

**HOMEOWNERS WARNED** as authorities arrest or cite 22 unlicensed building contractors. Page 11

# The Almanac

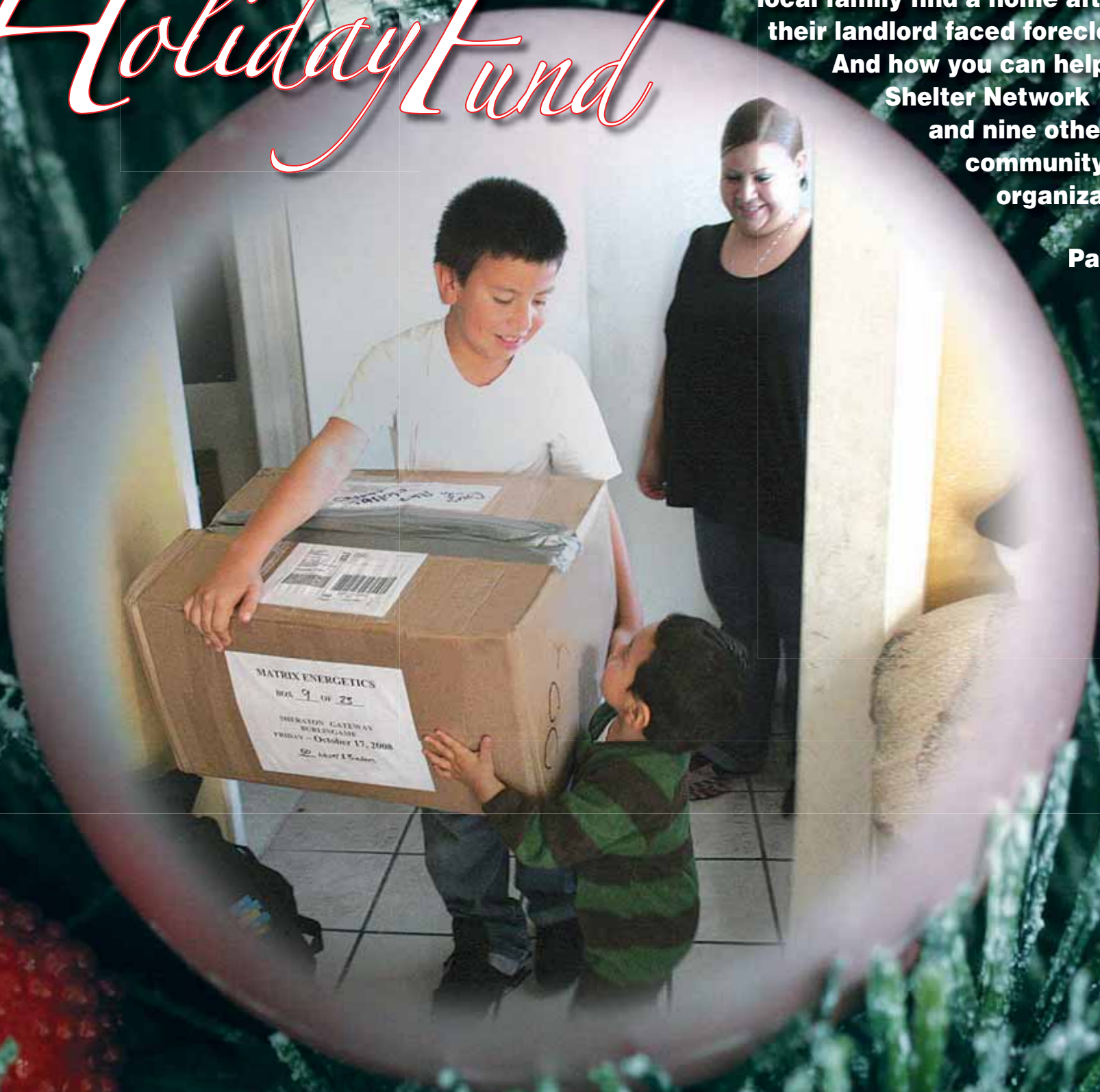
THE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER FOR MENLO PARK, ATHERTON, PORTOLA VALLEY AND WOODSIDE

NOVEMBER 26, 2008 [www.TheAlmanacOnline.com](http://www.TheAlmanacOnline.com) | VOL. 44 NO. 13

## *Holiday Fund*

**How Shelter Network helped a local family find a home after their landlord faced foreclosure. And how you can help Shelter Network and nine other community organizations.**

**Page 8**





# CASHIN COMPANY

MENLO PARK (650) 614-3500 ■ PORTOLA VALLEY (650) 529-2900 ■ WOODSIDE (650) 529-1000 ■ LOS ALTOS (650) 948-8050  
PALO ALTO (650) 853-7100 ■ SAN CARLOS (650) 598-4900 ■ SAN MATEO (650) 343-3700 ■ BURLINGAME (650) 340-9688



**ATHERTON** – Beautiful custom home nestled on gorgeous large lot in sought after W. Atherton neighborhood. 5BR/4.5BA, elegant & spacious living and dining rms, epicurean kitchen w/large breakfast rm; incredible vaulted ceiling FR.

*Elizabeth Daschbach* \$6,995,000



**ATHERTON** – Wonderful remodeled 4BR home in prime West Atherton location. Sunny gourmet kitchen, spacious master, huge FR, 2 offices, Frch Drs, hrdwd flrs. Expansive, level, parklike yard w/mature trees surrounding the perimeter. Sparkling pool w/fence. Outstanding Las Lomas Schools.

*Elizabeth Daschbach* \$4,350,000



**LOS ALTOS HILLS** – Located in LAH, boasting truly majestic views, is a spacious 4BR/2BA + two half BA home resting upon a sprawling lot amidst a canopy of towering trees, a mini-orchard, sparkling pool, manicured lawns & fragrant, blooming shrubs. A Must See!

*George Monaco* \$3,450,000



**MENLO PARK** – Located in the desirable Allied Arts this 5BR/3.5BA home is surrounded by cottage-style gardens. The flrpln offers formal LR & DR w/hrdwd flrs & an updated kitchen w/window-lined eating area. A spacious, light-filled, FR w/FP, plantation shutters & French drs opens to a delightful patio & rear grounds.

*Doyle Rundell* \$3,149,000



**MENLO PARK** – This classic 4BR/3BA ranch-style home is located on one of the nicest streets in central Menlo Park. The open floor plan includes; hardwood floors, updated BA's, breakfast nook, formal DR & LR.

*Steve Gray/Tim Kerns* \$1,850,000

## ATHERTON

Gorgeous traditional brick estate home in desirable W. Atherton, on quiet cul-de-sac.

*Elizabeth Daschbach* \$4,995,000

Price reduced on one of Atherton's most desirable streets, a stylish 4BR residence.

*Tim Kerns* \$2,695,000

W Atherton remodel or build new opportunity on large park-like setting.

*Steve Gray* \$2,595,000

## EAST PALO ALTO

Great Opportunity in the "Hidden Willows!" Large lot with 2, 2BR/1BA ranch units.

*Joe Carcione III* \$939,000

Bright corner unit, new double paned windows, freshly painted inside & out.

*Gordana Wolfman* \$268,888

## HALF MOON BAY

Spectacular views from this large lot! Complete with plans and permits.

*Katherine Clark* \$639,000

## HAYWARD

2 separate homes on a large lot. Front unit is 3BR/3BA. Rear unit is 2BR/2BA.

*Gordana Wolfman* \$575,000

## LA HONDA

Prop. has 3 structures, a main, barn & a studio to be permitted by the new owners.

*Gary Mckae* \$599,000

Great value in La Honda! Close to WS & 280. Charming cottage w/a lrg level rear garden.

*Cristina Harper* \$399,500

Quiet, serene & secluded. Enjoy privacy among the Redwoods. 35 min from Roberts Market.

*Gary Mckae* \$350,000

## LOS ALTOS

Charming 2BR/2BA cul-de-sac location backs onto creek. Huge \$100,000 price reduction!

*Carol Christie* \$1,275,000

## LOS ALTOS HILLS

Price Reduction! Lovely 4BR/3BA property on designated scenic route adjacent to Hidden Villa.

*Clarke Team/Nadine Matityahu* \$1,499,500

## MENLO PARK

Impeccably maintained 4BR/2.5BA Rancher. Thoroughly refurbished from 2004 to the present.

*Gary McKae* \$1,995,000

Desirable 3BR/2.5BA town home in sought after Menlo Park complex. Close to shopping & downtown.

*Elizabeth Daschbach* \$1,189,000

Gorgeous tastefully remodeled light & bright 2BR/2BA condo with garage.

*Suzanne Scott* \$758,000

## MOUNTAIN VIEW

Charming 3BR/2BA home blocks away from Castro St! Located on a quiet street across from a park.

*Kristin Cashin* \$925,000

3BR/2BA home in Santiago Villa, open flr plan, brkfst bar, island kitchen.

*Cristina Page* \$155,750

## REDWOOD CITY

Live in the Country! This 3BR/2.5BA home is located next to Handley Rock Park.

*Dana Cappiello* \$1,198,000

Light bright & spacious 3BR/2.5BA private end unit. Steps away from boat dock.

*Lilly Chow* \$749,000

Large 3BR/2.5BA Mediterranean styled townhome with large fenced patio area. Quiet location.

*Dana Cappiello* \$598,000

Remodeled 3 Bedroom, 2-1/2 Bath, Tile & Hardwood Floors, New Landscaping.

*Vivian Vella* \$549,000

This spacious 3BR/2BA Condo has newer double pane windows, sliding doors & kitchen appliances.

*Brendan Royer* \$469,950

Perfectly maintained, this 2BR/1BA condo is ready to move into!

*Dana Cappiello* \$399,000

## SAN CARLOS

Located on a quite private lane is this spacious 4BR/3BA well maintained home.

*Debbie Lorell/Bob Johnston* \$1,398,000

## SAN FRANCISCO

In the heart of S. Beach this spacious 2BR condo has spectacular views.

*Joe Carcione III* \$988,000

## SAN JOSE

Santana Row model unit w/many upgrades! Designer paint, carpet, appl. Fl. to ceiling window.

*Camille Eder* \$788,000

## SUNNYVALE

Great corner location in this Cherry Chase neighborhood. Beautiful 4BR/3BA home is ready to move into.

*Dana Cappiello* \$1,280,000

## WOODSIDE

Beautiful 3BR/2BA home in central Woodside on a large lot. Main home has brand new BA's, LR & DR & in law unit.

*Dana Cappiello* \$1,998,000

Beautiful large lot in central Woodside.

*Dana Cappiello* \$899,000



**MENLO PARK** – Prime W. Menlo on Atherton border. Large home with space for in-law unit or au pair quarters all rooms are large with plenty of closets. Family room has pot belly brick fireplace. Living room is oversized. Floor plan is terrific for a large bustling family.

*Maureen Love* \$1,850,000



**MOUNTAIN VIEW** – Duplex in desirable area, close to Sylvan Park. 3BR/2BA beautifully remodeled, large private backyard, great freeway access to all arteries.

*Marta Hayes* \$1,180,000



**REDWOOD CITY** – Gracious 4BR/3.5BA open family style home. Home is light and bright. With bucolic gardens, pool and expansive decking this property unites all the best in Real Estate.

*Nino Gaetano* \$2,295,000



**REDWOOD CITY** – Incredible home located on a quiet tree-lined street. 3BR/1BA + 1/2 BA w/skylight in Master BA. Huge walk-in closet in Master BR. Refinished hrdwd flrs, dual paned windows. Stunning gourmet kit w/ Viking range, custom cabinets. Open floor plan.

*Jennifer Whelan* \$649,000



**WOODSIDE** – This beautifully remodeled, 3BR/2BA home is situated on a lushly landscaped lot near dwntwn Woodside. The master suite has lrg closets & an updated BA. The sun-lit LR w/a wood-burning FP is warm & inviting. The sep DR is light & spacious w/easy access to the chef's kitchen.

*Ken & Carol Reeves* \$1,799,000

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# Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

## FIRST SHOT



Photo by Danielle Vernon/The Almanac

### Packed with care

Woodside Elementary School students load up a shipping crate with nearly 800 boxes of donated clothes, toys and medical supplies for orphans in India on Friday, Nov. 21. Diane Eskenazi, a Woodside parent, organized the charity drive to benefit Ruchika Social Services in Orissa, which brings basic education and health care to thousands of orphaned, homeless children living on train platforms and in slums. "It's so wonderful to see the community of Woodside come together in this effort to help the homeless orphans in India," Ms. Eskenazi said.

### Atherton

■ Atherton officials make pitch for new town hall. **Page 12**

### Menlo Park

- Can community engagement manager Cherise Brandell change the way the city makes decisions? **Page 7**
- Fee increases proposed for Children's Center, planning department, other services. **Page 12**
- City's sales tax income holds steady in recent quarter. **Page 5**

### Portola Valley

■ Portola Valley: improving a park and parking in town. **Page 21**

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### Woodside

■ Pit bull attacks, grabs horse by throat, local equestrian says. **Page 5**

### Schools

■ Woodside Elementary taps principal for superintendent job. **Page 24**

### Regional

■ David Boesch to get \$270,000-plus a year as county manager. **Page 11**

### Community

■ Priory students walk to fund diabetes research. **Cover, Section 2**

### On the cover

Two-year-old Christopher helps Gustavo handle a box as the family leaves for their new home, thanks to Shelter Network, one of 10 organizations supported by donors to The Almanac Holiday Fund. Photo by Veronica Weber. See **Page 8**

### CALLING ON THE ALMANAC

The Almanac offices are at **3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025.**

For Classified ads, call **854-0858**  
 For all other calls, phone **854-2626**  
 News: **Ext. 213**  
 Display advertising: **Ext. 233**  
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■ E-mail news, information and obituaries to (no photos please): **editor@AlmanacNews.com**  
 ■ E-mail news photos with captions to: **AlmanacNews@gmail.com**  
 ■ E-mail letters to the editor to: **letters@AlmanacNews.com**

To request free delivery, or stop delivery, of The Almanac in zip code 94025, 94027, 94028 and the Woodside portion of 94062, call **854-2626**.

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ACTIVE LIVING Q&A

**The Beauty of Fruits & Veggies**

**Q:** How can I turn eating fruits and vegetables into a habit?

**A:** Color matters. I start by adding at least three colors of fruits and vegetables twice a week to my grocery cart. Eating a variety of colors everyday is the way I assure I am scooping up these really rich nutrients and vitamins to keep my body well balanced and healthy.

These are five easy steps to creating a new habit:

**1st Step:** As soon as I return from the market, I wash all fruits and vegetables.

**2nd Step:** Cut and chop all vegetables, doesn't need to be perfect.

**3rd Step:** Set aside three plastic produce bags or zip lock bags (Sun-Tues or Wed-Sat.)

**4th Step:** Fill each plastic bag with an assortment of color.

**5th Step:** Store in crisper to maintain freshness.

Pull out a bag of vegetables every night of the week, steam, add to soups, casserole or stir fry. Teach you and your family to start by eating your vegetables first, this sets up a healthy tone for the rest of your dinner. Put fruit in a large bowl in view on kitchen counter so it's easy to grab for morning snack and after dinner sweet treat.

**By Jackie Ballinger, CEO Physically Focused**

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 in advance or you may  
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**\$16.98** lb.

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**\$6.98** lb.

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**OSCAR MAYER CENTER CUT BACON**

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**SARA LEE PETITE FRENCH STYLE CROISSANTS**

6 count

**\$2.99**

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30 oz. - Also Light

**\$3.79**

**CARRS TABLE WATER CRACKERS**

4 oz. - Also Cracked Pepper - Whole Wheat

**\$2.19**

**VANITY FAIR DINNER NAPKINS**

40 count - Also Everyday Napkins

**\$1.99**

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**PRODUCE**

12 oz.

**CRANBERRIES**



**\$1.99** ea.

Best for Pie

**GRANNY SMITH APPLES**



**\$1.29** lb.

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**DELI**

*Roberts Market Thanksgiving Menu 2008*

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*Starters & Sides*

**PUMPKIN SQUASH SOUP**

Savory with a hint of curry and cream. \$9.25 per qt.

**STUFFED BAKED BRIE**

With cranberry chutney. \$14.50 each

**GREEN BEAN ALMONDINE**

With caramelized shallots and butter

\$6.00 per pint. \$11.75 per qt.

**BRUSSELS SPROUTS**

Sautéed with Smokey bacon and French fried onions

\$6.00 per pint. \$11.75 per qt.

**ROASTED BUTTERNUT SQUASH**

With apples and candied walnuts

\$6.00 per pint. \$11.75 per qt.

**WHIPPED POTATOES**

Traditional potatoes with butters & cream

\$6.25 per pint. \$12.00 per qt.

**FRESHMADE CRANBERRY SAUCE**

Delicious with a hint of orange

\$4.75 per pint. \$9.50 per qt.

*Desserts*

**GIANNA'S BAKERY**

8" Pies. \$15.99 each

Apple, 4 Berry, Cherry Peach and Blueberry

8" Pecan Pies. \$16.99 each

**GOOD EARTH**

8" Pumpkin Pie. \$12.49 each

*Turkeys*

**FREE RANGE DIESTEL TURKEYS**

Small (10-12 lbs) Serves 8-10. \$49.00

Large (16-18 lbs) Serves 14-16. \$59.00

\* The Diestel turkeys are pre-roasted and will need approximately 2 hours to re-heat at 300° in your oven.

*Dressings & Gravy*

**TRADITIONAL STUFFING**

With mushrooms, celery, onions, & water chestnuts

\$5.50 per pint. \$10.75 per qt.

**CORNBREAD STUFFING**

With dried cranberries and apricots

\$5.50 per pint. \$10.75 per qt.

**PORCINI MUSHROOM GRAVY**

Rich and creamy

\$6.25 per pint. \$12.00 per qt.

**ONION SAGE GRAVY**

Red wine, caramelized onion and sage flavor this rich gravy

\$6.25 per pint. \$12.00 per qt.

*Desserts*

**RUBICON BAKERY**

6" Lemon Tarts. \$12.99 each

6" Cakes. \$14.99 each

Chocolate Cake, Chocolate Turtle, and Carrot Spice Cake

Rubicon La Bête Noire. \$17.59 each

**Wine**

*Wine Super Savers*

**2006 Hess Chardonnay, Monterey**

Reg. \$11.99,

Looking for an affordable alternative this holiday season?

Here's our most popular Chardonnay at an unbeatable price. Stock up!

**\$7.99**  
 Sale

**2007 Mark West Pinot Noir, California**

Reg. \$11.99,

For our money, nothing pulls together a Thanksgiving dinner better than Pinot Noir. You won't find a better deal anywhere!

**\$7.99**  
 Sale

*Holiday Bubbly*

The election has arrived and the holiday season is upon us. It's time to celebrate. What better way to kick off the festivities than a (or a few) bottles of delicious refreshing sparkling wine! Here are some special pricing to soften the blow.

**Domaine Chandon Brut Classic, Blanc du Noirs, Rose** - Reg. \$17.99, Sale \$14.99

An American Icon. Great value!

**Nicolas Feuillate Brut, Champagne** - Reg. \$39.99, Sale \$29.99

Fresh, crisp, lemony with chalky complexity.

**Henriot Brut Souverain, Champagne** - Reg. \$41.99, Sale \$33.99

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**Jose Dhondt Brut Blanc du Blancs, Champagne** - Reg. \$47.99, Sale \$39.99

A toasty, vibrant 100% Chardonnay stunner. Pinpoint bubbles and a long, focused finish.

Sale prices are net and cannot service further discount.

Limited to quantities on hand. No rain checks.

# Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

## Pit bull attacks, grabs horse by throat, local equestrian says

■ Horse and rider injured; Humane Society investigating.

By Dave Boyce  
Almanac Staff Writer

Message, the equestrian version of ballet and martial arts set to music, is still in the cards for Woodside resident Chiyoko Ono and her horse Vader, a big, black gelding, but they now have a painful memory to negotiate — one that the Peninsula Humane Society is investigating.

Vader will have a scar from a puncture wound made by an off-leash pit bull terrier on Friday, Nov. 15, around 4 p.m. in a barn's driveway on Phillip Road in Woodside, Ms. Ono told The Almanac in an interview.

After circling the 1,400-pound horse, the dog leapt, clamped its teeth on the horse's neck and hung there until the horse's gyrations shook it off, she said.

Ms. Ono, at 110 pounds, is in one piece, but has extensive bruises from a fall after she parted company with Vader

as he jumped and bucked. Though she knows her horse well, she said the experience reminded her of the equine's millions of years of evolution.

"You really need to respect their survival instincts," she said in an interview. "They are very smart."

"I felt like I was on top of a two-story house," she said, recalling the incident. "I felt it could be the end. The human body is like an insect on (its back). The strength of the horse was just amazing. You really have to absolutely respect that strength and mind."

After 20 X-rays at a clinic, she said her physician was amazed that she didn't have any broken bones. In the interview, Ms. Ono said she tried to roll upon landing and made sure to protect her head.

Apart from assisting in the Humane Society investigation, Ms. Ono said her primary concern is community awareness of the potential of attacks from foreign dogs unused to horses — the pit bull was visiting — and the cascade of events that



Photo by Veronica Weber/The Almanac

Woodside resident Chiyoko Ono and her horse Vader after the attack.

could result.

This dog chased her horse into the street, where more problems could have ensued, she said. Vader had the wits to return to the driveway and to a groom who kept the dog away until its owner got control of it, Ms. Ono said.

A veterinarian ministered to Vader at the barn, and Ms. Ono said she is already back on him and assessing his condition. "He's now afraid of dogs,"

she said. "He may eventually recover, but when I took him again toward the driveway, he was very nervous."

She also has to master her own emotions, since a horse is sensitive and will respond to the rider's state of mind, she said.

The Humane Society will be gathering testimony about the incident, weighing possible actions, and should have a decision soon, spokesman Scott Delucchi said.

Law enforcement tends to avoid cases involving animal-to-animal confrontations unless there is evidence of malicious intent by humans, Mr. Delucchi said.

Are pit bulls a problem? All dogs can bite, he said, and the more populous a breed, the higher its numbers. Of the 300-400 bites reported every year in San Mateo County, Labrador

See PIT BULL, page 13

## Menlo Park sales tax income holds steady in recent quarter

The economy has been hurting, but any ill effects that Menlo Park retailers might be experiencing didn't show up in the city's quarterly financial report.

The report — which includes data from July 1 through Sept. 30, the first quarter of the 2008-2009 fiscal year — showed a \$68,000 increase in sales tax revenues over the same period in 2007, excluding a large payout the city received in 2007 as an adjustment for the previous year's sales tax.

The reporting period does not include the time since September, when financial institutions collapsed and the stock market plummeted.

Financial Director Carol Augustine called prospects for the upcoming holiday shopping

season "grim."

The city saw a drop in utility tax revenue of about \$238,000, taking in less than half of what it received in the same quarter last year. Ms. Augustine attributed that decline to a lower tax rate.

And licensing and permit fees were down by about \$151,000 — a 23 percent drop. The sheer number of construction projects has declined only marginally, but the average value of each project has fallen, according to Ms. Augustine — suggesting that homeowners are renovating and remodeling on a smaller scale this year.

Total revenue is down 13.5 percent from the same quarter last year, but Ms. Augustine said that she did not recommend a budget revision at this stage.

## Strong-arm robberies not a trend, police says

By Sean Howell  
Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park has experienced several armed and strong-arm robberies in recent weeks, but the police department does not see the robberies as part of a larger trend, Detective Jeff Keegan of the Menlo Park Police Department said.

Jeffrey Smith, 38, of Palo Alto, was arrested Nov. 18 after a failed street robbery in Palo Alto and a successful one in Menlo Park. He has been charged with one count of robbery and one count of possession of stolen property, according to Steve Wagstaffe, San Mateo County's chief deputy district attorney.

In another incident, on the night of Nov. 13, a wallet and a cell phone were stolen in a strong-arm robbery by male juveniles in the Belle Haven neighborhood. One victim was taken to the hospital after being punched. A suspect from Menlo Park was identified in a police lineup; the other suspects are still at large.

And, on the night of Oct. 21, two armed men robbed the Union 76 service station at 710 Willow Road in the Willows neighborhood.

Detective Keegan said that armed or strong-arm

robberies should be treated as individual incidents, and are not necessarily connected with larger societal issues, such as the declining economy. He said that he expects the rate of such crimes to decrease once the perpetrators are arrested.

Mr. Keegan did, however, note that crime in general tends to rise around the holiday season.

### Safety tips

Detective Keegan outlined several basic precautions that residents can take to guard themselves against robbery. Don't walk alone, he says, especially at night. Be aware of your surroundings, and of the objects you're carrying or displaying — a cell phone, a purse — that could make you an attractive target.

If you see a crime in progress, take note of any information that would help police to identify the perpetrator. Police apprehended Mr. Smith, the man charged in the Nov. 18 robbery, after seeing a car with a license plate that matched the plate number provided by a witness of the attempted Palo Alto robbery earlier that night.

"We solve these crimes because we have good witnesses and good suspect information," Mr. Keegan said. ■

## Longtime city employee remembered by colleagues

Beverly Searles-Beasley, whose first job with the city of Menlo Park was as a softball score keeper when she was 14, died Nov. 15 at the age of 48.

Ms. Searles-Beasley was remembered in remarks made by City Manager Glen Rojas at the Nov. 18 City Council meeting. "Bev served this community with integrity, wisdom and a gung-ho drive that was contagious, especially among her colleagues in the Community Development Department, who are feeling her loss most acutely," said Mr. Rojas.

For 34 years, Ms. Searles-Beasley worked for the city of Menlo Park. She was an administrative assistant in the Community Development (planning and building) Department.

### OBITUARIES



Searles-Beasley

Ms. Searles-Beasley grew up in Menlo Park, attended local schools and graduated from Menlo-Atherton High School. She enjoyed sports and volunteering at a local women's shelter. She also enjoyed cooking, reading, and shopping with friends, say family members, who describe her as "a mother to all."

She is survived by her husband, Otto Beasley of Newark; son Brandon Beasley; and brothers Steve and Stan Searles.

She was preceded in death by her mother, Dorothy Searles-Magill, and father, Thomas P. Searles.

Interment will be in Alta Mesa Memorial Park. Memorials in her name may be made to the Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health Uncompensated Care Fund, 400 Hamilton Ave., Suite 340, Palo Alto CA 94301.

Obituaries are based on information provided by mortuaries and family members.

### Anthony Robert Kriebel

*Mechanical engineer, researcher*

Anthony Robert "Bob" Kriebel, who lived in Ladera for 52 years, died under hospice care in Santa Rosa on Nov. 14, after a year-long battle with leukemia. He was 80.

Born in Anderson, Indiana, Mr. Kriebel attended M.I.T., where he earned his bachelor's and master's degrees, as well as

his doctor of science degree, all in mechanical engineering. He served in the Army Ordnance Corps from 1950 to 1953, witnessing the first field tests of atomic bombs in Nevada. He also served as a first lieutenant during the Korean War.

Mr. Kriebel married Janice Alexander in 1955. The couple moved to Ladera in 1956, when Mr. Kriebel began working at SRI International. From 1960 to 1993, he worked in the Vidya Division of the California research lab Itek, publishing theoretical research.

In his spare time, Mr. Kriebel invented and sold a patent for the tonometer, which measures pressure in the human eye with a puff of air and is used to detect the onset of glaucoma.

After retiring in 1993, Mr. Kriebel served as a docent at the Hiller Aviation Museum in San Carlos. He continued to tinker in his garage and pursue

his inventions, building models of environmentally sustainable, "human-powered" vehicles. He was an early advocate of solar and wind power, according to family members.

Mr. Kriebel is survived by his wife, Jan; his daughters, Anne and Jane; his sisters, Carolyn and Connie; and three grandchildren. A private service will be held at a later date. Correspondence or remembrances to Jan may be sent to Anne McKinney at 2825 Vale Court, Lake Oswego, Oregon 97034.

### Maura Ann Collins

*Licensed vocational nurse*

A memorial service will be held for Maura Ann Collins at St. Raymond's Church on Saturday, Dec. 6, at 10 a.m. Ms. Collins died on Nov. 14 due to complications from surgery, at the age of 54.

Ms. Collins attended St. Raymond School and Canada College. She worked at the Stanford Blood Center, recruiting donors.

She was a dedicated gardener and environmentalist, according to family members.

Ms. Collins is survived by her siblings: Catie O'Leary, Tim Collins and Rowan Andrews.

St. Raymond's Church is located at 1100 Santa Cruz Ave. In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be sent to the St. Raymond's Homeless Family Fund, at the same address.

### Wallace Kean

*Retired airline pilot*

Wallace (Wally) Kean of Menlo Park, whose desire to see the world inspired his 33-year career as a commercial pilot, died Nov. 11. He was 81.

Mr. Kean was born in Bremerton, Washington. As a youth, he enjoyed fishing, hunting and boating. After serving in the U.S. Navy, he parlayed the GI Bill, hard work and a series of jobs into a degree in civil engineering from the University of Washington.

After taking flying lessons and buying a private plane, he became a commercial pilot for United Airlines and Pan American World Airways. He flew a variety of aircraft, including the DC4, B337 Stratocruiser, 707 and 747, achieving the rank of check captain. He combined a love of boating and engineering skills to build a 50-foot vessel for which he designed the operational systems.

His knowledge of a wide variety of subjects, especially geography and history, made him an engaging conversationalist, say family friends.

He is survived by his wife, Gudny, and many friends. Donations in his name may be made to Second Harvest Food Bank, 1051 Bing St., San Carlos, CA 94070-5320.

## We expect the best



### Obstetrics & Gynecology

Diana Aung, M.D.  
Kaytha Clawson, M.D.  
Laurie Karl, M.D.  
James W. McCarrick III, M.D., PhD  
Winona Tan, M.D.

### Fertility

Lillian Marie Swiersz, M.D.  
Salli Tazuke, M.D.



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# Menlo Park's new community engagement manager gets to work

Can Cherise Brandell change the way the city makes decisions?

By Sean Howell  
Almanac Staff Writer

Shortly after coming on board as Menlo Park's new community engagement manager in May, Cherise Brandell got a hint of why the City Council created the position.

"I was looking at a survey we had sent out, and I came across a question that said something like: 'Do you want a stop light at a certain intersection, yes or no?' And I just thought, 'oh, no,'" Ms. Brandell says. "There was no information about what the stop light was for. There was no option for negotiating a solution. Just: 'Do you want a stop light?'"

Ms. Brandell sees that seemingly innocuous question as an example of the city's sometimes misguided approach to decision-making. Instead of discussing an issue with community members and gradually coming to a decision, she says, Menlo Park has often presented residents with a binary choice — housing or retail, stop light or no — that, she argues, has contributed to the oft-cited polarization of the city's politics.

By encouraging residents to line up on one side or the other, she says, the city has unwittingly helped to fissure the community into two camps — one of which invariably comes away from the table with balled fists.

"We have to take government out of the business of salesmanship," Ms. Brandell says.

Councilman Rich Cline says he thinks Ms. Brandell will also help ease the City Council out of the business of informing the public on city issues — a task that has increasingly fallen to council members, Mr. Cline said, who often have their own agendas.

## First six months

The council created Ms. Brandell's position in June of 2007, after the previous council majority of Lee Duboc, Mickie Winkler and Nicholas Jellins had been criticized for sometimes failing to solicit public input on issues such as the decision to privatize the city's aquatics center, and to approve the proposed Derry project on El Camino Real. Mayor Andy

Cohen said that Ms. Brandell would help to keep the council and city staff from assuming they know how residents feel about a particular issue.

"It's not to say the other process was wrong, but there were a few instances where [council members] thought they were doing the right thing by the community, only to find at election time that it turned out not to be so," Mr. Cohen said. He added that he thought the previous council majority had made an effort to seek input from the community, citing the "your city/your decision" budget survey, but that it lacked the tools to do so.

Ms. Brandell has spent the bulk of her first six months on the job working "behind the scenes," she says — putting together a "community engagement plan," training other staff members in the process she advocates, revamping the "direct connect" feature on the city's Web site, and helping to prepare an organizational plan for the city manager.

*By encouraging residents to line up on one side or the other, she says, the city has unwittingly helped to fissure the community into two camps.*

Ms. Brandell was also responsible for the newsletter mailed to Menlo Park residents several weeks ago, and for the survey sent to 1,200 homes, asking residents to evaluate the quality of the city's services.

She said she hopes to better utilize the Web to involve the community in city business, and said that she is working to develop an online forum where residents can weigh in on issues facing the city.

"I'd like to see her implement her plan on larger scale," Mr. Cline said. "She's been forced to do small things, piecemeal work here and there, but she hasn't had an opportunity to exercise the whole process."

Mr. Cohen stressed patience when it comes to evaluating Ms. Brandell's impact, saying it would take time for her to get to know the community, and to



Photo by Veronica Weber/The Almanac

**Cherise Brandell**, Menlo Park's community engagement manager, speaking at a meeting of the Sustainable Menlo Park group at the Burgess Recreational Center on Wednesday, Nov. 19.

train city staff in the process she has put together.

## Upcoming projects

Mr. Cline said that he thinks Ms. Brandell will "offer a lot of value" to some of the council's upcoming projects, particularly the consultant-led visioning plan for El Camino Real and the downtown area. Ms. Brandell provided input in the consultant selection process, and she said she will help to facilitate the consultant's discussions with residents.

Her model will also be put to the test in a traffic study that is about to get under way in the Willows neighborhood. The city attempted to involve the community when it conducted a similar study in the mid-1990s and implemented traffic circles and lane chokers, but ultimately the dissatisfaction of many residents over the street devices led to the removal of nearly all of them.

This time around, Ms. Brandell said, the city will try to solicit input from a wider swath of the community — though it's possible that some residents might be left in the dark again.

"If you have an open process that works hard to be accessible, people have to choose not to participate," Ms. Brandell said. "There's only so much you can do."

And the time-intensive community engagement process shouldn't be applied to every decision, she said — only ones the council feels should be made through a public process. The worst thing the council could do, from Ms. Brandell's perspec-

tive, would be to solicit public input on matters that council members have already made up their minds on.

"You can't have it both ways," she said. "If [council members] feel very strongly about a solution, they should explain why, and move on."

## Coming West

Ms. Brandell said she decided to take the job and move to California on "sort of a whim," after a friend had come across

the job posting and shown it to her. Ms. Brandell served in a similar position with the city of Battle Creek, Michigan, and said she would not miss the cold weather there. Her three children have grown up, moved out and spread across the country, a fact that Ms. Brandell said made it easier to leave.

Ms. Brandell and her husband, a high school teacher, are currently renting in Mountain View as they look to buy — perhaps in Menlo Park, she said. ■

## REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



### Seller Financing

**Q: I am thinking of offering financing to attract a buyer for my property. Is this advisable?**

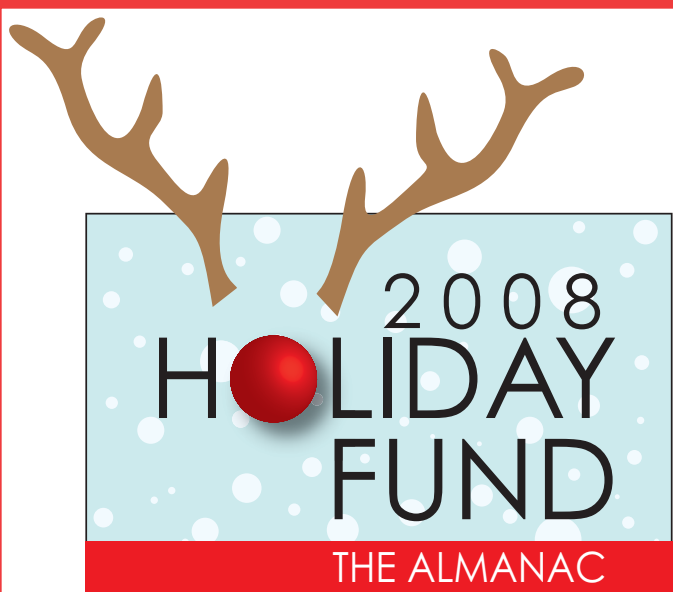
**A:** Seller financing was more common in the late 1970's and early 1980's when interest rates were very high. The prime rate reached 20.5 percent in December 1980 and mortgages were very expensive. Sellers who were in a position to offer first or second mortgage assistance to buyers often found it financially beneficial to do this.

In the very tight credit market that we are now in, seller financing is beginning to make a comeback. But sellers, like commercial lenders, want to be cautious about extending credit. Depending on the market where your property is located, you can decide how

much is prudent to lend. If your market is generally stable, you might lend up to 75 or 80 percent for a three to five year period or until credit markets ease and your buyer can refinance at a good rate. If you are more conservative, you might only lend no more than 60 percent.

In a declining or volatile market, it would not be advisable to provide secondary financing unless the borrower is very strong or you can cross-collateralize your loan, i.e., secure it with more than one property. If you are planning to extend seller financing, you should consult with your tax advisor or attorney on how best to structure this for your financial needs. I think we will see more creative financing in the near future.

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



# Giving through the HOLIDAY FUND 2008

For the 16th year, The Almanac offers readers the opportunity to multiply their charity dollars by giving through the annual Holiday Fund.

The Almanac has selected 10 local charities to benefit from donations to this year's Holiday Fund. These charities help the most vulnerable of our neighbors, be they homeless, hungry, sick or abused, young or old, native or immigrant.

In a series of articles over the next month, The Almanac will profile organizations that benefit from the Holiday Fund.

For every dollar given to the Holiday Fund, the Almanac seeks matching funds from foundations and private donors. The total amount donated is then divided equally among the 10 charities.

The fund drive could not happen without the help of the Silicon Valley Community Foundation and the donors who provide the matching grants for most contributions.

Since the Holiday Fund started in 1993, it has contributed just over \$3 million to a wide range of local nonprofit agencies. More than half came from readers, who have donated an average of \$111,000 a year over 15 years.



Photo by Veronica Weber/The Almanac

## SHELTER NETWORK helps family find new home after landlord faces foreclosure

By MARION SOFTKY

Patricia paid the rent on Oct. 1. On Oct. 4, just three days later, an eviction notice was taped to the front door of the tiny three-bedroom duplex where Patricia lived with her parents, her sister, and three dynamite little boys.

The eviction notice from Countywide Mortgage, which had bought their home from the landlord at public auction, told them to be out of the house by Nov. 8. "We were shocked," says Patricia during an interview in the two-story duplex in Redwood City, three days before they were to leave. "We called the owner — no answer. There's still no answer."

The family upstairs was evicted also. Patricia grumbles, "He (the landlord) got a new truck in August, but he didn't pay the mortgage."

Welcome to one of the personal consequences in our community from the mortgage mess that's grabbing national headlines.

Patricia's hard-working family did nothing wrong; yet still they got caught. They work three jobs to pay the rent and support the family. "But we didn't even have time to save up money for the deposit and first month's rent for a new place," says Patricia.

Grandfather Mario is a house-

man at a Burlingame hotel; Patricia does room service in a senior living complex in San Mateo; Maria prepares food at a sandwich shop in South San Francisco. Grandmother Alma stays home with two-year-old Christopher; Alex, 6, and Gustavo, 9, go to Roosevelt School nearby.

**'We are a rapid re-housing agency.'**

MICHELLE JACKSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, SHELTER NETWORK

Thanks to Shelter Network, San Mateo County's primary agency serving the homeless, the saga has a positive outcome. The family did not end up on the street, and they are now renting a larger, nicer home with a really good back yard in East Palo Alto. "The kids love it," says Patricia.

Their first step was to go for

help to the Fair Oaks Community Center. The center referred them to Shelter Network, which speedily enrolled them in its Housing First Program.

Housing First helps people who already have an income stay housed, and off the street, says Amy Wright of Shelter Network. The agency gives participants counseling, help in finding a new place, and financial help with deposits or a shallow rent subsidy. "We need space in our shelters for people who need it even more," says Ms. Wright.

But Patricia and her family discovered that finding a new rental was tough. "This is happening to so many people that the rental market is really tight," Ms. Wright notes.

Fortunately they secured the apartment in East Palo Alto two days before they had to move. Otherwise Shelter Network would have put them up in a hotel or motel. "If there is a gap, we'll put them up in a hotel so we don't put seven people on the street roaming around, including boys age 2, 6 and 9," Ms. Wright says.

Patricia is enormously grateful to Shelter Network for saving her family. "There are no words for their help," she says.

As the family prepares to leave one home to go to another, the children congregate in the kitchen of their Redwood City apartment and Gustavo reads to Patricia.

### HOLIDAY FUND

Your gifts to the Holiday Fund help Shelter Network. To give to the Holiday Fund, see the coupon on this page or go to [TheAlmanacOnline.com](http://TheAlmanacOnline.com).

with services and housing. "Staff goes out under overpasses and in parks, talking to people, connecting them with services," Ms. Jackson says. "That's brand new."

### Needs up; donations down

"This the worst I have ever seen it," says Ms. Jackson. "Last year at this time, we had 40 to 50 families on our waiting list; this year we have 75 to 110 families waiting because all our shelters are full."

All the basic safety-net services that provide food, shelter and medical help are stretched by the new influx of people hit by job loss, foreclosure, and the shrinking economy, says Ms. Jackson. "This is really happening on a major scale — more demand; less money," she says. "Our services are more critical than ever."

Ms. Jackson concludes, "We are hoping people will respond to the need to support agencies like ours who provide safety-net services to those most in need in our community."

"Our typical client is a single mom with two young children." Besides donations to The Almanac's Holiday Fund, Shelter Network welcomes volunteers of many interests and in-kind gifts of personal and household items. For information, contact Shelter Network at 1450 Chapin Ave., 2nd floor, Burlingame, CA 94010; or call 685-5880; or go to [ShelterNetwork.org](http://ShelterNetwork.org).

### Shelter Network

Housing First is one of 13 programs operated by Shelter Network that helped 3,702 people last year — including 1,656 children — to stay in safe housing with access to counseling, child care and social services.

"We are a rapid re-housing agency," says Michele Jackson, executive director of the 21-year-old agency. "We try to get people into housing as soon as possible to minimize the trauma."

Four of Shelter Network's major facilities are in South San Mateo County: Haven Family House in Menlo Park; Redwood Family House and the Maple Street Shelter for singles in Redwood City; and EPA House in East Palo Alto. In addition, Shelter Network operates several scattered sites and transitional programs throughout the county.

"Last year, on average, 90 percent of our transitional program graduates returned to homes of their own in an average of 107 days," Ms. Jackson says with pride.

Shelter Network's newest program, Outreach South County, works to connect the homeless



Your gift helps children and others in need

Contributions to the Holiday Fund go directly to programs that benefit Peninsula residents. Last year, Almanac readers contributed \$116,000, and with available matching grants, over \$150,000 was raised for 10 agencies that feed the hungry, house the homeless and provide numerous other services to those in need.

Contributions to the Holiday Fund will be matched, to the extent possible, by generous community corporations, foundations, and individuals, including the Rotary Club of Menlo Park, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. No administrative costs will be deducted from the gifts, which are tax-deductible as permitted by law.

All donations to the Holiday Fund will be shared equally among the 10 recipient agencies.

### This year, the Almanac's Holiday Fund will support these nonprofit organizations in the community

- Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula**  
Provides after-school academic support and enrichment activities for 1,000 youths each day, ages 6 to 18. Operates club-houses in Menlo Park's Belle Haven neighborhood, East Palo Alto and Redwood City, and after-school programs at schools in these communities designed to extend the learning day and supplement the school's curriculum.
- Ecumenical Hunger Program**  
Provides emergency food, clothing, household essentials, special children's programs and sometimes financial assistance to families in need, regardless of religious preference, including Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for more than 1,500 households.
- Family Connections**  
Provides a free parent-participation preschool program that includes parent education, parent leadership, preschool and pre-kindergarten for 400 people, including children, ages newborn to 5, at three sites in the Belle Haven neighborhood of Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, and the North Fair Oaks neighborhood of Redwood City.
- Project Read-Menlo Park**  
Provides free literacy services to adults in the Menlo Park area. Trained volunteers work one-to-one or in small groups to help adults improve their basic reading, writing and English language skills so they can achieve their goals and function more effectively at home, at work, and in the community. In 2007-08, a total of 120 tutors assisted more than 300 students.
- Second Harvest Food Bank**  
The largest collector and distributor of food on the Peninsula, Second Harvest Food Bank distributed 30 million pounds of food last year. It gathers donations from individuals and businesses and distributes food to some 162,000 people each month through more than 700 agencies and distribution sites in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.
- Ravenswood Family Health Center**  
Provides primary medical care, behavioral health services and preventive health care for all ages at its clinics in Belle Haven and East Palo Alto. It also operates a mobile clinic at school sites. Of the 22,700 registered patients, most are low-income and uninsured.
- St. Anthony's Padua Dining Room**  
Serves hundreds of hot meals six days a week in a social and friendly atmosphere to anyone in need. Funded entirely by contributions from the community, St. Anthony's is the largest soup kitchen between San Francisco and San Jose. It offers groceries to take home and distributes clothing to families.
- St. Francis Center (North Fair Oaks)**  
Provides services for families in need with the goal of helping them to live in dignity and become self-supporting community members. Assists 2,400 people each month with such services as low-income housing, food and clothing, showers and laundry, counseling, community garden, and education.
- Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition**  
Provides educational programs for youth and adults to help teens make healthy choices that will result in lower rates of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Its Teen Talk program last year served 3,650 youth at 23 public school sites in San Mateo County.
- Shelter Network**  
Provides short-term shelter and transitional housing services to more than 3,700 people and children each year. Offers programs for families and individuals to become self-sufficient and return to permanent housing.
- Youth and Family Enrichment Services**  
Provides many programs to help people who struggle with substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health, relationship and communications issues. Helps strengthen youth, families and individuals to overcome challenges through counseling, education, and residential services.

Name of donor \_\_\_\_\_ Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Street address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

I wish to contribute anonymously.  Don't publish the amount of my contribution.

I wish to designate my contribution as follows:

In honor of:  In memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

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PLEASE MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: THE HOLIDAY FUND

Enclose this coupon and send to: **The Almanac Holiday Fund**  
The Almanac, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas,  
Menlo Park, CA 94025

By Credit Card:  Visa or  MasterCard No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

The organizations named below provide major matching grants to the Holiday Fund.



The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation



Rotary Club of Menlo Park

The Almanac will make every effort to publish donor names for donations received before Dec. 31, 2008, unless the donor checks the anonymous box. All donations will be acknowledged by mail.

Short  
takes

## Ring them bells

Restaurateur Jamis MacNiven promises that this race will be the next Sand Hill Challenge. That would be the Silver Bells wheelchair race to benefit Companions for the Soul, a pet assisted therapy organization. The ladies, who range in age from 70 to 105 — according to Mr. MacNiven — the race will start at 3 p.m. Wednesday, Dec. 3, at Buck's restaurant, 3062 Woodside Road, in Woodside.

The race will be followed by a concert performed by the Silver Bells and the Serendipity dancers. The therapy dogs and their handlers will put on their own little show at 4:15 p.m.

There will be a \$10 suggested donation at the door. Questions? Call Buck's at 510-8010.

## Turn in that survey

The 1,200 Menlo Park residents who received a survey in the mail asking about the quality of city services must return it by Dec. 1 if they want their voices to be heard. Residents who didn't receive the survey in the mail can fill out an online version at the city's Web site, [www.menlopark.org](http://www.menlopark.org).

And residents who did not receive the newsletter the city recently sent out can call the city at 330-6618 to request delivery, or pick one up in the city manager's office in the Civic Center, between Laurel and Alma streets.

## What's opera, Doc?

Rebecca Wallace, a veteran Almanac staffer who's now the arts and entertainment editor for our sister paper, the Palo Alto Weekly, is back from New York after winning a prestigious journalism fellowship. She was one of 23 reporters and editors chosen from across the nation for a 10-day National Endowment for the Arts program on covering classical music and opera. The jam-packed agenda included attending performances of the New York Philharmonic and Metropolitan Opera's premiere of "Doctor Atomic," backstage tours, and writing reviews with senior journalists, Ms. Wallace said.

## Family Connections brings preschool, parent leadership, to those in need

By Renee Zimmerman

**O**n any weekday morning, in a typical classroom at Family Connections, instead of kissing their youngsters goodbye, parents are stuffing purses and jackets into small cubbies meant for little lunch boxes and joining their children on the colorful carpet as one of the teachers begins the "welcome song," encouraging everyone to join in.

This co-op model of preschool programming, where parents attend with their child, involves the parents early on in their children's education and seeks to keep them involved as they transition into the K-12 school system.

As evidence increasingly links parent involvement to school success, Family Connections provides this important opportunity to hundreds of low-income people each year.

Operating for nearly a decade as small, grassroots organization, Family Connections today has grown to three locations in Redwood City, Menlo Park and



**Dora Oseguera** and her daughter Itzel enjoy finger painting at a Family Connections parent participation preschool classroom.

Photo by Julie Brodie Photography

## HOLIDAY FUND

Your gifts to the Holiday Fund help Family Connections provide free preschool and parent education programs for low-income families. To give to the Holiday Fund, see the coupon on Page 9 go to [TheAlmanacOnline.com](http://TheAlmanacOnline.com).

East Palo Alto.

The organization has also become the service provider for the Silicon Valley Community Foundation's "Kickoff To Kindergarten" summer program serving 100 children living within the Ravenswood City

Elementary School District.

Most recently, in a special collaboration, Family Connections is providing its core co-op preschool program to the English as a Second Language students in the Sequoia Union High School District Adult School.

"Parents come to us because they are looking for an affordable, high quality, preschool program for their child," explains Ruth Pinkus-Resnik, Family Connections' education coordinator. "When we emphasize that the program is a co-op model, where parents attend with their child, many parents enroll not knowing quite what to expect.

"It often takes months before

they realize that they too are growing and learning as much, if not more, than their 3 year old."

Funded primarily by grants and individual donations, Family Connections remains free of charge so that all who qualify as low-income can participate.

The program is open to parents and their children, ages newborn to five years old.

Unique to the program is the ability for parents to bring all of their children under the age of 5, eliminating the need for child care for the newborn or toddler-age child.

"We are like a big family here," notes Angela Jaime, a longtime teacher. "So many of our parents are here alone and new to the country, and this is a place where they can make friends and build important support system that benefits the child and strengthens the family unit."

In addition to preschool and parent education, Family Connections provides many other services free of charge through various partnerships in the community, including free mental health counseling for both the parents and children, workshops on domestic violence prevention, nutrition, child safety, and parent leadership and advocacy.

For more information on Family Connections, call 369-6467, go to [www.familyconnections.org](http://www.familyconnections.org) or send an e-mail to: [director@familyconnections.org](mailto:director@familyconnections.org).

## Project Read learners improve English, and futures

By Roberta Roth

**L**ucia Soto, a 19 year resident of Menlo Park's Belle Haven community, says her life has dramatically improved since she began studying with a Project Read tutor three years ago.

Ms. Soto has become more involved in her neighborhood.

She now serves on the Onetta Harris Community Center's Advisory Council and was recently appointed to the Menlo Park Library Commission. She is the only commission member from Belle Haven and she is the first Project Read learner to be selected by the City Council to join the commission.

"Before, I felt like a child, but now I can speak with people better and have a good life here. My experience (with Project Read) is very good — it is a good thing that has happened in my life."

In addition, Ms. Soto has taken on leadership roles with the Project Read Events Committee and was a driving force

**Tutor** Gary Fry and Learner Joel Landeros in the Project Read Computer Lab.  
Photo by Alice Bradshaw



behind its successful Taste Desserts for Literacy event in 2007 and 2008.

"People come to us knowing some English," said Alice Bradshaw, the program's acting coordinator. "Perhaps they can read traffic signs but cannot read a newspaper or communicate with their children's teachers. After working with a volunteer tutor, learners improve their lives in so many ways - they can read to their children, earn a job promotion, enroll in community college, register to vote - the opportunities are endless!"

The 23-year-old program currently has 100 tutors and more

## HOLIDAY FUND

Your gifts to the Holiday Fund benefit Project Read-Menlo Park. To contribute, see the coupon on Page 9 or go to [TheAlmanacOnline.com](http://TheAlmanacOnline.com).

than 100 adult learners. Tutors are continually recruited to meet the program's ongoing waiting list of adults eager to improve their reading, writing, and communication skills.

According to tutor Jean Eastman: "To join Project Read as a tutor is to embark on an adven-

ture — an adventure demanding patience, creativity, and imagination. All of us want the best for our students and look for ways to ensure their success."

Patricia D'Arzelere, a tutor for 12 years, said: "I get to help someone get a little more comfortable with a language that I love. So with great courage, perhaps even desperate courage, they (the learners) asked for help. And Project READ was there."

In many ways, she says, "this program is really for me. I get to help someone get a little more comfortable with the language that I love. And they inspire me so."

## Homeowners warned about unlicensed contractors

San Mateo County authorities are warning homeowners about unlicensed contractors in the wake of a two-day sting operation in Menlo Park and Belmont that resulted in 22 arrests or citations.

Investigators from the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office and the Menlo Park and Belmont police departments aided the Contractors State License Board in carrying out the operations on Nov. 13 and Nov. 14, according to the district attorney's office. The board conducts similar stings periodically across the state, targeting cities where investigators find consumer complaints and a high number of advertisements placed by unlicensed contractors.

The district attorney's office said it would not know how many of the 22 contractors had been working in Menlo Park until the contractors board completes its investigative reports.

As part of the sting, contractors were contacted and asked to bid on projects. Unlicensed contractors who bid more than \$500 for a job — the minimum value of home improvement contracts that require a license — were arrested or cited for misdemea-

or charges of contracting without a license, according to the district attorney's office. Penalties for conviction range as high as six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

The licensing process is designed to impose a "minimum standard of competence" on contractors, according to John Wilson with the district attorney's office.

Mr. Wilson warned that, in addition to posing a threat of inferior workmanship, unlicensed contractors might employ workers without liability insurance, which is required by law. A lack of insurance could result in lawsuits against homeowners if a worker is injured on the job, Mr. Wilson said.

He advised homeowners to have contractors sign a written contract for the work to be completed, to comparison shop, to check references, and to refuse to pay more than 10 percent down on work.

Homeowners can verify a contractor's license by calling the license board at (800) 321-2752, or by visiting its Web site at [www.cslb.ca.gov](http://www.cslb.ca.gov).

—Bay City News Service  
contributed to this story.

## Boesch to get \$270,000-plus a year

Former Menlo Park city manager David Boesch, the man chosen to replace longtime San Mateo County Manager John Maltbie when he retires at the end of the year, will make \$270,234 a year when he picks up the reins on Jan. 1.

Mr. Boesch is currently the assistant county manager.

The Board of Supervisors, which announced his appointment in early November, unanimously approved Mr. Boesch's one-year contract on Nov. 18.

Terms of the contract include 45 vacation days annually, a \$13,338 annual transportation

allowance, and three months of severance pay if his contract isn't renewed or if he is fired "without cause." He can accumulate up to 720 hours of vacation time, which he can cash in when his tenure ends.

The supervisors will evaluate his performance next year on or before July 31 and on or before Sept. 30.

Mr. Boesch was city manager of Menlo Park from 2000 until February 2007, when he was appointed assistant county manager. He lives in Menlo Park with his wife, Carrie, and their teenage son, Alexander.

## Volunteers sought for transportation panel

The San Mateo County Transportation Authority is soliciting applications from county residents to fill several vacancies on its 15-member Citizens Advisory Committee.

The committee, which meets

once a month in San Carlos, acts as a liaison between the public and the authority's board of directors, according to a press release. For more information, go to [www.smcta.com](http://www.smcta.com) or call 508-6223.

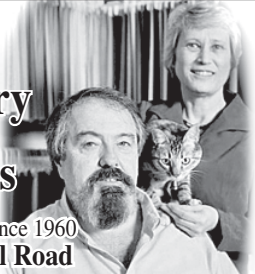
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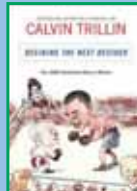


## KEPLER'S FEATURED AUTHORS IN DECEMBER

Calvin Trillin

*Deciding the Next Decider: The 2008 Presidential Race in Rhyme*

Thursday, December 4th, 7:30 p.m.



Thomas Keller

*Under Pressure: Cooking Sous Vide*

Thursday, December 11th, 7:30 p.m.



With an introduction by the eminent food-science writer Harold McGee.

In this revolutionary new cookbook, Thomas Keller, America's most respected chef, explains why this foolproof technique yields results that other culinary methods cannot. Features a collection of never-before-published recipes from his landmark restaurants—The French Laundry in Napa Valley and per se in New York.

Election 2008:

Never have so many said so much in the pursuit of so little. And who better than Calvin Trillin to encapsulate in crystalline verse every vainglorious speech, flat-footed gaffe, blatant misstatement, and calculated pandering gesture of the many men (and one woman) who knew in their hearts that only they could ably guide the Free World. It's all here!

### Don't miss this exclusive MEMBERS-ONLY event!

Sunday, December 7th, 5-8 p.m.

Kepler's will be open for MEMBERS ONLY! Bring us your holiday shopping list! Our staff will be here just for you. We'll help you select the perfect gifts and wrap them all up, while you enjoy champagne, chocolate, music, and merrymaking.

Don't miss this exclusive shopping event.

### Become a Kepler's Literary Circle Member today!

*Chocolate* MILK CHOCOLATE

Culture Inside

Kepler (kəp'lar), U.S. Slang — n. 1. one who kipples; a literary enthusiast. —v.t. 2. the art of browsing and acquiring books. Syn. 1. See booklover.

100% Literary Content

TASTES BEST BY DEC 7

100% RECYCLED

# Kepler's

x o x o x

**Champagne and Chocolate Reception**  
Sunday, December 7th— 5-8pm.

*Kepler's will be open for MEMBERS ONLY. Bring us your list! Our staff will be here just for you. We'll help you select the perfect gifts, and wrap them all up, while you enjoy champagne, chocolate, music and merrymaking.*

### A Meet and Chat Book-signing with Wona Miniati

*Cooking with All Things*  
Trader Joe's

Sunday, December 14th, 11:00 a.m.

Mortal beings can now create the stuff of chefs, in minutes, using ingredients all from Trader Joe's. The perfect gift for all your TJ-loving friends!

Besides being Trader Joe's junkies, the authors are also busy moms. They geared this cookbook to healthy and tasty family-friendly meals that can be made quickly and easily, any night of the week.

No formal presentation.



### Palo Alto Weekly Short Story Contest Reception

Monday, December 8th, 7:30 p.m.

This year marks the 23rd Anniversary of the Palo Alto Weekly Short Story Contest. Join us for a reception in honor of this year's winners! Refreshments will be served.



### Writing Workshop with Lynn Hazen

Friday, December 12th, 7:00 -9:00 p.m.  
Location: Menlo Park Library, 800 Alma Street

We know that there are plenty of aspiring writers in our community...so, come share your talent at this FREE Writing Workshop designed for ages 12 and up.



### Kepler's Story Time every Sunday at 11:30 a.m.

#### December 7th - Penguin Story Time

Winter is coming to Kepler's! Our favorite artic animals are popping up all over the store.



#### December 14th - Gingerbread Story Time

Gingerbread men for everyone! Catch one if you can!



#### December 21st and 28th - Cookies and Coloring

Drop off the kids for cookies and coloring while you browse Kepler's.



All events are free and take place at Kepler's unless otherwise noted. Please visit [keplers.com](http://keplers.com) for details and updates.



Follow me to Kepler's. It's our bookstore.

1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park • 650-324-4321 • Learn more at [Keplers.com](http://Keplers.com)

# Atherton officials make pitch for new town hall

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

Behind the scenes at Atherton's administrative offices and police station, town staff work in cramped, cluttered and inadequate quarters, said town officials at a public meeting held Thursday, Nov. 20.

"I'd be embarrassed to bring anybody to our police facility," said Councilman Jim Dobbie.

Members of the "Blue Ribbon Task Force" are hoping to gather public support to rebuild the facility, not only to give employees some elbow-room, but also to bring the town into compliance with fire and seismic safety, accessibility and emergency operations center regulations, they said. Built in 1965, the administration/police building doesn't come close to meeting current building codes, said Council-

man Charles Marsala.

Amidst talk of a new town hall's prospective size, placement, financing and attributes, the most convincing argument of the evening came in the form of a slide show.

The virtual tour of town facilities included rodent-infested attics where sensitive town documents are stored in cardboard boxes, an overflowing locker where police weapons and ammunition are stowed, and the narrow hallway that houses sensitive communications equipment.

In 1995, the town hired G4 consultants to do a space needs assessment, which came to the conclusion that Atherton needed three times as much space as it had.

Architect William Grindley, a member of the task force, said his own assessment pegs the town's

needs at 25,000 square feet, up from the 13,744 square feet it currently has. That estimate includes a new meeting room that would serve as Town Council Chambers, he said. He estimated the cost at \$400 per square foot.

"It's much cheaper to build new than to remodel the 1965 facility," he said. "The good news is, (the town owns) a lot of land."

The small audience gathered at the Pavilion at Holbrook-Palmer Park raised concerns about town land that might be seized to build new train tracks for the state's high-speed rail project, and what would happen to the historic Town Council Chambers located across the street from the administration building. Task force members said the historic building would be preserved, and that even if the railroad right of way is widened, it would still leave

plenty of land.

"It seems to me that in Atherton, as one of the wealthiest communities in the country, we ought to be able to afford respectable facilities," said resident Jack Ringham, a member of the town's rail committee.

Looking to Portola Valley's recently completed new Town Center complex, built almost entirely with private donations, the Atherton City Council on Wednesday, Nov. 19, approved the creation of an account to receive tax-deductible contributions.

"Obviously, we need space, but we're not just going to go out and get another storage locker," Mr. Marsala said after the meeting. "There are safety codes and other issues we have to address."

He encouraged residents to call 752-0500 for a private tour of the town facilities. ■



Atherton police weapons and ammunition crowd a closet at the police station. The building needs to be replaced with a larger, safer facility for officers and town staff, say town officials.

# Fee increases proposed for Children's Center, planning services

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

## ■ MENLO PARK

Menlo Park residents seeking building permits and parents with kids in the city's child care program would see the costs of services increase — in some cases steeply — under a proposal that the City Council will take up at its meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 25.

The proposal, which would raise fees for full-time students at the Menlo Children's Center by 7 percent and fees associated with planning department services by

an average of 36 percent, will be the subject of a public hearing at the meeting, scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. in the council chambers in the Civic Center, located between Laurel and Alma streets.

The recommendations come in the wake of a consultant-directed study on user fees that calculated the cost to the city of providing services for the first time since 1998.

Parents of kids at Menlo Children's Center would see a 7 per-

cent increase for full-time enrollment in the program. The cost of part-time enrollment for new students would jump by as much as 88 percent, though students who are now enrolled part-time would see only a 7 percent increase.

In letters to the City Council, several parents asked whether it was appropriate to raise costs during a recession. One parent voiced concern that the jump might encourage parents to pull their kids out of the program.

"We certainly don't want to prevent people from availing themselves of child care," Mayor

Andy Cohen said, "but we do need to try to get a higher percentage of cost recovery, if possible." Mr. Cohen said that he expected the council to approve an increase in the fee, though probably not as high as 7 percent.

The Children's Center fee has increased by an average of 4 to 5 percent per year for the last few years, according to Community Services Director Barbara George. The fact that the fee hadn't been updated in about a year and a half contributed to the higher-than-usual increase, Ms. George said.

In recommending a fee hike, Ms. George said, the recreation department was acting on the direction of past councils to recover as much of the cost of the child care program as possible. Under the new proposed fee schedule, the city would recoup an estimated 80 percent of the program's cost; it currently recovers 75 percent. The price would range as high as \$1,211 per month per child for pre-school, and \$1,541 per month for toddlers, according to the report.

Ms. George noted that despite the raise, the city still charges less than many of the comparable child care facilities in the area — nearly all of which are private. She said that the center's enrollment fee isn't determined by a sliding scale based on family income, unlike the Belle Haven Child Development Center. She added that the recreation department might consider giving a discount to parents with multiple children in the center at a future date.

### Other proposed changes

The proposed elevated fee levels for planning department ser-

vices are intended to allow the city to recoup nearly all of the costs related to private development, according to Community Development Director Arlinda Heineck.

The cost to Menlo Park residents to appeal a decision by staff or the Planning Commission on the approval of a project will leap from \$15 to \$110, which would represent approximately one-tenth of the estimated cost to the city of carrying out the appeal process, according to the staff report. The higher fee is intended to force people to think about the seriousness of the appeal before they file it, but not to make it prohibitively expensive, Ms. Heineck said.

The new schedule would also charge seniors at the Belle Haven Senior Center \$2 for re-usable bags at brown-bag lunches, and 25 cents for to-go containers — measures intended to encourage diners to bring their own bags to the lunches, and to eat at the center as opposed to taking food home, according to the report.

Staff recommends a decrease in fees for construction inspections, because the study revealed that the city had in some cases charged more for the inspections than it cost to carry them out.

If adopted, the amendments will bring the city an additional \$668,000 per year in general fund revenue, according to the report. The new schedule would go into effect as early as Feb. 1.

To see the recommended fee increases, go to [www.menlopark.org](http://www.menlopark.org), follow the link to the City Council page, and then follow the link to the Nov. 25 agenda. From there, open the staff report under the "Public Hearings" subhead. ■

## LORRAINE R. HENDERSON

### LOCAL VOLUNTEER



Lorraine R. Henderson, former resident of Menlo Park, died recently in Richland, WA at age 84. Mrs. Henderson was born in New Orleans, LA. Shortly thereafter she moved to Los Angeles, CA where she received her elementary, high school and college (University of California at Los Angeles) education.

She assisted in her mother's businesses before starting a career in L. A. County government, ultimately overseeing the Coogan Law's required funds for minor screen actors. Also, she was Social Director at Temple Beth Am. In Washington, DC she married Marc Henderson, a systems designer for computers in the Pentagon. She continued her studies at George Washington University, was involved in several charities, supported costumers at the Arena Stage, did volunteer work in the U. S. House of Representatives, became an astute follower of national politics and supported one of the candidates in DC's first elective campaign.

Her husband was transferred by SRI International to Menlo Park, CA, where she began a new range of volunteerism—ranging from polling stations to her favorite, the Palo Alto Auxiliary to the Children's Hospital

at Stanford. She attended St. Raymond's Church and was a member of the Palo Alto University Club. Her praiseworthy dinner parties for her husband's business associates and clients were notable. In 1989, she moved with her husband, for his new assignment, to Richland where she participated in several local organizations including the Tri-Cities Traditional Jazz Society and Meadow Springs County Club.

She enjoyed traveling, especially in Europe before and after marriage. She was known for her independent spirit, compassion for others, quick wit and positive outlook. She had truly personified the lyrics of the 40's song "Sweet Lorraine" and was beloved by many.

She is survived by Marc, her husband of 46 years; her step-son Richard (Jan) and their daughters Brooke and Ali Henderson, all of Phoenix, AZ; nephew Dr. H. Milano Mellon (Marji) and their children of Los Angeles; niece Lore (Werner) Gaubinger of Spokane; brothers-in-law Richard (Avanell) Henderson of Portland, OR and Barry Henderson of Seattle, WA and numerous other relatives.

Donations in her memory for the Lucille Packard Children's Hospital may be mailed to the Lucille Packard Foundation for Children's Health, 400 Hamilton Avenue, Suite 340, Palo Alto, CA 94301.

PAID OBITUARY

# Menlo girls earns No. 1 seed in NorCal volleyball playoff

The Menlo School girls' volleyball team has been rewarded for its outstanding season, and will get to stay home for the holidays while competing in the CIF Nor-Cal tournament. The Knights (33-6) were awarded the No. 1 seed in the Division IV playoffs and will host No. 8 Central Valley in a first-round match on Tuesday, Nov. 25, at 7 p.m.

Central Valley (23-10) is from Shasta Lake City in the Northern Section.

Menlo will play at home as long as it continues to win. The second round will be Saturday, Nov. 29, with the Knights potentially facing

the winner between No. 4 Sutter (41-1) and No. 5 Ripon (43-5).

The NorCal title match will be Tuesday, Dec. 2, with the state finals moving to the Bren Center on the campus of UC Irvine on Dec. 6.

Menlo won its third consecutive Central Coast Section Division IV girls' volleyball championship Saturday with a 25-12, 25-15, 25-19 victory over top-seeded Harbor at Independence High in San Jose.

The Knights now have now won seven CCS Division IV titles in the past 10 years.

— *Palo Alto Weekly*. For more, go to *TheAlmanacOnline.com*.

## Water polo: SHP girls win CCS title

By Keith Peters

Palo Alto Weekly

The Sacred Heart Prep girls' water polo team established a little personal history by holding off Castilleja, 5-4, in the Central Coast Section Division II championship game on Saturday at Stanford's Avery Aquatic Center.

The top-seeded Gators (23-6) won their second straight CCS title, the first time in school history. It wasn't easy, however, as No. 2-seeded Castilleja (19-10) gave SHP a battle.

Castilleja was making only its first appearance in the CCS finals in 10 years and, while the Castilleja players were happy to be there, they believed they also could win it. They came pretty

close, rallying from a 4-1 half-time deficit to tie the match at 4 in the third period following goals by sophomore Natasha von Kaeppler, senior Laura Martinez and senior Ericka von Kaeppler.

Castilleja also changed its defense in that third period, clamping down on SHP senior Yvonne Dunlevie, who scored three goals in the first half to stake her team to the lead. SHP coach Jon Burke finally decided to move Dunlevie to the outside again, where she had scored in the first half. When that happened, Castilleja had to put defenders on her, thus opening the middle.

With just 1:14 left in the match, SHP junior Heather Smith took a pass inside and whipped a backhanded shot past Castilleja sophomore goalie Evan Cranston for the winning goal. ■

## ■ POLICE CALLS

### ATHERTON

**Grand theft report:** Necklace discovered missing, 100 block of Atherton Ave., Nov. 14.

**Fraud report:** Letter thanked resident for opening account though no account had been opened, first block of Jennings Lane, Nov. 14.

### MENLO PARK

#### Auto burglary reports:

■ Apple iPod and accessory and energy drinks stolen, 100 block of Creek Road, Nov. 14.

■ GPS device stolen, 100 block of Creek Road, Nov. 14.

■ GPS device stolen, 600 block of Roble Ave., Nov. 19.

**Residential burglary report:** Two bicycles valued at \$1,400 stolen, 600 block of Middle Ave., Nov. 15.

**Commercial burglary report:** Coins stolen from Laundromat, 900 block of Willow Road, Nov. 17.

#### Grand theft reports:

■ Laptop computer stolen, 500 block of Middlefield Road, Nov. 14.

■ Bicycles stolen, 1300 block of Windermere Ave. and 800 block of Coleman Ave., Nov. 16 and 17.

#### Fraud reports:

■ ID theft, 1000 block of Sonoma Ave. and 1100 block of Willow Road and 200 block of Gilbert Ave., Nov. 14, 17 and 18.

■ Bank account depleted by \$12,000, 1100 block of Chestnut St., Nov. 19.

■ M-A wins rematch with Woodside High in semifinals.

By Rick Eymmer

Palo Alto Weekly

Vaughn Smith has a thing for the end zone. Even after scoring twice in Menlo-Atherton's 36-20 victory over visiting Monta Vista on Saturday he wanted more.

So when he intercepted a two-point conversion in the end zone it was off to the races. He crossed the 50-yard line before realizing the officials were blowing their whistles.

Smith had already put on quite a show, gaining 252 yards, 75 on the first play of the second half, on 25 carries. He was just looking for an encore after helping M-A earn the first round Central Coast Section Large Schools Division victory.

## SHP boys successfully defend CCS Division II polo title

For the first time in the history of the boys' water polo program at Sacred Heart Prep, the Gators are back-to-back Central Coast Section champions. Sacred Heart, the No. 1 seed, wrapped up its second straight CCS championship on Saturday night with a 6-3 win over No. 2 Menlo.

With the win, the Gators (25-5) also avenged a loss to Menlo in the CCS championship in 2006, when Menlo defeated Sacred Heart 6-4.

For Sacred Heart, the biggest factor in their win was the play of junior goalie Ben Dearborn,

## ■ SPORTS

For more sports news and photos, go to *TheAlmanacOnline.com*.

He'll get his encore Saturday, Nov. 29, when the Bears (9-2) take on PAL Bay Division rival Woodside (8-3) in the semifinals. That game will be at Terra Nova High in Pacifica at 7 p.m. The Wildcats advanced with a 42-13 win over Homestead.

M-A just got through with the Wildcats in the regular-season finale the previous week, needing a late touchdown drive to grab a 28-25 victory.

M-A gained 404 total offensive yards, with quarterback Turner Baty contributing 70 yards on 5-of-12 passing. He was all smiles even if he didn't get a chance to throw the ball in the second half. The Bears won their sixth straight game. ■



Photo by Keith Peters/Palo Alto Weekly

**M-A senior** running back Vaughn Smith rushed for 252 yards on 25 carries as the Bears beat visiting Monta Vista, 36-20, in the first round of the CCS Large School playoffs on Saturday.

who consistently denied Menlo's attempts on goal. Dearborn only let in two natural goals with Menlo's third coming on a penalty shot.

Dearborn was peppered by

shots all night from Menlo's attacks. By the end of the third quarter, Menlo (22-7) already had taken 24 shots. Yet Dearborn was able to parry away shot after shot. — *By Colin Becht*



# Adventures in Music



## Dawn Harms and special guests present a program for elementary school aged children on the FUN of MUSIC!

This is a FREE event!

Monday, January 26, 2009 at 9:30 and 11:00 a.m.

Dinkelspiel Auditorium at Stanford University

PRESENTED BY



**RESERVATIONS:** Please get in touch with Nette Worthey at 650.725.1932 or [nworthey@stanford.edu](mailto:nworthey@stanford.edu). Funding is available for schools in need of financial assistance for transportation.

## PIT BULL

continued from page 5

retrievers and pit bulls are near the top of the list, he said.

## Not the first time

Woodside resident Jeanne Carley, a lifelong equestrian and still riding, encountered a pit bull in late 2002, but with a different outcome: the horse fended off the dog, but Ms. Carley suffered a broken neck.

In this case, a pit bull in the bed of a passing truck broke free of its chain, jumped out and chased her and her horse down Runnymede Road, she said. The horse bucked, kicked, spun and reared. "It was a long, drawn out, insane rodeo," she said.

The dog was a tough customer. She said she whacked it twice with her dressage whip, but to no effect. "It was like hitting a fence post," she said.

A kick from her horse sent the dog sailing, but it came right

back. "When the horse kicked the dog and it made no difference, I lost all hope," she said.

Her goal: stay on the horse and let it conduct the fight without interference from her.

Her neck injury came when she happened to look skyward during a bucking maneuver. The force of the bucking snapped her head further back and fractured a vertebrae, and she fell off.

"I don't come off that easily, but a broken neck will do it," she said. ■

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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?**

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

**TOWN SQUARE FORUM**

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**EMAIL**

your views to: letters@almanacnews.com and note this it is a letter to the editor in the subject line.

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

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

## Holiday Fund helps strapped local agencies

The economic crisis gripping the country is already being felt at the nonprofits that serve Menlo Park and the surrounding communities. Many report that their demand for help is up 50 percent or more compared with last year. This year, more than ever, it is important for those who have the means to share with those who are down on their luck.

If you are able, we urge you to consider a donation to the Almanac's Holiday Fund, now in its 17th year. Your contribution will help support 10 nonprofit agencies that provide a safety net to local residents who have nowhere to turn. These are our neighbors who may have been laid off unexpectedly, or had a catastrophic illness, or suffer from addiction or mental health problems. They deserve our help.

The Holiday Fund provides grants to organizations that can offer a temporary home, arrange health care or provide counseling to bring an end to the substance abuse that destroys families and victimizes young children.

Last year the Holiday Fund and its partners — the Rotary Club of Menlo Park, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation — were able to raise more than \$150,000 for 10 local agencies. Well over half of that contribution — \$116,000 — was donated by 208 Almanac readers. With available matching grants, the Holiday Fund was able to provide nearly \$16,000 for each of the 10 nonprofit agencies.

Over the last 16 years, Almanac readers and the supporting foundations have contributed more than \$3 million to local social service agencies. More than half came from Almanac readers, and the rest from generous individuals and foundations.

Monies contributed to the Holiday Fund are held by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation and will be distributed to the nonprofits in February or early March. No administrative costs or fees are deducted from Holiday Fund gifts, so 100 percent of all donations will be received by the nonprofit agencies.

The Almanac's Holiday Fund this year will support the following nonprofit organizations in the community:

**Boys & Girls Club of the Peninsula**

Provides after-school academic support and enrichment activities for 1,000 youth each day, ages 6 to 18. Operates clubhouses in Menlo Park's Belle Haven neighborhood, East Palo Alto and Redwood City, and after-school programs at schools in these communities designed to extend the learning day and supplement the school's curriculum.

**LETTERS**  
Our readers write

**Why it pays to shop with local merchants**

Editor:

As our budgets are stretched thinner these days and as many of us are pondering how we will manage through the holidays,

it's a good time to reflect on how and why our shopping choices make a difference.

Hard-earned dollars spent at our locally owned businesses aren't paying for a CEO's multi-million-dollar salary and bonus, regardless of level of success or the real cost to the economy, our families and the environment. Our dollars aren't paying for lobbyists or massive advertising for creating highly petroleum-

**Ecumenical Hunger Program**

Provides emergency food, clothing, household essentials, special children's programs and sometimes financial assistance to families in need, regardless of religious preference, including Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for more than 1,500 households.

**Ravenswood Family Health Center**

Provides primary medical care, behavioral health services and preventive health care for all ages at its clinics in Belle Haven and East Palo Alto. It also operates a mobile clinic at school sites. Of the 22,700 registered patients, most are low-income and uninsured.

**St. Anthony's Padua Dining Room**

Serves hundreds of hot meals six days a week in a social and friendly atmosphere to anyone in need. Funded entirely by contributions from the community, St. Anthony's is the largest soup kitchen between San Francisco and San Jose. It offers groceries to take home and distributes clothing to families.

**Second Harvest Food Bank**

The largest collector and distributor of food on the Peninsula, Second Harvest Food Bank distributed 30 million pounds of food last year. It gathers donations from individuals and businesses and distributes food to some 162,000 people each month through more than 700 agencies and distribution sites in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

**Shelter Network**

Provides short-term shelter and transitional housing services to more than 3,700 adults and children each year. Offers programs for families and individuals to become self-sufficient and return to permanent housing.

**Youth and Family Enrichment Services**

Provides many programs to help people who struggle with substance abuse, domestic violence, mental health, relationship and communications issues. Helps strengthen youth, families and individuals to overcome challenges through counseling, education, and residential services.

**Project Read-Menlo Park**

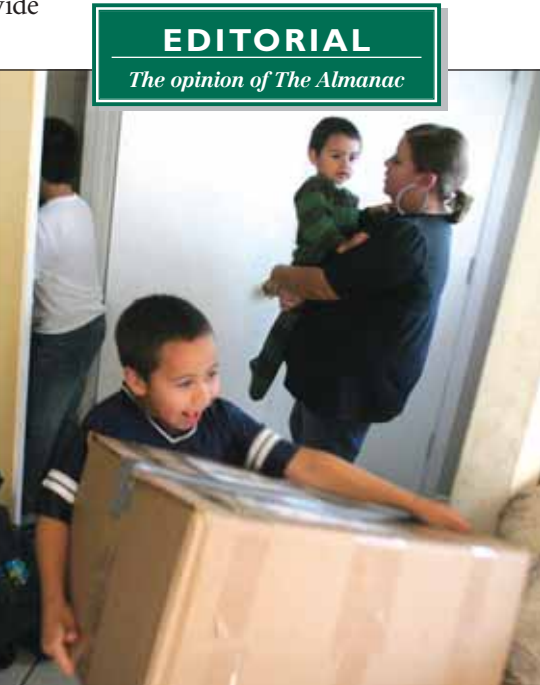
Provides free literacy services to adults in the Menlo Park area. Trained volunteers work one-on-one or in small groups to help adults improve their basic reading, writing and English language skills so they can achieve their goals and function more effectively at home, at work and in the community. In 2007-08, a total of 120 tutors assisted more than 300 students.

**St. Francis Center (North Fair Oaks)**

Provides services for families in need with the goal of helping them to live in dignity and become self-supporting community members. The center assists 2,400 people each month with such services as low-income housing, food and clothing, shower and laundry, counseling, community garden, and education.

**Family Connections**

Provides a free parent-participation preschool program that includes parent education, parent leadership, preschool and pre-kindergarten for 400 people, including parents and children, ages newborn to 5, at three sites in the Belle Haven neighborhood of Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, and the North Fair Oaks neighborhood of Redwood City.



**EDITORIAL**  
The opinion of The Almanac

Photo by Veronica Weber

Alexander, 6, helps his family move boxes out of their Redwood City apartment, which their landlord lost to foreclosure. With the help of Shelter Network, the family is moving into an East Palo Alto home rather than being forced onto the streets.

dependent shopping, or for shipping jobs overseas.

When we shop at our local independent businesses, more of our shopping dollars stay in our communities. Our dollars are helping to pay better wages, and more often include benefits, and some of those dollars are spent with other local merchants or on local services. The owners are our neighbors, friends, people we count on when asking for

donations for a local cause.

Shopping at our independent merchants is also a return to "community," the idea that we know, trust and value the people we do business with, and they us. Locally owned businesses bring quality, passion, diversity, service, uniqueness, and vitality to their business and to our communities and we are all

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Woodside Library Collection

## Our Regional Heritage

The family poses on the front porch of the Henry Bottger home on King's Mountain Road in Woodside, near the intersection of Tripp Road, in this undated photo.

## 'The only thing we have to fear is fear itself'

By Greg Conlon

The statement "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself," made by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt on March 4, 1933, at his inaugural ceremony, is one of the best recognized in American history.

Roosevelt made his statement when the nation's unemployment rate was 25 percent and many banks had been closed. The words apply equally well today, even though unemployment is only 6 to 7 percent. The current Congress is considering the introduction of another stimulus package of about \$100 billion to help increase consumer spending and get the economy back on its feet.

The economy has already received more than three times this amount of stimulus. More than a month ago the Wall Street Journal stated that the nation has saved over \$250 billion in the reduced cost of gaso-

line, as the price declined from over \$4 to under \$3 per gallon. Since then the price of gasoline has decreased even further, to \$2.50 per gallon on average, making the savings closer to \$300 billion.

Consumers are receiving this benefit every day as they fill their tanks, but evidently they are not spending this saving since consumer spending continues to decrease. This lack of spending by America's workers could be the result of fear that they will lose their jobs, but unemployment is only 6 or 7 percent compared to the 25 percent FDR faced in 1933. The decline in consumer spending is causing declining revenues and sales, thus adding to unemployment and triggering an economic death spiral that must be stopped if the economy is going to improve and confidence is to be restored.

Only when consumers recognize the truth in FDR's admonition — "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself" — will today's employed workers open their wallets. The 93 percent of Americans who are employed must spend the money saved by the steep decline in the cost of a full tank of gas on reasonable necessities. They should buy a new auto to replace one in great need of repair, or a new computer or television when the old one no longer works properly.

I don't call for spending on extravagant amusements but I encourage consumers to let go of their fear and spend that \$300 billion in gasoline savings to help the economy get back on its feet.

Greg Conlon is the former president of the California Public Utilities Commission who lives on Virginia Lane in Atherton.



### LETTERS

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richer for it.

Stacy Mitchell, author of Big-Box Swindle, spoke recently on behalf of Hometown Peninsula, our local independent business alliance, and the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship.

Her advice is that investing in our communities — and our independent businesses — is the best investment we can make. Big-box and chain stores are not an investment but a siphoning of resources, she said. Please shop wisely and locally this holiday season.

Elizabeth Lasensky  
Fremont Street, Menlo Park

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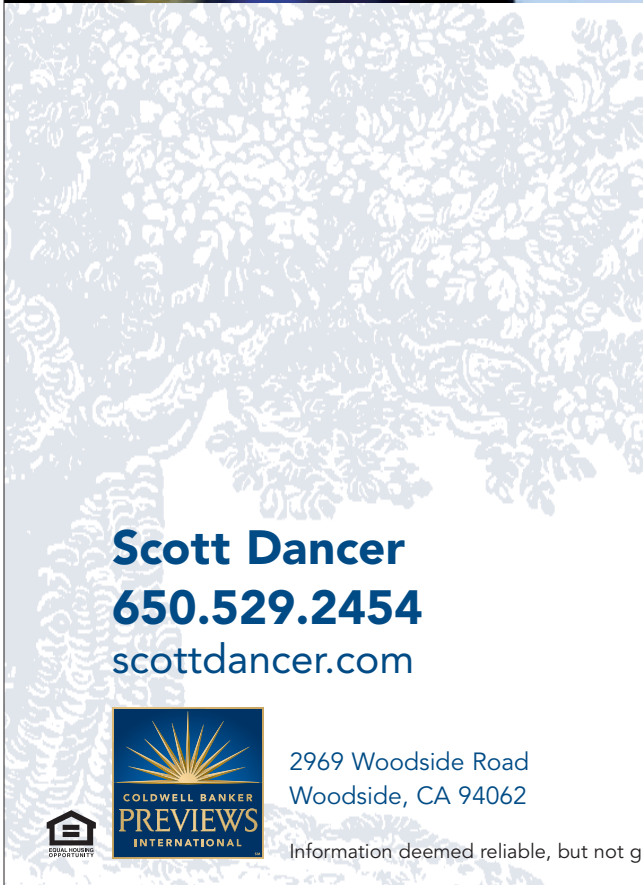
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