy world of lesser citizenship by the proponents of Proposition 8.

Let us keep same-sex marriage by voting "no" on Proposition 8. Let us end this radical experiment of discrimination against a significant proportion of society's members. Being in love should facilitate marriage, not preclude it.

**Harry A. Turner
La Mesa Drive, Portola Valley**



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