

Atherton police officer sues town, public works supervisor over assault, harassment claims. Page 5

The Almanac

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

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See Section 2



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- (Restaurants)
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- Best Breakfast Restaurant
- Best Chinese Restaurant
- Best French Restaurant
- Best Indian Restaurant
- Best Intimate Dining
- Best Italian Restaurant
- Best Japanese Restaurant
- Best Mexican Restaurant
- Best Mom & Pop Restaurant
- Best New Restaurant
- Best Pizza Place
- Best Place to Dine with Kids
- Best Seafood Restaurant
- Best Sunday Brunch
- Best Thai Restaurant

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- Best Bakery
- Best Cocktails
- Best Coffee/Esspresso/Tea
- Best Dessert

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- Best Hamburgers
- Best Ice Cream Place
- Best Meat Store
- Best Produce
- Best Sandwich Shop
- Best Take-Out Food
- Best Wine/Liquor Store

To The Rescue

- (Services)
- Best Auto Repair Shop
- Best Bank
- Best Barber
- Best Cleaners
- Best Day Spa
- Best Fitness
- Best Florist
- Best Green Business
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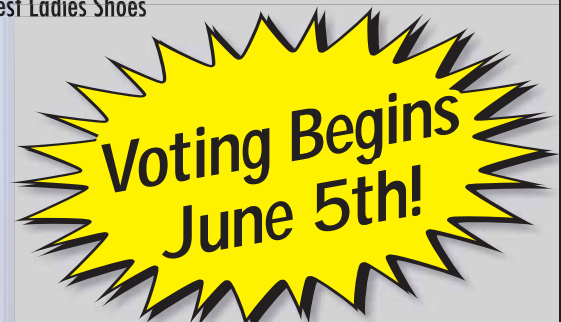
To The Mall... And Beyond

- (Retail Shopping)
- Best Antique Shop
- Best Bicycle Shop
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- Best Boutique
- Best Frame Store
- Best Furniture Store
- Best Hardware Store
- Best Jewelry Store
- Best Ladies Shoes

- Best Lingerie
- Best Nursery
- Best Paint Store
- Best Pet Store
- Best Oriental Carpet
- Best Stationery Store
- Best Toy Shop

Up, Up and Away!

- (Fun Stuff)
- Best Place for a Date
- Best Place to Meet People
- Best Live Music
- Best Children's Birthday Place



Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

FIRST SHOT



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Woodside operetta

Woodside School's eighth-graders will stage the Disney musical, "Beauty and the Beast," June 3-6 at the school, 3195 Woodside Road in Woodside. The cast includes, front, from left, Julia Dressel, Leigh Thomas, and Jackie Falkenberg; and back, from left, Caroline Glazer, Ricardo Barron-Silva, Spencer Hanley, Peter Quinby, and Shannon Cleary. Tickets, for sale at the school, are \$10-\$12. Show times are 5 p.m. on June 3, 6 p.m. on June 4, and 7 p.m. on June 5 and 6. For more information, call the school at 851-1571.

Atherton

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Woodside

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Viewpoint

■ Guest opinion: Library supporters fear impact of new gym. **Page 27**

On the cover

Courtney Kingston of Ladera stands in her family's vineyards in Chile's Casablanca Valley. The vineyards produce the grapes for Kingston Family Vineyards wines, as well as for a number of Chilean winemakers. According to Wine Spectator magazine, Kingston is proving that Chile can produce fine pinot noir. Photo by Constanza Brunner Halpern. See story, **Section 2**.

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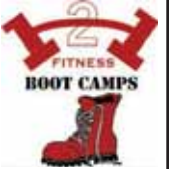
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Local News

MENLO PARK | A THERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Police officer sues town, public works supervisor over assault, harassment

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

Atherton's public works supervisor, who's been with the town for 33 years, is facing a criminal trial on misdemeanor charges of assault and battery on an Atherton police officer. He's also named in a civil lawsuit the officer filed.

In a June 3, 2008, incident caught on videotape, Officer Pilar Ortiz-Buckley was sitting in the police station staff room when she was threatened by public works supervisor Troy Henderson, who then lunged at her, according to Steve Wagstaffe, the chief deputy district attorney of San Mateo County.

The alleged assault exacerbated Officer Ortiz-Buckley's existing work-related injury and caused a new one, according to her complaint.

The criminal case is set to go to trial on June 22.

In her lawsuit against the town of Atherton and Mr. Henderson, filed April 29, Officer Ortiz-Buckley alleges that she suffered ongoing sexual harassment from Mr. Henderson, and that once she reported the incident, she faced retaliation and disability discrimination related to the injury she suffered.

Mr. Henderson referred all comments to his attorney, Jacklyn A. Bentley, who is representing him in the criminal case.

"This is tearing me apart, tearing my family apart," he told *The Almanac*.

"Mr. Henderson firmly maintains his innocence in the matter, as he has from the very beginning," said Ms. Bentley in an e-mail to *The Almanac*. "The case is currently set for a jury trial, where Mr. Henderson believes his side of the story will become known and prevail."

Ms. Bentley said she was unable to comment further on the case.

Atherton City Attorney Wynne

Furth said she could not comment on pending litigation, and said the town has not yet responded to the complaint.

According to Officer Ortiz-Buckley's lawsuit, Mr. Henderson, 58, has a long history of sexually harassing female town employees, stretching back at least 15 of the 33 years that he has worked for Atherton. At least three formal complaints were made against Mr. Henderson over the years, and his behavior is well known to everyone in town hall, she claims in her lawsuit.

The town's only response to the sexual harassment complaints has been to issue reprimands and require Mr. Henderson to take sensitivity training, she said in her complaint.

"It's a slap on the wrist," said John Scott Bonagofsky, Officer Ortiz-Buckley's attorney.

Caught on video

According to Officer Ortiz-Buckley's account of the June 3 incident, Mr. Henderson followed her into the police station staff room while leering at her and making verbal sexual advances.

"Henderson followed Officer Ortiz down the hallway, and as he often did, began making sexual comments towards Officer Ortiz about her needing a man like him to 'quench her fires,' and telling Officer Ortiz what he would do to her if she went out with him," the lawsuit says. "As she typically did in these circumstances, Officer Ortiz told Henderson she was not interested."

Mr. Henderson allegedly continued making sexual remarks, and when he got inappropriately close to her, she warned him to get out of her space, she claims in the lawsuit.

"Suddenly, Henderson lunged

See **ORTIZ-BUCKLEY**, page 8



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Volunteers with **Habitat for Humanity** tear down an illegal add-on to a home in Belle Haven on the first day of construction. Habitat bought the home after it had been foreclosed upon, and is renovating it to sell to a "low-income" family.

Habitat for Humanity begins work on foreclosed home in Belle Haven

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

Habitat for Humanity has already begun renovation on a foreclosed home in Menlo Park, less than a month after the city of Menlo Park approved funding for the program.

Volunteers started work on a home in the city's Belle Haven neighborhood Friday, May 29, tearing down an illegal addition behind the house to lay the foundation for the rehabilitation effort. Within the next two months, the housing nonprofit expects to choose a low-income family to sell the home to.

"This is very new for us," said spokeswoman Jennifer Doettling. Habitat normally builds homes from the ground up, but in this case it's going about it differently: buying homes that

have been foreclosed upon and fixing them up.

In addition to providing housing for a low-income family, the organization hopes the plan will help to stave off blight in the Belle Haven neighborhood, which has been wracked by foreclosures as real estate prices have plummeted.

The city of Menlo Park has agreed to contribute up to \$500,000 to the program from its below-market-rate housing fund, matching \$500,000 that Habitat will put up. The nonprofit group hopes to use the money to purchase and renovate up to five homes in Belle Haven.

Menlo Park Presbyterian Church also plans to contribute to the program, offering to match donations up to a total of \$150,000. With additional donations, Habitat hopes to

buy a minimum of 15 foreclosed homes over the next two years, Ms. Doettling said.

Habitat bought the first home under the program for \$225,000 in late April, according to Ms. Doettling. By the time the renovation is finished, the house will cover 910 square feet, with three bedrooms.

Habitat plans to sell the house to a family that either lives or works in Menlo Park, and takes in 40 to 60 percent of area median income — between about \$63,000 and \$94,000. It will cost somewhere in the range of \$25,000 to \$50,000 to renovate each home, Ms. Doettling said.

The Habitat plan is separate from the city's plan to buy foreclosed homes in the Belle Haven neighborhood, and resell them to people on the city's below-market-rate housing list. ▀

Civic Center: Will parking for new gym push out library patrons?

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

As plans progress for a new gymnasium in Menlo Park's Civic Center complex, some residents are arguing that the Civic Center is getting too crowded — and that there aren't

nearly enough parking spaces for the new visitors.

Their concerns revolve around one parking lot in particular, off Alma Street, near the intersection with Ravenswood Avenue. Its 132 spaces, already shared between the library, City Hall, and the recreation center, would be forced

to accommodate another group: users of the new gymnasium, to be built on an empty plot adjacent to the parking lot. The new gym and the new gymnastics center, which would go in at the site of the existing gym, would take up nearly three times the land that the existing gym does.

Each facility could reach up to 50 feet.

During peak hours, gym users alone would occupy about 100 parking spaces, according to a consultant's report. The gym would also cover over part of the lot, eliminating 17 of the 132 spaces.

It's a proposition that library supporters are none too thrilled with.

The parking situation at the library "has never been very good, and this makes it even worse," said Tim Goode, a member of the

See **CIVIC CENTER**, page 8

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David Tinsley, biochemist, musician, football enthusiast

OBITUARY

David Paul Tinsley, who was born and raised in Menlo Park and graduated from Menlo-Atherton High School in 1987, died May 25 with his wife by his side, after a three-year battle with lung cancer. He was 40.

A memorial service was held May 29 at Saint Pius Church in Redwood City.

Mr. Tinsley, who most recently lived in Redwood City, was born October 29, 1968, at Stanford hospital and lived most of his life in the Bay Area. In June 1998, he married Daisy Martin.

"Whether caring for his family, entertaining or helping out friends, or researching cures for cancer and other diseases through his academic and professional years, David had the rare gift of always putting others before himself," said his mother, Carol Tinsley of Menlo Park. "David possessed a quick wit, the ability to put anyone at ease, and enjoyed the simple pleasures of life: traveling, sports, music, and spending time with friends and family."

Football was a passion. He played for the Menlo-Atherton Bears and the Mountain View Flyers, and was a fan of the 49ers in good times and bad.

His love of golf was formed early as he and his brothers would traipse along the fairways of the Stanford University Golf Course near their childhood home collecting errant balls. He played that course dozens of times along with hundreds of others across the country, family members said.

Music was a powerful force

in his life. He played drums with numerous bands and would never shy away from a chance to sit in on a set or two. Peninsula residents will remember him as laying down the beat behind Knick Knack Jones over the last five years.

After graduating from M-A, where, in addition to football, he participated in Junior ROTC, he moved to Southern California to attend the University of California, Los Angeles, where he earned a bachelor's degree in psychobiology.

After three years working in biotechnology, he returned to academia, earning a master's degree in biochemistry from the Keck School of Medicine at the University of Southern California.

In addition to postgraduate research into the causes of cancer at Keck, David spent more than five years working for Renovis, a South San Francisco biotechnology company that just shut down in May. He researched and developed medicines for pain and inflammatory diseases.

Mr. Tinsley is survived by his wife of 11 years, Daisy; three children, Carl, Will and Sarah; mother and father, Carol and Carlos Tinsley of Menlo Park; brothers, Randy, Ron and Ken; and 12 nieces and nephews.



David Tinsley

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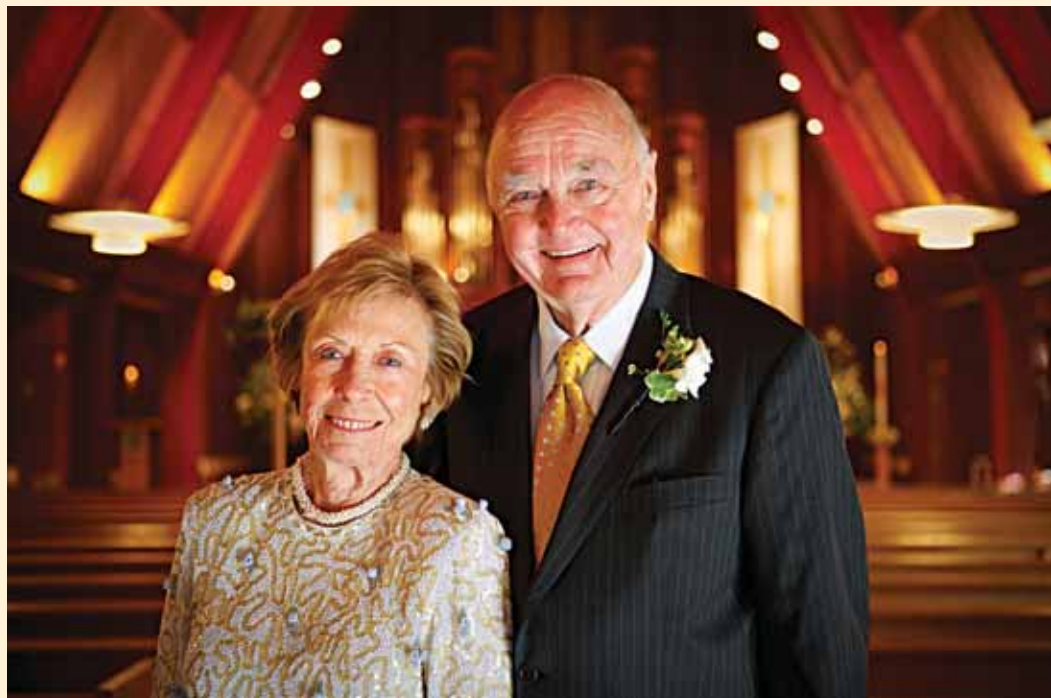


Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Too cool for school

Mike Moore, the principle of Hillview Middle School, accepts a token of appreciation from students Rosie Gurman and Becky Abramowitz at his retirement party on Friday, May 15. After 23 years of leading the Menlo Park middle school, with more than 5,100 students passing through the doors, Mr. Moore is handing over the reins. "The principal's been here so long, and the school's so cool, it'll probably change when he leaves," said Rosie.

PEOPLE



Suzanne Becker Bronk Photography

Sallie DeGolia and Jack Jorgenson right after their wedding at Christ Church Episcopal in Portola Valley.

A big wedding at The Sequoias

This story was written by Margaret Brandon for The Sequoian, the publication of The Sequoias retirement community in Portola Valley. Jack Jorgenson founded the Menlo Park law firm of Jorgenson, Siegel, McClure & Flegel LLP and he was a longtime attorney for the city of Menlo Park.

When two 83-year-olds who met at The Sequoias marry, it is a big deal. When they are Sallie DeGolia and Jack Jorgenson, who held their wedding reception in Hanson Hall (at The Sequoias), it is a really big deal.

Every resident in independent living at The Sequoias received a personally

addressed invitation to the 6:30 reception on Sunday, May 24, that followed the wedding for family members at Christ Church Episcopal in Portola Valley.

The Rev. Marylou Taylor officiated. About 150 Sequoians as well another 150 or so from "the outside" enjoyed the festivities. Great music for dancing was provided by Bob Stiff and his combo.

The night before the wedding the rehearsal dinner for 60 was held at the Menlo Park home of Jack's daughter, Carol. All close relatives were present, including Sallie's four children and eight grandchildren and Jack's three children and five grandchildren.

Family came from as far away as Washington, D.C., Cleveland and Minneapolis.

Hansen Hall was lavishly decorated. Two large lighted ficus trees framed the entrance and there were eight more trees inside.

High winds disturbed the plans to dine on the terrace so the assembled guests were accommodated (squeezed) inside. The delicious food was catered by The Sequoias Kitchen and it was accompanied by copious amounts of champagne and wine.

What a send-off! We all wish Jack and Sallie, who promise each other 15 good years together, the best of marriages.

A first for Atherton

Kristin Nichols is the Atherton Police Department's first female sergeant in the town's history. "She's so bright, so focused, she's going to do very well in her chosen career," said Chief Glenn Nielsen. Sgt. Nichols, who was recently promoted, said she's looking forward to the additional responsibility of her new role. "I'm flattered that they chose me," she said.

Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac



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REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Gloria Darke



What? This "show place" property isn't selling?

Dear Gloria,

Our house is a virtual show place. It is very clean and has fresh paint and new carpet. We have received two offers but, we are selling it ourselves. What can we do to get a sale?

-T.W.

Dear T.W.,

Sales just don't happen; they require hard work and an experienced agent. The toughest part of selling a house comes after the offer is made.

Frequently, a buyer tenders an offer that's not at full-price. Unless you are highly skilled at real estate negotiations, it pays

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A few years back, Atherton officials had to scrape reflective dots and yellow paint off of a freshly repaved Stockbridge Avenue after homeowners raised a hue and cry about it. So it was odd when a group of Watkins Avenue residents started lobbying town officials because they want a double-yellow line painted on their street.

Council members waived, then voted no at the May 20 meeting. Their reasoning? Residents want to slow down speeding cars, but double yellow lines are really only effective at keeping people from passing.

They had the encouragement of several other Athertonians, who protested that the striping wrecks the rural ambience and that drivers would rather run over bicyclists and pedestrians rather than flout the law by crossing a double yellow line.

A wrenching recall

After discovering a problem that affects steering, Tesla Motors has decided to recall all of its roadsters manufactured before April 22 of this year. That's right, all 345 of them.

After one owner reported shaky handling, Tesla found that a particular bolt on a small percentage of its roadsters had been "improperly torqued" during assembly. In a press release, the car manufacturer noted that the company that makes the chassis is to blame.

Most recalls require the consumer to return the product to the factory. This being Tesla, it isn't your ordinary recall. Mechanics will come to the homes of roadster owners to properly torque the bolts, and will throw in a full-vehicle inspection.

Menlo Park is home to one of Tesla's two showrooms.

Overcrowding at Menlo Park Civic Center?

CIVIC CENTER

continued from page 5

board of directors for the Friends of the Library, a foundation that raises money for library projects.

Mr. Goode was one of about a dozen people, including two members of the Library Commission, who in letters to the city disputed an environmental impact study's finding that no new parking spaces would be needed to accommodate the new gym, and the new gymnastics center.

The lot in question isn't the only one in the Civic Center complex — there are a total of 560 spaces in six lots — but it is the closest to the library, the recreation center, and the site of the proposed gymnasium. Once that lot fills, the overflow would likely drain into a skinny lot that runs along Alma Street and curls down Burgess Drive, near the Little League field at the opposite end of the Civic Center complex — parts of it over a quarter mile from the library.

That would be a difficult trip for members of two groups that use the library frequently, Mr. Goode said: senior citizens and families. The parking dilemma will be especially acute on days when the library holds popular special events, residents said in letters to the city.

Among the possible solutions floated by residents: building a level of underground parking under the existing lot; imple-



Illustration by The Almanac

Menlo Park residents and library supporters say that plans for a new gymnasium would crowd the city's Civic Center complex, forcing library visitors to park in a skinny lot along Alma Street and Burgess Drive during peak use hours.

menting a shuttle service around the Civic Center complex during peak use hours; and rethinking the location of the gym.

The city would foot the bill for any mitigation efforts, according to Lisa Ekers, the city's engineering services manager. Palo Alto developer John Arrillaga has agreed to pay all construction costs over \$6 million for the gym.

Some residents say the new gym, along with a new proposed gymnastics center that hasn't yet been funded, will simply make the Civic Center too crowded.

John Kadvany, a member of the

city's Planning Commission, floated a creative solution at a May 4 Planning Commission meeting: the city could buy a vacant lot near the Civic Center complex on El Camino Real near Middle Avenue, and put the gym there. It would serve as an anchor for development on El Camino Real, and would complement a bike tunnel under the street and train tracks, he said.

While expressing concern over the parking situation, some commission members noted that the lack of parking could encourage people to find alter-

natives to driving.

Construction could begin in the fall, the city has said. ■

INFORMATION

The comment period closed May 26 on a draft environmental impact report on the proposed new gym and gymnastics center. The Planning Commission and the City Council are tentatively scheduled to hold public hearings on the project's potential environmental impacts on June 29 and July 21, respectively. For more information, visit www.menlopark.org/gym.

Atherton police officer sues town, public works supervisor over assault

ORTIZ-BUCKLEY

continued from page 5

at Officer Ortiz and grabbed her, and Officer Ortiz was forced to defend herself from the much larger man," the complaint states. Another officer then walked into the room, defusing the situation, the lawsuit says.

The next day, Officer Ortiz-Buckley asked to see the security camera video, and was told by Jeanne Enberg, the police department's communications manager, that the incident needed to

be reported to then-Chief Bob Brennan. The police department referred the investigation of the incident to the county District Attorney's Office.

"It's all on video," said Mr. Wagstaffe. "We've been talking to other (Atherton) employees with similar situations."

Officer Ortiz-Buckley's lawsuit also claims that Assistant City Manager Eileen Wilkerson told Ms. Enberg to "get rid" of the video. Ms. Wilkerson disputed that allegation to an investigator for the DA's office, saying she

asked Ms. Enberg to remove the video from her desktop.

Restraining order

A stay-away order prepared by Chief Brennan was given to City Manager Jerry Gruber, but was never served on Mr. Henderson, the lawsuit claims.

Officer Ortiz-Buckley later was granted a three-year restraining order against Mr. Henderson in county Superior Court, requiring him to stay five yards away from her, and to stay away from her home and her children's school.

Disability claim

When the incident occurred, Officer Ortiz-Buckley was working part-time while recovering from a back injury stemming from an April 2007 training exercise. After the altercation with Mr. Henderson, her back injury worsened, and a new injury to her neck was diagnosed, leaving her unable to work, she said in her complaint.

After physical therapy, she returned to work on limited duty at the end of November 2008. Her lawsuit claims that town officials did not try to accommodate her by offering her alternate open positions in the police department.

Officer Ortiz-Buckley's doctor cleared her to return to work, but with a weight-limitation that prevents her from wearing the 35-pound gun belt that's part of a patrol officer's uniform.

Instead, Officer Ortiz-Buckley claims she was told to retire from the police department. She's been on administrative leave since January, after using up all her vacation

Poets, artists, musicians gather in Menlo Park on Saturday

Menlo Park's recreation center will become a hub of poetry, music and fine art on Saturday, June 6, when the Menlo Park Library hosts "The Gathering of the Poetry Groups" from 11:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.

The event will take place in Room 105 of the Burgess Recreation Center at 701 Laurel St., a short distance from the library in the Menlo Park Civic Center.

About 16 poets are scheduled to read their work beginning at

noon, and non-registered poets will be invited to read during a period to begin shortly after 2 p.m. Some poets will be accompanied by musicians.

There will be about 15 fine artists displaying their work, and five musicians are scheduled to perform.

Outreach librarian Roberta Roth, who helped organize the event, said she doesn't remember any other arts program at the library that gathered as

many artists together.

Leah Lubin of Skyline worked with Ms. Roth to produce the event. She will read from her poetry and exhibit her art work at the event. Some of her recent work has focused on cultural icons Ken Kesey and Jerry Garcia, who had local ties to the community during the 1960s.

The event, sponsored by the Friends of the Menlo Park Library, is free. Refreshments will be served.

See **ORTIZ-BUCKLEY**, page 10

David Bohannon holds outreach meetings, sets up Web site for his office-hotel project

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

As the city of Menlo Park fine-tunes a schedule for how developer David Bohannon's new proposed project will work its way through the city approval process, Mr. Bohannon is gearing up his own outreach efforts — including setting up a Web site and holding meetings to discuss the project.

The proposed 930,000-square-foot project, near the intersection of Marsh Road and Bayfront Expressway, would include three eight-story office buildings, and a 230-room Marriott hotel. According to a tentative schedule, the City Council would decide whether to approve the zoning changes the project would require in February 2010.

The project's Web site, featuring a description of the project and an artist's rendering, is scheduled to come online this week at www.menlogateway.com.

It also has a new name — "Menlo Gateway" — that's somewhat more evocative than "the Bohannon project," as it has commonly been referred to in the pages of The Almanac and elsewhere.

Mr. Bohannon plans to hold four meetings on the project in June, with groups of about 20 people. Through the meetings, he hopes to inform people about the project, and to discuss it in a more relaxed setting than a council meeting, he said in an interview.

Attendance at the meetings is by invitation only. He isn't trying to exclude people from the meetings, he said

— only to keep the discussion group to a manageable size. "We've basically invited a broad cross-section of the community," he said.

Anyone can sign up to be on the invitation list, he says, though space is limited at each meeting, and an RSVP is required. People can sign up to get on the mailing list for the meetings on the Web site (www.menlogateway.com) or by e-mailing Mr. Bohannon at david.bohannon@ddbo.com.

Mr. Bohannon added that he's planning to "expose the project in various public ways," including by sponsoring a booth at both downtown block parties over the summer.

Meanwhile, the city is planning three community meetings across Menlo Park in July to make people aware of the project. ■

City to sell millions in park, recreation bonds

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

The city of Menlo Park is poised to issue between \$10 million and \$12 million in bonds to finance improvements to parks and recreation facilities.

If approved by the City Council at its June 2 meeting, this would mark the second sale of Measure T bonds, following the sale of \$13.2 million in 2002. The measure, approved by voters in 2001, provides for the issuance of up to \$38 million in bonds.

The city will devote \$5.8 million of the proceeds from the bonds to a new gymnasium in the Civic Center complex, if the council approves that project. The council has tentatively signed off on allocating another \$110,000 to resurface tennis courts at Willow Oaks Park and Nealon Park.

The city is considering issuing a new form of bond, created by the federal stimulus bill. The federal government would subsidize 35 percent of the interest payment for "Build America" bonds, according

■ MENLO WATCH

to an investment firm that's working with the city.

But interest on those bonds would not be exempt from taxation at the federal level, as most municipal bonds are, according to the firm.

The city expects to repay the bonds through a levy on property taxes.

Residents interested in purchasing bonds can check the city's Web site, www.menlopark.org, later this month for more information, Finance Director Carol Augustine said.

Foreclosure plan rescued?

After hashing out a plan that would keep homeowners who have defaulted on their mortgages out of foreclosure, Menlo Park may have found a way to fund the program.

The city has been working with the Los Altos-based EARN Group to develop the proposal, through which the city would take an

equity stake in homes that are in danger of being foreclosed upon. City officials say the program would help to stabilize the Belle Haven neighborhood, which has seen a spate of foreclosures in recent months.

Concerned that using below-market-rate housing funds for the program would impose a long-term limit on the resale price of a home, the city shelved the program and went back to the drawing board.

Now, city officials think they might have a solution: asking a developer who pays into the below-market-rate fund to waive restrictions on that funding. City Attorney Bill McClure thinks the developer's approval would be all that's needed to allow the city to inject money into the homes, without capping the resale price.

The city's Housing Commission is scheduled to discuss the plan at its meeting Wednesday, June 3, with the City Council expected to take it up at a June 9 study session. ■

Redwood City takes in senior advocacy group

After being cut off from state funding, a nonprofit group that investigates complaints of abuse of senior citizens in care facilities has struck a deal with Redwood City: free office space in return for services.

On May 29, Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County

held an open house at its new facility, located on the campus of the Veterans Memorial Senior Center at 711 Nevada Street in Redwood City. The group had previously been based in San Mateo.

In return for the office space, Ombudsman staffers will help

the city to provide easier access to information and referral services for Redwood City seniors.

The organization investigates complaints by seniors in long-term care facilities, and works to resolve those complaints. For more information, visit ossmc.org.

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M-A grad forms baseball team

Menlo Park has a new summer league baseball team.

Founded by Menlo-Atherton High School alum David Klein, the Menlo Park Legends are scheduled to begin play with a double-header June 21, at 11:30 a.m. at M-A's Betencourt Field. The season will last about a month, going into late July.

Mr. Klein graduated from M-A in 2005, and is finishing up a degree at UC Santa Barbara. He founded the team to remedy the lack of serious summertime baseball in Menlo Park, he said; among the prospective players are local friends with whom he has scrimmaged over the past few summers.

The team will play in the Stan Musial Division of the Western Baseball Association, a summer league made up of Bay Area teams. Mr. Klein plans to hold tryouts June 13, and to run weeklong camps for children ages 6 to 15 in July and early August.

For more information, visit the team's Web site: www.menloparlegends.com.

ORTIZ-BUCKLEY

continued from page 8

time, her attorney said.

She was hired by the Atherton Police Department as an officer in 2000, and worked for two years as a school resource officer and juvenile detective, and then returned to patrol duty. Prior to that, she worked as a police dispatcher and was promoted to communications manager.

Officer Ortiz-Buckley is "an excellent police officer," her attorney, Mr. Bonagofsky, told *The Almanac*. "The people she works with like her. Everything was fine until she reported Troy, and all of a sudden, they tried to get rid of her."

Officer Ortiz-Buckley's workers compensation claim was denied by a claims adjuster who said that she, not Mr. Henderson,

was the "initial aggressor" in the incident.

"You can see on the video that he lunges at her, she puts a police hold on him to get him off of her, and somehow, she's the aggressor," said Mr. Bonagofsky. "That's what the legal argument is, but I don't think anyone who sees the video would believe that."

Officer Ortiz-Buckley claims she suffered additional retaliation at work, saying the town filled a communications manager position and a detective position without offering them to her, even though it was legally required to do so.

Police Chief Glenn Nielsen said he was unable to comment on pending litigation.

Officer Ortiz-Buckley said she was also excluded from town staff events because of her restraining order against Mr. Henderson,

according to her complaint.

Her lawsuit states that when then-Chief Brennan asked City Manager Gruber whether Mr. Henderson was told to stay away from a staff party, Mr. Gruber told him no, "because Henderson was black and over 50 (years old)."

Officer Ortiz-Buckley claims she was intentionally left off the invitation list for the town staff's 2008 holiday barbecue.

"Ms. Wilkerson informed Officer Ortiz that Henderson was cooking at the barbecue and this is why Officer Ortiz had not been invited," she said in her complaint. "(She) told Ms. Wilkerson that she was shocked that Atherton was treating her this way. ... Atherton's response to Officer Ortiz's complaint in this regard was to cancel the holiday barbecue." ■

Council adopts new mandate on fire-resistant building

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

■ PORTOLA VALLEY

To the disappointment of a handful of residents gathered in Portola Valley's Town Council chambers on May 27, the council voted unanimously to adopt tough state fire-safety regulations, known as Chapter 7A, on the use of ignition-resistant construction materials and methods for all new buildings in town.

The vote echoes a unanimous May 14 vote by the full council to "introduce" the ordinance to change the building code. The law's adoption, with Mayor Ann Wengert and Councilman Steve Toben absent, starts the 30-day countdown to when the new rules take effect.

The law specifies that any remodel affecting 50 percent or more of the exterior wall surface or interior floor area is considered a new building. As such, the entire building must then meet Chapter 7A rules. Also

required for any new building in this heavily wooded community: an interior sprinkler system.

The mandates are necessary to get Portola Valley up to the 7A standard sooner rather than later, Councilman Richard Merk said. Under the existing rule, a remodel is considered a new building if it exceeds 50 percent of the value of the house.

Added Councilman Ted Driscoll: "I'm afraid we have to set the bar really high. ... We have to get peoples' attention."

The change was a sore point for the home owners present.

Virginia Bacon, a resident and real estate broker, complained that the extra costs would be a hardship and advocated for a 75 percent threshold in defining a remodel as a new building. She said 50 percent was an "arbitrary" number and she chided the council on the mandatory aspect.

"I'd rather use the carrot effect," she said. "I'd like to get people to voluntarily realize that (fire safety) is in their best interests."

Another longtime resident sitting next to Ms. Bacon agreed. The new laws should be advisory and stimulate residents to action, he said. Besides, he added, what good is a sprinkler system in a hillside home vulnerable to

reduced water pressure when power for the pumps goes out.

Defending the sprinkler provision, Mr. Merk noted that water pressure may drop in the midst of a wildfire because firefighters are "sucking it out of the (water) mains." But interior sprinklers are critical to prevent that first fire from getting going.

"Every time a fire is suppressed, all the neighbors are protected from the possibility of wildland fire," he said.

"This is deadly serious stuff here, people," Councilwoman Maryann Moise Derwin added. "Yes, it's going to be difficult. It's not a perfect ordinance.

We're going to have to struggle through it. ... If you want to remodel more than 50 percent of your home, you have to build the expenses in. That's the price you pay for living in Portola Valley."

'If you want to remodel more than 50 percent of your home, you have to build the expenses in. That's the price you pay for living in Portola Valley.'

COUNCILWOMAN
MARYANN MOISE DERWIN

Costs increase

The new law means new building materials, or perhaps new versions of them.

A list of 71 approved products at the Web site of the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection includes many familiar words, such as pine, fir, hemlock and cedar, as well as some that are trademarked: Cedar Impression, TruWood, HardiePlank and EverGrain.

Deputy Building Official Gary Fitzer reiterated a view he'd expressed earlier to the council, that he was amazed at the number of treated wood products on Cal Fire's list.

Such materials can cost more, he acknowledged, and the ordinance does not have a provision to relax the rules in cases of economic hardship.

Ms. Bacon reiterated her complaint. "It's an economic hardship for a lot of people and I don't think you're dealing with that," she said. "You're going to force new homes. We're going to be in constant construction." ■

Woodside struggles with definition for "new building." Page 13



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Woodside struggles with definition for 'new building'

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

Ask an average 6-year-old if a building is new and you'll get a simple answer. If the lot across the street used to be empty and now it's got a house on it, if there's a mansion where there was once a bungalow, yup, those are new buildings.

Suppose a house is rebuilt to its exact original dimensions. Is that a new building? What if it's got a new foundation, or a new kitchen, or two new bedrooms? These are important questions if the "new building" label means your remodel has to include an interior sprinkler system as well as new septic system leach fields to replace fields that aren't malfunctioning.

Woodside Town Council members discussed these variations on a remodeling theme at their May 26 meeting, where they considered a staff proposal defining a new building: any remodel that affects more than half the floor area or exterior wall surface. Then they sent it back for refinement.

The definition is too crude, the council told Public Works Director Paul Nagengast and Building Official Curt Clark, in that it could be unfair to smaller remodels, seismic upgrades and, in particular, to home owners with working septic systems and no plans to expand occupancy.

The issue is coming up now because the council, to reduce the town's vulnerability to wild-fire, recently adopted an ordinance requiring all new buildings to be built to rigorous state standards on the use of fire-resistant construction materials and techniques. The ordinance did not define when a remodeled building is sufficiently changed to be considered new.

And so there are projects now in limbo. Adding to their difficulties is an apparently inflexible San Mateo County Public Works rule that requires upgrades to septic systems for all new buildings, but leaves the definition of a new building to the cities and towns.

Contractor Dale Williams told the council that her project meets fire-safety and sprinkler rules, but that the septic rule has put things on hold for two months. "If I don't pass this (septic system) perk test, my client is dead," she said. "It's a death blow."

A Woodside Glens resident with a 1920s-era one-bedroom home located "almost entirely" in a stream corridor, sounded hopeless. "I'm having trouble doing anything at all," he said, adding that a house that is "51

percent new is still 49 percent old and calling it anything else is just ridiculous."

Instead of a single definition for a new building, Mayor Peter Mason and other council members suggested a matrix that maps different categories of remodels to appropriate sprinkler, fire-resistance and septic system rules.

A definition, in whatever form, is a priority, Town Manager Susan George said, adding: "Right now, we're kind of making it up as we go."

Mayor Mason, looking in the direction of Mr. Nagengast and Mr. Clark, returned this hot potato with an ironic touch. "Thank you," he said, smiling broadly. "Good job. (pause) Nice try." ■

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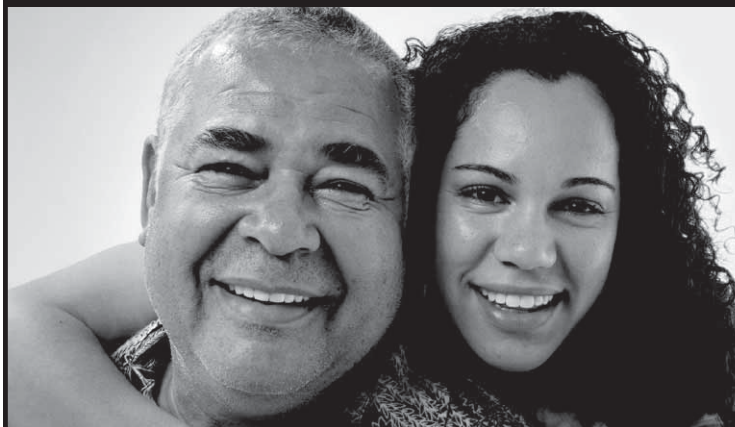
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High-speed rail draws a crowd

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

How do you pack the room at the annual Atherton Civic Interest League meeting? Put a discussion of the California High Speed Rail project on the agenda. Somewhere in the neighborhood of 150 people crowded the Jennings Pavilion at Holbrook-Palmer Park on Thursday evening, May 28, to hear from a panel of experts assembled by the league.

If there were any high-speed rail supporters in the house, they kept that fact to themselves.

The standing-room only audience listened politely to Mike Garvey and John Litzinger, public outreach consultants hired by the state's High Speed Rail Authority, but reserved their enthusiasm for panel members opposed to the current route that would send high-speed trains through the Caltrain corridor that bisects Atherton and Menlo Park.

"We need to do this right," said attorney Gary Patton, saying that the rail authority's preferred route is the wrong way to go.

Mr. Patton is the former executive director of the Planning and Conservation League, a Sacramento-based environmental lobby group that is one of the plaintiffs in a pending lawsuit against the project's planned route from Los Angeles to San Francisco. Atherton and Menlo Park are also plaintiffs in the lawsuit.

It's not too late to change the route to something better than what's proposed, he told the receptive audience. Mr. Patton advised the crowd to band together, decide on a reasonable alternative, and then, "have constant and continuous contact" with state legislators and the governor.

For his part, Mr. Garvey advised patience, as the environmental study of the route is still in its early phases, and alternatives to the route haven't been analyzed yet.

"People ask, 'Why can't we have a tunnel? What will it look like if we raise (the tracks)?' We don't know the answers to any of those questions yet," Mr. Garvey said.

Duncan Jones, Atherton's public works director, laid out the town's case for both joining the lawsuit and still participating in the high-speed rail planning process. "We need to hedge our

Continued on next page

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Continued from previous page

bets," he said.

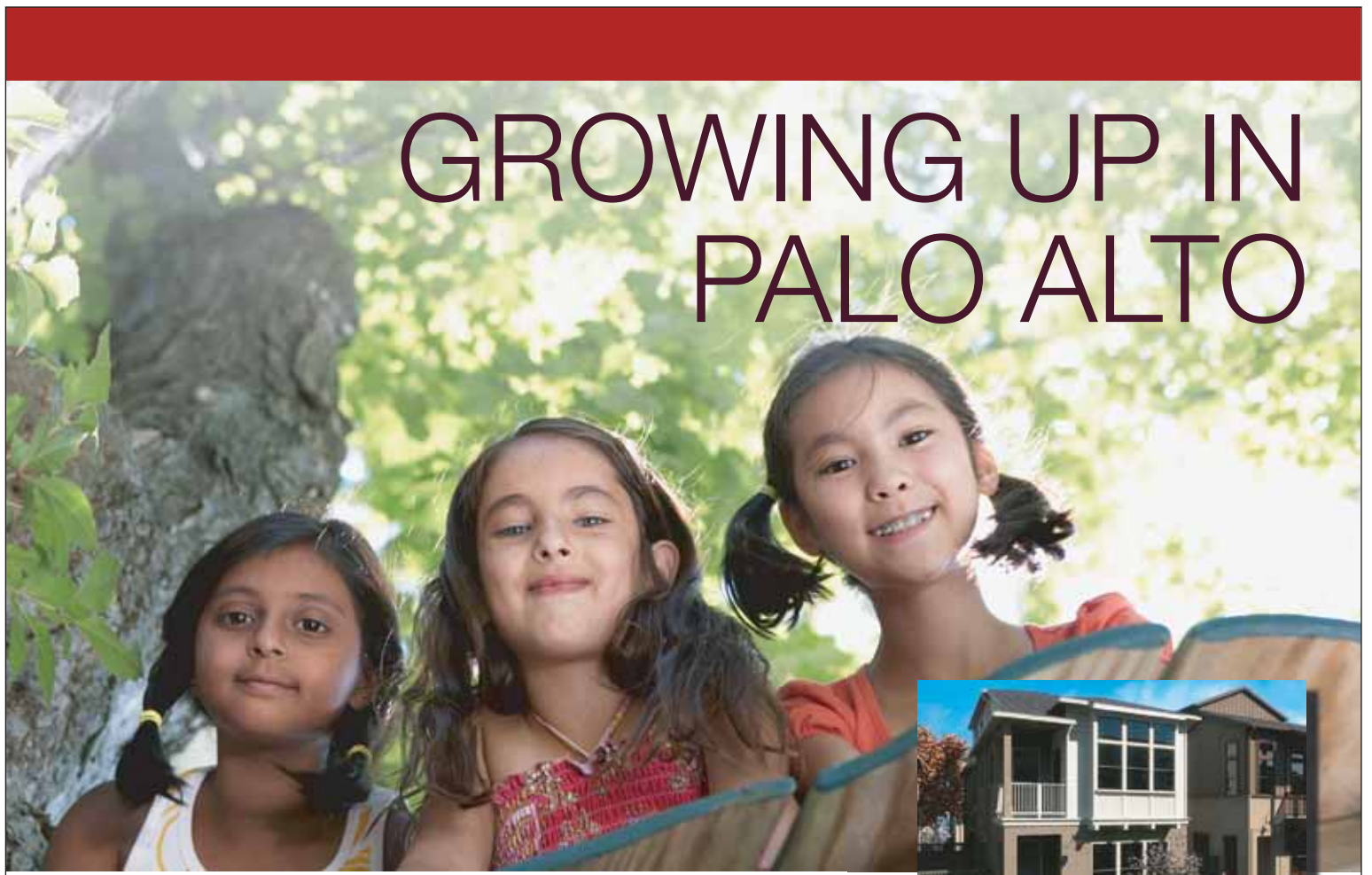
Mr. Jones, a former rail consultant, said that the town's fallback position — if the route doesn't change, put the high-speed trains in a tunnel, rather than on a raised berm — isn't as far-fetched as it sounds.

The rail corridor in Atherton is lined by expensive homes, and widening it to accommodate high-speed rail would require purchasing swaths of private property. The well-heeled crowd laughed derisively at the rail authority's estimate of Peninsula property values — \$100,000 per acre.

"When (the authority) looks at all of the costs and impacts, they may find out that going underground may be cheaper," Mr. Jones said.

The audience got an overview of various tunneling methods, sizes and shapes from John Townsend, the executive vice president of Hatch Mott MacDonald, a consulting engineering firm with experience building rail tunnels all over the world.

However, Mr. Townsend said there were too many variables for him to be able to estimate the cost of constructing a high-speed rail tunnel through Atherton. ■



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CLASS	DAY	TIME	INSTRUCTOR	LOCATION	FEE	STARTING DATE
YOGA FOR EVERYONE						
10 Weeks	Mon.	9:30 AM - 10:30 AM	Carla Germano	Independence Hall	\$160	June 8
10 Weeks - Bring exercise mat and wear comfortable clothing	Tues.	9:30 AM - 10:30 AM		Wdse. Village Church Guild Hall	\$160	June 9
	Wed.	6:00 PM - 7:00 PM		Wdse. Village Church Guild Hall	\$160	June 10
	Thurs.	9:00 AM - 10:00 AM		Wdse. Village Church Guild Hall	\$160	June 11
	Fri.	9:30 AM - 10:30 AM		Independence Hall	\$160	June 12
LOW IMPACT AEROBICS & JOYFLEX BODY TONING						
12 Weeks No class 7/17 Healthy Back, Cardio, 8/31-9/4 Inner-Core Strengthening	Mon.	7:45 AM - 9:00 AM	Joy Lopez	Independence Hall	\$378	July 3
	Fri.	7:45 AM - 9:00 AM		Independence Hall	\$25 drop in	July 6
MUSIC TOGETHER						
8 Weeks Ages 0-4 Years Creative Classes For Children	Tues.	8:30 AM - 9:15 AM	Sean Mendelson	Wdse. Library	\$120	July 7
	Tues.	9:15 AM - 10:00 AM		Wdse. Library	\$120	July 7
	Tues.	10:15 AM - 11:00 AM		Wdse. Library	\$120 \$40 mat. fee	July 7

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Despite state's grief, city eyes balanced budget

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

■ MENLO PARK

As the state of California struggles to find billions of dollars in budget cuts, the city of Menlo Park finds itself with a nearly balanced budget for the 2009-10 fiscal year — though city staff and City Council members alike note that the long-term forecast isn't so rosy.

Rising city expenses, coupled with concerns that the state will go after cities to help balance its budget, cloud the city's financial picture. But excluding a \$450,000 draw on the city's general fund reserve to pay for the downtown planning process currently under way, the city will take a balanced budget into the 2009-10 fiscal year — provided the City Council approves the budget recommended by City Manager Glen Rojas.

The city will hold a public hearing on the budget proposal at its meeting Tuesday, June 2. The meeting starts at 7 p.m. in the council chambers in the Civic Center, between Laurel and Alma streets.

City officials say they're concerned the state will raid city coffers to help bridge its budget shortfall.

Nothing in pipeline

The budget doesn't call for layoffs, or for a tax increase. But city staff and council members alike say that the budget is unsustainable, and that the city may have to consider taking more drastic measures to shore up its finances in years to come. In the fiscal year beginning July 1, the city will see a bump in taxes from several housing and commercial developments that likely won't recur, including the Rosewood Hotel.

"Next year, there's nothing in the pipeline" in terms of development projects, said Councilman John Boyle, who also serves on the city's Finance and Audit Committee. "We're not going to have the benefit of some big jump again to offset what we know are going to be increases in expenses."

City officials also say they're concerned the state will raid city coffers to help bridge its budget shortfall, but that they don't know which funds, if any, might be at risk. If the state borrows nearly \$1 million from the city in property tax revenue, as its financial director has suggested might happen, city representatives have said that Menlo Park will likely lend the money out of its sizable general reserve fund.

Long-term outlook

The prospect of a balanced

budget has dissipated much of the tension among council members over the city's approach to its finances.

"I didn't think when we first started this process that we would be sitting here today, talking about something that was this near to a balanced budget," said Mayor Heyward Robinson during a May 12 study session. "But the worry is next year."

Prior to Mr. Rojas's proposal, Councilman Andy Cohen said he saw the need for a structural overhaul of the city's operations, accusing his fellow council members and Mr. Rojas of willfully ignoring the impending impacts of the recession.

But during the study session, he expressed support for the city's budget proposal. "It just doesn't seem right to not be encouraging" city staff's attempt to balance the

budget without overhauling the organization, he said, adding that he wasn't excluding the possibility of asking city staff members to take pay cuts down

the road.

Several council members repeated earlier assertions that "everything's on the table" as the city looks to control rising expenses. "We should be able to ask all the hard questions" as the city faces a projected deficit in excess of \$1 million in the 2010-2011 fiscal year, said Councilman Rich Cline.

Among the city's rising costs is an expected increase of nearly \$900,000 in contracts for police officers and sergeants in the 2009-10 fiscal year alone, though Mr. Rojas noted that the increase is offset somewhat by the city's plan to leave one position in the department vacant for the time being.

The budget assumes that city employees in non-police unions won't receive a raise when their current contracts expire in October, but Mr. Rojas was quick to point out that he's not trying to supersede those negotiations.

The proposed budget includes a transfer of about \$100,000 less than planned to the city's capital improvement fund. Council members have said the decrease is justified, because the city expects to receive funding for capital improvement projects through the federal stimulus bill. ■



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Event aims to bring Sunset pages to life

"Discoveries in Your Own Backyard" is the theme of Sunset magazine's annual Celebration Weekend, to be held Saturday and Sunday, June 6-7, at its headquarters, 80 Willow Road in Menlo Park.

Sunset's editors, along with food, wine, garden, design and green-living experts, will share tips, tastings and demonstrations.

Two new Sunset Idea House programs will debut at the event: the Modern Cottage Idea House and the Sunset Outdoor Kitchen.

The cottage has two small modular living spaces in a 350-square-foot structure. It can be used for a guest house, home office, or studio

and is small enough to fit in the average backyard.

The new outdoor kitchen is a permanent installation just outside the Sunset test kitchen. Visitors will be able to tour the facility and attend cooking demonstrations.

Another attraction is the Secondhand Sunset booth, where visitors may shop for items from the Sunset prop studio, library, Idea Houses and the editors' own closets. Proceeds will go to charity.

Seminars by Sunset wine editor Sara Schneider will take visitors on a journey down the West Coast to explore six new wine regions.

Among the celebrity chef speak-

ers will be: Jamie Lauren, Top Chef contestant on Bravo television; Sara Snow, host of "Get Fresh with Sara Snow" on the Discovery channel; and Aaron McCargo Jr., host of "Big Daddy's House" and season four winner of "The Next Food Network Star." Cindy Pawlcy, executive chef of Mustards restaurant in Napa Valley, will also speak.

"There are so many treasures to be found in your own backyard, especially here in the West," Sunset's editor-in-chief Katie Tamony says in a press release. "We hope you'll join us in our backyard to discover something new, fun, and fresh."

INFORMATION

Sunset Celebration Weekend will be held Saturday and Sunday, June 6-7, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day at 80 Willow Road in Menlo Park. Tickets, sold at the door, are \$15 for general admission, \$10 for seniors, and free for children under 12. Visitors will receive \$1 off admission if they bike to the event or park at Sun Microsystems, 1601 Willow Road in Menlo Park, and ride a free shuttle to the event. For more information, visit www.sunset.com/cw.



Photo courtesy of Sunset magazine

Wine seminars are a popular event at Sunset's Celebration Weekend, which takes place June 6-7 in Menlo Park.

Green Foothills tour of Santa Clara Valley farms

The Committee for Green Foothills invites the public to a day-long educational tour of Santa Clara Valley farms on Saturday, June 27, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Tickets must be purchased by June 16 (see below).

The tour's first stop is the non-

profit iCollective Roots garden at the East Palo Alto Charter School, where, over muffins and coffee, participants will learn about food system change, the school food revolution, and a vision for open space in East Palo Alto.

A tour of the 11-acre sustainable

farm and school garden at Full Circle Farm in Sunnyvale follows, and includes tasting of newly harvested produce.

Participants will next have a tour of the Emma Prusch Farm Park, the historic 87-acre property where community gardens and

urban farming flourish.

During lunch catered by Buck's of Woodside at the Farm Park, participants will learn about "Veggielution," a student urban farming project.

Wine tasting by Randy Robinson, owner of Vino Locale in Palo Alto, will close out the day back at the Peninsula Conservation Center.

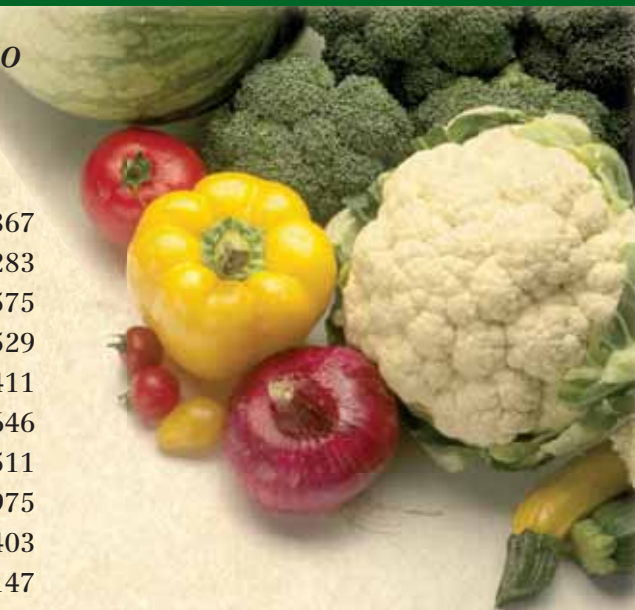
Tickets for the tour, which leaves from the Peninsula Conservation Center in Palo Alto, are \$85 (\$65 for CGF members) and include transportation, tours and lectures from local experts, a lunch and wine tasting. Tickets must be purchased by June 16 from GreenFoothills.org or by calling (650) 968-7243.



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Sacred Heart Preparatory	\$12,529
Ladera Community Church Preschool	\$11,411
Windmill School	\$10,646
St. Joseph's School of the Sacred Heart	\$7,511
Woodside Priory School	\$7,975
St. Raymond's School	\$7,403
Woodside High School PTSA	\$6,147
Phillips Brooks School	\$5,952



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Community Health Education Programs

Palo Alto Center 795 El Camino Real

Lectures and Workshops

Depression, Anxiety and Stress in an Uncertain World: When Should I Get Help?

Gale Hylton, M.D., PAMF Psychiatry and Behavioral Health
Tuesday, June 9, 7 – 8:30 p.m., 650-853-4873

Living Well Classes

Learning About Heart Failure

Friday, June 12, 10 – 11:30 a.m. or Thursday, June 25, 2 – 3:30 p.m., 650-853-2960

Supermarket Wise

Tuesday, June 23, 2 – 4 p.m., 650-853-2960

What You Need to Know About Warfarin

Wednesday, June 17, 2 – 4 p.m., 650-853-2960

Nutrition and Diabetes Classes

Bariatric Class

Thursday, June 11, 9:30 – noon, 650-853-2961

Prediabetes

Monday, June 1, 9 a.m. – noon, or Wednesday, June 17, 4:30 – 7:30 p.m., 650-853-2961

Heart Smart Class

Tuesdays, June 16 & 23, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m., must attend both sessions, 650-853-2961



Pregnancy, Breastfeeding and Child Care Classes

Breastfeeding – Secrets for Success

Thursday, June 25, 7 – 9 p.m., and Saturday, July 18, 10 a.m. – noon, 650-853-2960

Feeding Your Preschooler

Thursday, June 4, 10 a.m. – noon, 650-853-2960

Feeding Your Toddler

Thursday, July 16, 10 a.m. – noon, 650-853-2960

Preparing for Birth – A Refresher

Sunday, June 14, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., 650-853-2960

Support Groups

Cancer

650-342-3749

CPAP

650-853-2952

Diabetes

650-224-7872

Drug and Alcohol

650-853-2904

Healing Imagery for Cancer Patients

650-279-8772

Kidney

650-326-2107

Multiple Sclerosis

650-321-4121

Redwood Shores Health Center 290 Redwood Shores Parkway

Nutrition and Diabetes Classes

Prediabetes

Wednesday, June 24, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m., 650-853-2961

Mountain View Center 701 E. El Camino Real

Lectures and Workshops

Allergies and Asthma in Children

Tuesday, June 9, 7 – 8:30 p.m., 650-934-7380

Common Causes of Shoulder Pain and Dysfunction

Wednesday, June 10, 7 – 8 p.m., 408-523-3295

Living Well Classes

Advance Health Care Directive Appointments

650-934-7380

HICAP Insurance Counseling Appointments

650-934-7380

Mind-Body Stress Management (3 sessions)

Monday, July 13, 7 – 9 p.m., 650-934-7373

LIFESTEPS® Weight Management Program (18 sessions)

Wednesday, June 24, 6 – 7:15 p.m., 650-934-7373

Pregnancy, Breastfeeding and Child Care Classes

Feeding Your Toddler

Tuesday, June 2, 7 – 9 p.m., 650-934-7373

Infant and Child CPR

Monday, June 8, 6 – 8 p.m., 650-934-7373

Infant Emergencies and CPR

Wednesdays, June 3 and 24, 6 – 8:30 p.m., 650-934-7373

Preparing for Baby

Tuesday, June 2, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m., 650-934-7373

Sunnyvale Center 201 Old San Francisco Road

Breastfeeding Support Group

Tuesdays, 10:30 – noon

Sunnyvale City Council Chambers 456 W. Olive Avenue

Understanding Gastroesophageal Reflux Disease (GERD) Community Lecture

Nicole Simpson, M.D., PAMF Gastroenterology
Wednesday, July 22, 7 – 8 p.m., 408-523-3295

Pranksters' robo-call delays M-A's opening

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

Families in the Menlo-Ather-ton High School community received an early morning automated call on Friday, May 29, saying that the electricity at the school had been cut off and that classes were canceled.

Such a call was made to as many as 1,700 families, but it was a senior prank, according to a student who was privy to the caper and who agreed to an interview on the condition that The Almanac not reveal any other identifying information.

A dispatcher at the Ather-ton Police Department said she received six or seven calls around 7 a.m. from M-A parents trying to check on the validity of the call they'd received.

A second automated call, this one a legitimate message from the school administration, debunked the earlier call, but classes did not get fully under way until about 8:30 a.m. instead of the usual 7 a.m., the senior said.

Senior pranks are an annual thing at M-A. This year, the pranksters managed to mimic M-A's automated call system without hacking into school computers or violating prank-related warnings from the administration about destruction of property, vandalism or trespassing, the student said.

"It was cool," the senior said. "I mean, it didn't really hurt anyone. It was a really well thought-out plan."

Students and some teachers were laughing about it, the senior said, but then added that other teachers were reportedly peeved because they had planned to give tests during the first two periods. It was the last full day of classes for the 2008-09 school year, the senior said.

Ather-ton police Sgt. Chris Madsen said police are consulting with the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office to see if the prank call warrants criminal charges and a police investigation.

The school will have the last word as to whether to press charges, Sgt. Madsen said.

Bettylu Smith, speaking for the Sequoia Union High School District, commented via e-mail: "It's disappointing when anyone chooses to pull a childish prank, particularly when it causes dis-

See M-A PRANK, next page



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Sacred Heart Prep graduates 126 students

This story was submitted by Dawna Houston, director of communications for Sacred Heart Schools in Atherton.

GRADUATION 2009

Narges Alaei, Marissa Lucia Alvarez, Eric Spencer Andrews, Alexander Steven Baloff, Matthew David Bocci, Matthew James Brezinski, Taylor Alan Brudos

C Taylor Francis Calderon, Margaret Roberta Campbell, Elizabeth Marie Carey, Alyssa Vella Carroll, Megan Lee Cashin, Ana Laura Castillo, Michael Joseph Cattermole, John Joseph Ceremsak, Joseph Alexis Clancy, Stephanie Patrice Clements, Seamas Anthony Clerkin, Caroline Marie Coffey, Stephanie Marie Covell, Fallon Mariko Cox, Brian James Cropper, Christopher James Cummings

D Matthew Robert Davison, Bradley John DeBattista, Danielle Alyssa DeBroeck, John Thurman Deggelman, Miles R. DeLong, Sasha Alexandra Demienne, Lauren Christine Denniston, Emily Louisa Denton, Dana Elizabeth Dieferdorf, Jon Richard Duane, Yvonne Vera Dunlevie

E-G James Dean Erwin, Ashley Fae Evans, Kameryn Margaret Evans, Sabrina Kristine Fagliano, Laurel Grace Frazier, Katherine Elizabeth Gallagher, Manuel Antonio Garcia, John Peter Gotcher, Shane Patrick Greenleaf

H Kelly Anne Halamek, Andrew David Hannebrink, John Michael Hansen, Kirsten Elizabeth Harman, Teresa Lauren Hashiguchi, Demetrius C. Hill, Melissa Moore Hillberg, Peter John Holoien, Hunter James Horsley, Katherine Amelia Hosking

J-L Abigail Burnett Jones, Christine Elizabeth Jones, Molly Elizabeth Jordan, Kristen Ashley Kiefer, Austin Collins Koenig, Alexander Marek Konopnicki, Kelly Anne La Rue, Kevin Russell Lamb, Arpad Persik Lazar, Taylor Joseph Licolli, William Robert Lockwood, Kevin Gregory Low, Michael James Lussier, Maire Meghan Lynch

M Jennifer Ann MacGregor, Robert James MacGregor, Phiania Decatur Macpherson, Mia Christine Marino, Brooke Elaine Marsal, James Duncan Mason, Laura Crowe McKenna, Christopher Cyrus McMillan, John Camm Melen, Ross William Raymond Merrill, Gabriel Roman Micek, Joanna Malia Milner, Gabriel Cabangangan Miranda, Sean Thomas Mitchell, Mary Jayne Mordell,

Sara Sutton Morey

N-R Megan Fallows Neider, Stephanie Danielle Nicholson, Claudia Ann Norton, Carolina O'Donnell, John Spellman Parsons, Doyle Beckham Pitchford, Mary Spenser Poletti, Michael Anthony Putnam, Brynna Rae Quillin, Kevin Daniel Recinos, Dania S. Reed, Edita Maria Alicia Robinson, Andrianna Louise Rodriguez, Jennifer Margaret Rogers, Paul Raymond Rudolph

S Ryan Christopher Sakowski, Luc Robert Sallaberry, Gurbhej Kaur Sandhu, Juan Carlos Sandoval, John Patrick Schreiber, Monica Erin Seaney, John

See SHP GRADS, next page

Sacred Heart Preparatory graduated 126 students Friday, May 22, during the 111th commencement ceremony on the Sacred Heart Schools campus in Atherton.

Director of Schools Richard A. Dioli, Board of Trustees Co-Chair Anne Holloway, and Sacred Heart Prep Principal James B. Everitt presented the graduates with their diplomas.

Valedictorian is John Ceremsak, who will attend Dartmouth College in the fall. Salutatorian is Claudia Norton, who will attend Brown University in the fall.

The National Merit Scholarship Program recognized 24 students this year, four as finalists. One student was named a National Hispanic Scholar.

All 126 graduates will matriculate to colleges and universities throughout the United States, including Boston College, Stanford, the University of Pennsylvania, UC Berkeley, and USC.

Sacred Heart Schools, located at 150 Valparaiso Ave. in Atherton, is a Roman Catholic, independent school for grades preschool through 12. SHS is made up of St. Joseph's School of the Sacred Heart for grades preschool through 8 and Sacred Heart Preparatory for grades 9 through 12.

The graduates

A-B Kira Chiyoko Abe, Sarah Claire Abuel-Saud, Bryn Donna Aitken-Young, Morgan Elizabeth Aitken-Young, Shuka

M-A PRANK

continued from previous page

ruption to students and their families. The school responded promptly and continues investigating this morning's incident. At this time, it is believed that there has been no breach of the school's telecommunications or student information system. Preparation for finals is in full swing and, although a number of students arrived after the school day began this morning, school business continued as normal."

Anatomy of a prank

"M-A has a rich past as far as senior pranks go," the senior said.

Among them: the plastering over of a classroom door that hid it so well that the teacher could not find the entrance, and the borrowing of a golf cart from that year's arch-rival Menlo School and placing it on an M-A roof, the student said.

This year, "the school panicked

and sent out another phone call and said it was a senior prank and that everyone should go to school immediately," the senior said. The administration, according to the senior, claimed that students hacked into M-A's phone server and began an investigation into how it was done.

There was no hacking, the senior said. The pranksters collected enough money to hire a service that makes automated calls. The students used 1,700 phone numbers from the school's directory, crafted a message, and provided a caller ID that mimicked that of the school, the senior said.

To throw off the administration and parents, the seniors arranged an earlier decoy prank in which they collected 40 "little (plastic) slow-down guys with the flags" and put them on the school roof, the senior said.

The real prank's targets would then be led to think, "Oh, the senior prank already happened so I guess it's real," the senior said. "It was kind of perfect." ■



PUBLIC NOTICE NOTICE OF FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

MENLO PARK CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT
NEW HILLVIEW MIDDLE SCHOOL PROJECT

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Menlo Park City School District has prepared a Final Environmental Impact Report for the proposed New Hillview Middle School Project. Beginning on June 2, 2009, the document will be available for public review at the Menlo Park City School District Office, located at 181 Encinal Avenue in Atherton, California and will be posted on the internet at www.mpcsd.org/facilities. The Board of Education will review and consider approval of the Final EIR and corresponding School Board Resolutions at the June 9, 2009, Regular Board Meeting at the District Office at 6:00 p.m. The Board Agenda and supporting documents will be available at Agenda Online on June 5, 2009 at www.mpcsd.org.

NOTICE OF PROPOSED RATE CHANGE BEFORE THE CALIFORNIA PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION (CPUC)

Cal Water has completed a fish screen project in the Bear Gulch District and this project is now in operation benefiting the community.

After May 26, 2009, California Water Service Company (Cal Water) will file an advice letter requesting a rate increase of \$31,234, or 0.3%, to offset the capital costs of a fish screen project in the Bear Gulch District. If approved, this filing would result in a monthly increase of \$0.0818 for the average residential customer with a 5/8" by 3/4" meter using 28 hundred cubic feet of water per month. Cal Water was authorized to make this request in connection with the CPUC Decision 06-08-011.

Metered Service Charges

Meter Sizes	Residential Services		Non-Residential Services	
	Present Rates	Proposed Rates	Present Rates	Proposed Rates
5/8 x 3/4-inch	\$12.45	\$12.46	\$12.41	\$12.42
3/4-inch	\$18.69	\$18.71	\$18.62	\$18.64
1-inch	\$24.20	\$24.23	\$24.13	\$24.16
1 1/2-inch	\$35.74	\$35.78	\$35.64	\$35.68
2-inch	\$54.13	\$54.19	\$53.98	\$54.04
3-inch	\$116.42	\$116.56	\$116.10	\$116.24
4-inch	\$204.26	\$204.51	\$203.68	\$203.92
6-inch	\$352.33	\$352.75	\$351.34	\$351.76
8-inch	\$996.05	\$997.25	\$993.26	\$994.45
10-inch	\$1,431.82	\$1,433.54	\$1,427.80	\$1,429.51
12-inch	\$2,054.36	\$2,056.83	\$2,048.59	\$2,051.05
14-inch	\$2,801.39	\$2,804.75	\$2,793.53	\$2,796.88

Quantity Rates (Ccf.)

Residential Quantity Rate		
Tier 1	\$13.2087	\$3.2126
Tier 2	\$3.4098	\$3.4139
Tier 3	\$4.0763	\$4.0812

Non-Residential Quantity Rate

Less than 8 in.	\$3.4662	\$3.4704
Greater than 8 in.	\$3.4662	\$3.4704

As indicated above, if this request is approved, a typical residential customer with a 5/8 x 3/4" meter using 28 hundred cubic feet (Ccf) of water per month would see the monthly bill go from \$71.82 to \$71.90. This comparison does not include fees, taxes, or temporary surcharges that may apply to your bill.

The CPUC provides two ways to respond to this notice. You can send a protest to the CPUC and, if you do, you must send a copy of the protest to Cal Water; or you can send a response to the CPUC with a copy to Cal Water if you wish. A protest is a document objecting to the granting in whole or in part of the authority sought in this advice letter. A response is a document that does not object to the authority sought, but nevertheless presents information that the party tendering the response believes would be useful to the CPUC in acting on the request.

A protest must be mailed within 20 days of the publication of this notice. A protest must state the facts on which the protest is based, the effect that approval of the advice letter might have on the protestant, and the reasons the protestant believes the advice letter, or a part of it, is not justified. If the protest requests an evidentiary hearing, the protest must state the facts the protestant would present at an evidentiary hearing to support its request for whole or partial denial of the advice letter. The utility must respond to a protest within five days. All protests should be sent to California Water Service Company, 1720 North First Street, San Jose, CA 95112, or faxed to (408) 367-8430, or e-mailed to ratesquestion@calwater.com. If you have not received a reply to your protest within 10 business days, please call Cal Water at (408) 367-8200.

The California Public Utilities Commission welcomes your comments. If you wish to make a response to this rate request, you may submit written comments to the CPUC at the address listed below. Simply state that you are writing about the California Water Service Company's Advice letter for fish screen project in the Bear Gulch District. If you need help, you may contact the Public Advisor's office of the Public Utilities Commission by writing them at 505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102.

A copy of the California Water Service Company advice letter may be obtained from Cal Water at its website www.calwater.com or from the office of the California Public Utilities Commission, Division of Water and Audits, 505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, California 94102.

You're Invited Sustainable Menlo Park Speakers Series

Sustainable Menlo Park seeks to preserve what is best about Menlo Park while providing for its economic and environmental sustainability.

Since 2008, Sustainable Menlo Park has been engaging every segment of the Menlo Park community in a series of meaningful conversations and presentations about what makes Menlo Park a great place and how we can sustain ourselves into the future.

Please join us for our next conversation with Stanford Provost John Etchemendy about Stanford's future.

**John Etchemendy
Provost and Professor of Philosophy,
Stanford University**

**Wednesday
June 17, 2009**

**Menlo Park Recreation Center—Burgess Park
5:30pm to 7:00pm**

**www.sustainablemenlopark.com
sustainablemenlopark@gmail.com**

Stanford president at Priory commencement

John Hennessy, president of Stanford University, will be the commencement speaker at the graduation ceremonies for Woodside Priory School in Portola Valley on Saturday, June 6.

A total of 68 diplomas will be awarded during the ceremony, which starts at 10 a.m. at the school, 302 Portola Road, said Sean McInain Brown, director of communications for the Priory.

Brian Schlaak, assistant head of school, will preside over the ceremonies. Valedictorian is Marika Bannick and salutatorian is Christopher Harlem. Zuhayr Mallam is the recipient of the St. Benedict Award, the highest award given by the school.

Baccalaureate Mass will be celebrated Friday, June 5, at 5:30 p.m. in the Priory Chapel. Principal celebrant will be Father Martin Mager, religious superior of the Benedictine Community. Concelebrants will be Father Maurus Nemeth and Father Pius Horvath.

High school graduates

Note: The asterisks are explained at the bottom of the list.

B Marika Anne Bannick***, Leslie Jeanne Barkmann, Servando Barriga, Kyle O'Neal Berka, Daniel Morris Berman*, Laura Ann Bevilacqua, Frederick Andrew Bollman**, Danielle Felice Boross, Nora Judit Botos*, Margaret Drummond Bussmann

C-E Mallory Lynn Cadwell, David Madison Calbert, Yao-Chia Chang*, Zoe Alexandra Ciupitu, Kayley Anne Colville, Teagan Cosmo Corkery, Colin Nicholas DeMartini, Claire Wallis Dennis*, Laurel Henley Detkin, Arshia Amin Ehsanipour*

F-K Nathan Tully Feldman*, Jordan Alessandra Foland**, Christopher Patrick Harlem**, Andras Helmeozzi, Johan Brian Henkens*, James Winston Hickman**, Constance Van Winkle Hiller*, Kelsey June Horton, Catalina Noriko Hosokawa, Erin Nicole Kinstler, Woosik Koong*, Sharukh Chintu Kumar*

L-N Darcey Selma Lachtman*, Noel Alexander Laporte, Anna Suzie Lee*, Courtney Nicole Lee*, Wonho Lee*, Andrew James Muelling MacKay*, Zuhayr Arif Mallam*, Christian Conrad Montalvo, Sarah Elizabeth Montgomery*, Angela Nakahara*

O-S Christian James Alexander Opperman**, Kayla Jean Patterson, Ignas Pavilonis, Alexander Jason Piccolotti, Chasen Roxy Rapp*, Maxime Athena Rieman*, Shajee Taiyab Rizvi**, Philipp Emanuel Roye, Yoon-Young Shin**, Caelum Pye Shove, Tyler Reed Starling*, Mike Istvan

GRADUATION 2009

Szabados, Kimberley Esther Grace Szabo

T-Z Lara Allene Donahoe Tenenbaum, Elizabeth Muir Thomas, Alyssa Ching-Young Thunen*, Ethan Lawrence Toolis-Byrd, Sophia Serena Varga, Chia-an Gabriel Wang, Claire Chien Watson*, Blake Patrick Weber, Kelsey Ariana Whitehouse, Markus Stefan Willhite*, Claire Olivia Zbinovich.

*The asterisks signify academic honors based on a four-year grade point average: *** Benedictine Honors (GPA of 4.0 plus); ** Head of School's Honors (GPA of 3.81 to 3.99); * Dean's Honors (GPA 3.5 to 3.80).*

Middle school graduates

B-F Houtan Bozorghdad, Stephanie Elessar Brugger, Brock Ellwood Burgess, Matthew James Campbell, Courtney Margaret Cheung, Brooke Hutchinson Cornish, Dylan James Croll, Brian Stephen DiGiorio, Andrew Joseph Dubbs, Simon Francis Fox, Julian Michael French

G-R Madeleine Mercedes Gerhardt, Aneesha Gupta, Nicola Grace Hartman, Siobhan Briana Howard, Benjamin Ray Krausz, Gregory Alexander Kushnir, Riley Lane Munks, Gabriela Williamson Nighan, Elizabeth Mary Oliphant, Cesar Roberto Perez, Catherine Sheridan Ross

S Lukas Kirkegaard Sarnow, Matthew Charles Schwab, Stephanie Anniece Seymour, Peter James Siegler, Emre Bozbag Sonmez, John Fitzgerald Sterbenc

Menlo School wins mock trial event

Menlo School's mock trial team has won the 2009 American Mock Trial Invitational, held May 17-19 in New Brunswick, New Jersey.

The Atherton private school came in first among 25 schools in the third annual competition, held at the Middlesex County Courthouse.

This was the first time the Menlo School team partici-

pated in the competition, said Kathy Crankshaw, whose son, Daniel Crankshaw, was one of the three seniors on the team.

The 19 members of Menlo School's mock trial team had won a bronze medal at the state finals in Riverside on March 22, and with it, a trip to the American Mock Trial competition.

SHP GRADS

continued from page 19

Andrew Seely, Catherine Wilson Shannon, Alexander Bosche Siegel, Jordan Escher Surzyn, John Charles Suttle

T-W Katalina Peki-Kula Tameilau, Myles Daniel Tanous, Benjamin Kyle Taylor, Christian Alan Valdez, Elisa Leana Giannini Valinoti, Gregory John Ville-neuve, Melissa Meriwether von Mayrhauser, Mark Granville Westerfield, Nicholas James Wheat, Alexander James Henry Whittam, Elizabeth Marie Wiggans, Martell J. Winn, Lydia Vaughan Wood.

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Boys & Girls Clubs youth beat the odds

This story was submitted by Chris Canter, director of development at the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula.

Martell Winn, Dania Reed, Demetrius Hill and Juan Sandoval have a number of things in common. Each of them grew up facing adversity.

They were all members of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula, where they participated in the Club's Reading Wizards and school-based Center for a New Generation programs. Each of them also caught the attention of Connie Heldman, a Club volunteer who was commuting from her home in Tiburon to the Boys & Girls Club in East Palo Alto to run the Reading Wizards program that she created.

Another commonality is that four years ago, all of them were accepted to Sacred Heart Preparatory High School in Atherton and are now looking forward to college.

On May 22, they graduated from high school. Martell received a special award, one of the highest honor the school can bestow on a graduating student. It was for his personal and active faith in God. Connie Heldman was there — wild horses couldn't have kept her away.

"I remember these children who I met so long ago," she says. "They didn't think they had a chance in this world. They were told that they weren't smart enough and that they should not waste time reaching for the stars.

"I remember the trials and ridicule they had to overcome to focus on their studies and school and stay out of gangs and drugs. And, how they have now become role models for their younger siblings and countless others at the Boys & Girls Club and beyond.

"I will remember all of the wonderful staff and volunteers at the Club who helped and supported them and made them feel welcome. I will remember and I will cry tears of joy."

Club Executive Director Peter Fortenbaugh said he applauded the students, as well as numerous other Club members who are graduating from high school

GRADUATION 2009

this year and going on to college. "They are truly beating the odds," he said, noting that upwards of 70 percent of youth from the areas served by the Club (east Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, and Redwood City) do not graduate from high school.

In an effort to improve the high school graduation rate, the Club partners with schools

and families, offers programs focused on reading, math and science, and has launched College Bound, a new program designed to help youth graduate from high school with a plan for their future.

There are currently 90 youth enrolled in the program.

This summer, a number of College Bound participants will go on field trips, most to high

See **BOYS & GIRLS CLUB**, page 22



NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CITY OF MENLO PARK PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING JUNE 15, 2009

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

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

Use Permit/Neil Swartzberg and Loreli Cadapan/277A Willow Road: Request for a use permit to construct first- and second-story additions to an existing single-story, single-family, nonconforming residence that would exceed 50 percent of the replacement value of the existing structure in a 12-month period and would add more than 50 percent of the existing square footage on a substandard lot with regard to lot width and area in the R-1-U (Single-Family Urban) zoning district. The proposed remodeling and expansion are considered to be equivalent to a new structure.

Use Permit, Variance, and Architectural Control/Scott Stotler, Stotler Design Group/849 & 865 University Drive: Request for a use permit and architectural control to demolish two single-family houses and to construct four single-family houses and associated site improvements in the R-3 (Apartment) zoning district. Request for variances for uncovered parking to encroach five feet into the left and right side setbacks and to reduce the distance between buildings on the subject and adjacent property on the right side to less than 20 feet.

Minor Subdivision/Cupertino Development Corp./2199 Clayton Drive: Request for a minor subdivision to create three single-family residential parcels where one parcel currently exists in the R-1-S (Single-Family Suburban) zoning district. The proposal would include the removal of 16 heritage trees.

Use Permit/Verizon Wireless/2180 Sand Hill Road: Request for a use permit to install wireless telecommunications antennas on three sides of an existing building. The nine antennas would be flush mounted on the building and covered with fiberglass reinforced panels. Associated equipment cabinets and a natural gas generator would be installed on the roof of the building, which is located in the C-1(X) (Administrative and Professional, Conditional Development) zoning district.

PUBLIC MEETING ITEMS - None

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that said Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on public hearing items in the Council Chambers of the City of Menlo Park, located at 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, on Monday, **June 15, 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 at, or prior to, the public hearing.

The project file may be viewed 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 Department of Community Development, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park. Please call the Planning Division if there are any questions and/or for complete agenda information (650) 330-6702.

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

DATED: May 28, 2009 Deanna Chow, Senior Planner
PUBLISHED: June 3, 2009 Menlo Park Planning Commission

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

Letter from the Benedictine Fathers April 11, 1986



Your aware that we have filed the appropriate separate Claim against the Estate of Gambetta and, if the dispute is not resolved, it is our intention to file a second lawsuit based on breach of contract against the Estate of Gambetta.

Further, we would also file the appropriate action for an Heirship Determination if that becomes necessary.

The Woodside Priority wants very much to resolve this case now, provided the settlement reasonable reflects relative litigation risks and both the delay and expense of proceeding to trial. If the case cannot be settled along the lines of this settlement offer, we have been instructed to proceed with three lawsuits in sequence. The first lawsuit would test the validity of the purported 1985 will; the second lawsuit would test the validity of the 1971 contract Mrs. Gambetta made with our client; and the third lawsuit would test whether or not your client performed all the necessary preconditions to her purported bequest. Each of these lawsuit operates under a separate set of theories and our client need only prevail in one of the lawsuits to defeat your client's interest.

Having said all this, The Woodside Priory does prefer to resolve the matter amicably and does want this negotiation to result in a settlement at this time. therefore, we look forward to a response to this counter-offer following your consultation with Judith Rutherford.

Very sincerely yours,
Hopkins, Mitchell & Carley
Sherwood M. Sullivan

gambettaranch@gmail.com

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School community says goodbye to Barbara Fong

Colleagues and friends at Las Lomas School are throwing a farewell party for kindergarten teacher Barbara Fong, who is retiring after 26 years at the school.

The “celebration to salute her achievement,” in the words of Assistant Principal Sue Sartor, is set for 3:30 p.m. Sunday, June 14, in Atherton. “All former stu-

dents, parents, and colleagues are welcome to join us,” she said.

For invitation information, go to tinyurl.com/Fong2009 or e-mail mrs.conniefong@gmail.com by June 10.

People interested in attending can also stop by the school office to pick up an invitation. The school is at 299 Alameda de las Pulgas in Atherton.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUB

continued from page 21

schools, colleges and companies, but there will be one unusual destination: a prison.

“Why? Because statistics show that 80 percent of inmates in prison were high school drop-outs,” says Sean Mendy, the director of the Club’s College Bound program. “We want

them to see what is possible if they graduate and if they don’t.

“We want them to know that people believe in them and they can graduate, go on to college and be successful in whatever they apply themselves to.”

The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula has clubhouses in Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, and Redwood City and runs programs at numerous schools in the community.

The Almanac newsroom has a new phone number!

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Other departments, including Advertising, will keep the number they’ve been using: (650) 854-2626




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Encinal School celebrates Mexican culture

This story was submitted by Andrea Ralston of Atherton, and Elena Stallings and Elizabeth Ouren of Menlo Park, who are parents of Encinal School students and members of the Cultural Arts Day Committee.

Equipped with passports, Encinal School students learned all about our neighboring country, Mexico, on May 15.

That date marked Encinal's first Cultural Arts Day, designed to increase awareness of other cultures, customs, and languages, and help students gain an appreciation of our differences as well as similarities.

Throughout the day, students — from kindergarten and third through fifth grades — visited activity stations at the Atherton school, including folklore storytelling, Mexican games, and craft creations.

Students were also able to visit Mexico using 21st century technology, including "smartboards" (computerized white boards), as well as view Mexican artifacts.

A particular favorite with the kids was the Mexican food-tasting. Luluís on the Alameda donated all of the food and drinks for the students to try. During the lunch hour, a roaming Mariachi band played, and to end the day, Ballet Folklorico and Aztec dancers performed during afternoon assemblies.

Encinal's Cultural Arts Day was modeled after a similar event at White Oaks School in San Carlos. Encinal's principal Allison Liner asked the co-chairs for the Encinal event, Elizabeth Ouren and Elena Stallings, to bring the program to Encinal as a community-building event for the growing school. The Cultural Arts Day Committee spent

nearly nine months researching and planning the event.

With the introduction of Spanish at Encinal this year through the bilingual Spanish Immersion program in kindergarten and the Spanish instruction program for third through fifth grades, Mexico was the logical country to focus on for this inaugural event.

Cultural Arts Day was made possible by a Jeanie Ritchie grant from the Menlo Park Atherton Education Foundation, along with the Encinal PTO. The grant program is named in honor of Jeanie Ritchie, a founder of the MPAEF, who believes strongly in supporting innovative educators.

Jeanie Ritchie herself visited Cultural Arts Day, as did the mayor of Menlo Park, representatives from the Mexican consulate, and Atherton Police Chief Glenn Nielsen. ■



Photo by Michelle Ye
Bismarck Delgado of the Aztec dance group, Xiuhoatl Danza Azteca, dances at Encinal School's Cultural Arts Day.

'Drive Less Challenge' winners are named

Here is a partial list of winners of the "Drive Less Challenge," an initiative by Menlo Park's Green Ribbon Citizens' Committee to encourage residents to take fewer solo car trips. The challenge ran from April 22 to April 28, with participants keeping track of their trips. The list was provided by the committee.

■ Most "green trips": Leah Strichartz (20 trips); Butch Byers (14); Kent Steffens (14).

■ Most "green miles" (train and bike): Lanette Kozlowski (309 miles); Caroline Dedeystere (299); Nien San Chaw (284).

■ Most active walkers: Kent Steffens (8 trips); Lisa Kwiatkowski (5); Wendy Kuehl (5).

■ Most active cyclists: Leah Strichartz (17 trips); Manfred Kopsisch (13); Butch Byers (13).

■ Most frequent carpoolers: John Boyle (8 trips); Kent Steffens (5); Robin Dusaint (5); Heather Nelson (5).

■ Most frequent bus riders: Yevgeniy Lysy (6 trips); Delilah Cline (5); Lisa Kwiatkowski (4).

■ Most frequent train riders: Caroline Dedeystere (6 trips); Lisa Kwiatkowski (5); Robin Dusaint (4).

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Town Hall's green purchasing policy shows its limits

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

■ PORTOLA VALLEY

Portola Valley town government is ambitious when it comes to keeping its carbon-dioxide emissions low. The new Town Center complex is likely to receive the highest rating by the U.S. Green Building Council, and Town Hall has had an environmental purchasing policy for several years.

Town Hall's green ways include sustainably manufac-

ured three-ring binders, scissors, and beverage containers, plus the usual suspects of copier paper and printer ink cartridges, Assistant Town Manager Janet McDougall told The Almanac. But there are limits.

Portola Valley's vehicles, a major factor in any greenhouse gas footprint, are old school. The town owns four conventionally powered trucks from the last

century — two pickups, a flatbed and a van — plus a \$16,000 electric utility cart bought in 2007.

The Town Council had an opportunity on May 27 to use funds already budgeted to replace the van with a Toyota Prius, but declined by consensus. Not a wise move in a tight budget year that starts July 1, and an upcoming election to renew the utility users' tax, Councilman Ted Driscoll told Town Manager Angela Howard.

Driving the tight budget are higher costs and lower revenues.

The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office is proposing a 33 percent total increase for police services, in part due to steeply rising costs for staff benefit packages, Ms. Howard has said.


Revenue from home construction is way down, the more sophisticated Town Center is costing more to maintain, and the state is backing out of grants to help refurbish town parks, Ms. Howard has said.

The utility tax, a 6.5 percent levy on residential and commercial utility bills, was expected to bring in \$737,000 for 2008-09. Opponents dislike the tax, in part because it is not deductible

and, they say, is a hardship on people with fixed incomes. It has outlived its purpose now that the town's annual share of property tax revenues has almost doubled, they say.

"We are facing a major budget shortfall. I have a problem with buying a new car at this time," Mr. Driscoll said, adding that such a purchase would give tax opponents a potent argument. The \$25,000 earmarked for the car can be treated as a budget surplus, he said.

The Prius' primary user would have been the building official, who receives a \$250 monthly stipend for the business use of his personal vehicle, a Jeep, Ms. Howard said. ■

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- ✱ **PARENTING YOUR CHRONICALLY ILL CHILD: STRATEGIES FOR HOSPITAL AND HOME**
Dr. Rebecca Bernard, Child and Adolescent Psychiatry specialist, will discuss the challenges and offer strategies for setting boundaries and expectations when parenting a chronically ill child.
- Tuesday, June 23: 7:00-8:30 pm
- ✱ **NEWBORN CARE 101**
Often touted as our "most fun" class, this interactive program teaches the specifics of newborn care, including bathing, temperature-taking, changing diapers, swaddling, soothing techniques and more. Infant doll models are used to allow for hands-on practice.
- Saturday, June 20: 9:00 am-12:00 pm
- ✱ **PEDIATRIC WEIGHT CONTROL PROGRAM OPEN HOUSE**
This family-based, behavioral and educational weight management program promotes healthy eating and exercise habits for overweight children and their families. More than 80% of children achieve long-term weight loss through this program – and parents lose weight too! **Call (650) 725-4424 for information.**
- Monday, June 29: 7:00-8:00 pm
- ✱ **NEW FAMILY PROGRAM**
This program features a selection of support groups designed to help families throughout the first nine months after birth, offering something for everyone. Enrollment includes participation in weekly Mother & Baby Mornings, as well as Dads' Nights, Working Mothers' Groups and Couples Coffees. Mother and Baby Mornings groups meet:
- Tuesday mornings, 10:00-11:30 am for moms with babies 0-5 months of age
- Wednesday afternoons, 12:30-1:30 pm for moms with babies 5-9 months of age

Call (650) 723-4600 or visit www.lpch.org to register or obtain more information on the times, locations and fees for these and other courses.

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■ 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

Fraud report: Internet scam, St. Joseph's School of the Sacred Heart at 150 Valparaiso Ave., May 21.

MENLO PARK

Residential burglary reports:

■ Music equipment, including two guitars, stolen from locked closet, 1200 block of Arbor Road, May 22.

■ Sunglasses stolen, Gloria Circle, May 26.

Auto burglary reports:

■ Window smashed and purse stolen, 1600 block of Marsh Road, May 24.

■ Camera stolen, Arnold Way, May 25.

■ Break-in; amplifier and speakers stolen, 1300 block of Willow Road, May 25.

■ Briefcase stolen from unlocked vehicle, 800 block of Roble Ave., May 28.

Commercial burglary report: Kenneth Owens, 47, of Menlo Park arrested on charges that include burglary and larceny, Gachina Landscape Management at 1130 O'Brien Drive, May 25.

Grand theft report: Laptop computer

stolen, 400 block of O'Connor St., May 26.

Fraud reports:

■ Loss of \$341 through unauthorized use of bank account number, 1100 block of Pine St., May 22.

■ Loss of \$5,300 through Internet scam, 900 block of Cotton St., May 26.

■ Francisco Moreno, 31, of East Palo Alto arrested on charges that include embezzlement and counterfeiting after trying to cash \$500 check, La Michoacana Market at 1305 Willow Road, May 27.

■ Unauthorized purchases valued at \$1,900 made with credit card, 300 block of Sharon Park Drive, May 28.

Stolen vehicle reports:

■ Red 2000 two-door Honda Civic with whale-tail spoiler, 1300 block of O'Brien Drive, May 26.

■ White Volkswagen Jetta, 300 block of El Camino Real, May 28.

WOODSIDE

Assault report: Arrest made after juvenile forced out of car by other juveniles armed with shotgun, 1100 block of Canada Road, May 24.

PORTOLA VALLEY

Incident report: Pedestrians shot at, but not struck, with pellets from BB or air rifle, Portola Road at Windy Hill Open Space Preserve, May 22.

Women's tennis team wins championship

The women's tennis team of Sharon Heights Golf and Country Club was recently named a senior section champion and will travel to Indian Wells Oct. 16-18 to represent Northern California at the U.S. Tennis Association League National Championships.

The Sharon Heights club's team is one of eight to advance to the national championship round of the senior recreational tennis league by winning the USTA League Northern California section championships, held in May at Valley Vista Racquet Club in Walnut Creek.

Sally Fong is captain of the Sharon Heights team. Team members include Joni Amaroli, Kerry Cunningham, Diane Curry, Nancy Garcia, Bobbi Giudicelli, Wendy Haskell, Sharilyn Mayer, Nancy Maxton, Laurie Rose, Gertrud Ruschoff, Nancy

■ SPORTS

See TheAlmanacOnline.com for more sports news.

Sallaberry, Maude Scott and Yvonne Seiner.

Wrestling coach honored

Lars Jensen, a Menlo Park native, has been inducted into the California Wrestling Hall of Fame.

Mr. Jensen, 51, graduated from Menlo-Atherton in 1975. He has served as the head coach of wrestling at San Francisco State University since 1983, leading the school to the NCAA Division II title in 1997. He has coached 51 All-Americans and nine individual NCAA National Champions.

Mr. Jensen was inducted into the hall of fame at a ceremony in Sacramento on May 16.

Calendar

MEETINGS, MUSIC, THEATER, FAMILY ACTIVITIES AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Special Events

Antique Appraisal Day at Allied Arts. Appraisers from famed auction house Bonhams & Butterfields will be at Allied Arts Guild to appraise paintings, jewelry, decorative arts and Asian art pieces. Reservations recommended. Thu., June 4, 10 a.m.-3 p.m. \$10 per item. Allied Arts Guild, 75 Arbor Road, Menlo Park. www.alliedartsguild.org

Kehillah's Israeli Wine Festival. Kehillah Jewish High School, Palo Alto, will host an Israeli Wine Festival and Tasting June 4 from 6:30-9 p.m. in Atherton. Money raised will support programming, financial aid, and teacher resources. \$180 per person Holbrook-Palmer Park Pavilion, 150 Watkins Ave., Atherton. Call 650-213-9600, ext. 125. www.kehillah.org

Poets, artists, musicians. Menlo Park Library presents "The Gathering of the Poetry Groups: Poets, Musicians, and Artists" on Saturday, June 6, at the Burgess Recreation Center. Live music, poetry reading, and art exhibited. Music provided by Gary Gates and Bennett Roth-Newell, jazz pianist. 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Free. Burgess Recreation Center, 700 Alma St., Menlo Park. Call 330-2512. www.menloparklibrary.org

BOK Ranch Western Day. B.O.K. Ranch, providing therapeutic horseback riding programs for children and adults with special needs, is holding its annual Western Day benefit. Kids' games, duck and sheep herding, student horseback riding demos, silent auction with live music and BBQ lunch included in admission. Sun., June 7, noon-5 p.m. \$45 per person/under 10 free. 1815 Cordilleras Road, Redwood City. Call 650-366-2265. www.bokranch.com

On Stage

"Beauty and the Beast." Woodside School's 8th-grade class presents Disney's "Beauty and the Beast" June 3 at 5 p.m., June 4 at 6 p.m., and June 5 & 6 at 7 p.m. \$10 students, \$12 adults. Sellman Auditorium, 3195 Woodside Road, Woodside. For more information, call the school at 851-1571.

Devised Theater Performance at Stanford. Stanford students perform original, interactive, site-specific theater as part of an ongoing devised theater project. June 5-6. 7-8:30 p.m. Free. Stanford University, Math Courtyard, Lomita Mall, near Serra Mall, Stanford. Call 650-723-4631.

Theatre Q presents "Lips Together, Teeth Apart." Two straight couples are confronted with their own homophobia and personal regrets in this classic play from playwright Terrence McNally. June 4-28, 8-10:30 p.m. Tickets: \$10-25. Dragon Theatre, 535 Alma St., Palo Alto. Call 415-433-1235. www.theatreq.org

Talks/Authors

"Saving Our Teenage Girls from Today's Pressures." Dr. Stephen Hinshaw, U.C.-Berkeley Psychology Department chair, will talk. Wed., June 3, 7:30-9:30 p.m. \$5. The Friends Meeting House, 957 Colorado St., Palo Alto.

Ally Carter: "Don't Judge a Girl by Her Cover." Author of the Gallagher Girls series discusses her latest book. Mon., June 8, 5:30 p.m. free. Kepler's Books, 1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. Call 650-324-4321. www.keplers.com

Ayelet Waldman discusses her book, "Bad Mother: A Chronicle of Maternal Crimes, Minor Calamities, and Occasional Moments of Grace" Mon., June 8, 7:30 p.m. Free. Kepler's Books, 1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. Call 650-324-4321. www.keplers.com

Glen David Gold, author of "Carter Beats the Devil," presents his new book about Charlie Chaplin. Wed., June 3, 7:30 p.m. Free. Kepler's Books, 1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. Call 650-324-4321. www.keplers.com

Mahbod Seraji's "Rooftops of Tehran." Novel about Persian culture. Thu., June 6, 7:30 p.m. Free. Kepler's Books, 1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. Call 650-324-4321. www.keplers.com

P.J. O'Rourke, humorist and author, celebrates America's love affair with cars in his new anthology of spiels-on-wheels. Thu., June 11, 6:30 p.m. \$12 members; \$18 non-members. Cubberley Theatre, 4000 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Call 1-800-847-7730. commonwealthclub.org/sv

For all listings

This Calendar contains partial listings of community events. To see all listings, go to TheAlmanacOnline.com and on the green navigation bar on the left, click on "Community Calendar."

Poetry at Waverley Writers. Brad Buchanan, poet and professor of English, reads from his book, "Swimming the Mirror: Poems for My Daughter." Fri., June 5, 7:30-10 p.m. Free. Waverley Writers, Friends Meeting House, 957 Colorado Ave., Palo Alto.

Artists & The Creative Process. Artist Claudia Borgna and playwright Randy Gener discuss examples of their current work. This series explores the creative process in presentations by 2009 Djerassi Resident Artists Program artists. Thu., June 11, 7-8:30 p.m. Free; reservations required; call 329-2366. Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto. Call 650-747-1250. www.djerassi.org

Classes/Workshops

Portola Valley Green Speaker Series. The town of Portola Valley hosts a Green Speaker Series: Local Heroes on Local Issues. This series will provide tools and resources to make homes more efficient. Tuesdays, 7-9 p.m. Free. Portola Valley Town Center, Community Hall, 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley. Call 650-851-1700. www.portolavalley.net

Information on grey-water irrigation. Class describes what grey water is, how to use it safely in the garden. Sat., June 6, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. \$30. Common Ground Organic Garden Supply and Education Center, 559 College Ave., Palo Alto. Call 650-493-6072.

Community Events

Spring Down Equestrian Center Horse Show. Spring Down's June 7th Horse Show. Riding, classes, raffle. June 7, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Spring Down Equestrian Center, 725 Portola Road, Portola Valley. Call 650-851-1114. www.springdown.com

Family Fair. Stevenson House hosts outdoor family fair focused on emergency preparedness and environmental awareness. Highlights include sustainable food demo by Chef Laura Stec, children's activities and raffle prizes. June 6, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Free. Stevenson House, 455 E. Charleston Road., Palo Alto.

St. Pius 58th Summer Festival. St. Pius 58th Annual Summer Festival June 5-7. Rides, games, entertainment, food. Free. St. Pius Church, 1100 Woodside Road, Redwood City. Call 650-365-2830. www.pius.org

Kids & Families

Community Fun Nights. One hour of gaming (Wii and board games) followed by movie, "Bedtime Stories." Raffle prize will be drawn. Refreshments will be served. Fri., June 5, 6-8:45 p.m. Free. Atherton Library, 2 Dinkelspiel Station Lane, Atherton. Call 650-328-2422.

Sheralee Iglehart will read and present a puppet show from her picture book, "Three Cheers for Kangaroo." For children under 6. Sat., June 6, 11 a.m. free. Books Inc., 855 El Camino Real #74, Palo Alto. Call 650-321-0600.

Birdwatching for Kids. A two-session class designed for younger folks to learn about bird anatomy, behavior, nesting, and migration. Bring your own binoculars or borrow a pair. Parent participation optional. Ages 7-15. Saturdays through June 13, 10-11:30 a.m. \$10 Palo Alto residents / \$12 non-residents. Baylands Nature Center, 2775 Embarcadero, Palo Alto. Call 650-329-2506. enjoyonline.cityofpaloalto.org

Story Time with local author Sally Mallam. In Dende Maro, Mallam weaves words and images into a creation myth. The prehistoric rock art of Africa inspired this story, which unfolds over a thousand million years. Sun., June 7, 11:30 a.m. free. Kepler's Books, 1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. Call 650-324-4321. www.keplers.com

Storytime and Craft at Atherton Library. The Atherton Library has a monthly family storytime. A simple craft will be provided for all ages. Second Saturdays through June

13. 11-11:30 a.m. Free. Atherton Library, 2 Dinkelspiel Station Lane, Atherton. Call 650-328-2422. www.smcl.org

Film

"\$100 a Day." The film tells the story of Rick Walker, an East Palo Alto man who was wrongly imprisoned for 12 years for a murder he did not commit. A panel discussion with Rick Walker, State Senator Joe Simitian, and filmmaker Gwen Essegian follows the movie. Thu., June 11, 7-8:30 p.m. Free. Palo Alto City Hall (council chambers), 250 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto. Call 650-327-9148. 100dollarsaday.eventbrite.com

Atherton Library Movie Night. Monthly films for adults are shown at the Atherton Library. This month's feature is "To Wong Foo: Thanks for Everything, Julie Newmar." A comedy for Gay Pride month. Doors open at 6:45 pm and refreshments are provided. June 12, 7-9 p.m. free Atherton Library, 2 Dinkelspiel Station Lane, Atherton. Call 650-328-2422. www.smcl.org

Live Music

Leonard Bernstein's "Candide." Redwood Symphony, Peninsula Cantare and a full cast of soloists present Leonard Bernstein's operetta, "Candide." Directed by Ken Malucelli. Saturday, June 6, Canada College Main Theatre. 8 p.m. \$10 (student), \$20 in advance, \$25 at door. 4200 Farm Hill Blvd., Woodside. Call 650-366-6872. www.redwoodsmyphony.org

Local Talent Night. Caffe Sportivo promotes local talent every Friday and Saturday evening. Bands, musicians, improv, comedy, etc. 6-9 p.m. free. Caffe Sportivo, 965 Brewster Ave., Redwood City. Call 650-369-4568. caffesportivo.com

Mike Bastian's Pentimento Jazz. Lavanda Wine Bar & Restaurant presents Mike Bastian's Pentimento Jazz every Sunday night. American jazz songbook with drums/vocals by Mike Bastian. No cover. 5:45-9 p.m. Lavanda, 185 University Ave., Palo Alto. Call 650-321-3514. www.lavandarestaurant.com

The Bobs: Vocal Fireworks in Redwood City. THE BOBS bring their musical comedy to Angelica's Bistro on June 5. 8:30-10:30 p.m. \$22. Angelica's Bistro, 863 Main St., Redwood City. angelicasbistro.com/entertainment.htm

Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra Sinfonia Final Concert. The program features five winners of PACO's annual concerto competition, performing a wide range of solo works. Sun., June 7, 3-5 p.m. \$10/general, \$5/senior and student. Dinkelspiel Auditorium, Stanford University, Stanford. Call 650-856-3848. <http://www.pacomusic.org>

Outdoors

Full Moon Canoe Tour at the Baylands. Meet at the Sailing Station and be provided with canoes, paddles, life jackets and safety tips. Some canoe experience required. Ages 14 and up. Sat., June 6, 9:30-11 p.m. \$35 Palo Alto residents / \$42 non-residents. Baylands Nature Preserve, 2775 Embarcadero, Palo Alto. Call 650-617-3156. enjoyonline.cityofpaloalto.org

Sunset-Moonrise Walk in the Wetlands. Full-moon hike in the Baylands. Ages 8 and up. Bring a flashlight. Tue., June 9, 7:30-9 p.m. Free. Baylands Nature Center, 2775 Embarcadero, Palo Alto. Call 650-329-2506. enjoyonline.cityofpaloalto.org

Et Alia

Rodin Redux, Photographs by Alan McGee. Photographic study of the Rodin collection. Meet the artist Saturday, June 13, from 1-4 p.m. Exhibit through June 30, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. Portola Art Gallery, 75 Arbor Road, Menlo Park. www.portolaartgallery.com

Senior Ministries Dinners - Mexican Fiesta Night. Seniors are welcome to come out for an evening of fellowship, food and entertainment. No reservations needed. Fridays, 5:30-8 p.m. \$6 donation. Menlo Park Presbyterian Church - Fellowship Hall, 950 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park. www.mppcc.org

Auditions: "42nd Street," a Palo Alto Children's Theatre Wingspread Production. Auditions open to ages 16-22 on June 6 and 13, 5:30-8 p.m. Free. Palo Alto Children's Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Call 650-463-4930.

Submitting items for the Calendar

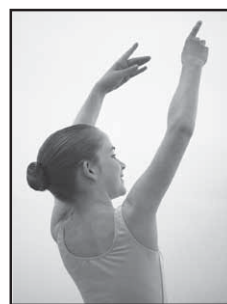
Submit information online. Go to TheAlmanacOnline.com and on the green navigation bar on the left, click on "Calendar Event." That will take you to the Palo Alto Online Master Community Calendar page with a form to enter your information. If the event is of interest to a large number of people, also e-mail a press release to Editor@AlmanacNews.com.



Shakespeare in Menlo

Sara Trupski plays Titania and Jonathan Murphy, Nick Bottom in William Shakespeare's "A Midsummer Night's Dream," to be staged by the Festival Theatre Ensemble under the stars at Mid-Peninsula High School, 1340 Willow Road in Menlo Park. The play opens Friday, June 12, and is stage in repertory with the "The Merry Wives of Windsor," opening Saturday, June 6, and Rudyard Kipling's "The Jungle Book," opening June 19. Performances are at 8 p.m. Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays through June 28. Admission is free, though donations are accepted. For more information, call 408-996-0635.

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Mon 6/22	Tues 6/23	Weds 6/24	Thurs 6/25
Mon 7/6	Tues 7/7	Weds 7/8	Thurs 7/9
Mon 7/20	Tues 7/21	Weds 7/22	Thurs 7/23

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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 854-2690, ext. 222.

Hands off Atherton library funds

The current plan by Atherton City Council member Charles Marsala to take millions of dollars from the town's dedicated library fund should be scrapped before any more time is wasted.

We can understand that Mr. Marsala and his colleagues on the Blue Ribbon Task Force for a new town center are desperately looking for ways to finance a new Town Hall to replace the totally inadequate and decrepit quarters now used by town staff. At the police department, for example, female officers do not even have their own locker room. It is a disgrace in a town that takes pride in its estate-sized properties and

spends most of its budget on police services.

We seriously doubt that the elaborate shell game put together by Mr. Marsala and his colleagues to "sell" the old council chambers to the library by taking the fair market value from the \$4 million-plus in the library's Donor City Fund would be accepted by the community. Instead, there should be an open discussion among the council, the library joint powers board members and the community to see if some library funds could be used to start a town center project that includes a new library.

But if library supporters cannot be persuaded to get on board, the Blue Ribbon Task Force should switch gears and focus on taking funding for a sensible project to the voters in a few years, without using library funds. The intervening time could be used to drum up support for the plan, hopefully from a few lead donors who could give the project some much-needed respect.

Taking the library money without approval of library support-

ers would launch any town center project on a sour note, rather than build the momentum needed to sell a new town hall to the community. Given the considerable wealth of its 2,000-plus households, Atherton residents would surely be willing to back a bond issue or donate their own funds for a well-designed town hall project.

Joan Sanders, president of the Friends of the Atherton Community Library, is livid about Mr. Marsala's idea, and put it this way in a May 23 resignation letter to the Blue Ribbon Task Force:

"In view of this latest assault on the library funds, it is inconceivable for me to remain on the Blue Ribbon Task Force. My remaining on the Task Force may seem to lend an acceptance of the BRTF to use of our library funds for purposes other than for library needs. Mr. Marsala has tried to 'sell' the library a building we do not want, build an auditorium unsuitable for our needs, give us an 'exclusive right' to a building we don't want, all calling for a use of a validated portion of our library funds."

She goes on to say, "The library should be able to use every dollar of its funds to develop a vibrant, useful, up-to-code, and seismically stable space with an upgraded interior, increased computer capacity, and a distinguished collection for use by all Atherton residents, young and old."

If Mr. Marsala sincerely wants to bring a new town hall project to Atherton, he should persuade fellow council members to put the issue before the voters. Anyone who doubts that a small town can design and build a first-class town center need only look a few miles west to Portola Valley's new \$18 million town center, built almost entirely with funds donated by town residents. It is a state-of-the-art green building, and it includes a new library.

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

LETTERS

Our readers write

Council member explains plan for library funds

Editor:

In response to Jean SchAAF's letter last week:

I served as Atherton's representative to the San Mateo County Library JPA (joint powers agency) from 2003 to 2008 and have continued to attend and vote at meetings this year as Atherton's alternate. I chaired the Atherton Facilities Committee from 2006 to 2008 and currently chair the Blue Ribbon Task Force studying our Town Center.

Our library receives 3.4 percent of our property taxes compared to less than 11 percent for the entire town. From 2003 to 2008 our library reserves have grown from \$300,000 to \$3.2 million and are growing at more than \$500,000 a year. This week we received the Fiscal Year 2009 surplus check for more than \$770,000.

Our council chambers, which are within 30 feet of the library, are also used for Planning Commission, General Plan, Rail Committee, and Environmental Committee meetings. They were to serve as Atherton's Emergency Operations



Jac Audiffred Collection

Our Regional Heritage

Valentina Gorbatenko and her sister, Eugenia, outside the Little Store in Woodside in the early 1950s. Valentina and her husband George operated the popular restaurant from 1950 to 1952. The restaurant is still in business at the same location, 3340 Woodside Road, and is open for lunch and dinner Monday through Saturday. Call 851-8110 for more information.

Center (EOC) until it was realized they are seismically unsafe. Repairs are estimated to cost at least \$300,000.

At the 2008 council meetings

in August and September and the February and March 2009 council meetings, I proposed a solution to the library's space needs and the town's EOC needs, which would

use a portion of the library reserves to acquire the council chambers

See **LETTERS**, next page

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

and the remainder and surpluses from future years if needed to remodel.

Some support this idea and others oppose it. The Brown Act does not allow for the council to discuss this privately before a council meeting. Transparency would be needed to put it on the agenda, take public comments, and inform the public of the options.

The joint powers agreement reads that surplus funds can be used for "expansion." During the two JPA meetings in which the matter was discussed, the JPA board twice voted unanimously to support the decision being Atherton's to make.

Let's keep the debate focused on the merits of the idea.

**Charles Marsala, member
Atherton City Council**

**Save trees — pay for
Oak Knoll music**

Editor:

To Menlo Park City School District board members:

In response to last week's Almanac article, "Menlo Park schools must face the music," I offer the following plan:

Music is most definitely an important aspect of every child's life, and in fact studies show that children with musical and other artistic outlets fare better in academia.

There would be plenty of money to provide outstanding music programs if some building adjustments were made at Oak Knoll School. The present plan is to cut down four ancient heritage trees on the upper grade program and in their place build a water-devouring soccer field. Anyone who has ever paid for tree-trimming — never mind the cutting down of trees — knows what an enormous expense that entails.

I would suggest the playground remain in its present state, a model for other schools: three heritage oaks, a Joshua heritage tree, recently purchased state-of-the-art children's climbing equipment, a softball field, and tennis court.

Take the money designated for the removal of the above, and put some of it toward a top-notch musical program for students. As far as a soccer field is concerned, when the school's original plans were designed, there was no soccer field nearby. Since that time, the city of Menlo Park has announced plans for a full-sized soccer field to be built at Kelly Park, and there has been talk about another possible soccer field at Burgess Park or even Flood Park.

Library supporters fear impact of new gym

By Timothy D. Goode

The Friends of the Menlo Park Library and the library community learned last week that the preferred building site of the city's gymnasium project is facing the library on land adjacent to the recreation building and Alma Street.

Even at this moment most of the library community is not aware of this idea. Most, me included, assumed that the new gymnasium would be built on the original Burgess Gymnasium site. Furthermore, most of the library community supported the gymnasium project, as I did.

However, to have a new gymnasium built on this location will take parking spaces away from the library that had been carefully planned to meet the needs in the years ahead. It is almost ludicrous for the hun-

dreds of gymnasium users to compete for the remaining spaces in the library parking lot, especially in these economic times.

Anyone who has visited the library in the last six months or so will realize that in these times especially, the community needs a library that welcomes them. These days all computer stations at the library are taken during most of the business hours. The children's storytelling has been closed because of lack of funds and space. The library is crowded with strollers in the morning and patrons seeking help and hope on the computer stations. This is absolutely the worst time to shrink the library for a gymnasium, and I am a gym rat and an advocate for youth athletics.

However, given the choice of a gymnasium encroaching on the existing library parking spaces without serious concerns for impact could turn a beautiful dream into a disas-

trous nightmare. There are also issues with increased traffic and safety at Alma Street and Ravenswood Avenue, one of Menlo Park's most dangerous intersections.

I commend all the city planners who have spent many hours and offered the public opportunities to comment on this project. But as a career English teacher and coach, I believe the library needs special consideration. It offers opportunity in these troubling times and deserves recognition for its work and the need to have the city support those needs.

The Friends of the Menlo Park Library are currently alerting the library community about these developments. We hope the city takes into account the severe deleterious impact on the library as a result of building a gymnasium at its present proposed location. Both can be served. ■

Tim Goode lives on Vine Street in Menlo Park and is a youth advocate and longtime member of Friends of the Menlo Park Library.



Save the trees, save taxpayers' money, and put into place a musical program envied by other school districts.

**Carol Taggart
Valparaiso Avenue, Menlo Park
(The writer retired after
teaching third grade at
Oak Knoll School.)**

**Cargill development is
a Menlo Park issue**

Editor:

When a mini-city is proposed for the wetlands adjoining Menlo Park's Bayfront Park, the proposal becomes an issue for Menlo Park's residents. Indeed, the proposal will affect all of us who live in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties and who care about the future of our bay lands.

Agribusiness giant Cargill and developer DMB Associates propose a massive development of the Redwood City salt ponds into a community of 25,000 to 30,000 residents, in addition to commercial and retail development.

These are the same salt ponds that were to have been part of the 2003 purchase of salt ponds from Cargill for restoration, but Cargill withdrew them from the deal. Based on a secret appraisal that was later determined to be vastly inflated, we taxpayers paid most of the \$243 million Cargill received (\$100 million cash; \$143 million in tax write-offs). As such, these salt ponds rightly should be restored to the bay.

Restoration of the Redwood City salt ponds would improve the environment and benefit all of us. The proposed Cargill development will negatively impact all of us in many ways and requires regional opposition.

**Pat Walker
Arlington Way, Menlo Park**

**It is neighborly to
trim your trees**

Editor:

In the last few weeks I've noticed some neighbors have had their trees trimmed. One had a tree taken out.

What a difference! One can see blue sky and life one hasn't seen before. There is more light, freshness and airiness.

The effect of trimming trees is much the same as vacuuming and mopping floors in a house that hasn't been cleaned for a month. The house becomes brighter, larger and filled with more beauty.

Thank you for trimming your trees. It is a benefit to everyone.

**Jackie Leonard-Dimmick
Walnut Avenue, Atherton**

**What is Cargill doing
for Wetlands Month?**

Editor:

May is American Wetlands Month, a time when government, nonprofit, and private organizations celebrate the vital importance of wetlands to the nation's ecological, economic, and social health.

It is also a great opportunity to discover and teach others about the important role that wetlands play in our environment and the significant benefits they provide — carbon dioxide absorption, improved water quality, reduced flood and storm surge risk, and critical habitat for plants, fish, and wildlife.

On May 5, the Board of Supervisors proclaimed May as National Wetlands Month in San Mateo County, encouraging "all citizens of San Mateo County to support the efforts to raise awareness of our wetlands."

Two weeks ago, the Redwood City community sponsored a "Keeping Our Baylands Wet and

Wild" event. Many residents and organizations attended, celebrating American Wetlands Month. Redwood City Mayor Rosanne Faust presented a city wetlands proclamation signed by all members of our city council. State Assembly members Ira Ruskin and Jerry Hill spoke of the value of San Francisco Bay wetlands to

the people of the Bay Area and the state.

So it is somewhat ironic that Cargill/DMB chose this fine week in May to submit their plans to Redwood City to fill in almost 1,000 acres of restorable San Francisco Bay wetlands for their development.

Matt Leddy, Redwood City

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lwilsonroberts@apr.com



Redwood City **\$1,795,000**
Beautifully updated Georgian Colonial built in 1925. 4bd/2.5ba with chef's kitchen. Park-like backyard.



Patricia York
650.543.1161
pjyork@apr.com



Menlo Park **\$1,295,000**
This elegant 4 bedroom contemporary home has been tastefully and completely remodeled and nestled in beautiful landscaped gardens.



Lizabeth Rhodes
650.543.1066
lrhodes@apr.com

Ron Marin
650.543.1035
rmarin@apr.com



Palo Alto **\$1,249,000**
Spacious 4bd/2.5ba home with distinct, modern design and walls of windows.



John Forsyth James
650.218.4337
john.james@apr.com



Menlo Park **\$869,000**
3bd/1ba home on R3 lot of 8900+/-sf in move in condition. Freshly painted in/out. New front landscaping.

LOS ALTOS 167 S San Antonio Road 650.941.1111 | **PALO ALTO** 578 University Avenue 650.323.1111
MENLO PARK 1550 El Camino Real, Ste 100 650.462.1111

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