

SCHOOLS: State board unanimously approves Everest charter despite opposition from Sequoia high school district. Page 5

The Almanac

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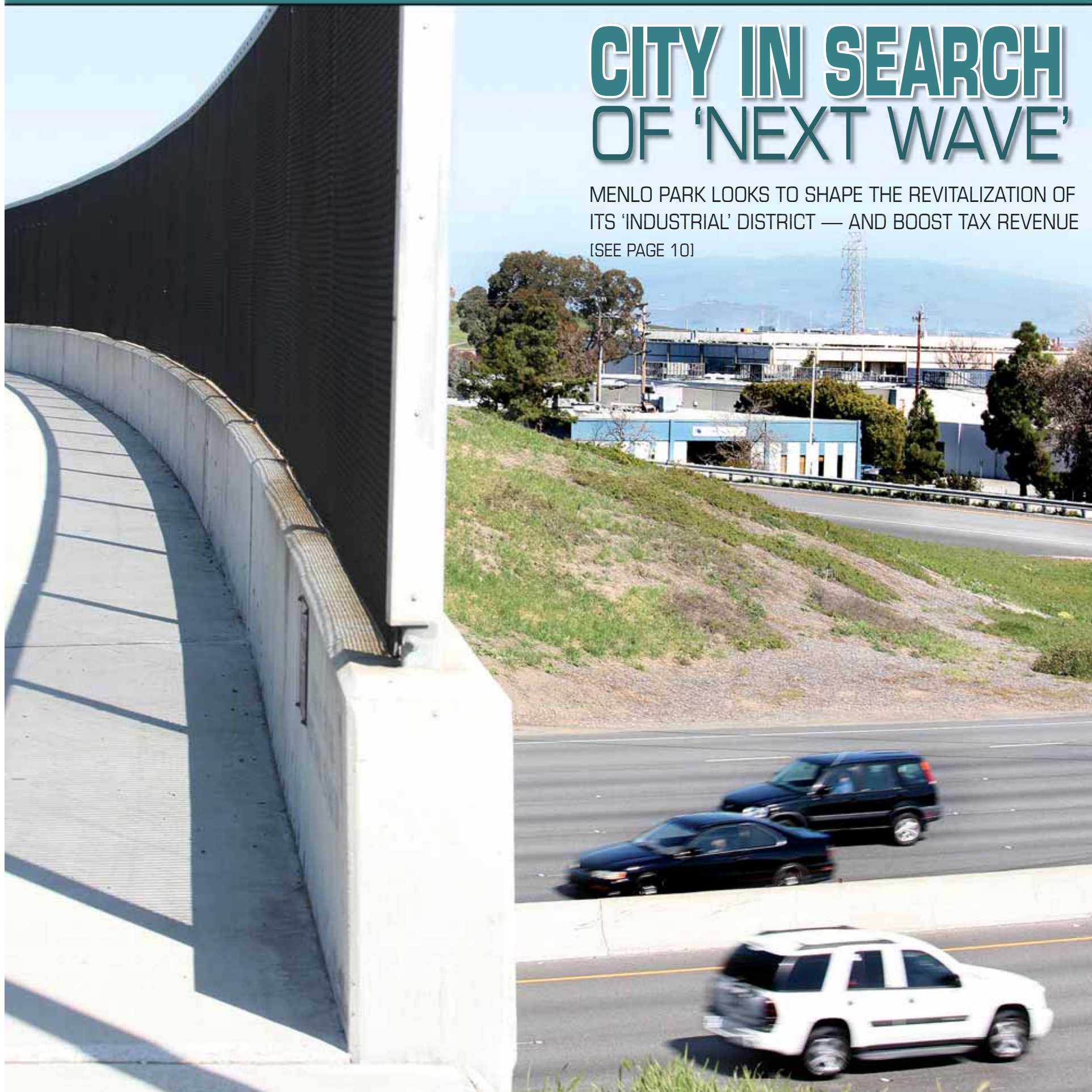
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MARCH 18, 2009 | VOL. 44 NO. 29

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Dana Cappiello
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LOS ALTOS HILLS – 5BR, 5.5 BA home situated on a cul-de-sac. Hardwood floors & crown molding. Kitchen w/ granite counter tops, top of the line appliances & Butler's Pantry.

Susan Furstman
(650) 529-2900

\$5,395,000



MENLO PARK – Light filled craftsman featuring 4BD/3.5BA with full basement, hardwood floors and dual paned windows. Nice neighborhood and Menlo Park Schools.

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4BR/4+BA Casual & formal living spaces flowing over 2 levels featuring oak hardwood flooring, boxed & wood-beamed ceilings, crown moldings, wood trims & built-ins. Backyard w/ lap pool & spa, patio & lawn area. Lg Mstr & Granite Kitchen.

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EMERALD HILLS

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Judy Chow

\$1,630,000

(650) 614-3500

Spectacular views from this lot!!! Complete with Plans and Permits. Planned "Green" home with separate/permitted unit over additional 2 car carport.

Katherine Clark

\$589,000

(650) 614-3500

HAYWARD

2 separate homes on a large lot. Front unit is 3BR/3BA. Rear unit is 2BR/2BA. Just painted inside & out, with new carpet, ceiling fan & blinds. New landscaping in front yard. Washer & Dryer.

Gordana Wolfman

\$575,000

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LA HONDA

Great value in La Honda! Close to WS & 280. Charming cottage w/a lrg level rear garden. 2BR/1.5BA. Expansion capabilities. Downstairs bedroom has a separate entrance.

Cristina Harper

\$399,500

(650) 614-3500

LOS ALTOS

Rarely available ground floor unit with large landscaped patio. 2BR/2BA, new carpet and paint, fireplace in living room and close to downtown. A must see!

Victor Platonoff

\$699,000

(650) 948-8050

LOS ALTOS HILLS

Price Reduction! Lovely property on designated scenic route. Over an acre boasting a variety of mature trees including almond, pear, plum, apple, walnut, persimmon & apricot. Serene & private. 4BD/3BA. www.27100Moody.com

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(650) 948-8050

MENLO PARK

Exceptional 5BD/4.5BA remodeled home on desirable cul-de-sac. Incredible gourmet kitchen; 2 FR's-1 upstairs, 1 downstairs; elegant living and dining rooms; luxurious Mstr Suite; lg separate guest/au-pair suite w/kitchenette; large sunny lot; Las Lomitas Schools.

Elizabeth Daschbach

\$2,695,000

(650) 614-3500

4BR/4+BA Executive home w/Architectural details. Cathedral ceilings & Gourmet Kitchen w/inviting family room. Las Lomitas School District.

Kristin Cashin

\$2,195,000

(650) 614-3500

Price reduced! Beautiful 1 year old custom home. 5BR/4BA + powder rm. 2 Master Suites. Elegant chef's kitchen opens to Family Room. High quality finished details including coffered ceilings, dual zone heat and A/C. MP City Schools. Transferred sellers' loss 1 buyer's value opportunity.

Carol Bartlett

\$2,119,000

(650) 614-3500

Desirable 4-Plex located in downtown Menlo Park. 2 of the 1 BR units have fireplaces; other 2 units have backyard areas. Property is in good repair. Termite & home inspection reports available.

Paul Shrabo

\$1,295,000

(650) 529-2900

An excellent opportunity in Linfield Oaks. 3BR/2BA home w/large backyard and a garage-converted play-room. The home is move-in ready and offers room to expand.

Nino Gaetano

\$1,295,000

(650) 529-2900

MOUNTAIN VIEW

Beautiful new construction with luxurious finishes! Features: 5BR/3.5BA, Hdwd flrs, 8 ft drs, Marble entry & stairs, Granite counters, high ceil, sound sys, cable, satellite & CAT5 wiring, landscaping & lrg lot w/mature trees.

Dory Marhamat

\$2,199,000

(650) 948-8050

Duplex in desirable area & close to Sylvan Park. 3BR/2BA beautifully remodeled.

Marta Hayes

\$1,100,000

(650) 614-3500

Single story remodeled. Own a home for the cost of a new condo. No square footage is wasted on stairs. This sparkling home is ready for the pickiest buyers. Rebuilt in 2008. Granite, hardwood, Italian tile, private yard, excellent neighborhood & great schools.

Deniece Watkins Smith

\$1,049,999

(650) 948-8050

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

Kristin Cashin

\$899,000

(650) 614-3500

Location...Location...Location...Convenient Mid Peninsula area close to everything. This highly desirable upper end unit 2BD/2BA condo in "The Waters" complex offers serene views of the lake and mature trees from the living room, dining area and balcony.

Jan Strohecker

\$468,000

(650) 614-3500

PALO ALTO

Located in Mid-town PA is a remodeled 4BR/2.5BA home brimming w/exuberant light that gently filters through its lavish windows.

Tim Kerns

\$1,595,000

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REDWOOD CITY

3BD/2BA, beautifully remodeled home. Award winning Roy Cloud Schools. Perfect location.

Bob Johnston

\$939,000

(650) 614-3500

6+BD/4+BA home. Close to shopping & major commuter routes. Features dining area in FR, wall-to-wall carpeting & tile.

Ginna Lazar

\$799,000

(650) 614-3500

REDWOOD SHORES

Beautiful 3BR/3BA with large deck and hot tub. New paint, stove and microwave. Must see to appreciate!

Joann Bedrossian

\$980,000

(650) 614-3500

Light bright & spacious 3BR/2.5BA private end unit. LR w/ high ceilings, recessed lights & views of the water. Mstr BR features Walk-In Closet, soaking tub and dual sinks. Steps away from boat dock.

Lilly Chow

\$699,000

(650) 614-3500

SAN CARLOS

4BR/3BA This fabulous updated home features a remodeled kitchen w/ custom built-ins. Mstr BR Ste w/ a remodeled BA & Walk-In Clst. Fresh Paint & New Carpets. Canyon & Bay views from nearly every room. Can entertain from large deck. Attached two-car garage and lots of storage.

Debbie Lorell/Bob Johnston

\$1,398,000

(650) 614-3500

A superb layout goes with this 4BR/2BA Mediterranean offering a bay view enhanced by mtn vistas. Desirable amenities include patio, family room and deck. Two-car garage. Enjoy the move-up & magic of this lovely home.

Michael S. Teymouri

Offered at \$1,198,000

(650) 948-8050

SAN MATEO

One level 2BR/2BA spacious penthouse located on the top floor of a 4-story building. Close to downtown shops & transportation.

Enayat Boroumand

\$700,000

(650) 529-2900

SANTA CLARA

Mediterranean Townhome. High ceilings, light, bright interior. Kitchen w/Granite & stainless steel appliances. Attached 2/car garage, AC + El Camino to Lincoln to Clay"

Paul Shrabo

\$798,000

650-529-2900



PALO ALTO – Located in the Crescent Park neighborhood, this 2-story 5BR/3.5BA home sits on a beautifully manicured lot. Details include hrwd flrs, a wood burning fireplace and large kitchen w/granite countertops. Ideally situated just minutes from all of the downtown amenities.

Ginna Lazar

(650) 614-3500

\$2,465,000



PORTOLA VALLEY – Remodeled 3BR/2.5BA, casual elegance detailed to perfection. Open floor plan includes family room, exquisitely remodeled kitchen/baths, hand-hewn Maple hardwoods & expansive windows leading out to patio, deck, spa, and garden.

Brooke Dunbar

(650) 340-9688

\$1,588,000



PORTOLA VALLEY – 2 story home on large lot. Spacious FR w/vaulted ceilings. HRDWD Flrs. Kit w/ Stainless Steel Appliances. Sep/studio w/Kit & BA. Poss/rental income.

Enayat Boroumand

(650) 529-2900

\$1,250,000



SAN MATEO – Charming 2-story Aaragon home is move-in ready. 3BR, plus bonus office & sitting area, as well as 2 Full BA's. Remodeled Kitchen and Baths with Granite counters, recessed lighting and French doors leading to a spacious deck/backyard. Bonus multi-use garden cottage. Don't want to miss this one!

Meegan Ferrari

(650) 614-3500

\$1,349,000



SAN MATEO – Edgewater Isle - The perfect place for the active at heart! This 1BR/1BA unit is only seconds from the waters edge. Private deck-patio. Enjoy boating/waterskiing, kayaking, paths along the shore for bike rides or strolls along the water.

George Monaco

(650) 948-8050

\$395,000



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Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

FIRST SHOT



Colorful parasols

This photograph of colorful parasols for sale in a handicraft market in Laos is among the works of Menlo Park photographer Frances Freyberg that are on exhibit in Palo Alto. A selection of photos from her travels to some 40 countries are in the exhibit. A reception for Ms. Freyberg will be held Sunday, March 22. See story on **Page 7**.

Menlo Park

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Woodside

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CALLING ON THE ALMANAC

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

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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**.

Schools

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- More kindergarteners, less money in Menlo Park school district. **Page 8**
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Artscene

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Family Almanac

- It's up, up and away for Menlo School benefit, "Menlo 9 Takes Flight." **Cover, Section 2**

On the cover

When the topic of Menlo Park businesses comes up, most people think of downtown restaurants and merchants. But the city is increasingly focusing its attention on the area east of U.S. 101. Photo by Michelle Le. See **Page 10**.

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Coming Events

- **Texas Hold'Em Poker Tournament** — Saturday, March 21, 12:30 – 5:00 PM
- **Pearl Sofaer Lecture, Book Signing & Lunch** — Saturday, March 28, 11:00 AM
- **Fashion Show & Luncheon, Art to Wear** — Friday, April 17

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2007 Pinot Noir Deal

In case you haven't heard, 2007 is shaping up to be a great Pinot Noir Vintage in California. Here are a few fine examples at a great deal.

2007 Poppy, Monterey County

2007 Cartridge & Brown, California

2007 Ramsay, North Coast



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Roberts Tip of the Week

Matters of Taste

If you've ever eaten food while suffering from a head cold, you have first-hand knowledge that flavor is a combination of taste and smell. That is, it is nearly impossible to get a sense of food's flavor without being able to smell it. As far as taste goes, each taste bud on the tongue contains 50 to 100 taste cells that represent five primary taste sensations-salty, sour, sweet, bitter, and umami. As its name implies, umami was identified in 1908 by a Japanese researcher who found that glutamate contained in seaweed sauce triggered a fifth taste that can be loosely translated as "savory." This discovery led to the mass production of monosodium glutamate (MSG), a popular flavor enhancer.

Come to ROBERTS MARKET, where we offer a wide variety of foods from all over the world. We are your source for specialties. Our wine department is the most extensive in the area, more than most liquor stores. Don't forget fresh cut flowers from our floral department to grace your table. Our finest produce, meats, poultry, and seafood available in the area, and we have a great selection of marinades which help change the taste of your favorite meats. If you find yourself pressed for time visit our "heat and eat it" department for wonderful gourmet prepared foods. You can find prepared foods such as home made hot soups and sandwiches.

Hint: Because the receptivity of taste cells can change over time, people's taste preferences may change in their later years.

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Roberts Market Deli

Greek Feta Salad

Tomatoes, cucumbers, red, green, yellow bell peppers, Calamata Olives, French feta cheese, garlic, oregano, mint, red wine vinaigrette.

\$6.22 lb.



Greek Panini

Grilled chicken breast marinated in a spread of tangy pomegranates, roasted red peppers, ground walnuts-comes with tomatoes, feta cheese, red onion, and spinach on Acme sweet bun.

\$8.00 ea.



May flowers bring pilgrims

February showers bring March wildflowers (that's right, winter is short on the Peninsula) and it's not too soon to plan a hike of the Edgewood Natural Preserve just north of Woodside. Docents from the local chapter of the California Native Plant Society lead free hikes on Saturdays and Sundays this spring, though June 7.

The meandering three-hour hikes are scenic and informative, but not overly strenuous.

Native wildflowers are more varied than just vivid orange California poppies. Depending on your timing, you could see clumps of purple lupine, vast carpets of tiny yellow goldfields, delicate cream cups, crimson Indian warriors, or even a rare fairy lantern. Information is at <http://friendsofedgeswood.org/>.

At least it's a dry heat

The Menlo Park City School District escaped the worst of the mid-year education funding cuts stemming from California's budget crisis, but there's trepidation that it won't be so lucky next year. Jeff Child, the school board vice president, asked staff if there's a contingency plan in case the state's revenue-boosting tax measures on the May ballot don't pass.

"Move to Nevada," quipped board member Laura Rich with wry humor.

This doesn't add up

Third-graders around the country can thank Christopher Brugger of Woodside Elementary School for fixing a flaw in their math books. Ellen Bertine, his teacher, says that Christopher noticed an error and with her help, wrote a letter to the editor about it. About a month later, Christopher received a reply from the assistant editor acknowledging the oversight and saying that the next printing will be amended, said Ms. Bertine.

West Coast is, like, totally awesome

A poll commissioned by Sunset Magazine proves what we all know: we, along with the rest of the nation, think the West Coast is the best in nearly every category.

Local News

MENLO PARK | ATHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

State board backs Everest charter

■ Sequoia district's opposition gets no traction in Sacramento.

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

The California Board of Education unanimously approved a charter for Everest Public High School on March 11, rejecting the opposition by the Sequoia Union High School District.

The state board's staff report rejected all the allegations the Sequoia district used to justify its efforts to deny Everest a charter.

Of 16 allegations made by the Sequoia district against Everest's petition, and three presented by the San Mateo County Office of Education, none was supported in the staff report by Department of Education consultant Michelle Ruskofsky.

The March 11 vote of 7-0 in Sacramento followed a 9-0 decision in Everest's favor in February by the Advisory Commission on Charter Schools, a panel that advises the state board and that also relied on Ms. Ruskofsky's report.

Sequoia district Superintendent Patrick Gemma makes many claims against Everest, including that it will harm the district in economically hard times and that the school's model violates what

Hundreds apply for charter high schools. **Page 14**

he says was the Legislature's intent for charter schools: that they focus on low-performing students. He responded to the board's decision in a statement.

"We are disappointed that the state became involved in what is clearly a local issue and that the state chose to grant the appeal," he said. "It was a daunting task to try to ensure appointed officials 150 miles away understood our local interests and needs."

Mr. Gemma's entire statement can be read at www.seq.org. The Almanac requested an interview, but was referred to Mr. Gemma's statement.

Diane Tavenner, Everest spokeswoman and founder of Summit Preparatory Charter High School in Redwood City, told The Almanac that she was "ecstatic" about the board's decision.

Ms. Tavenner said she had not expected a unanimous vote. One member had voted against charter petitions earlier that day and had a reputation for doing so regularly, she said, but this time he voted for Everest.



Photo by Dave Boyce/The Almanac

James Lianides, an assistant superintendent for the Sequoia Union High School District, stood in for Superintendent Patrick Gemma on March 11 at a meeting of the group Sustainable Menlo Park. Mr. Gemma was in Sacramento trying to persuade the California Board of Education to deny a charter to Everest Public High School. The board approved the charter unanimously.

"In our case, he was the first one to raise his hand and say 'I see no reason not to approve this charter,'" Ms. Tavenner said. "It was a very strong show of support by the board."

Ms. Ruskofsky, the consultant, said in an interview that while the board as a whole did not ask the Sequoia district to justify its opposition to Everest, one member did say there was "no reason to deny" the petition and described Everest as "a high-quality charter school"

that would "meet legal requirements and fulfill the (charter school) legislation's intent."

Everest would be modeled on Summit Prep, a school in its sixth year that has many more applicants than available seats each year, a four-year-college acceptance rate of more than 95 percent, per-student spending that runs thousands of dollars less than the district's, and an ethnically diverse

See **EVEREST**, page 14

Longtime principal of Hillview school to retire in June

Mike Moore, the principal of Hillview Middle School in Menlo Park for the past 23 years, announced Monday that he plans to retire at the end of the school year.

Mr. Moore, who has been a teacher or administrator for the past 39 years, said he will stay with the Menlo Park City School District as a consultant for a year after he retires.

Hillview, the district's only middle school, is embarking on a massive campus reconstruction project in order to accommodate a big jump in enroll-



Mike Moore

See **MOORE**, page 8

Survey shows support for big project

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

If the final say on David Bohannon's proposed office/hotel complex came down to the ballot, voters would likely approve the project, according to the results of a recent poll paid for by Mr. Bohannon.

Of the 400 "likely" Menlo Park voters surveyed on Mr. Bohannon's project by Godbe Research, 65 percent said they supported the project, and 61 percent said they would vote in favor of the project if it appeared on a ballot, according to Bryan Godbe, president of the polling company.

Mr. Bohannon commissioned the survey, he said, primarily to gauge public sentiment for the project, which would comprise three eight-story office buildings totaling 700,000 square feet, a 206-room Marriott Hotel, and athletic facilities. The complex would be built on Bohannon-owned land near the intersection of Marsh Road and U.S. 101 in east Menlo Park.

Mr. Bohannon also wanted to gauge whether the project would pass the test of Menlo Park voters in the event of a referendum, he said.

"Recent history suggests that having an approved project doesn't mean you're through with the process," he said, referring to the Derry Project, a high-density condo/commercial project proposed for El Camino Real. That project cleared the council, but the development company ended up revising its proposal after residents gathered enough signatures to put a referendum on the ballot.

"In the event that we had to defend the approval, we think it's important to get a sense of where the voters would be," Mr. Bohannon said.

He said he only wanted to see how the project would do in a referendum. He doesn't plan to launch a ballot initiative himself to push the project through the city's process, or bypass it altogether, he said.

While he acknowledged that he is frustrated with the city's "slow" review process, he maintained that the poll had nothing to do with those frustrations.

Support

Mr. Godbe presented the results of the survey to The Almanac and defended its methods, say-

See **SURVEY**, page 8

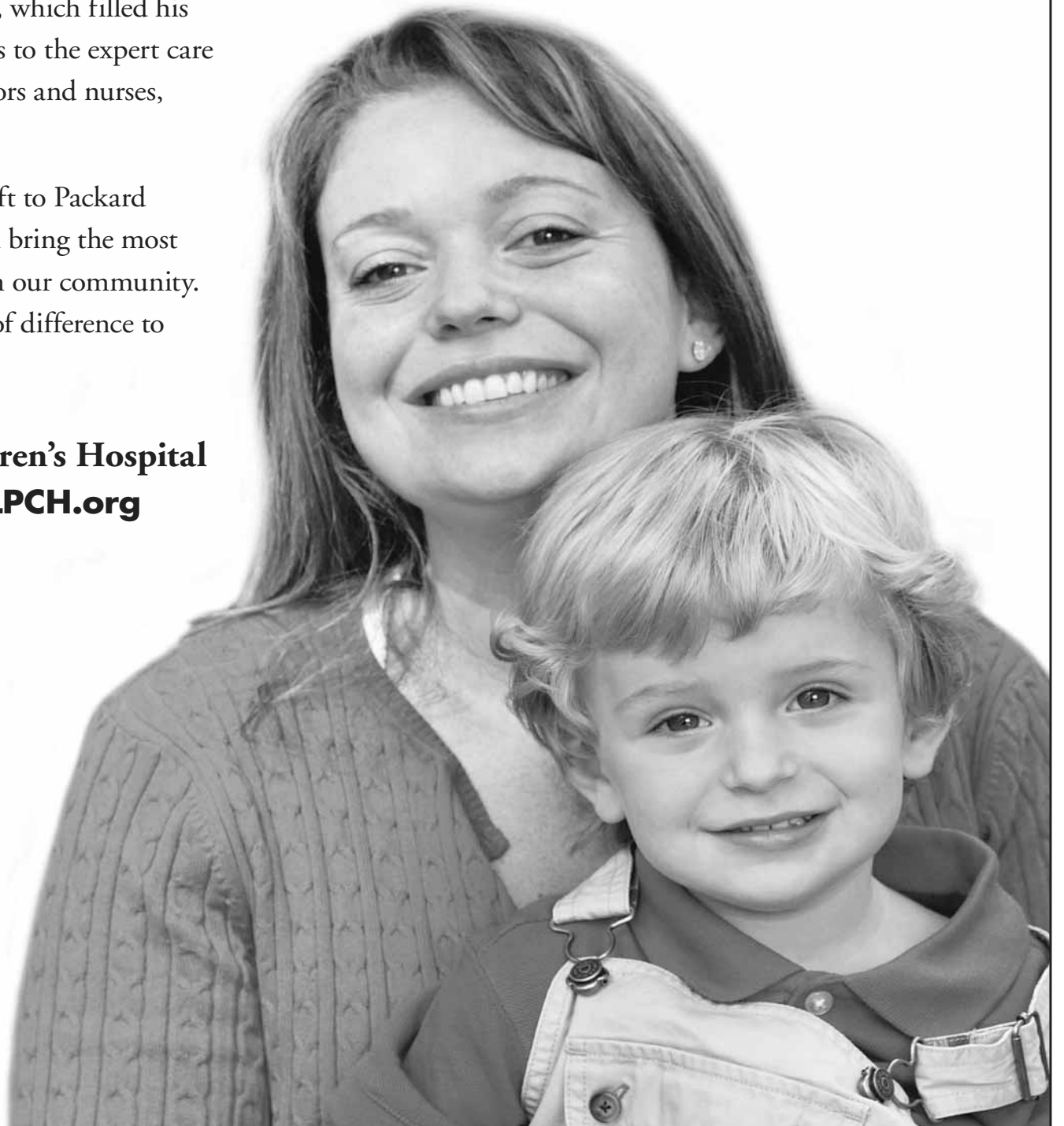
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M-A senior gets a look from science's big leagues, meets with President Obama

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

It was a (science) fair to remember for Julia Ransohoff, a Menlo-Atherton High School senior and one of 40 teens attending one of the nation's premier competitive scholastic science events, the annual Intel Science Talent Search held last week in Washington, D.C.

Among the top honors this year were for research that could lead to temperature-sensitive clothing and molecule-sized insulin pumps for diabetic patients; a chemotherapy delivery system to treat drug-resistant cancer without significant side effects; and math equations essential to developing a quantum theory of gravity.

Not your ordinary high school science fair, but Ms. Ransohoff was a contender. She investigated gender as a factor in donated stem cells used to repair cardiac tissue damaged by a heart attack, concluding that stem cells from adult female donors alerted a recipient's immune system to a significantly greater degree than previously thought.

Ms. Ransohoff came home after the March 10 black-tie awards dinner with a \$5,000 scholarship,

a new laptop computer, and memories of some rare experiences.

She talked about her work at some length with Dudley Herschbach, a 1986 Nobel Laureate in chemistry, Harvard University professor and board chairman of the contest.

"He seemed very interested in my project," Ms. Ransohoff said in a phone interview, adding that she felt treated "not like a celebrity but like an important member of the scientific community."

Mr. Herschbach talks with every finalist individually, Intel spokesman Rick Bates said.

The actual judging, done by 13 working scientists, takes place over two days. Each student meets with three or four of the judges at a time in 15-minute sessions when the student fields questions, Mr. Bates said.

"It was pretty nerve-racking and pretty intimidating, but I had fun with that even if you couldn't answer the question right away," Ms. Ransohoff said. "There were no obvious answers to the questions. They wanted to hear you



Julia Ransohoff

think."

Meeting the president

The finalists gathered on March 9 on the White House steps, Ms. Ransohoff said, to shake hands with President Barack Obama and pose with him for a group photo.

Mr. Obama told them how important they were to the future of the country and how proud he was of them and what they'd accomplished, she said.

They spent about 10 minutes with the president, and it happened to be about an hour after he'd signed an executive order ending federal restrictions on embryonic stem cell research. "It was a very exciting time to meet him," she said. "I'm thrilled for him to do that, to separate science from politics."

At the other end of the fame spectrum, Ms. Ransohoff, who was staying at the St. Regis hotel, saw actor Brad Pitt and former anchorman Dan Rather on separate occasions at the hotel, and actor Angelina Jolie working outdoors on the set of a film.

As for her experience with the other 39 science contest finalists: "We've really bonded and had a wonderful time," she said.

Dance team show

The Menlo-Atherton Dance Team will hold a fundraising performance at 6 p.m. Friday, March 20, in the new gym on the M-A campus, 555 Middlefield Road. The team, coached by Nona Ybarra, is made up of M-A students who perform at football and basketball games. Tickets are \$8 for adults, \$5 for students, and \$10 at the door. To purchase tickets in advance, call Kristin Gananian at 854-9332. Raffle prizes will be offered.



World travels featured in Frances Freyberg photos

In 2008, Frances Freyberg of Menlo Park left her job in high-tech communications at Sun Microsystems to travel the world for a year, taking photographs and writing about her experiences.

Ms. Freyberg is hosting a reception from 1 to 4 p.m. Sunday, March 22, at the Yoga Mind Warrior Body Studio in Palo Alto, where a selection of photos from her travels to more than 40 countries will be displayed.

In addition to the March recep-

See picture on Page 3.

tion, Ms. Freyberg has two upcoming Open Studio weekends in May: May 2-3, Silicon Valley Open Studio at Yoga Mind Warrior Body, 609 B Cowper St., Palo Alto; May 16-17, Silicon Valley Open Studio, 753 Partridge Ave., Menlo Park.

Ms. Freyberg grew up in Menlo Park, attending Oak Knoll and Hillview schools, and Menlo-Atherton High School. After grad-

uating from Brown University in 2000, she returned to Menlo Park to take a job at Sun Microsystems. "Menlo Park was a wonderful place to grow up, and it's a wonderful place to be a young professional," she says.

Ms. Freyberg specializes in portraits of people, wildlife, nature and architecture from her travels.

More information about the March 22 reception may be found at www.francesfreyberg.com/invasion.htm.

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Back To Basics

The weather is warming and gardens are beginning to bloom. This is traditionally the beginning of the most active real estate buying season of the year. Buyers are out in substantial numbers looking at property and some are buying. Others are waiting for assurance that we are at or near the bottom of the price decline that began in 2008. Much of their confidence depends on what happens in the financial markets, since Wall Street news surrounds us daily.

This is a good time to remember that long term benefits are more important than short term fluctuations. Prices have come down 10 - 25% in some areas of the Mid-

Peninsula and interest rates are low. Before now low interest rates kept prices higher than they would have been if rates were higher. But now prices and rates are down. Prudent buyers who are looking for a good place to live for the long term should not be afraid to take advantage of this. Make the decision to buy based on where you want to live, and don't think of property only as an investment. If your plan is to be in a house for at least 7 - 10 years, then you go ahead and buy the home that suits your needs and be confident in your decision. This has always been the best way to buy real estate in any market.

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

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Woodside fire-safe rules to take effect April 9

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

Wildfire prevention advanced a step in Woodside on March 10 with the Town Council's unanimous decision to complete the two-step process to amend the building code to require fire-resistant materials and methods in all new construction and in some remodels.

The first step, a council decision to introduce the amendments, happened on Feb. 24 in another unanimous vote. At neither that meeting nor the one on March 10 did anyone from the public make a substantial comment on or critique of the proposed changes.

The regulations are effective 30 days after adoption, meaning that building permits sought after Friday, April 9, will come under the new rules. For construction plans already under planning review, the council extended the effective date to Friday, May 1.

The town-wide rules for new homes affect roofing and gutters; attic ventilation; exterior walls, including doors, windows and wall coverings; and decking, including "surfaces, stair treads, risers, and landings of decks, porches and balconies ... within 10 feet of the primary structure," according to Chapter 7A of the state's Wildland-Urban Interface Building Code.

The roofing, decking and window regulations will also apply to replacement roofs, replacement windows and replacement decks throughout Woodside. A list of state-approved fire-resistant materials can be found at tinyurl.com/WS-fire2.

Public notice

The council was agreeable to setting up a limited appeal

process at Town Hall for projects in the midst of getting approved. "I imagine there will be some folks who are caught by that (deadline), but we will do our best to avoid it," Assistant Town Manager Kevin Bryant told the council.

The council took pains to avoid an overly urgent stance. "The whole thing that we're doing here is taking a 50-, 100-, 1,000-year perspective," Councilman Dave Burow said.

Councilman Dave Tanner, a contractor, said compliance would be a simple matter of replacing non-compliant materials with compliant ones. "I don't see it as a major deal," he said.

Post cards notifying the public about the rule changes have already gone out and more will follow, Town Manager Susan George said. The next round may include cards to local contractors, architects and real estate offices.

Ms. George suggested that the cards have references to Web pages that offer more information, including to Chapter 7A. To view the regulations, go to tinyurl.com/WS-fire1.

The council has not yet decided on whether to adopt the state's fire-safe landscaping practices, but has acknowledged the ongoing role of the Woodside Fire Protection District in addressing this issue.

The fire district, which includes Woodside and Portola Valley, does annual safety checks on vegetation-based fire hazards, though such checks will not get around to every property every year, Fire Marshal Denise Enea has said.

Safer landscaping is often as simple as removing brush that threatens to ignite tree canopies, she said. ■

More kindergarteners, less money in Menlo Park school district

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

The Menlo Park City School District is expecting a record number of kindergartners next year, and a potential budget deficit of \$450,000.

Last year's bumper crop of 320 new kindergarten students pales in comparison with the more than 350 children who have already enrolled to start kindergarten in the fall.

Since Menlo Park relies on local property tax revenue, not per-pupil funding from the state, there's not much in the way of additional money to accommodate the increasing numbers of children.

Property tax revenue, the district's main source of funding, is expected to grow by only 2 percent in the next year, down from the 9 percent increase projected for the current year, said Diane White, the district's chief business official.

Salary freezes, elimination of some professional development funding, and other budget cuts to close the deficit are in the works, but the district has managed to avoid the flurry of pink slips that other districts have issued to teachers. Teachers will be reassigned, not laid off.

Rather than hire additional teachers to accommodate all the students, the district would increase class sizes and make changes to enrichment programs such as music, art, Spanish and physical education, in order to make do with existing resources, Superintendent Ken Ranella said at the March 10 school board meeting.

The changes could result in some grades getting less time for enrichment programs while other grades might see an increase, said Mr. Ranella.

Classes for instrumental music are already untenably large, and they should be made smaller in the upper grades so children can receive meaningful instruction, said board President Deborah Fitz. "If we dilute (the program), then everybody gets nothing," she said.

The budget woes are forcing a change in the district policy of keeping class sizes to a maximum of 20 students in primary grades and 24 students in grades 4 through 8. Next year, kindergarten class-

rooms are likely to have as many as 22 students.

In order to avoid layoffs, the district will be reassigning teachers and hiring only when there is attrition. This year saw an unusually low number of teachers planning to leave the district at the end of the school year — just one.

That could impact the size of the district's new bilingual Spanish immersion program. The program, which runs from kindergarten through fifth grade, launched with two classes of kindergartners at Encinal School last fall. So far, 75 children signed up to enter the bilingual kindergarten this fall, but the district plans to hire only one new immersion teacher, because there is only one teacher vacancy.

Mr. Ranella said he would hire a second Spanish immersion teacher if another district teacher decides to leave, a plan that met with some resistance by board members Jeff Child and Maria Hilton. They said it might be better to keep bilingual immersion to only one new class of kindergartners.

"I'm not sure I'm on board with that strategy, (that) 100 percent of our new teachers for the next years should be immersion," Mr. Child said. "I think young teachers add to the district, they come out of school with new skills."

However, Encinal Principal Alison Liner pointed out that immersion teachers collaborate and share ideas with their colleagues, just like teachers in regular classrooms, and they are qualified to teach in English as well as in Spanish.

"Our immersion teachers I consider to be exceptional. They get all the same information across without the kids' understanding the language," Ms. Liner told the board. "I don't want anyone to think they lack anything. They're a great resource and could teach in any other grade."

Mr. Ranella said the district's model for the immersion program calls for two classes in each grade, and that there was a good chance that another teacher vacancy would allow him to hire another immersion teacher.

He said he would come up with some proposals for reorganizing the enrichment programs and get public comment on them before asking the board to make a decision. ■

SURVEY

continued from page 5

ing the results give a strong indication that voters would approve Mr. Bohannon's project if it were put to a vote. The survey was conducted by phone between Feb. 25 and March 5.

Questioners asked residents at the beginning of the phone call whether they would support the project, then asked the same question at the end, after running through a number of pro and con arguments. Before respondents heard many of the project's details, 70 percent said they supported it. By the end of the call, 65 percent said they supported the project.

The number of residents who said they would "strongly oppose" the project rose from 7 percent to 13 percent by the end

of the calls.

The survey claimed a 4.5 percent margin of error. Even if over-estimated support by 4.5 percent, it still indicates that voters would approve the project, according to Mr. Godbe.

Twenty-six percent of respondents said they would vote against the project.

Mr. Godbe's firm works primarily for cities trying to decide whether to sponsor a ballot measure. In 92 percent of the surveys his firm conducted in 2008, its findings were borne out at the ballot box, he said.

Survey details

Over the course of the survey, residents were told that the project would generate \$6 million for the city's affordable housing fund, \$1.1 million for traffic mitigation, \$1.1 million for the construction of new schools, and \$500,000 for

the fire district. Mr. Bohannon said his company's finance team calculated those numbers, based on payments mandated by the city for development projects.

Residents were also told that the project would generate an additional \$2 million per year in tax revenue for Menlo Park, and that it would create 1,900 construction jobs, and 2,300 jobs through new businesses.

Of the negative arguments presented, residents said they would be swayed most by the specter of increased traffic, by the argument that it would be out of character for Menlo Park, and by an increased demand for housing, in that order.

Asked to rank the importance of various community issues, residents put improving the local economy and securing new revenue for the city ahead of decreasing traffic, according to Mr. Godbe. ■

MOORE

continued from page 5

ment.

Mr. Moore told The Almanac that, when the school reconstruction bond originally passed, he had been looking forward to spending a year as the principal of a brand-new, renovated campus. However, the project took

longer to get under way than he had anticipated, and he'd rather not retire in the midst of the construction, he said.

"For twenty-three years, Hillview, along with my family, has been my life," he said in an e-mail sent out to the school community announcing his retirement.

For more on this story, check TheAlmanacOnline.com.

County officials lobby for relief from Lehman losses; House to hold hearing

The county's quest to get federal bailout money to cover losses from the collapse of Lehman Bros. appears to be getting some traction, with a congressional hearing set for April, according to Mary McMillan, the deputy county manager.

County officials met recently with representatives Anna Eshoo, Jackie Speier and Barney Frank, chairman of the House Financial Services Committee, to discuss the use of Trouble Asset Relief Program (TARP) funds to purchase bad assets held by the county.

On Friday, Ms. McMillan announced that Rep. Frank agreed to hold a hearing after the spring congressional break is over in mid-April.

The San Mateo County treasury lost \$150 million in investments when Lehman Bros. went bankrupt last fall. Among the members of the county investment pool that were affected are the Menlo Park City and Sequoia Union High school districts and the town of Atherton.

Local officials hope the upcoming hearing will

shake loose some of the TARP funds to help cover its losses.

"Lehman Brothers was the only large financial institution allowed to fail and its failure cost state and local governments (nationally) more than \$2 billion," said Rep. Speier, in a press release.

Rep. Eshoo said she is hopeful that San Mateo County and other public entities will be able to recover some of the dollars lost. "Our schools, public safety, and social services will suffer if we cannot return a portion of these dollars back to our local governments," she said.

Representatives from San Mateo County in the meeting with Rep. Frank included Supervisor Rich Gordon, Supervisor Rose Jacobs Gibson, and Ms. McMillan.

San Mateo County officials also met with the White House Office of Intergovernmental Affairs, senators Barbara Boxer and Diane Feinstein, and the House and Senate Finance Committees.

County pays \$6.8 million to settle fraud suit

San Mateo County has agreed to pay \$6.8 million to the U.S. government to resolve allegations that the San Mateo Medical Center submitted false claims for payments from the Medicare and Medicaid programs, U.S. Attorney Joseph Russoniello announced March 12.

The medical center was accused of improper conduct between 1997 and 2007, including falsely inflating its bed count to Medicare to receive higher payments, according to the U.S. Department of Justice.

The settlement resolves allegations by Ronald Davis, a former county employee who filed the lawsuit under the whistleblower provisions of the False Claims Act. Mr. Davis will receive \$1.02 million of the proceeds of the settlement, according to the U.S. Attorney's office.

"At the time the alleged overpayments occurred, the regulations were in flux and open to interpretation, said Beverly Thames, spokesperson for the county Health Department in a statement denying intentional

wrongdoing. "Due to the complexity of the rules, some beds that we thought qualified under the reimbursement program, in retrospect, may not have qualified."

"The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors authorized County Counsel to settle out of court, rather than risk triple fines," the statement says. "In addition, the county will enhance training, auditing and reporting in its compliance program at San Mateo Medical Center."

— Bay City News Service

Revamped recycling facility approved by eight cities

Plans for a re-tooled \$65 million Shoreway recycling center cleared a major hurdle March 10, when the Belmont City Council signed off on the plan.

With the Belmont vote, eight of the 12 jurisdictions in the regional agency that oversees waste management issues have now agreed to the new facility. The plans required a two-thirds vote in order to proceed.

The new recycling center will increase diversion rates by 30 percent, officials say. It will also allow for single-stream recycling, unlike the current facility.

Atherton was one of two cities to vote against the plan, saying the new center was too expensive.

But Menlo Park's City Council was swayed by arguments that it would be cheaper to operate. City staffers maintain that the current facility, located in San Carlos, has run its course, and would require extensive repairs to keep it operational.

The renovation will be paid for over a 25-year period through an increase in garbage collection rates. Rates will increase by an average of 5 percent across the 12 jurisdictions, officials estimate.

With the vote, the jurisdictions authorized the issuance of up to \$65.5 million in bonds. They will, however, have another chance to vote on a specific financing plan for the facility.

Grindin' on the railroad: making trains quieter

It's going to get noisier in order for it to get quieter for those living within earshot of the train tracks. Caltrain is planning an after-hours rail-grinding program in order to smooth and restore the rails, thereby making for a smoother and quieter ride for its commuter trains.

Residents living near the tracks can look forward to the sounds of a "rail-mounted, industrial-sized

grinder" at work between the hours of 10 p.m. and 4:30 a.m. from March 23 through April 13. The work should last no more than one or two nights in each town, according to Caltrain spokeswoman Tasha Bartholomew.

Work is scheduled to take place in Atherton and Menlo Park on April 1, 2 and 12.

The contractor has to keep the racket below 85 decibels at a dis-

tance of 25 feet from the center of the rail, a noise level that roughly compares to shop tools or someone shouting, Ms. Bartholomew said in a press release. It should be quieter than a train whistle or a gas-powered lawn mower, she said.

The video preview of a spark-spewing rail-grinder in action is available on Caltrain's Web site at www.caltrain.com.



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CITY IN SEARCH OF 'NEXT WAVE'

Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

MENLO PARK LOOKS TO SHAPE THE REVITALIZATION OF ITS 'INDUSTRIAL' DISTRICT — AND BOOST SALES TAX REVENUE

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

MENLO PARK'S DOWNTOWN AREA MAY BE THE FIRST PLACE THAT COMES TO MIND WHEN RESIDENTS THINK OF THE CITY'S BUSINESSES. BUT INCREASINGLY, THE CITY IS FOCUSING ITS ATTENTION AND RESOURCES EAST OF U.S. 101, ON THE CITY'S SO-CALLED INDUSTRIAL AREA.

Home to the sprawling campuses of Tyco Electronics and Sun Microsystems, as well as a smattering of other technology and manufacturing companies, the district perhaps is better known for what it could be (or might have been). David Bohannon's proposed 1-million-square-foot office/hotel complex is still in the design phases; General Motors is still searching for a buyer for the 22-acre site where it had once planned an auto mall.

But city officials and property owners are focusing on other possibilities for the area. They see the potential for clusters of biotech and "green" technology companies, as well as freeway-visible retail operations.

No one suggests that the area will transform overnight, and some question the extent to which the city can shape development — or if it should do so at all.

But with Menlo Park facing the

enue than the city's restaurants and retailers.

The city can get "more bang for our buck, sooner," by focusing its business development efforts on the industrial area, Mr. Johnson said in an interview. "That's where we should be spending a majority of our time."

Historically, the city's management of the industrial area has "been pretty laissez-faire," Mayor Robinson says.

Though residents likely feel more attached to a downtown mainstay, such as Kepler's, than to OfficeMax's distribution center, the latter probably has a bigger impact on the city's bottom line.

Among the city's highest sales tax producers are companies that makes automated lab products, medical devices, and gardening implements. Providers of office and electronic equipment generate more revenue for the city than restaurants and retail outlets.

"MENLO PARK HAS DRIVEN AND BENEFITED FROM EVERY WAVE OF INNOVATION. I THINK WE'RE ALL ASKING OURSELVES, 'WHAT IS THE NEXT WAVE?'"

— MENLO PARK COUNCILWOMAN KELLY FERGUSSON

prospect of a stagnant revenue stream, efforts to generate more sales tax and retain the businesses already there have grown more urgent. City officials view the industrial area's empty or blighted tracts of land as a prime opportunity for expansion, and are working with property owners to retool sites that were previously devoted to light industrial, or to computing companies.

"We've got to make the pie bigger," said Mayor Heyward Robinson, referring to the city's revenues. "If we're successful in revitalizing the area, it's going to come back to us many times over in property taxes and sales taxes."

A subcommittee including Mr. Robinson and Councilman John Boyle, tasked with interacting with the city's business owners and providing guidance on the city's planning efforts, met for the first time last week. Business Manager Dave Johnson hopes to set up periodic meetings that would bring together city officials and major property owners.

Residents may be more familiar with Menlo Park's downtown businesses, but the area east of Middlefield Road produces approximately 54 percent of the city's sales tax revenue, according to Finance Director Carol Augustine. Vendors of office supplies and electronic equipment bring in more sales tax rev-

Menlo Park residents think of the city's industrial area as a vague sprawl east of the freeway — if they think of it at all.

But when Mr. Johnson looks at a map, he sees eight distinct districts, each suited to different types of development.

For instance, a blighted stretch of Haven Avenue between U.S. 101 and Bayfront Expressway, near Marsh Road, would be ideal for a "freeway-visible" retail operation, according to Mr. Johnson. (General Motors had wanted to build an auto mall on that site several years ago, but ran into complications and instead bought a 22-acre plot from Tyco Electronics.)

The Haven site is eligible for funding through the city's redevelopment district, as is a section of the business park area to the east. Redevelopment funds could be used to improve the streetscape, and to enter into public/private partnerships with industries that would benefit the surrounding community.

The city is working with several property owners in the industrial district's eastern reaches, encouraging them to try to attract companies in booming industries.

"Menlo Park has driven and benefited from every wave of innovation," said Councilwoman Ms. Fergusson. "I think we're

all asking ourselves, ‘What is the next wave?’”

City officials seem to agree that the “next wave” includes companies involved in clean energy technology, and manufacturers of medical devices and laboratory equipment.

One major property owner in the business park has allowed for “incubator” space for start-up companies, in the form of a series of small “wet laboratories,” Mr. Johnson said. Once some of those companies start to take off, property owners need to provide enough space to accommodate them, he said.

“We don’t want to let a home run get away,” he said.

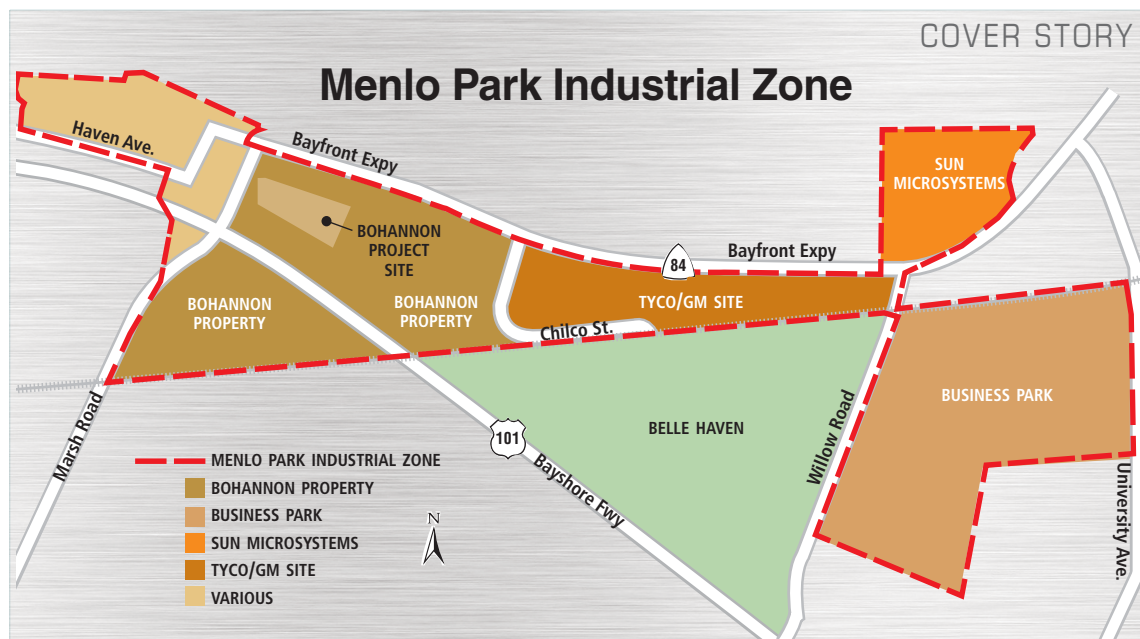
The city has a few quivers in its belt when it comes to shaping development and retaining businesses. In addition to deploying redevelopment funds where applicable, the city can build infrastructure — it’s working on a pilot program to create a

“green brand” for Menlo Park, and council members have banded about the idea of marketing the city in the hopes of luring companies.

If property owners are able to bring in high-profile “life sciences” companies, the marketing may work itself out, Mr. Johnson said. He maintains that complementary businesses tend to cluster, feeding off each other.

Councilman Boyle is wary of the city pursuing specific industries, saying that, in general, he’d prefer to let the free market sort it out. He pointed out that the city would have been in a bad way during the dot-com bust if it had courted only computing companies.

Holding on to the businesses currently in Menlo Park might be challenge enough. The city has been working with Sun Microsystems to reduce its energy bills in an effort to keep the



COMPANIES IN MENLO INDUSTRIAL ZONE

Tyco Electronics and Sun Microsystems, companies with headquarters in Menlo Park’s industrial zone, are household names. But there are a number of lesser-known companies located in the area, some of which generate a considerable amount of sales tax revenue. A sampling of those companies:

Acclarent

1525 O’Brien Drive:
Maker of balloon catheters, used in nasal surgery.

Al’s Roofing Supply

985 O’Brien Drive:
Sells roofing material, such as shingles and tiles, as well as insulation. Menlo Park location is one of four in the Bay Area.

Guckenheimer food service

149 Commonwealth Drive: Operates corporate cafeterias; began as a sandwich cart in the Stanford Medical School. Corporate offices in Menlo Park and Redwood City.

D.M. Figley Co.

10 Kelly Court: Sells sealants. Menlo Park outlet is one of three Bay Area locations.

Horizon

4060 Campbell Ave.: Sells sprinkler systems and fertilizers, as well as other gardening supplies. Has a retail outlet in Menlo Park.

OfficeMax

1315 O’Brien Drive: International office-supply company has a distribution center in Menlo Park.

Pacific Biosciences

1505 Adams Drive: Maker of DNA sequencing technology.

Velocity11

3565 Haven Ave.: Makers of robots for a laboratory environment (see photo).

XTENT

125 Constitution Drive: Develops technology that aids in treating heart disease.

VENDORS OF OFFICE SUPPLIES AND ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT BRING IN MORE SALES TAX REVENUE THAN THE CITY’S RESTAURANTS AND RETAILERS.

fiber-optic network in the business park — and could also offer incentives to certain industries, or change zoning requirements.

But the city can’t tell property owners how to manage their land, and it can’t force them to develop it.

“Property owners have to be motivated to spend capital to make changes,” said Mr. Johnson. “If they want to be able to attract a more stable tenant, they have to be willing to pay a price.”

What kind of a role should the city take in shaping the industries that develop within its borders?

A large one, several city officials say. Councilwoman Ferguson has spoken of creating a

firm in Menlo Park, according to Mr. Johnson. He said it was too early to say whether Sun would close its Menlo Park complex, but that a meeting has been scheduled between the company, Mayor Robinson, and City Manager Glen Rojas, to discuss the issue.

Mr. Robinson has said he’s concerned that the city relies too heavily on a handful of businesses. Two companies generate around 30 percent of the city’s sales tax revenue. (The city doesn’t disclose the names of those companies.)

“I want to hear from companies and landowners,” Mr. Robinson said. “What are your obstacles? I don’t know if we can solve them, but what can we do to help you?” ■

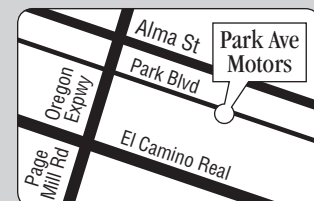
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Stanford Hospital Health Notes

A community health education series from Stanford Hospital & Clinics

Saving the Spine: Restoring Structure For Maximum Result

Back pain had been a constant in Jennifer Ford's life for years. "I always did sports," she said. The list was long - soccer, softball, tennis, track and basketball. She was good enough to be recruited by UCLA as a soccer player. Once there, she added lacrosse to her list of sports. She met her husband, Dustin, while leading cycling tours in France.

A decade later—after working in public relations, teaching second grade and having two children—Ford, 33, began to feel more than her usual pain. It was especially bad when she ran, pushing her kids in a double-jogger. "I was taking ibuprofen three times a day," she said. But that wasn't working. She was in such agony she went to see an orthopedist, an old family friend. He did x-rays and then an MRI.

He called and the Fords went to his office. "I knew it was bad when I looked at his face," she said. He told

her she had a tumor in her back and, he said, she shouldn't lift anything, not even her purse. "That was very scary," Ford said.

"The physical therapist said, 'Okay, let's go.' I was shocked. I was also excited, just to be able to walk."

— Jennifer Ford, Orthopaedic Spine Center patient

The doctor he recommended was Eugene Carragee, MD, at Stanford Hospital & Clinics. Carragee, Vice Chairman of the Department of Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine, is also the director of the Hospital's Orthopaedic Spine Center. Carragee is the editor-in-chief of the North American Spine Society's Spine Journal and a physician who has worked with U.S. troops overseas as a lieutenant colonel in the U.S. Army Reserve.



Jennifer Ford may have slowed down a bit to allow her back to heal, but she has returned home, out of pain for the first time in many weeks. Her husband, Dustin, children Tanner (l), Taylor (r), and dog, Oreo, are happy to have her around again.

Norbert von der Giebben

Ford called on a Thursday and was scheduled to be seen the following Monday. But her condition continued to worsen over the next two days until she could barely walk. Her very concerned husband tracked down Carragee at the Hospital on Saturday. "I'm here," Carragee said. "Come see me. I think it's best you come in sooner."

Carragee ordered CT and MRI images of her back. When he looked at those, he immediately admitted her to the Hospital. On Ford's spine was a bone cyst and a benign tumor the size of a lemon, Carragee said. It had grown so large it had compressed her spinal cord, impairing signals to her legs. "It looked like it had eroded into the bone," he said. "We set her up to try to remove as much of the tumor as we could and preserve function in her legs."

It took four hours. The growth clung densely to her spine's dura, a protective membrane that surrounds the spinal cord. "We had to peel it off," Carragee said. "It was nerve wracking."

Complex superstructure, comprehensive care

Removing the kind of tumor Ford had is not an everyday occurrence. But it is the kind of demanding surgery the Orthopaedic Spine Center is well equipped to do, Carragee said. The Hospital's orthopaedic physicians are responsible for several breakthroughs in spinal care, from techniques to improve recovery time from herniated disc repair to a higher precision of the diagnosis of spinal problems. The Center is also at the forefront of minimally-invasive surgery to the spine, using microdissection and microsurgery. Recently, the Center relocated to the new Stanford Medicine Outpatient Center in Redwood City. Available there are state-of-the-art operating rooms, equipment and imaging.

The spine is the superstructure that supports our bodies. Yet its complexities are challenging when age, injury or illness alter its components. Back pain affects one in three Americans, according to the National Association Spine Society. While some of that pain is temporary, many people endure problems for years. And the impact of aging can only be forestalled, not eliminated.

Regardless of the cause, finding a combination of proper exercise, physical therapy, medications or

How to Keep Your Spine Healthy

- **Practice good posture** - Standing up straight and sitting properly prevents stress on the spine.
- **Sleeping position matters** - Sleeping on your side or back is best.
- **Use your knees** - Bending over with legs straight and hoisting up weight is responsible for many, many back injuries.
- **Maintain appropriate weight** - Extra weight is another strain on the spine.

- **Exercise regularly** - Include aerobic and weight-bearing activities. As you age, think about changing your choices to low-impact activities.
- **Strengthen your core muscles** - A strong core helps support the spine.
- **Stretch your body** - Flexibility is important. If you have already injured your back, or have suffered from long-term back pain, consult your doctor about which stretching exercises will work best for you.
- **A healthy diet** - Eating fruits, vegetables and whole grains is recommended.
- **If your back hurts, see your doctor.**

For More Information

- The Stanford Health Library: Stanford Shopping Center, (650) 725-8400; Stanford Hospital, (650) 725-8100; Stanford Comprehensive Cancer Center, 875 Blake Wilbur Dr., (650) 736-7157. Website: healthlibrary.stanford.edu
- The Stanford Hospital & Clinics Orthopaedic Spine Center, (650) 725-5905. Its webpage has a patient education section. www.stanfordhospital.com, select Clinical Services.
- The North American Spine Society: www.spine.org

surgery to restore function is much easier than in years past. Physicians are far more able to figure out what's going wrong.

Stanford's Orthopaedic Spine Center has been recognized as one of the best in the country, with physicians specializing in treatment of a wide range of conditions, including scoliosis, disc herniation, degenerative spine disease, spinal infections, spinal reconstruction, and spinal deformities. The Center also works collaboratively with the Hospital's Pain Management Center and Neurosurgery Spine Clinic to offer patients a multi-department approach to spine care.

Stanford physicians have also been recognized worldwide for their work in developing techniques to evaluate how each patient might benefit from

disc surgery to relieve lower back pain. They have also inaugurated improvements in the readability of diagnostic images. Compared to his early days of practice in the 1980s, Carragee is far more confident of the diagnosis and outcome when he operates. "It used to be that we did explorations," he said. "We just don't do that now. If you use all the available imaging methods, the number of times where you go in and don't find what you think you're going to find is less than 5 percent."

"I'm lucky. I'm a walking miracle. After you go through something like this, you want to cherish every moment."

— Jennifer Ford, Orthopaedic Spine Center patient



Reading to her kids is an activity Jennifer Ford can do while she recuperates, this afternoon in Taylor's room.

Sometimes the surgical challenge can't be predicted. Ford's vertebrae was so damaged by the tumor that Carragee had to remove it almost completely. He added a titanium rod to Ford's spine and inserted bone grafting on either side. Two days later, however, Ford needed a second surgery to close a microscopic hole in the dura where the tumor had thinned it to extreme fragility.

Cooperation for optimal results

Carragee called Laurence Shuer, MD, a Stanford neurosurgeon, to join him in the operating room. "Our high degree of cooperation is a real benefit to the patient," Carragee said. "We can call on the great depth of resources we have right here in oncology, neurosurgery and other fields. That's the way it should work especially in cases like this."

Shuer patched the hole with one tiny stitch and covered it with glue made with a substance that is part of the body's own coagulation process. That fibrin glue is a huge advance from techniques once considered standard. "In the old days we would have used muscle taken off her back or a connective tissue from her thigh," Carragee said.

Ford had to lie flat on her bed for 24 hours. By the second day, she was up



Taylor Ford is very happy to have her mom at home again, especially when there's cake involved.

on her feet. "The physical therapist said, 'Okay, let's go.' I was shocked. I was also excited, just to be able to walk."

Ford went home a couple of days later. But she's still seeing Carragee and goes for check-ups at the Orthopaedic Clinic's new location in the Stanford Medicine Outpatient Center in Redwood City.

She must be very careful with her healing spine and won't be able to pick up her children for months. Despite that restriction, she said, "I'm lucky. I'm a walking miracle. It just shows how fragile life is. We forget, but this has made me reflect. After you go through something like this, you want to cherish every moment."



Eugene Carragee, MD works with his physician assistant, Zoya Benjamin, to review patient test results.

Norbert von der Giebben

Norbert von der Giebben

Norbert von der Giebben

Hundreds apply for charter schools

Enrollment began over the weekend for freshman classes at Everest and Summit Prep charter high schools, each enrolling 108 students. A lottery was held Saturday, March 14, as required when there are more applicants than space.

Everest had 298 applicants, a ratio of about 2.8 applicants for every seat, according to Diane Tavenner, Everest spokeswoman and founder of Summit Prep.

Summit Prep had 497 applications, including 27 that were too late, and 34 from outside the

Sequoia district, school Director Todd Dickson said. That ratio is 4.6 applicants for every seat.

"There's definitely a strong demand and not enough space for the kids," Mr. Dickson added. "There were a lot of tears and a lot of sad kids who didn't get in (at the lottery), and there were a lot of happy kids who did. It's always bittersweet."

The Sequoia district estimates that 2,023 freshmen will enroll in its four comprehensive schools in September, district spokeswoman Bettylu Smith said.

EVEREST

continued from page 5

student body chosen by lottery.

State sponsorship

Asked if a hostile home district affects the operations of charter schools under state sponsorship, Ms. Ruskofsky said she didn't see it as a concern, but described the situation as "unfortunate (and) typical" for charters that come before the board on appeal.

Ms. Tavenner said she's looking forward to a relationship with the state education department. "The staff members are very collabora-

tive in nature," she said. "They are in the business of wanting schools to succeed and excel and serve students."

The site for Everest remains in flux.

The Sequoia district offered four portable buildings on a currently empty lot on residential Green Street in East Palo Alto, but in their response, Everest's lawyers have threatened a court battle if the district does not offer a classroom building reported not to be in use on the campus of Sequoia High School in Redwood City.

The district has until April 1 to reply to Everest's response. ■

Former transportation secretary dies at 82

■ Claude Brinegar was an oil executive and collector of Mark Twain memorabilia.

Claude Stout Brinegar, who served as the nation's third secretary of transportation, died March 13 at Classic Hyatt Care Center in Palo Alto. Mr. Brinegar, who maintained homes in Menlo Park and Boothbay Harbor, Maine, was 82.

Mr. Brinegar served as secretary of transportation in Richard Nixon's cabinet in 1973-75. He did not know Mr. Nixon when he was tapped for the transportation post as part of a move to add several businessmen and professional managers to Mr. Nixon's cabinet, say family members.

He stayed on for six months after Mr. Nixon's resignation. Although he admired Gerald Ford, he did not want to be part of an election campaign, say family members.

He returned to Union Oil in 1975 and in 1980-81, headed Ronald Reagan's transportation transition team. He returned to the Democratic Party in the

1990s.

Mr. Brinegar spent nearly 40 years in the oil industry, joining Union Oil Co. of California in 1953 and rising to executive vice president and chief financial officer of the renamed Unocal Corp. by the time he retired in 1992.

He served on the Union Oil/Unocal board from 1968 to 1973 and FROM 1975 to 1995, the last five years as vice chairman.

Born Claude Rawles Stout in Rockport, California, on Dec. 16, 1926, Mr. Brinegar took the name of his stepfather, Butler Brinegar, in 1951.

He served in the U.S. Army Air Corps in Japan and Korea in 1945-47. He graduated Phi Beta Kappa with three degrees from Stanford University, a bachelor's degree in economics, a master's in statistics, and a doctorate in applied economics from Stanford's Food Research Institute.

After retiring in 1992, he

return to the institute to serve as a visiting scholar for four years.

An avid collector of Mark Twain first editions and related memorabilia, he proved by statistical tests that Mr. Twain was not the author of a collection of letters attributed to him. Elmira College awarded him an honorary doctorate in 1997 for his public service and Twain-related work.

Mr. Brinegar is survived by his wife, Karen Bartholomew, whom he married in 1995; his children, Claudia Berglund of Huntington Beach, Meredith Cross of Washington, D.C., and Thomas Brinegar of Cody, Wyoming; and four grandchildren.

His marriage to the former Elva Jackson in 1950 ended in divorce. In 1983 he married Mary Katharine Porter, who died in 1993.

At his request there will be no services. The family prefers contributions to the Mark Twain Studies Center, Elmira College, Elmira, NY 14901; or the Mark Twain House, 351 Farmington Ave., Hartford, CT 06105.

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Public session Thursday on Hillview rebuild plan

The public will have an opportunity to comment on the draft environmental impact report for the Hillview Middle School project at a special Menlo Park City School District board meeting beginning at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 19. The meeting will be held in the Hillview library, 1100 Elder Ave. in Menlo Park.

The Menlo Park district plans to build new classrooms, an auditorium, parking lots and other facilities to accommodate an anticipated jump in enrollment, from the current 670 students to an estimated 974 students by 2016. Most of the current buildings on campus will be torn down once the new facilities are completed.

The draft EIR for the project

SCHOOLS

details significant traffic and noise impacts from the project, but says that the impacts would be worse if the school is left as-is.

The 45-day public review period ends April 3. Written comments will be addressed in the final version of the EIR, but oral comments made at the meeting will not. The board is not scheduled to take any action at the meeting, only hear comment from the public.

The draft EIR is available for public review at the Menlo Park City School District Office, the Menlo Park Library, and the Atherton branch library. It is also posted online at www.mpcsd.org/facilities.

Portola Valley schools face minimal cuts, balanced budget

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor

Thanks to a smaller-than-expected hit from the state and some budgetary fine-tuning, Portola Valley School District officials expect to begin the 2009-10 fiscal year on July 1 with a balanced budget — a change from last year.

Tim Hanretty, assistant superintendent, said the projected \$10.6 million budget for next fiscal year reflects layoffs of two non-teaching staff members, and a loss of work hours for one teacher.

This fiscal year's budget was about \$11.3 million, and included about \$500,000 in deficit spending.

That sum, and the \$580,375 in planned budget reductions for 2009-10, represent in large part the revenue loss to the district resulting from the reassessment of billionaire Larry Ellison's Woodside estate, which dropped his property tax bill by about 60 percent.

Mr. Hanretty said the board last year decided to spread the pain of that loss over two school years, and endorsed the deficit-spending plan for the first of those years.

Aside from the revenue loss because of the Ellison reassessment, property tax revenue in 2008-09 was flat, Mr. Hanretty said. Next fiscal year, however, tax revenue is expected to grow by about 4 percent, he said.

"Fluid" circumstances

Superintendent Anne Campbell told the school board at its March 4 meeting that the district fared better than expected with state budget cuts. Rather than the \$540-per-pupil cuts that district officials were told to expect, the cuts were limited to categorical funding —

money that is required to be spent on specific programs.

The categorical funding loss is about \$35,300 for this school year, and about \$47,000 in 2009-10.

But, Ms. Campbell warned, the situation is "very dynamic and fluid," and much could depend on the May 19 statewide election. If voters reject Proposition 1C — the "lottery securitization" measure that would generate over \$5 billion for the state — school funding will likely take another hit, she said.

Mr. Hanretty said after the meeting that the funding cuts for categorical programs this year "won't make or break the programs," adding that the district will be able to absorb the loss with "perhaps a minimal trimming of operational costs."

Categorical programs include the arts and music block grant; the Gifted and Talented program; instructional materials; peer and assistance review; professional development block grant; and the school and library improvement block grant.

Cutting costs

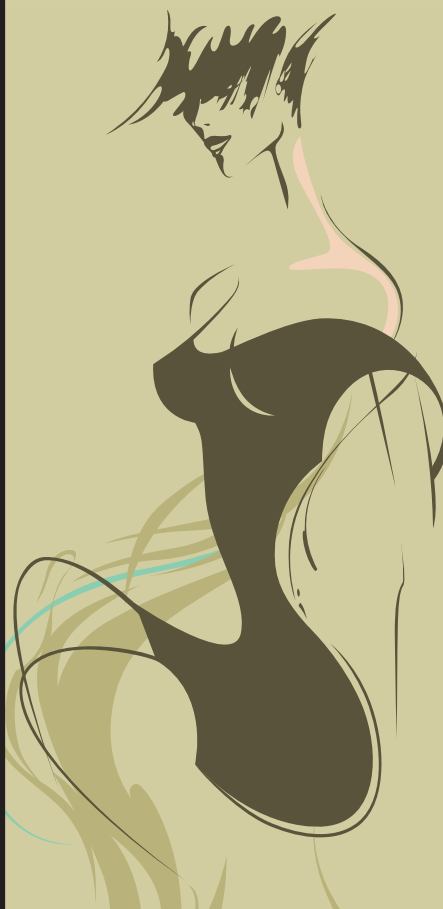
Among the budget-reduction measures for 2009-10 is "belt-tightening" at Corte Madera School, which includes dropping an advanced math course and English Language Development periods. Mr. Hanretty said one teacher's hours will be reduced by two periods a day.

A network administrator and the special education administrative assistant will be laid off as cost-cutting measures.

Other measures include a freeze on administrative and confidential

See BUDGET, page 18

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The forum will feature a panel of experts dedicated to understanding and meeting the needs of older adults—from navigating the care environment, to assuring that every detail of the hospital's interior is senior-friendly, to translating important concepts into architecture and planning.

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HEALTHCARE TOMORROW is a speaker series presented by the Stanford University Medical Center Renewal Project discussing topics ranging from Modern Hospitals and Sustainable Design to the Future of Healthcare.



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Design Concepts Unlimited

Rita Ghatak, PhD

Director of Aging Adult Services,
Stanford University Medical Center

George Tingwald, MD, AIA

Director of Medical Planning,
Stanford University Medical Center
Renewal Project

MODERATOR

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Executive Director for Public Affairs,
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Locals win kudos for environmental efforts

In its annual recognition of notable environmental contributors, the honors conferred by Sustainable San Mateo County this year will include several names with local ties.

Portola Valley resident Bill Lane, the former publisher of Sunset Magazine and a long-standing advocate for environmental causes, will receive a tribute at the Wednesday, March 18, award ceremony.

Sharing that spotlight will be Raj Atluru, a managing director and clean-technology specialist at Menlo Park-based venture firm Draper Fisher Jurvetson.

The ceremony begins at 6:45 p.m. at the South San Francisco Conference Center at 255 S Airport Blvd. Tickets are \$85, of which \$40 is tax deductible. For more information, go to www.SustainableSanMateo.org.

One of five sustainability awards will go to the Yerba Buena Nursery, a source for native plants and located since the 1960s in the hills

above Woodside. The award recognizes the nursery's "positive contributions to San Mateo County's economy, environment and social equity," according to a statement on the SSMC Web site.

The commercial green-building award goes to the town of Portola Valley for its new \$19 million complex eligible for a gold or possibly platinum rating from the U.S. Green Building Council.

The library, town hall and community hall are noteworthy for their natural ventilation, daylighting and shading, and use of recycled and reclaimed materials that give the complex "a comfortable and natural feeling while accomplishing energy conservation," the statement said.

An honorable mention for a new home that made "extensive use of salvaged materials" goes to Woodside residents Marty Walker and Nancy Reyring.

Students tapped for green home makeovers

Local students will be asked to solve a tough problem — reducing greenhouse emissions — one family at a time.

Atherton's "GreenStart Challenge" offers prizes for kids who convince their families to take measures to reduce their carbon footprint, according to Valerie Gardner of the Atherton Environmental Programs Committee.

Through April 30, kids in kindergarten through 12th grade in Atherton and some Menlo Park schools can sign up to take part in the challenge. Kids will be offered

simple strategies to boost energy efficiency, reduce consumption and help the environment.

"We've come up with a challenge form that contains a wide range of tasks that each have certain point values. The kids get their families to do these tasks and get credit for the points associated with that task," Ms. Gardner said.

Kids who participate are eligible for raffle prizes, and families are offered information and discounts on services ranging from water-saving native plant land-

scaping and composting to green interior design, according to Ms. Gardner.

Local businesses offering special discounts for their services will be featured at a Live Green mini-expo on Sunday, March 22, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. at the Menlo School gymnasium, 50 Valparaiso Ave. in Atherton.

Information about GreenStart and other programs sponsored by the Environmental Programs Committee can be found at the EPC's Web site, www.athertongreen.net.

Local emergency responders conduct large-scale drill

Teams of volunteers with San Mateo County's emergency preparedness program went door to door in Menlo Park on Wednesday, March 11, testing the speed at which the district could distribute medicine in case of an emergency.

Volunteers distributed earthquake preparedness pamphlets to 2,447 homes in Menlo Park, and about 14,000 throughout the county, officials said. The drill was meant to mimic medicine distribution in the case of an anthrax attack, influenza pandemic or other health crisis.

Jon Johnston of the Menlo Park Fire District said the drill lasted for three hours in Menlo Park. The biggest challenge, he said,

was tracking multiple team movements over a large area, and working efficiently with a command center using a ham radio.

"It was a success and we were definitely able to get a good critique of how things ran," he said.

The exercise was designed to test responder's ability to communicate with one another and disseminate information (or in the case of a real emergency, medicine) quickly and efficiently throughout the county.

Traditionally, agencies prepare for such disasters by offering medicine at various distribution points. Doris Estremera, spokeswoman for the San Mateo County Health System, said this approach raises logistical issues including parking

and the risk of exposure.

"We wanted to see how quickly we can get it out without having people come to us," she said of the theoretical medicine being distributed.

This is the third year San Mateo County has conducted the drill.

Ms. Estremera said her organization threw canvassers a curveball, having actors pretending to have special issues or to require additional attention. Actors told the teams that the medication was against their religion, pretended not to speak English, or asked whether it was safe for pregnant women. Some actors pretended to be reporters trying to get interviews during the distribution process, according to Mr. Johnston.

—Bay City News Service contributed to this report.

BUDGET

continued from page 15

staff salaries; elimination of strategic plan funding; elimination of conference attendance and travel; a freeze on technology purchases; and a reduction in supplies and services. ■

— Bay City News Service



EYE CARE NEWS

Presented by
Mark Schmidt
Licensed Optician

A THINNESS PRESCRIPTION

People with strong prescription lenses may want to take advantage of "high-index" lenses that pack more prescriptive power into less space. As a consequence, high-index lenses are thinner than lenses made from ordinary materials. High-index plastic materials, in particular, have changed the look of high-prescription eyeglasses. They make it possible for very nearsighted and very farsighted individuals to enjoy wearing glasses that are virtually indistinguishable from glasses with less powerful prescriptions. As a

result, no one need necessarily feel self-conscious about wearing glasses with thick lenses. Even bifocal lenses can be fabricated into a thinner, lighter lens. In addition, most high-index lenses can also include UV-filtering protection, scratch resistance, and anti-reflection coatings.

No one wants to wear thick lenses that make even the most fashionable frames look heavy and dated. Thanks to high-index lenses, you don't need to compromise your appearance because you wear glasses. Bring your eyewear prescription to MENLO OPTICAL at 1166 University Drive, on the corner of Oak Grove Avenue and University Drive. We carry high-index lenses, progressive lenses, transition lenses, and tinted lenses. Select from quality frames in the latest shapes, sizes, and colors. You can reach us at 322-900.

P.S. Because high-index lenses reflect more light than conventional lenses, anti-reflective (AR coatings) are recommended.

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

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE



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

The City Council of the City of Menlo Park hereby gives public notice of its intent to increase the existing solid waste / recycling rates for commercial and multi-family residential customers within the City of Menlo Park for the collection of solid waste and recyclable materials. The increase, if approved, would be retroactively effective as of January 1, 2009. The City Council plans to consider these rate increases at a public hearing on March 24, 2009 at 7:00 p.m., or as near as possible thereafter, in the City of Menlo Park Council Chambers Building at 701 Laurel Street - Civic Center.

What are the new rates:

Several rate increase levels will be considered at the public hearing. The maximum rate increase under consideration is 24% higher than current rates. A detailed listing of the proposed rates can be obtained from the Finance Department located on the second floor at City Hall, 701 Laurel Street, on-line at http://www.menlopark.org/departments/dep_finance.html, or by calling 650-330-6644.

Necessity for new rates:

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

If you wish to file a written protest to these fee increases, please send a letter addressed to Solid Waste Rates, c/o City Clerk, City of Menlo Park, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025. Your letter must identify the real property you own by street address and the assessor's parcel number. Your letter must be legibly signed by any one of the current property owners. Your name should be set forth as it appears on your tax bill. The City of Menlo Park must receive your letter at City Hall by 5:00 p.m. on March 20, 2009, or it must be presented at the City Council meeting March 24, 2009, prior to the close of the public hearing on the matter.

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

Dated: March 4, 2009

/s/

MARGARET S. ROBERTS, MMC, City Clerk

Published in THE ALMANAC on March 11, 18, 2009.

Recession could take smallish bite at WHS

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

It will be (school) business as usual at Woodside High School in the fall, financial crisis notwithstanding.

"From the student's perspective, they won't know the difference," Principal David Reilly said in an interview. "In fact, they'll be scratching their heads about how we're offering more classes."

New classes for next year include anthropology, world cinema, conceptual chemistry, advanced placement European history, and robotics and engineering technology. Physics will be opened up to ninth-graders to help them prepare for the robotics program, he said.

Depending on enrollment, teaching staff of 108 will be right around the same number in 2009-10, he said. Support staff of 53 may drop "a little bit," but the focus will be on keeping cuts from impacting classrooms. "Anyone who's not doing that shouldn't be in the game, quite frankly," he added.

Class size is set at 27.5 students per teacher, he said. If enrollment drops enough, it can force layoffs.

The school will lose a couple hundred thousand dollars, about 2.5 percent of its budget, for the coming school year, he said, as will all the comprehensive high schools in the Sequoia Union High School District, including Menlo-Atherton.

"The students will not see the difference, but many of the staff members and volunteers will have to do more with less," he said in an e-mail. "Given the spirit of my staff, I know that we will rise to the challenges set before us; however, if we are looking at deeper cuts in the years ahead, there will be a breaking point, and our children will pay the price."

On the other hand, Mr. Reilly said he is considering reducing class sizes in areas where student performance is trending downward, particularly in English classes. The school's foundation, which often provides funds for class size reduction, "likes the idea," he said.

Asked if donations to the school have fallen off, given the recession, he acknowledged a "little bit" of a drop. "I have been surprised," he said. "They're certainly not giving at the same level that they have in the past, but all in all, the support is there." ■



PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE AMENDING CITY OF MENLO PARK MASTER FEE SCHEDULE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City Council of the City of Menlo Park, California, will hold a Public Hearing to consider amending the City's Master Fee Schedule concerning proposed changes in fees for the following departments: Administrative Services, Community Services, Police, Community Development, Public Works, and Library. The amounts of the proposed fees are based on information which will be available to the public at least 10 days in advance of this Public Hearing at the Finance Department.

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that the City Council of the City of Menlo Park will hold this Public Hearing on Tuesday, March 24, 2009, at 7:00 p.m., or as near as possible thereafter, in the City Council Chambers of the City of Menlo Park, Civic Center - 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, California, at which time and place interested persons may appear and be heard thereon.

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that "if you challenge this matter in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the Public Hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Menlo Park at, or prior to, the Public Hearing".

DATED: Dated: March 4, 2009
/s/
MARGARET S. ROBERTS, MMC, City Clerk

Published in THE ALMANAC on March 11, 18, 2009.

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Mayor says city will consider raising tax

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

Taxing residents might be the best way to balance Menlo Park's budget, Mayor Heyward Robinson said in his March 10 "state of the city" address.

The city could raise utility tax rates for between one and three years, he said, while it waits for tax income from the Rosewood Hotel and other projects to fill the gap between expenses and revenues.

Anticipating a backlash from those who have pushed for city staffers to bear at least some of the burden for the economic downturn, Mr. Robinson told residents not to get caught up in short-sighted criticism by the council's detractors, and not to lose sight of what's best for the city in the long run.

"It's easy to be the outsider who questions or criticizes every decision made," Mr. Robinson said. "We too often find that the solution that pleases everyone in the short term, satisfies no one in the long run."

He urged resident to consider "all interests," "not just the voices of naysayers and critics."

"Let's not allow our fear of the current uncertain times to be a substitute for action," he said.

Turning to city staffers assembled in the council chambers, Mr. Robinson said, "I want to make it clear that significant reductions in staff are our last option" in the council's attempt to balance the budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1.

Lee Duboc, a former council member who has repeatedly pushed for the city to scale back benefits to staffers, shot back in a post on her blog.

"As this unabashed naysayer and critic sees it, our Mayor's vision of the future is comforting unless you happen to be a taxpayer," she wrote, arguing that it isn't fair to expect residents who are suffering from the economic crisis to help the city balance its books.

It is unclear whether a majority of council members would approve a steep tax hike. Councilman John Boyle has been a frequent critic of the tax, and Councilman Rich Cline has said that the city has to look at other options in trying to work its way out of a deficit.

"We can't just put (the city's

deficit) on the backs of the community," in the form of a utility tax hike or a cut in services, Mr. Cline said at a Feb. 24 meeting.

The city enacted a two-tiered utility users tax in April 2007 — 3.5 percent on utilities (water, gas and electric bills), and 2.5 percent on communications (telephone, television and Internet bills) — in order to narrow what the city maintains is a long-term deficit. Council members voted to lower the rates to their current 1 percent level that June, after the city realized that revenues were coming in higher than expected. ■

For a condensed version of Mr. Robinson's speech, see Page 23.

Meetings on budget, childcare, overpass

Over the next week, the city of Menlo Park will hold several meetings that might be of interest to residents, including a breakfast with current and former council members on Friday, March 20.

■ **Tuesday, March 17:** The City Council will hold a study session on the El Camino Real/downtown planning process, and a workshop on the budget process. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. in the council chambers, between Laurel and Alma streets in the Civic Center.

■ **Wednesday, March 18:** The Menlo Children's Center will be the topic of discussion at a meeting of the Parks and Recreation Commission. The commission will weigh various options for the center, with an eye toward minimizing the cost to the city — either through privatizing the center, or asking parents to pay the full cost. The meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. in the Burgess Recreation Center at 700 Alma St.

■ **Thursday, March 19:** At a neighborhood meeting, residents can weigh in on the design of a replacement bike/pedestrian overpass across U.S. 101 at Ringwood Avenue. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. in the council chambers.

■ **Friday, March 20:** Breakfast and general discussion with current and former City Council members. Along with the current council and senior staff, Steve Schmidt (1994-2002), Paul Collachi (1996-2004), and Mary Jo Borak (1998-2002) had RSVP'd as of The Almanac's Monday afternoon deadline. Pastries and coffee will be served. The meeting will begin at 8 a.m. in the Gatehouse, in the Civic Center complex.

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■ OBITUARIES

Frances 'Franky' Jackson*Former Woodside resident*

Frances "Franky" McInnis Jackson died March 8, a month after the death of her husband, William Jackson Jr., a former mayor of Woodside.

The Jacksons resided in the San Francisco Towers, a retirement community. Before moving to San Francisco, they lived in

Woodside from 1960 to 1998.

Ms. Jackson was a native of San Francisco, and a third-generation Californian. She was a graduate of Castilleja School and Stanford University, where she was a member of the Cap and Gown Society and Alpha Phi sorority. She was a volunteer for the American Cancer Society and California Pacific Medical Center.

Ms. Jackson is survived by her daughter, Elizabeth Ann Reinhardt of Woodside; and three

grandsons.

Memorial donations may be made to the American Cancer Society or the California Pacific Medical Center.

Max Rondoni

A memorial service for Max Rondoni, a longtime resident of Menlo Park who died March 11, will be at 2 p.m. Wednesday, March 18, at the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, 950 Santa Cruz Ave. in Menlo Park. An obituary will appear in a future issue of The Almanac.

■ POLICE CALLS

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

ATHERTON

Child or elder abuse report: First block of Irving Ave., March 6.

MENLO PARK**Robbery reports:**

■ Apple iPod robbed from person who was struck several times in trying to retrieve it, 7:30 a.m. on Samtrans bus near Middlefield Road and Ringwood Ave., March 6.

■ Woman pushed down and robbed of purse, later recovered, 200 block of Van Buren Road, March 12.

Commercial burglary report: Vacant building entered through roof hatch and copper and electrical panels stolen, 100 block of Independence Drive, March 6.

Residential burglary reports:

■ House broken into, first block of Henderson Place, March 12.

■ House broken into, 700 block of Hamilton Ave., March 12.

Auto burglary reports:

■ Navigation device stolen, 1000 block of Middle Ave., March 7.

■ Cell phone and money order stolen, 900 block of Willow Road, March 12.

Fraud reports:

■ Victim deposited two checks written to closed account, 700 block of Pierce Road, March 6.

■ Counterfeit check received, 600 block of Laurel Ave., March 12.

Domestic disturbance report: Man arrested on assault and battery charges, 1100 block of Willow Road, March 12.

WOODSIDE

Resident's account and routing numbers found on counterfeit check, 700 block of California Way, March 4.

M-A goes online for fundraiser

By Kelly Todd*M-A High staff*

Menlo-Atherton's Foundation for the Future is holding its second "M-A on eBay" auction March 22-29. Up for bid are vacation homes, parties, community events, business services and sporting opportunities, in addition to unique items offered by M-A parents and teachers.

The difference from other school auctions? Everything is online, from the auction catalog (on www.maauction.org) to the live auction for a week on eBay.

There is no event and no cost to put on this auction — every dollar raised supports M-A students and programs through the Foundation for the Future, a fundraising organization for M-A.

The idea of a completely online auction started last year when the foundation was exploring new ways to raise funds for class size reduction, teacher development, expanded curriculum, and critical services and programs at M-A.

Board members Trish Gump and Linda Fornaciari had been involved with the Las Lomitas Education Foundation and knew people love to support a school by buying donated items at an auction. As students graduated from La Entrada, so did the items their parents regularly donated to the schools' auction.

"It felt like leaving money on the table — money that M-A could well use," remembers Trish. They and fellow board members asked friends for auction items and the auction was born.

Not wanting to put any precious resources into holding an event or paying for an online auction company, they chose to use eBay's charitable works program. Adding a catalog Web site leading bidders to eBay was the key, and the Web site was donated for the remainder of the year by local company Intuit.

"This kind of auction is more inclusive," explains Linda. "We reach more people online without an event, plus eBay is easy to use and well-known to most bidders. And we get plenty of bidding frenzy without a live event."

The first year's auction raised \$50,000, but, according to Trish, "it went beyond raising funds; the auction fills a void at M-A by offering chances for parents to come together at parties, and for community members and businesses to support our school. People are very generous and seem excited to be a part of this. No one turns us down."

For more information, contact co-chair Michele Culhane or Trish Gump at mafoundation@yahoo.com with questions, or go online and view the auction catalog at www.maauction.org.

FREDERIC MELFORD REA

OCTOBER 29, 1919 – MARCH 6, 2009



With his children at his side, Frederic M. Rea died peacefully in his Portola Valley home on March 6, 2009 after a long illness; he was 89. An extraordinary success in work, family and civic life, he was the great grandson of John Jennings, an 1849 San Francisco pioneer from Ireland, and the eldest son of Frederic W. and Alice Brown

Rea. Known for his generosity of spirit and the manner in which he lived his life, Fred's encouraging and upbeat influence deeply touched family, friends and colleagues; he was the living definition of a gentleman. His presence will be greatly missed.

Born in Alameda, Fred spent his childhood in Burlingame and summers in the Santa Cruz mountains. Named one of Burlingame High's Ten Most Outstanding Graduates, he was President of the Scholarship Society, President of the Dramatic Club and competed in varsity tennis.

Fred earned his BS degree in Economics at UC Berkeley and did post graduate work in Business Administration. While making lifelong friends at Delta Upsilon Fraternity, he also took on the responsibility of Business Manager at the Daily Californian (circulation of 16,000) and membership in Alpha Delta Sigma, the Golden Bear Society, and the San Francisco Symphony Forum. A diehard Old Blue, Fred loved rooting for CAL — win or lose. GO BEARS!

In 1941, his work for the UC Berkeley Dean of Students was interrupted by World War II, which took him to the South Pacific. As a lieutenant, Fred served first with the Office of Naval Intelligence and ultimately found himself in far off places on the staff of Admiral Guenther, who was under the command of Admiral Nimitz. Fred received his honorable discharge in 1946. He would soon return to the Pacific and Asia to become an influential force for the good will and economic promise of international tourism.

After the war, in a chance meeting Fred offered to help a young lady named Nancy Hawley Hubbard into her ski boots at Mount Rose, a stroke of luck that blossomed into a love affair of more than 60 years. They married in 1947, making their home in Palo Alto and raising three children.

Fred began his publishing career working with Sunset Magazine in 1949, becoming the Travel Editor in 1951. In 1954, he founded Western Business Publications, specializing in industry publications including Western Appliance and Television, Western Plastics, Pacific Travel News, Pacific Hotel Directory and Pacific Commerce. He was instrumental in expanding interest in diverse industries: the revolutionary uses of plastics and the rich potential of Pacific Rim tourism. Fred also collaborated on the publication of colorful travel books

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for Sunset Magazine and Book Publishing Company and a book entitled How to Fish the Pacific Coast by Ray Cannon.

Fred's principled and fair-minded approach to working with others established him as a hard-working leader who was highly respected and well liked. In the plastics industry, he received numerous tributes in recognition of his outstanding efforts, among them the Distinguished Service Award from the Society of Plastics Industries. As VP of Publications for the Pacific Area Travel Association (PATA), he helped transform America's perception of the South Pacific as a theater of war to a compelling tourist destination. In 1972, Fred was knighted by the King of Malaysia in honor of his pioneering work that was vital to the Pacific Rim economy and in 1978 he received the Award of Merit from PATA for his lifetime contributions.

Fred was known for his radiant smile, steadfast friendship and warmhearted kindness, attributes that attracted countless life-long friends at home and around the globe. His many affiliations set the stage for a life lived to the fullest. He was honored to be Past President and a long-term member of Menlo Country Club, where he honed his golf game, mingled at social events, and often played bridge or a friendly game of dominoes. He relished his association with Profits Unlimited and was valued as a Lifetime Member of the Olympic Club. Fred demonstrated his passion for community service and intercultural understanding by committing significant volunteer time and support to UC Berkeley's International House, serving as their Chief Financial Officer and long term board member. Fred served as the President for 30 years of Hawley Terminal Inc., a real estate company founded in 1910.

Fred treasured his family and was a devoted father and grandfather. He shared magical travel stories and experiences that opened portals to the world for his children and offered an unforgettable role model for his grandsons, who loved their "Bumpa" and the adventures they enjoyed together. He cherished family retreats to Lake Tahoe, The Lodge at Pebble Beach, and Hawaii, where he passed on his love of golf, swimming, tennis, and fishing mountain lakes and streams. Fred was an admired father figure and natural mentor whose caring attention profoundly shaped young lives.

He is survived by his sister Alice Barbara Rea Glesener of San Clemente and brother Leonard A. Rea and wife Lesle of Sacramento; his daughter Nancy Teresa Rea of Mill Valley; his son Geary F. Rea and his wife Leslie B. Rea of Santa Rosa; his daughter Elizabeth Rea Kosier and her husband Timothy S. Kosier of Lincoln, Nebraska; and his grandsons Brian Kosier, Riley Rea, and Nathan Rea.

In accordance with his wishes, his family will have a private memorial service. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the UC Berkeley Haas School of Business, the UC Berkeley International House or a charity of your choice.

PAID OBITUARY

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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

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

EMAIL your views to:

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

MAIL or deliver to:

Editor at the Almanac, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

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

Tax increases not the best option

Menlo Park's financial outlook for the 2009-10 fiscal year that starts July 1 is hardly rosy, but the budget formula laid out by the city staff and presented last week by Mayor Heyward Robinson projects a relatively painless year.

In his state of the city speech, Mr. Robinson suggested that cuts in operations and a reduction in the number of projects could get the city to a break-even point, providing the council approves use

EDITORIAL*The opinion of The Almanac*

of some of the city's \$26-plus million in reserves and agrees to increase the utility users tax.

In many ways, the budget is business as usual, calling for no

reductions in staff although some departing workers might not be replaced. Otherwise, the mayor promises that long-promised projects like sidewalks on Woodland and Santa Cruz avenues, the new field at Kelly Park and the Burgess gymnasium would go forward.

All of this would be relatively ho-hum in a normal budget year, but this is not a normal year. Although the Midpeninsula has not had the horrific impacts seen in some areas of the state, retail sales and other business are shrinking and real estate is not flying off the shelves, at least at this time. Residents are reining in their spending, often whether they need to or not, which creates a self-fulfilling prophecy of gloom and doom.

So the big question, as far as the mayor's budget is concerned, is whether this is a time to raise taxes and raid the city's reserves. Is that a message the city wants to send out?

How will Menlo Park residents feel about paying a higher utility tax to support the city's approximately 260 employees, many of whom make over \$100,000 a year and who will receive a good por-

tion of their salary and benefits for life when they retire after 25 or 30 years of service? Police can retire with 90 percent of their salary after 30 years.

Mr. Robinson and City Manager Glen Rojas are wary of reducing staff at this time, and want to rely instead on the tried and true formula of shifting priorities and not shying away from increasing the utility tax. That strategy has worked in prior years, although layoffs did occur in the big dot-com downturn.

As the budgeting process moves forward, we would at least like to see some comparisons. How many layoffs, or other cost savings, would it take to reduce or eliminate an increase in the utility tax? Or how many layoffs would be necessary to skip the planned use of some city reserve funds?

We believe Mayor Robinson and the council, in putting together a new budget, should at least consider more options, including a relatively small reduction in the city's work force, which accounts for roughly 72 percent of the city's annual expenses. Perhaps city residents are more than willing to kick in an additional \$1 million or more in utility taxes. Perhaps the recession has not really hit many households in Menlo Park.

However, everyone in the country, from President Obama on down, is doing everything possible to jump-start the economy, including passing out huge stimulus packages to state and local governments. But Menlo Park will see very little of that money, and California voters will be asked May 19 to pass ballot measures that would extend the duration of several tax increases approved in February, including a one-cent jump in the sales tax.

Unless it is absolutely necessary, Menlo Park should not add to this misery.

LETTERS*Our readers write***Editorial on Valley fire map misses the point***Editor:*

Your editorial of March 11, "Time for Valley to adopt a fire map," misses the current economic and fiscal realities facing the communities of Portola Valley and Woodside.

Your cavalier dismissal of the effects of the designation "very high risk areas" on homeowners in those areas, and fiscal waterfall effects that would follow on the towns, showed a surprising lack of understanding of the issues. Therefore, let's spell them out:

The designations that you seek would basically redline homeowners in those "very high risk" areas. They would be unable to obtain fire insurance at anything less than extraordinarily high prices — if at all.

If they lost insurance coverage, homeowners would risk losing the financing on their homes and face foreclosure. Refinancing, given the already tough environment for borrowers requiring jumbo mortgages (is there any other kind in Portola Valley or Woodside?) would be out of the question.

See **LETTERS**, next page



Atherton Heritage Association

Our Regional Heritage

Many early residents of Atherton also had homes in San Francisco. This is the San Francisco home of Charles Holbrook, whose daughter, Olive Holbrook Palmer, lived on the estate that is now Atherton's Holbrook-Palmer Park. She donated the park property to the town in 1958.

Mayor spotlights 'state of the city'

By Heyward Robinson

One of the best things about Menlo Park, even in troubled times, is the very positive attitudes we have about our community and one another. In a recent community survey, we asked residents what they liked best about living here. Here is what we learned: We are a community of families that are friendly and welcoming; we appreciate our neighbors and our neighborhoods; we like the small-town feeling and overall quality of life.

The same survey included feedback on our top challenges and concerns, including the economy, the city's budget, business development, high-speed rail and land-use planning.

In setting goals for this year, we reviewed these results and decided to concentrate extra effort in three areas:

- Creating a vibrant and resilient economy in support of a sustainable budget;

- Engaging in more future-focused planning and visioning in support of maintaining our high quality of life;

- Working with neighboring communities and other government agencies on issues of regional interest.

The first goal pinpoints how our economy impacts the budget and the broad, diverse services we provide. As a community, we expect a great deal from city hall. Continuing to provide high-quality services, however, depends on the maintenance of a strong, sustainable revenue stream and a balanced budget.

In the coming years, Menlo Park will face a deficit of \$1 million to \$2 million annually. Fortunately, our reserves are now over \$26 million, or about 70 percent of our general fund budget. We are thus in position to take a long-term view, rather than make drastic, damaging, short-term across-the-board service and staff cuts.



Drawing on our reserves can help us have a "soft landing," but cannot act as a sustainable long-term strategy. As we plan for the future, we must take everything into consideration, including prudent cost-cutting, fee increases and tax hikes.

We also must consider the revenue side of the equation. The Rosewood Hotel, set to open April 2, will provide a welcome boost to our transient occupancy tax. We also look to increase our sales tax revenues, particularly from the "M2" light industrial zone east of Highway 101. This area is home to a diverse mix of low- and high-tech businesses. Rising stars in this area include green tech, bio sciences, and medical device companies, many of which are poised to expand dramatically. Our council and staff are working hard to keep as many of these companies in Menlo Park as possible, and to make the area more attractive to high-profile, high sales tax-potential companies.

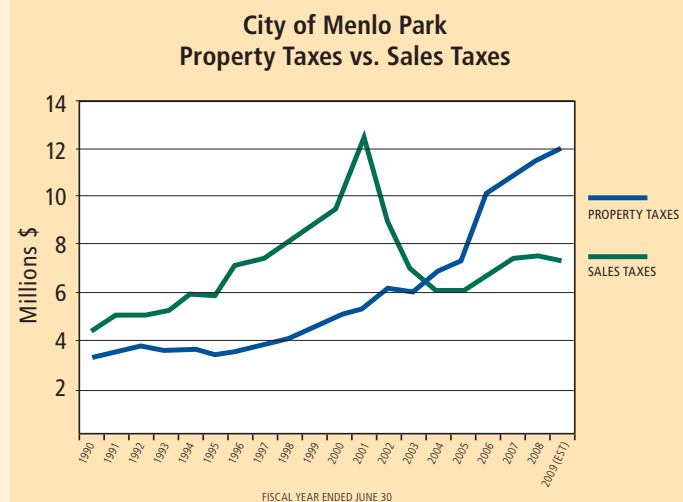
Under the "future-focused planning and visioning" goal we are into the critical second phase of our El Camino Real Downtown revitalization process, where we are shaping the future of our city's core. We have a council subcommittee working with other cities to plan for high-speed rail. And we will soon adopt a climate action plan to focus our efforts in preparing for climate change.

The third goal recognizes that many of the challenges we face extend beyond our borders. We are reaching out to our neighbors to address issues such as crime, traffic, mass transit, water (both supply and conservation), waste management, and more. We are making sure that officials at the county, state, and federal levels are aware of Menlo Park's needs and opportunities.

In reaching our goals, we will need the support of the entire community. I urge you to join me and my fellow council members in developing solid, long-term solutions to the challenges we face. We cannot rely on an outside entity to bail us out. Instead, we must take responsibility for our situation, with a patient view to the long term. If we — staff, commissioners, the public, and

council members — work harder and become more productive, Menlo Park will emerge from this downturn sooner and stronger. Let not the fear of our current times resign us to inaction. Instead, let us act together, so that we might maintain all that we love about Menlo Park, so that we might create a future that is all that and more.

This is an abbreviated version of Mayor Heyward Robinson's state of the city speech, delivered March 10 in the City Council Chambers. For a complete transcript, see the Menlo Park Web page at http://www.menlopark.org/homepage/SOC_Address.pdf



LETTERS

Continued from previous page

The lack of financing options and skyrocketing insurance costs would render the properties unsaleable in an already distressed market.

Property tax reassessments would inevitably follow, and tax revenues would see a corresponding drop. Municipal budgets and local schools would bear the brunt

of this — all so some bureaucrat in Sacramento can have a map that says what everyone here already knows and understands.

The Woodside Town Council has acted to take the sensible step of adopting a town-wide building code revision to require fire-safe construction materials and methods. The Portola Valley Council appears set to do the same thing.

This approach especially makes sense given that the proposed "very high risk" area map in Woodside had different designa-

tions for homes that were sometimes only a hundred feet apart — yet one was redlined and the other was not. Imagine if 100 feet decided whether or not you could adequately insure your home!

Maps don't do anything to mitigate fire risk, but the proposed building code revisions, along with sensible brush clearing by property owners and participation in fire mitigation and disaster preparedness programs, will.

**Kermit S. Claytor
Woodside**

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NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT and NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CITY OF MENLO PARK PLANNING COMMISSION

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

Rezoning, Planned Development Permit, Lot Merger and Minor Subdivision, BMR Agreement, Heritage Tree Removal Permit, and Environmental Review/Sand Hill Property Company/1300 El Camino Real:

Requests for the following: 1) Rezoning the properties from C-4 General Commercial District (Applicable to El Camino Real) to Planned Development (P-D) District, 2) Planned Development Permit to establish development regulations including parking, building height, landscaping, and building setbacks, and conduct architectural review for the proposed development of 110,065 square feet of commercial space (51,365 square feet of retail/restaurant/service uses and 58,700 square feet of non-medical office uses), 3) Lot Merger and Minor Subdivision to merge the existing six lots and create up to four commercial condominium units, 4) Below Market Rate (BMR) Agreement for the payment of in-lieu fees associated with the City's BMR Housing Program, 5) Heritage Tree Removal Permits to remove two on-site and four off-site heritage trees, and 6) Environmental Review of the proposed project for potential environmental impacts.

In addition to analyzing the proposed project, the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) analyzes a mixed-use residential alternative for which the applicant has prepared plans at the request of the City Council. The residential alternative would require similar entitlements as the proposed project, and would consist of 36 residential units, 58,700 square feet of non-medical office, and 22,895 square feet of retail/restaurant uses. This concept utilizes density bonus square footage as provided for in section 16.96.040 of the Zoning Ordinance.

The DEIR prepared for the project identifies potentially significant environmental effects that can be mitigated to a less than significant level in the following categories: Aesthetic Resources, Air Quality, Cultural and Paleontological Resources, Hydrology and Water Quality, Geology, Soils and Seismicity, Noise, Hazards, and Public Services and Utilities. The Draft EIR identifies potentially significant environmental effects that are significant and unavoidable in the following category: Transportation, Circulation, and Parking. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires this notice to disclose whether any listed toxic sites are present at the location. The project location does not contain a toxic site pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

Copies of the Draft EIR will be on file for review at the City Library and available for distribution at the Community Development Department, Civic Center, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025, as of Monday, March 23, 2009. The review period for the Draft EIR has been set from Monday, March 23, 2009 through Thursday, May 7, 2009. Written comments should be submitted to the Community Development Department no later than 5:30 p.m., Wednesday, May 6, 2009.

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that the Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on this item in the Council Chambers of the City of Menlo Park, located at 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, on Monday, April 6, 2009, 7:00 p.m. or as near as possible thereafter, at which time and place interested persons may appear and be heard thereon. If you challenge this item in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Menlo Park during the public review period for the Draft EIR or at, or prior to, the public hearing.

Documents related to these items may be inspected by the public on weekdays between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday, with alternate Fridays closed, at the Community Development Department, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park. Please call Megan Fisher, Associate Planner, if there are any questions or comments on this item. She may be reached at 650-330-6737 or by email at mefisher@menlopark.org. Up-to-date information on the project can be found on the project webpage: http://www.menlopark.org/projects/comdev_1300ecr.htm

Si usted necesita más información sobre este proyecto, por favor llame al 650-330-6702, y pregunte por un asistente que hable español.

DATED: March 12, 2009 Deanna Chow, Senior Planner
PUBLISHED: March 18, 2009 Menlo Park Planning Commission

Visit our Website for Planning Commission public hearing, agenda, and staff report information: www.menlopark.org

If there are any questions, please call the Planning Division at (650) 330-6702.

Published in THE ALMANAC on March 18, 2009

FOR SALE



1 Kilroy Way, Atherton

Newly constructed 6-bedroom, 7.5-bath estate spanning approximately 9,684 square feet; pool and spa next to covered lanai and barbecue area; access to top rated Las Lomitas schools

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FOR SALE



2124 Oakley Avenue, Menlo Park

New luxury 5-bedroom, 4-bath home with beautiful hardwood floors, chef's kitchen, and fully landscaped grounds; excellent Las Lomitas schools

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FOR SALE



465 Cotton Street, Menlo Park

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OFFERED AT \$1,695,000

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Menlo Park

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Menlo Park

Meticulously updated traditional 4-bedroom, 2-bath home with gorgeous rear brick dining terrace and level lawn, located in Central Menlo; access to excellent Menlo Park schools

.....

Atherton

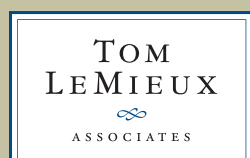
Updated 4-bedroom, 2.5-bath home with pool in Central Atherton

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Federal Tax Credit: The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 authorizes a tax credit of 10% of the purchase price up to \$8,000 for qualified first-time home buyers (income limitations pertain) purchasing and closing escrow on a principal residence between January 1, 2009 and November 30, 2009. For more information, please visit www.tomlemieux.com

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The above information is provided for general awareness and does not constitute legal or tax advice; please consult your tax and legal advisors to determine whether you qualify.



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