



WHEN NATURE meets suburbia: Local filmmakers explore changing natural landscape. | PAGE 5

The Almanac

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

JUNE 24, 2009 | VOL. 44 NO. 43



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Channeling clotheslines

Woodside artist makes a case for clotheslines with her art, echoing a larger environmental campaign
—see section 2—



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Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

FIRST SHOT



Photo by James Tensuan/Special to The Almanac

School's out for summer

No sooner did school end for the year than the bulldozers started rumbling at Oak Knoll School in Menlo Park. Portable classrooms are being replaced by a two-story building, the frontage of the school will have a new drop-off lane, and a new multi-use room is being built. Construction will still be going on when students head back to school on Aug. 25.

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On the cover

The economics and loveliness of a clothesline and its economical role in saving energy are passions for Woodside resident Ami Jaqua, who has a series of paintings on display at the Woodside Library until June 30. Her work happens to mesh neatly with a larger campaign advocating the use of clotheslines. Photo by Michelle Le. See **Section 2**.

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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Mystery in Sharon Park: Who hacked down trees?

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

One man's quest to encourage new trees to grow at Sharon Park took a strange turn when someone apparently took a chainsaw to fledgling trees in the park.

Alex Cannara, who lives in an unincorporated part of San Mateo County but frequently walks his dog in the city-owned park, recently alerted the city that the goats that graze in the park every spring have prevented new trees from growing. The city employs the goats to clear out high grasses so they don't pose a fire hazard, but the goats eat more than just grass, Mr. Cannara maintains.

"If you've ever lived in a farming area, you'd know that there are some animals you don't want to have in a park, and goats are one of them," he said.

"Chainsaw Chuck"

At the request of the City Council, two city staffers — Ruben Nino, the deputy director of public works, and Dave Mooney, who supervises the city's parks and trees — met Mr. Cannara at the park. He pointed out a cluster of small trees off Altschul Avenue as an example of what the whole park would look like, if the goats weren't allowed to

roam through it every year.

Mr. Nino said the city would provide fencing for Mr. Cannara and other interested residents to install themselves to protect small trees from the goats, and they left it at that.

But when Mr. Cannara returned to the area on June 11, the very trees he had pointed out had been leveled, hacked at with what appeared to be a chainsaw.

"I told them, 'This is what you could have five years from now,'" he said. "Then they cut it down."

Who's responsible? That remains a mystery, though Mr. Cannara blames a certain maintenance worker he refers to as "Chainsaw Chuck."

When *The Almanac* called, the reporter was told that Mr. Nino was on vacation. A call to Director of Public Works Kent Steffens was not returned.

"We're looking into it to find out what happened and why, and to take steps to make sure, if something was done inadvertently, that it doesn't happen again," said Lisa Ekers, the city's engineering services manager.

A ridiculous practice?

The goats that tramp through the park every spring appeal to children

See SHARON, page 8

Woodside weighs demolition permit for Jackling house and Steve Jobs

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

The Woodside Town Council on Tuesday, June 23, will consider issuing a second demolition permit for the Jackling house, the 1920s-era mansion owned by Apple co-founder Steve Jobs and the target of his ire in an eight-year effort to win permission to destroy it.

The council issued Mr. Jobs a demolition permit in 2004, but friends of the 18,000-square-foot house designed by architect George Washington Smith sued Mr. Jobs and the town and won. The judge ruled that Mr. Jobs did not prove demolition to be the only reasonable alternative to preserving the house, and an appeals court agreed.

The council meets at 7:30 p.m. in Independence Hall at the corner of Woodside and Whiskey

Hill roads.

Also on the agenda: a reconsideration of the town's definition for "new building." The term's meaning is important in determining when new rules on fire-resistant construction apply to home remodels.

The council will consider rules for replacement buildings, additions and remodels, and foundation and seismic upgrades. A matrix prepared by Public Works Director Paul Nagengast maps these project types to requirements that include automatic fire sprinklers, new septic systems, and fire-resistant building methods and materials as defined by the state.

The council will also consider an application to host a two-day cycling event, part of the Summer National Senior Games, that would partially close Canada Road for about seven hours each day on the weekend of Aug. 6 and 7. ■

School district could face \$1 million in additional cuts

■ Menlo Park school district OKs \$29 million budget.

By Andrea Gemmet
Almanac Staff Writer

Chief Business Official Diane White joked that she should have come dressed as "the goddess of gloom and doom" as she presented the budget for the 2009-2010 school year to the board of the Menlo Park City School District. It's belt-tightening time in the district, for several reasons.

Reason No. 1 is California's budget crisis. Uncertainty caused by the state's money troubles virtually guarantee that the district's budget will be obsolete long before school ever starts, Ms. White said. Despite not knowing how much money the state will take away from the district to patch up its own financial problems, the board approved the \$28.7 million budget on a 5-0 vote at its June 9 meeting.

The district budget includes a "placeholder" for a \$480,000 loss in state funding, "but it could absolutely be \$1 million (more than that) for us," Ms. White said.

The district must pass a balanced budget before June 30, so officials can't wait to see what the state Legislature will do with education funding.

The state's fiscal crisis isn't the only reason Menlo Park is trying to make do with less next year. The student body is increasing and property tax revenue isn't rising enough to keep pace. The \$1.82 million raised by the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation is also down slightly, compared to last year's grant to the district.

As a so-called basic-aid district, Menlo Park doesn't receive additional funding when the student body swells. Basic-aid districts get to

See BUDGET, page 8



Nick Scoggin plays an aging ranch hand who is forced to change his way of life when the land he has worked for decades is sold.

When nature meets suburbia

Filmmaking duo explores changing natural landscape

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor

In the opening scene of the short film "The Fenceline," an aging ranch hand is seen repairing a fence stretching out across an expanse of hilly open space.

Lanky and unbent, Ayden is at ease, comfortable in his weathered skin, as he twists barbed wire around wooden posts, and hefts up downed fencing to put things right on the land that has been his world for decades. He's the picture of the rugged individualist whose heart keeps time with the essential rhythms of the natural world.

As he nears the end of his project, at the far boundary of the cattle ranch he oversees, he's caught short: Just yards away over the barbed-wire fence he's mending, a toddler sits in his suburban backyard, watching him as if he were a strange animal.

That visual encounter sets up the conflict that's at the heart of the 21-minute film: the struggle of an old cowboy trying not to cross the "line between what will be and what was," in the words of the film's writer and director, Brian Rasmussen.

Mr. Rasmussen and his friend, Travis Schoen — who made his first films as a student at Menlo-Atherton High School — set out to explore this theme with "The Fenceline." Mr. Schoen produced and edited the film, which has met with considerable success on the film festival scene, taking the Audience Award at the California Independent Film Festival, and the Best Student Film award at the Tiburon International Film Festival.

Earlier this month, it was an official entry in the Swansea Bay Film Festival in Wales, and in the fall, it will be screened at the Sapporo International Short Film Festival in Japan.

See FILM, page 8



Lucile Packard
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Open Letter to Our Community from Martha Marsh and Christopher Dawes

Lucile Packard Children's Hospital and Stanford Hospital & Clinics are pleased to share with you our comprehensive proposal to the City of Palo Alto in relation to the Stanford Medical Center Renewal Project.

The proposal reflects the extensive input we have received over the past two years. Its total value to the community is estimated at \$142 million, including \$124 million in additional community benefits and \$18 million in fees and traffic mitigation measures.

The primary benefit the Hospitals provide to the community is excellent healthcare. In addition, we are proposing to fund new programs that will further enhance the health of Palo Alto residents and provide an economic stimulus to our community that will begin as soon as we start construction.

Highlights of the proposal include:

- **Traffic Reduction.** The Hospitals will purchase annual Caltrain Go Passes, which provide unlimited free rides, for all of their existing and new employees who work more than 20 hours per week, at an annual cost to the Hospitals of \$1.3 million. In addition, to expand the free Stanford Marguerite shuttle service, the Hospitals will pay \$2 million in capital costs plus \$450,000 per year in operating costs. When combined with other programs to mitigate traffic impacts, the total value of the proposed measures the Hospitals will provide to reduce vehicle trips over the life of the project is about \$90.4 million.
- **Affordable Housing Contribution.** Although the Hospitals are exempt from the City's housing impact requirements and are not required to pay a related impact fee, the proposal includes a contribution of \$23.1 million to the City's fund to support development of affordable housing in Palo Alto. This single contribution by the Hospitals is believed to be more than double the total amount collected in fees by the City of Palo Alto from commercial developers over the entire history of the program.
- **Community Health Contributions.** The Hospitals will provide \$4 million over 10 years for community health programs within the City of Palo Alto, working with a community advisory board that will be created to select the specific local nonprofits to receive the funds. Examples of potentially eligible recipients include Palo Alto schools, the Mayview Health Clinic, Avenidas, the Opportunity Health Center, and other organizations.

The Hospitals will also provide \$3 million to assist Palo Alto residents who have a self-payment responsibility that is greater than their financial means when they need inpatient or outpatient care at Packard or Stanford. This new, special funding for residents of Palo Alto is in addition to the Hospitals' existing charity care, which supports local residents and all other patients.

- **Pedestrian, Transit and Bicycle Connections.** To further encourage use of Caltrain, bus and other transit services and enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections between downtown Palo Alto and the Medical Center, the Hospitals will provide up to \$3.35 million for improvements to roadways, landscaping, pathways, transit stops and related infrastructure in areas linking El Camino Real, Welch and Quarry roads.

We feel that our proposal demonstrates a substantial commitment to the City of Palo Alto and its residents—a commitment above and beyond our ongoing efforts to provide the very best in patient care. It is critical that we move forward with the expansion and rebuilding of the Hospitals to ensure that our community has improved access to quality healthcare and the latest advances in medicine right here in Palo Alto.

Sincerely,

Martha H. Marsh
President and CEO
Stanford Hospital & Clinics

Christopher G. Dawes
President and CEO
Lucile Packard Children's Hospital

www.stanfordpackard.org



Photo by Ed Zappia

Father Miles Riley greets guests at his book-signing party with, from left, sisters Elizabeth Kibbey and Marianne Walters. Father Riley officiated at both women's weddings.

A guide for the bride

Father Miles Riley's new book offers sage wedding advice

By Jane Knoerle
Almanac Lifestyles Editor

"If you want a Martha Stewart wedding, don't buy this book," Father Miles O'Brien Riley told guests at a book-signing event held June 16 at the Menlo Park home of his longtime friend, Marianne Walters. Ms. Walters is a retired vice principal of Oak Knoll School.

Also on hand were Ms. Walters' sisters, Elizabeth Kibbey and Lyn Cobb, and their parents, Mack and Madelyn Jason of Atherton.

Father Riley's book (his 13th) is titled "It's Your Wedding — Not Theirs." The 65-page paperback is filled with his observations from presiding at more than 2,300 weddings in the past 45 years.

"I want to give brides the tools to personalize and spiritualize their weddings," he says. "The first chapter is about the bride's attitude. Does she want to be a superstar or the hostess for a meaningful ceremony for family and friends?"

Each of the 40 chapters begins with "your" in the title: Your Goal, Your Mother, Your Budget, Your Cake, Your Surprises.

The author polled 55 couples whose weddings he has presided over, and included photos from their weddings and accounts of their experiences. He says musicians, wedding coordinators, and photographers can cause major problems.

"Musicians are only interested in getting

the next gig, especially the DJs," he says. As for wedding planners, "Most of them learned their craft at Moscone Center car shows."

He shudders at the thought of photographers who keep the wedding party posing for photos for as much as an hour and a half after the ceremony. "Sometimes they even take the couple off somewhere to pose for a bunch of cutesy photos."

Father Riley lives in Miramar these days, but grew up in Atherton with his parents, Bill and Frances Riley, and six brothers and sisters. According to his Web site, the Riley children performed skits, played musical instruments, wrote poetry and songs. As a youngster, he read children's parts for Saturday morning radio programs.

Father Riley studied marriage and family counseling at the University of San Francisco and communications at Stanford, Notre Dame, and Loyola (New Orleans) universities, and received a doctorate from UC Berkeley.

He studied theology at the Gregorian University in Rome and was ordained at the North American College in Rome in 1963. He served as a parish priest at several Bay Area parishes and in 1970 founded the Communications Center for the Archdiocese of San Francisco.

Father Riley has written five musical comedies, produced a dozen films, and hosted more than 1,500 television programs, according to his Web site. He retired as a Catholic priest seven years ago.

"It's Your Wedding, Not Theirs" at \$24.99 is available through Amazon.com. ▀

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Non-toxics in the Home

Q: The interior of my home needs to be painted and I dread the thought of the overwhelming smell and toxic air that will come with it. Is there any way to avoid this?

A: Many new paint products have been developed with little or no smell and far less toxicity than the commonly used paints of the past. Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) are vapors emitted by paints and other liquids such as cleaning compounds, and these vapors can cause adverse health effects especially if used indoors. More and more consumers are asking for no-VOC or low-VOC paints and the increased demand is pushing the industry to create better products. These water-based paints perform very well compared to high-VOC paints and there is little or no accompanying toxic smell. Paints and finishes are just one segment of a fast-growing market in environmentally neutral building products, which includes carpets, flooring and drywall. Costs will come down as more products are developed. This is a welcome change and will make our homes and workplaces healthier places to be.

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In this year's Readers' Choice, we salute the Menlo Park superheroes of the local economy: the best businesses and hot spots in or around town. Click that mighty mouse and salute 2009's incredible!



Downtown workshop nets 152 participants

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

Residents crowded into the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church's meeting space at 700 Santa Cruz Ave. on Thursday to deliberate over plans for the city's downtown area, the stretch along El Camino Real, and the train station area.

They weighed in on a variety of possibilities for development and capital improvement projects in the city's downtown area. They debated whether the city should favor housing, office space or retail uses downtown. They discussed the possibility of closing side streets off Santa Cruz Avenue to create pedestrian walkways, and converting a parking plaza or two to a Ferry Building-style marketplace.

The consultant leading the city's community-driven downtown planning process reported that 152 residents turned out for the meeting. Residents squeezed around 12 tables, analyzing a set of plans that spilled over the tables.

Many spoke favorably of widening sidewalks, creating bike paths, and zoning for buildings with varied height and architectural design. People said they feared tall buildings that would create a "canyon effect," and the burden that creating extra housing could put on schools. Some were leery of anything that would make Menlo Park's downtown resemble Redwood City's.

There were calls for a performing arts theater along El Camino, diagonal street crossings, underground and rooftop parking.

The consulting firm Perkins+Will expects to use the feedback from the meeting to develop "refined plans" for the downtown area. Residents can see those plans at the next downtown meeting, scheduled for Sept. 17. ■

INFORMATION

For more information, visit www.menlopark.org/specificplan, or contact city planner Thomas Rogers by e-mail (THRogers@menlopark.org) or phone (330-6722).

SHARON

continued from page 5

and animal lovers. Their presence also carries a green sheen — the city trumpets the fact that the practice is more friendly to the environment than the exhaust-spewing tractor previously used to flatten the park's weeds after the spring growth.

But to Mr. Cannara, who says he has followed the city's efforts to develop a climate action plan with interest, the practice is "ridiculous."

"You used to have one guy with one tractor go in and mow it," he said. "He would drive around the little trees. He was done in a few

hours, and that was it." Now, the city pays more money than it would on the guy with the tractor to truck "10 tons" of goats in from the East Bay, according to Mr. Cannara. The park poses a more serious fire hazard than it would have, because the goats kill off the small trees, and grass grows in their place. And the goats emit methane gas that contributes to global warming.

"Menlo Park has always been kind of a hapless but sympathetic kind of place," Mr. Cannara said. "They say something, they want to do something, but what they end up doing is kind of bass-ackwards."

"I'll follow up next year. It's good to have (the issue) out in the public." ■

PV school board may act on budget

The Portola Valley School District board is expected to vote on a proposed \$11.5 million budget for the 2009-10 school year at its Wednesday, June 24, meeting. The meeting starts at 7 p.m. and is held in Room 1001 at Corte

Madera School, 4575 Alpine Road in Portola Valley.

The agenda for the meeting is available by going to www.pvsd.net and clicking on "Governing Board" under the "District" heading.

BUDGET

continued from page 5

keep their entire share of local property taxes, while revenue-limit districts get per-pupil funding from the state. When enrollment goes up in basic-aid districts like Menlo Park, the amount of money to spend on each student goes down.

As a result, the district's per-

pupil spending will decline from \$11,700 this school year to \$11,200 in the year starting July 1. Class sizes will be larger, some staff — but not teachers — have been cut back, and about \$395,000 will have to come out of the district reserve fund.

However, Superintendent Ken Ranella warned that if the budget situation gets worse there's only one place left to trim.



Brian Rasmussen, left, wrote and directed "The Fenceline," and Travis Schoen, an M-A graduate, is the film's producer and editor.

Filmmakers explore changing landscape

FILM

continued from page 5

Just last week, the filmmaking duo learned that the film was accepted by the Los Angeles International Short Film Festival, which is "a pretty darn big festival, so we are super excited," says Mr. Schoen.

The two men met in a film production class at the Academy of Art University in San Francisco. When Mr. Rasmussen conceived the idea for the film that would be his master's thesis project, "I was always expecting Travis to be involved."

Shot mainly on the Reinstein Ranch in Livermore, the film centers on Ayden's response to the news that economic realities have forced the owners of the ranch, a young married couple, to sell it to developers. This is the world in which he has lived and thrived since being hired by the young woman's father, and now, he will have to find his way in an essentially foreign world.

"Like many of the classic Westerns, it is about the struggle between nature and civilization," Mr. Rasmussen writes in his Director's Statement. "Ayden works outside, his life revolves around the changing of the seasons, births and deaths."

"The forces that act upon him derive from man's attempts to bring reason and predictability into a world of uncertainty, money, time, and society. His enemy isn't an outlaw, but the realities of our modern times, and against these forces he is powerless."

Growing up in Virginia, Mr. Rasmussen saw "a lot of farms taken by development. ... I watched cows disappear," he says. The story of suburban growth, and the toll it takes on open space and

farm land, is one that plays out all across the country, he adds.

"We didn't want to vilify anybody in the movie," Mr. Schoen says. "There isn't a bad guy. We show that (by portraying) the child across the fence in the backyard. But the reality is that someone is losing."

"It's a natural process — an unfortunate but natural process," Mr. Rasmussen adds.

His intent, he says, was "to explore both how people change the land, and the human effect of those changes."

Mr. Schoen says he was drawn to the project "not only because I have tremendous faith in Brian, but because he was setting out to make a movie with a social conscience."

While at M-A High, Mr. Schoen began making films in his freshman year, and was involved with the school's La Mancha Film Festival since it was launched by a couple of his friends. He and two other students took charge of the festival during his senior year.

After graduation in 2002, he studied filmmaking at Boston University, but left after one year because "I didn't like being away from California," he says.

The filmmakers launched an intensive effort to find just the right actors for "The Fenceline," and say they were particularly thrilled to find Nick Scoggin, an experienced film and stage actor, for the role of Ayden. The cast also includes Zehra Berkman, Ryan Ward and Pete Opdyke. ■

INFORMATION

More information, and a trailer for "The Fenceline," can be found at www.fencelinemovie.com.

"In the next round of cuts, if we have to go there, it has to be people, predominantly people," Mr. Ranella told the board. "We do not have soft stuff to cut."

Salaries and benefits account for 89 percent of the 2009-10 budget, while supplies account for less than 4 percent, said Mr. Ranella.

The district is planning for a very small increase in property

tax revenues in the next fiscal year, only 2.5 percent, said Ms. White. While it may not be quite so bleak, as property in the district is currently tracking at about a 6 percent increase, San Mateo County has about \$12 billion in pending property reassessment appeals that could drag those numbers down, she said.

The district always has to plan

for some successful appeals of property tax valuations, but there have never been so many before, Ms. White said. "This is on a grand scale."

Board member Jeff Child complimented Mr. Ranella on the budget. "Ken, way to be in front of this (situation)," he said. "We're as in front of this as we can be." ■

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STREET RECONSTRUCTION - PHASE VI
ATHERTON AVENUE - ATHERTON AVENUE
PROJECT NO. 08-025

Notice is hereby given that SEALED BIDS will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, California 94027, until 3:00 p.m. July 9, 2009, at which time they will be publicly opened and read, for performing the following work:

LAYOUT OF WORK, REMOVAL AND REPLACEMENT OF ASPHALT CONCRETE PAVEMENT ON STREET, REPLACEMENT OF CONCRETE VALLEY GUTTERS, AND PLACEMENT OF PERMANENT STRIPING FOR ATHERTON AVENUE BETWEEN STERN LANE AND ELENA AVENUE.

The UDBE Contract goal is 8.5% (percent).

Bids must be for the entire work, and shall be submitted in sealed envelopes clearly marked: "Bid of (Contractor) for STREET RECONSTRUCTION - PHASE VI - ATHERTON AVENUE - ATHERTON AVENUE, Project No. 08-025", along with date and time of bid opening. Contractors must attend the Mandatory Pre-Bid Meeting on June 25, 2009 at Town Hall at 2 p.m.

6610. Notice inviting formal bids for projects by a public agency that include a requirement for any type of mandatory prebid conference, site visit, or meeting shall include the time, date, and location of the mandatory prebid site visit, conference or meeting, and when and where project documents, including final plans and specifications are available. Any mandatory prebid site visit, conference or meeting shall not occur within a minimum of five calendar days of the publication of the initial notice. This provision shall not apply to the Regents of the University of California.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Any questions regarding the project should be directed to the Assistant Engineer, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, CA 94027, telephone (650) 752-0555, preferably no later than five days before bid opening. Requests for Information may be faxed to (650) 688-6539. Plan holder's lists may be obtained by calling (650) 752-0570.

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

Date: _____

Child care: Give city a chance, commission says

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

MENLO WATCH

A city commission tasked with evaluating how Menlo Park should cut its subsidy of the child care center in the Civic Center complex has recommended that the city continue to operate the center, for the time being.

The City Council referred the matter to the Parks and Recreation Commission last spring, after a consultant determined that the city is subsidizing the child care program to the tune of \$384,000 per year.

At its June 17 meeting, the commission voted unanimously to allow city management to implement its plans for cutting the subsidy, rather than begin a search for a private provider to take over the center. The city conducted a similar search in 2006, garnering some interest from service providers. But in the end, no provider decided to pursue the bidding process for the contract.

Under the commission's recommendation, the City Council would review the city's operation of the child care center during the mid-year budget process. At that point, if the center's revenue fell short of projections, or if parents complained about service, then the city would begin searching for an outside provider to run the center.

Osnat Loewenthal, who has headed up an ad hoc parent group advocating that the city continue to operate the center, said she was pleased with the recommendation, and that parents are eager to work with city officials to help the program recover more of its costs.

The City Council is expected to consider the commission's recommendation at its July 21 meeting.

Commission to meet on gym project

Menlo Park's Planning Commission will meet on Monday, June 29, to review an environmental impact report on a new city gymnasium proposed for the Civic Center complex.

One of the findings of the consultant who prepared the report — that the Civic Center's current space for parking will be sufficient to accommodate over 100 new visitors to the gym during peak use hours — has disconcerted members of the library community. The lot nearest the library is also the most convenient lot for the

gymnasium and the recreation center; overflow parking would spill into a separate lot.

Among the suggestions made to deal with the issue: moving the entrance to the gymnasium farther from the parking lot, running a shuttle around the Civic Center complex during peak use hours, and constructing underground parking.

Among the possible solutions City Manager Glen Rojas floated at the City Council's June 16 meeting: asking city employees to park elsewhere, coordinating library and gym events so they don't overlap, and leasing a lot from SRI International. Four Civic Center lots are closer to both the library and gym than the SRI lot, which is across Laurel Street from the campus.

At a previous meeting on the gym project, Planning Commission members said they were also concerned that traffic going to the gym would clog surrounding streets.

The commission is expected to advise the City Council on whether it should certify the environmental impact report. The meeting is tentatively scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. in the council chambers, between Laurel and Alma streets in the Civic Center complex.

Council OKs budget

At its June 16 meeting, Menlo Park's City Council gave final approval to a budget and capital improvement program for the 2009-10 fiscal year, which begins July 1.

The city expects its general fund operations in 2009-10 to net a surplus of \$50,000. It expects to draw an additional \$450,000 from its general fund reserve, money allocated to the downtown planning process.

After an anticipated drop in revenue of \$2.1 million in the current fiscal year from 2007-08, the city expects revenue to rebound by \$1.4 million in the upcoming fiscal year. That's due largely to a projected increase of \$1.5 million in property tax revenues, and \$1 million from a tax on hotel users at the recently opened Rosewood Sand Hill hotel.

While the city says it is optimistic about its financial standing in the upcoming fiscal year, council members aren't as hopeful about the city's long-term

MENLO WATCH, Continued on next page



Vintage Affaire

Fritz Hatton leads the live auction at last year's Vintage Affaire. This year, fine wines, great food, and a worthy cause will be celebrated on Saturday, June 27, when the 27th annual Vintage Affaire comes to a private estate in Atherton. The event, benefiting Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, raised \$320,000 last year. Since 1983, nearly \$6 million has been raised to assist blind and low-vision clients and their families. Tickets to Vintage Affaire are \$300. To receive an invitation, call Vista Center at 858-0202, or visit the Vintage Affaire Web site at www.vintageaffaire.org.

Bocce ball tournament brings winnings to Valley Presbyterian Church in PV

By Jane Knoerle
Almanac Lifestyles Editor

Talk about beginner's luck. David Dubbs of Woodside knew nothing about bocce ball, yet his team, "Bocce This," won the \$15,000 first-place award in the 11th annual Battle of the Bay, a bocce ball tournament hosted by former Bay Area NFL coaches Steve Mariucci and John Madden.

The tournament took place June 3 at Campo di Bocce in Livermore, with 32 teams competing.

The event, created in 1999 by Mr. Mariucci, has raised more than \$3 million for Bay Area charities. Mr. Dubbs' charity of choice was Valley Presbyterian Church in Portola Valley.

A member of Valley Presbyterian Church for nine years, Mr. Dubbs says the church "is very deserving," and notes that its staff has taken salary cuts, due to the poor economy.

Mr. Dubbs, who runs a

sports production company, was encouraged by a business colleague to enter a bocce team in this year's competition. "We were collaborating on a television project and wanted to engage certain professional athletes. I was told we might be able promote our concept by supporting Mariucci's bocce event," he says. "So I agreed and signed up under my production company, Windy Hill Productions."

Since he knew nothing about bocce ball, Mr. Dubbs called a former business partner in a consulting company, Gene D'Ovidio, to help him put together a team. They had shared an office in San Francisco's Ghirardelli Square across the street from Aquatic Park.

Benji Tosi, the top-ranked volo bocce player in the country, runs the Aquatic Park Bocce Center. While volo bocce is different from the open-style played at the tournament, Mr. Tosi agreed to play and recruited "some very

good players," says Mr. Dubbs.

"While we breezed through the preliminary rounds, the level of competition picked up in the round of 16. From the round of 8 forward, 'Bocce This' had to come from behind in every match. The final match was played against the Ponderosa Rollers. The game, which is played to 10 points, was a see-saw battle with two exceptionally good teams," he says.

The Rev. Mark Goodman-Morris, co-pastor of Valley Presbyterian Church, was on hand to cheer the winning team. He brought along Mr. Dubbs' son, Andrew, who has just graduated from eighth grade at Woodside Priory.

When Steve Mariucci called Mr. Dubbs to thank him for entering a team in the tournament, the two men found even more common ground: It turns out that Mr. Mariucci's daughter and Andrew Dubbs will both attend St. Francis High School in Mountain View this fall. ■

MENLO WATCH

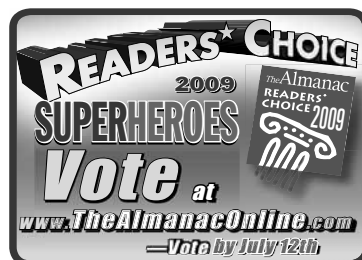
Continued from previous page

budget outlook, with few major, tax-generating development projects set to come online.

Meetings resume July 14

After its June 16 meeting, the City Council will not meet again until July 14.

Only two other meetings are slated for July and August: July 21, and Aug. 25. ■



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Mon 8/17	Tues 8/18	Weds 8/19	Thurs 8/20

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Atherton council members accuse colleagues of censorship

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

Two members of the Atherton City Council are accusing their colleagues of censorship for making it harder to place issues on meeting agendas.

Until recently, Atherton had no formal process for a member of the council to add an item to a meeting agenda, leaving it up to the city manager to set the agenda. In March, a new policy was adopt-

ed requiring the approval of two council members before an issue could be placed before the entire council.

But now that's going to change. At the June 17 meeting, a divided City Council passed new rules requiring an additional step — not only does a pair of council members have to agree in order to propose an agenda item, but it will require a majority vote of the council to authorize the item's placement on a future

meeting agenda.

So, if three or more members of the council vote against a proposed item, that item won't get on a meeting agenda and won't be discussed by the City Council.

The vote was 3-2, with Elizabeth Lewis and Charles Marsala opposed.

"Agenda items can be very dangerous if they're not approved by the council," said Councilman Jim Dobbie.

Getting something on a coun-

cil meeting agenda is important because, under the state's open meeting law known as the Brown Act, an elected body can't take action on anything that hasn't been placed on an official agenda and published at least 72 hours in advance. The rules can be cumbersome, but they serve a purpose — to prevent the public from being blindsided by government decisions.

Mr. Marsala said that a lot of controversial issues faced by the town in the past few years would have benefited from a public airing, if only he had been allowed to get them on the council's agenda.

"If there is an issue that needs to be brought out and vented, then let that happen," he said. "I like the idea that if two council members want to bring something to the attention of the full council, (they can). I'm in favor of leaving things the way they are."

Mr. Dobbie said there could be "absolute chaos" if the rules weren't changed. If an issue is important, the council will approve hearing it, he said.

"If the council doesn't allow it, we'll have to take the flak from the public," said Councilwoman Kathy McKeithen.

She said that there is often a very good reason to delay discussion of a topic, such as waiting until a report about it is completed.

"I feel this is censorship," said Mr. Marsala.

The change in rules was likely triggered by last month's controversy over Mr. Marsala's idea for

financing a new town hall. He proposed "selling" to the library the town's council chambers to expand the library, and using the proceeds from the sale for a new town hall building. The library has a reserve fund of several million dollars, whereas the town has little money for financing a new administrative building.

It wasn't only Mr. Marsala's idea, but the way it was presented, that generated a storm of criticism and led to the protest resignation of Joan Saunders, a member of the task force charged with getting a new town hall built.

Ironically, the library funds topic was put on the council agenda by a town committee, not via the policy that allowed a pair of council members to put forward an agenda item.

Ms. Lewis said she was truly at a loss as to why council members McKeithen and Dobbie proposed changing the rules, saying they are making the process "more cumbersome."

"We as council members are public servants; we aren't here to toot our own horns or grandstand," Ms. Lewis said.

Without comment, Mayor Jerry Carlson joined with Ms. McKeithen and Mr. Dobbie in voting to approve the tougher rules on placing items on council agendas.

"Council members McKeithen and Dobbie, and the mayor, are trying to censor and squash discussion in this town," said Ms. Lewis. ■



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Photo by Eric Brandt/Special to The Almanac

We're off

Menlo School graduates are off to greet family and friends after the commencement ceremony on the Atherton campus June 9.

Atherton dips into reserves with \$17 million town budget

By Andrea Gemmet
Almanac Staff Writer

Atherton is trimming staff, cutting expenses, and dipping into its reserve fund to make ends meet in the fiscal year beginning July 1. The \$17 million operating and capital improvement budget for 2009-10 was approved by the City Council at its June 17 meeting.

The vote was 4-1, with Councilman Charles Marsala opposed.

Mr. Marsala said he was concerned that the town is overcharging on road impact fees, and since the budget doesn't address that situation, he is voting against it. City Attorney Wynne Furth said a report on road impact fees should come to the council next month, and if there is an issue with the fees, it can be addressed then.

After spending hours at several special budget meetings scrutinizing everything from bottled water to business trips, the council pruned operating expenses by nearly \$547,000.

Simitian goes to farmers' market

Local residents will have a chance to ask questions and voice opinions on state issues at a "sidewalk office hours" session with state Sen. Joe Simitian (D-Palo Alto) from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, June 27, at the Palo Alto Farmers' Market.

The session is informal, and no appointments are required.

"During these difficult times, it's more important than ever for elected officials to listen to the people they represent," Sen. Simitian said in a press release. "I want to make sure the folks I represent have an easy way to share their thoughts."

For more information, visit www.senatorsimitian.com or call his Palo Alto district office at 688-6384.

The farmers' market is located behind the post office at Hamilton Avenue and Gilman Street.

Town staff is shrinking a bit, with the police department leaving two positions unfilled.

"I want to thank staff for all the hard work they've done in whittling down their budgets," said Councilwoman Elizabeth Lewis.

The town's general fund balance will drop by \$500,000 in order to help fund a new expense in the budget — setting aside money to pay for retiree health benefits — bringing the town's reserves to \$5.7 million.

If it wasn't for the town's problematic business license tax, Atherton's revenues would put the town in the black in the coming fiscal year, according to Louise Ho, Atherton's finance director. However, the need to issue refunds to building con-

tractors and subcontractors who were overcharged in the past two years pushes Atherton's revenue picture into the red. Atherton is setting aside \$817,000 in its budget for business tax refunds.

Since learning of the problem, the town has changed its method for figuring the business license tax.

Property tax revenues are projected to rise 3 percent over last year, while building permit revenue is expected to decline, according to Ms. Ho.

Capital improvement projects funded by the budget include road maintenance and repairs, several drainage improvement projects, and the town's share of a jointly funded new traffic signal at Encinal Avenue and Middlefield Road. ▀

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Correction

A caption in the June 17 issue of The Almanac incorrectly reported that Brenna Fitzpatrick is one of two valedictorians in the Woodside High School class of 2009. In fact, she is one of nine valedictorians.

KEPLER'S PROGRAMS & EVENTS IN JULY

Joanna Smith Rakoff

A Fortunate Age: A Novel
Thursday, July 2, 7:30 p.m.

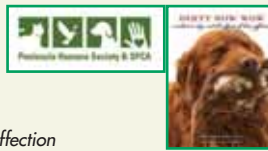
Like *The Group*, Mary McCarthy's classic tale about coming of age in New York, Rakoff's richly drawn and satisfying first novel details the lives of a group of Oberlin graduates.



Dirty Bow Wow Toy Drive for the Peninsula Humane Society

*Dirty Bow Wow: A Tribute to
Dogs and the Objects of Their Affection*
Saturday, July 18, 2:00 p.m.

The dog days of summer are here, but never fear, Kepler's has some relief. For our first annual Doggy Day, we will be collecting toys and bedding for shelter dogs at PHS.



Jonathan Littman and Marc Hershon

*I Hate People! Kick Loose from
the Overbearing and Under-
handed Jerks at Work and Get
What You Want Out of Your Job*
Wednesday, July 8, 7:30 p.m.

A smart, counter-intuitive, and irreverent turn on the classic workplace self-help book that will show you how to identify the Ten Least Wanted—the people you hate—while revealing the strategies to neutralize them.



Alan Drew

Gardens of Water: A Novel
Tuesday, July 21, 7:30 p.m.

An enthralling story of two families, and two faiths, in Turkey at the time of the devastating Marmara earthquake of 1999.



Andy Raskin

*The Ramen King & I: How the
Inventor of Instant Noodles Fixed
My Love Life*
Thursday, July 9, 7:30 p.m.

"This book will make you hungry. It will make you laugh (probably out loud), and it will make you consider the serious business of being human." — Megan K., Kepler's



M.J. Ryan

*AdaptAbility: How to Survive
Change You Didn't Ask For*
Wednesday, July 22, 7:30 p.m.

Learn the secrets to taking any change in stride from one of the creators of the "Random Acts of Kindness" series.



Anat Baniel

*Move Into Life: The Nine Essentials for
Lifelong Vitality*
Tuesday, July 14, 7:30 p.m.

Endorsed by leading physicians, scientists, and transformational teachers, the Anat Baniel Method will help you enjoy renewed energy and stamina.



Gladys Stone & Fred Whelan

*Goal!: Your 30-Day
Game Plan for Career
Success*
Wednesday, July 15,
7:30 p.m.

Executive coaches and recruiters, the authors can offer a 60-second resume repair service and are experts at discussing networking, resume polishing, and goal-setting.



Michaelene Risley and Jan Yanehiro

*This Is Not the Life I
Ordered: 50 Ways to
Keep Your Head Above
Water When Life Keeps
Dragging You Down*
Tuesday, July 28, 7:30 p.m.

"These women inspire us to go for the gold in our lives. They all deserve 10s!"

--Kristi Yamaguchi



Tom Maremaa

Metal Heads
Thursday, July 16, 7:30 p.m.

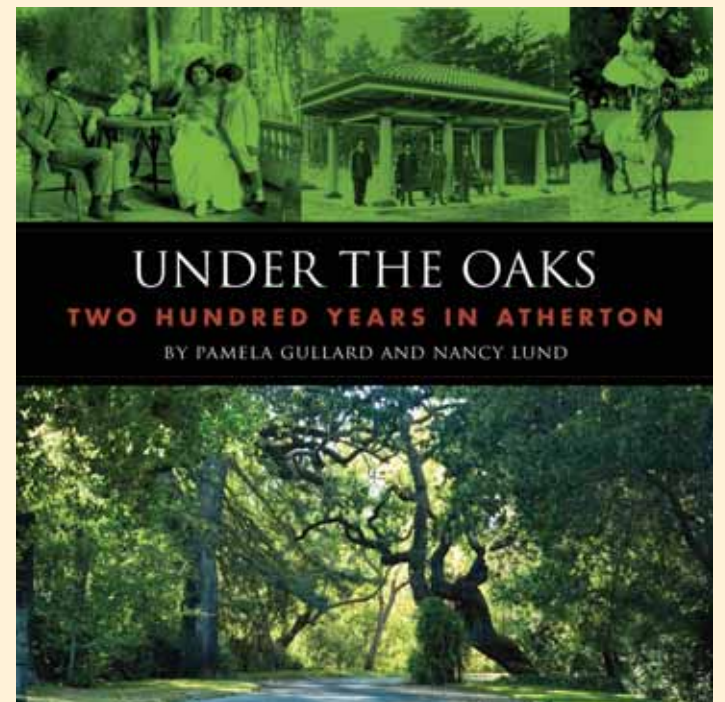
The most tragic and enduring legacy of the Iraq War may be the many vets suffering traumatic brain injury (TBI). *Metal Heads* is a deeply unsettling novel of a hospital full of such vets in California.



Kevin Starr

*Golden Dreams: California in an Age
of Abundance, 1950-1963 (Americans
and the California Dream)*
Wednesday, July 29, 7:30 p.m.

Starr's acclaimed multi-volume *Americans and the California Dream* is an unparalleled work of cultural history. In this volume, Starr covers the crucial postwar period--1950 to 1963--when the California we know today first burst into prominence.



The history of Atherton is documented in a soon-to-be released book.

New history book is all about Atherton

Atherton is the latest town to get the local history treatment, with a new coffee-table book called "Under the Oaks: Two Hundred Years in Atherton."

The book is penned by Nancy Lund of Portola Valley and Pamela Gullard of Menlo Park, the same duo behind "Life on the San Andreas Fault: A History of Portola Valley," published in 2003.

The hardcover book contains 450 archival photos and images, and highlights

the contributions of noted residents, including Faxon Dean Atherton, for whom the town is named, Mary Tutt Eyre, who helped create Trinity Parish, and inventor Leon Douglass.

The book costs \$75 and is expected to be available in September. The book is available for presale at a discount — \$60 — if ordered by June 30. For more information, or to order a book, go to www.AthertonHistory.com.

Workshop on interior design for green homes on Tuesday

The interior design of a home designed to be green is the subject of a two-hour workshop in Portola Valley at 7 p.m. Tuesday, June 23, and led by Kirsten Flynn, the principal designer of Sustainable Home.

This event, part of the town's Green Speakers Series, will be held in the community hall at Town Center, 765 Portola Road.

Among the topics Ms. Flynn will cover: evaluating and buying green products, determining a product's effect on indoor air, and finding greener alternatives to traditional materials, including local sources, according to a statement from the town.

Ms. Flynn is certified by the U.S. Green Building Council, according to her Web site at www.sustainablehome.com. She also teaches classes on green interior design, has a design degree from Syracuse University, and received the first green-design certificate issued by Canada College in Woodside.

Sustainable Home participated with a Santa Clara University team in the Department of Energy's 2007 Solar Decathlon contest and took a third-place prize, the statement said.

Note that the town does not endorse the speakers in this series, nor does it stand behind the information presented.

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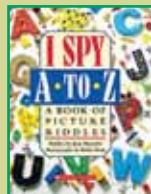
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Story Times Kepler's Story Time every Sunday at 11:30 a.m.

July 5th -

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July 19th

Man on the Moon Story Time
One Giant Leap
Mungo and the Spiders from Space

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July 12th -

Bear Story Time
Good Luck Bear
Don't Worry Bear
Thank You Bear

Bear is back and he's looking for luck with his best friend mouse. Will they find it? Join us as we read all of Bear's adventures and enjoy delicious bear claws.



July 26th

Story Time with Dave Keane
Sloppy Joe
Bobby Bramble Loses His Brain

Local author Dave Keane is coming to Kepler's to debut not one, but two fabulously fun new picture books.



Our event program is updated often. Please visit keplers.com for current information. All events are free at Kepler's unless otherwise noted.

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Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Hanging out before the eighth-grade graduation ceremony at La Entrada School are from left, Emily Westerfield, Victoria Mauett and Brittany Scheuch.

Goodbye, La Entrada; hello, high school

La Entrada School in Menlo Park celebrated its graduation ceremony on Thursday, June 11, at 6 p.m. For the first time, it was held in the school's new gymnasium.

Nick Batchelder, student body president, served as the master of ceremonies and Tyler Finn, commissioner of community service, led the flag salute.

Superintendent Eric Hartwig of the Las Lomas School District welcomed the students, their families and guests, and Spencer Bonham gave the annual student response.

Out-going Assistant Principal Pattie Dullea was honored and thanked by the eighth-grade class, teachers and the school community. Eighth-graders Cami Carlomagno, Sam Melville and Ian Bennett presented her with sunflowers and a beautifully framed tribute to her, written and painted by La Entrada students and art classes.

Ms. Dullea was recently named principal of Ross School, the K-8 public school in Ross.

The graduation program featured speeches by eighth-grade graduates James Colin, Adam Greenstein, Meleana Mataele, William Mills, David Schmitt, Emily Westerfield, and Kristen Wong. There were also short, recorded reflections by each of the 114 eighth-graders.

Principal Larry Thomas announced student awards in academic categories and Assistant Principal Dullea announced the winner of the coveted Larry McCarty Award.

Kristina Takayama, eighth-grade coordinator, presented the class gift, which this year is a donation to Phase II of the recycling and composting program at La Entrada.

GRADUATES

Leslie Airola Murveit, president of the district Board of Trustees, awarded diplomas to the eighth-graders, whose names were announced by Erika Lowe, La Entrada counselor.

The graduates celebrated later at a party, planned by their parents, in the school's Jensen Hall.

Graduates

A-B Alexander Aguiar, George Anagnostou, Jennifer Angulo, Colin Baker, Olivia Baker, Sarah Barrus, Nicholas Batchelder, Christian Bayloq, Negin Behzadian, Ian Bennett, Evan Bodell, Spencer Bonham, Thomas Bonham, Madeline Brudos, Andrew Byun.

C-F Cameron Carlomagno, Jeremy Chow, Stephen Chu, Ethan Cohen, James Colin, Adam Creeger, Nikolai de Saint Andrieu, Ian DeLisle, Max Eagle, Joshua Feiber, Justine Ferry, Tyler Finn, Scott Fleishman, Scott Fowler, Brian Francis, Alexander Freeman, Matthew Furtek.

G-L Fitzgerald Geonzon, Jacqueline Gonzalez, Adam Greenstein, Andres Hernandez, Maya Israni, Liz Jahng, Maria Jelvis, Clara Johnson, Michelle Kenney, Kotaro Kihira, Casey Kiyohara, Jeremie Lai, Caitlyn Lanigan, Ursula Lawson, Matthew Lee, Christopher Leong, Vincent Leoni, Lauren Lete, Elizabeth Lipps, John Lovegren.

M Victoria Mallett, Angelina Mapa, Nolan Martin, Meleana Mataele, Laura May, Shantal Medrano, Roxanne Mein, Samuel Melville, William Mills, Rebecca Milman, Kian Modjtchedi, Zachery Moore, Milithza Moran, Daniel Moritz-Rabson, Kathleen Muenzen, Brooke Muschott.

N-P Jacqueline Navarro, Neeka Nazhand, Serena Nietert-Wozniak, Catherine O'Farrell, Jonathan O'Farrell, Nicholas O'Farrell, Rino Oguchi, Blake Olsen, Isai Olvera, Yasmine Patino, Francelli Payan, Evan Perkins, Jacob Pfau.

R-S Megan Rash, Nina Rondoni, Daniella Sanchez, Christopher Scherm, Brittany Scheuch, David Schmitt, Steven Shimbo, Andrea Simes, Benjamin Smith, Ashley Song, Maxwell Spielman-Sun, Alison Spindt, Amanda Stahler, Patricia Stanley, Sofia Steinbock, Herman Stribling.

T-Y Christina Takayama, Taylor Tam, James Tedesco, Matthew Tinyo, Paul John Titterton, Varun Tolani, Rahim Ullah, James Walker, Catherine Wes, Emily Westerfield, Aubrey Westerlind, Hannah Westerlind, Joshua Williams, Megan Wiseman, Kristen Wong, Nicole Wong, Kseniya Yumasheva.

COLLEGE GRADUATES

Josephine O. Seff of Woodside graduated from Grinnell College on May 18

as one of the 350 members of its class of 2009. The daughter of Dr. Ronald L. Seff and Ms. Harriet Garfinkle, she earned a bachelor of arts degree in anthropology with a concentration in linguistics. She also received honors in anthropology. Grinnell College is a private, four-year, liberal arts college in Grinnell, Iowa. Founded in 1846, Grinnell enrolls 1,600 students.

Erik Madden of Menlo Park graduated from UC Davis in June 2008 with a degree in genetics, and minors in bioinformatics and quantitative biology. He spent the past year working at Arcadia Bioscience, and participated in a training for

health care delivery in rural areas at MVJ Medical College & Hospital, Haskote, Bangalore, India. In early August he enters the David Geffin Medical School at UCLA.

Jonathan Sattler, a resident of Menlo Park, was awarded a bachelor of arts in wilderness leadership by Prescott College in Prescott, Arizona, on May 8.

Hannah R. Bariteau, a resident of Atherton, was awarded a bachelor of arts in humanities from Prescott College in Prescott, Arizona, on June 6.

Robert Couch of Menlo Park graduated May 18 from Boston College with a bachelor of arts degree in English from the university's College of Arts and Sciences. The commencement speaker was documentary filmmaker Ken Burns.

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Pete McCloskey is focus of KQED documentary

An hour-long film documentary detailing the life of local lawyer and former Congressman Pete McCloskey will premiere on KQED-TV (Channel 9) at 6 p.m. Sunday, July 5. The documentary is part of the television station's Truly CA series.

The film was produced and directed by local political and environmental activist Rob Caughlan. This is his first full-length documentary. The late movie star Paul Newman, a friend of Mr. McCloskey, provides narration.

Mr. McCloskey, who has a home in Portola Valley, served

as a Marine during the Korean War, before becoming one of the nation's first environmental lawyers. He represented California's 11th district in Congress from 1967 to 1983. After vehemently opposing the Vietnam War, he ran against Richard Nixon for the Republican presidential nomination in 1972.

Mr. Caughlan said that Mr. McCloskey's story, "offers an example of an authentic hero who dedicates his life to public service, an elected official who follows his moral compass regardless of the prevailing political winds."

Frustration surfaces over reliance on consultants

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

■ MENLO PARK

The familiar complaint that Menlo Park would rather study a problem than fix it has come whistling through the city again, with one member of the City Council joining in the chorus of frustrated voices.

The issue surfaced at the June 16 council meeting when longtime resident Cedy Fisher declared, "I am tired of studies," in response to the city's proposal to conduct a \$90,000, consultant-led study of parking regulations in the downtown area. "I am *really* tired of studies," Ms. Fisher said. "This is not the time to have another."

Councilman Andy Cohen agreed, saying the parking study represents what he sees as a growing trend: the city's "failure ... to try solutions before we go out and hire consultants."

Residents and downtown merchants have derided plans for the parking study in e-mails to the City Council and on The Almanac's online forum, saying previous studies on the same issue were unproductive. Some said the city's money would be better spent on a parking structure. Others suggested Menlo Park should commission a study on why it conducts so many studies.

Public Works Director Kent Steffens defended the city's reliance on consultants, saying it doesn't have the manpower or the expertise to conduct a parking study. He argued that the parking situation is more complicated than many think, and noted that the consultant will also analyze whether the city should use parking meters

in its plazas.

At the meeting, Councilman John Boyle said he's heard "strong pleas" from merchants to simply change the limit from two to three hours, as Ms. Fisher and Mr. Cohen suggested. But the city needs to analyze the issue, he argued, because it isn't certain that those merchants speak for the larger business community.

Mr. Cohen said the city has banded about the switch from two to three hours, but never tried it. But Mark Flegel, president of Flegels Fine Furniture, said in an interview that the city did try a three-hour limit in the early 1990s — and decided against making the switch permanent, largely because employees would bogart the spaces.

The council voted 4-1 to proceed with the study, with Mr. Cohen dissenting. ■

Some suggested Menlo Park commission a study on why it conducts so many studies.



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Eva Spitz-Blum: psychologist, rancher, world researcher

Eva Maria Spitz-Blum of Ladera, a psychologist who did research around the world on folklore, shamanism, alcohol and drugs, before moving to Skyline where she took up ranching, will be honored at a memorial service at 2 p.m. Sunday, June 28, at the Stanford Faculty Club, 439 Lagunita Drive on the Stanford campus.

Ms. Spitz-Blum died peacefully at Stanford Hospital on May 2, just a month after she celebrated her 90th birthday on April 1.

Born in Budapest in 1919, Eva Spitz spent her first 19 years moving around Europe to avoid the political upheavals leading up to World War II. Her father was Rene Spitz, an early psychoanalyst and disciple of Sigmund Freud.

After fleeing Budapest when Eva was 3 months old because of a revolution, the family lived in Trieste, Vienna, Berlin and Paris. "She was a girl on the run," says her daughter, Lisa Duhl of Berkeley.

In 1938, Dr. Spitz and his family left seething Europe for New York and a new life in the United States.

Her education was almost as broken up as her living conditions. In Paris she studied at the Sorbonne. In the U.S., she graduated from Barnard College, and put in stints at Harvard and the University of Washington, before moving to California and Stanford. "She was incredibly adaptable," says Ms. Duhl.

Meanwhile, she had met and married Warner Shippee of Rhode Island. They lived in Virginia, where she worked with the legendary anthropologist Margaret Mead. The couple had a son and daughter, born in 1944 and 1945.

In 1949, Ms. Spitz, by then a single mother, moved to California and began her 60-year association with Stanford. In 1955, she received her Ph.D. in clinical psychology with a minor in anthropology.

That year, Ms. Spitz and her new fiancé, Richard H.D. Blum, bought a house on Whiskey Hill Road. There they pursued at least three careers: research into drugs, alcohol and mental health at Stanford and other local institutions; related studies around the world focusing on folklore, shamanism and drugs; and running two ranches in the mountains west of Skyline.

She held her first post-doctoral fellowship at the Menlo Park veterans hospital, where she served on the same ward with Ken Kesey, author of "One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest." Later she and Richard Blum co-directed research at Stanford into the psychodynamics of the use and effects of mind-altering drugs. She was associate editor of the "Encyclo-

OBITUARY

pedia of Alcohol Problems," and published widely on the subject.

The Blums pursued their research interests into foreign lands, including Greece, South America, the Middle East, and Central Asia. They particularly loved Greece and published books and articles on Greek folklore, and rural health.

Their studies of the dynamics of drug use took the Blums to Lebanon, Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Their work in Afghanistan, concerning control of opium poppies, ended with the Soviet invasion in 1979, Richard Blum notes. Meanwhile, she founded the Afghan Wildlife Society in hopes of protecting the country's dwindling wildlife.

As some of the first foreigners to enter one of the remote tribal provinces, the Blums were invited to join the Explorers Club — an activity she enjoyed for the rest of her life.

In 1995, at the age of 76, she made her last anthropological research expedition, Ms. Duhl recalls. "She and a few Explorers Club members trekked into Ecuadorian Amazonia to study the healing practices of the women shamans there."

Starting about 1969, the Blums took up serious ranching and bought two properties in the Santa Cruz Mountains. They raised picturesque Scotch Highland cattle — shaggy red with long horns — on the Volcano Ranch on Langley Hill. Farther to the south at Shingle Mill off Highway 9, they raised a flock of Southdown sheep.

She became active in the South Skyline Association, serving on the board and helping plan emergency response.

The Blums separated about 1984 and divorced a few years later. She moved down the hill, from Shingle Mill to Ladera, in 2005; he still lives at Shingle Mill.

Still unfinished is her project to write a biography of her father, to be called "Through a Daughter's Eyes: The Work and Life of a Pioneer Psychoanalyst, Rene A. Spitz."

Ms. Spitz-Blum is widely remembered as a magnificent hostess. She provided plentiful and lavish meals and delicious desserts, accompanied by wide-ranging, lively and stimulating conversa-



Eva Spitz-Blum

See SPITZ-BLUM, page 28

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Stanford execs face questions on Condi Rice, El Camino, trails

■ Mixed-use development on El Camino is appealing, says Stanford real estate manager.

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

Should the U.S. government investigate whether Condi Rice and other Bush administration officials violated the Constitution?

That's what a camera phone-wielding Stanford student asked Stanford Provost John Etchemendy at a June 17 meeting of Sustainable Menlo Park. He wanted to know if Mr. Etchemendy would sign a petition to that effect.

It wasn't the only tough question the provost faced during the meeting, attended by about 50 people interested in the university's plans for the foothills, and for the auto dealerships it owns along El Camino Real, among other things.

Mr. Etchemendy declined to sign the petition, saying he didn't see why the university should take a stance on the issue. This is how he answered two other key questions:

Q. What are the university's plans for the four parcels it owns along El Camino Real — the sites of Tesla Motors and three former auto dealerships?

Mr. Etchemendy opened his talk by acknowledging skepticism over Stanford's refusal to reveal its land-use plans. But the university generally does not share its plans because it wants to maintain flexibility when it comes to land use, he said — not because it has a secret agenda it doesn't want the community to know about.

Two of the former auto dealership parcels are currently under the university's control, while the leases on two others — to Tesla Motors, and to the Menlo Park Fire Protection District — expire in 2012 and 2013, according to Mr. Etchemendy. Stanford plans to begin making development proposals after it regains control of all four properties, he said.

Steve Elliott, managing director of real estate for the univer-

Stanford Provost John Etchemendy acknowledges skepticism over Stanford's refusal to reveal its land-use plans.

sity, said he couldn't speculate on what the university might do with its parcels along El Camino Real, but noted that they are commercial properties, and that the prospect of mixed-use development is appealing. He mentioned retail, housing, and medical offices as possibilities.

Mr. Etchemendy said the land would not be used for academic purposes.

Q. Should Stanford open its land to hikers?

Pointing to the goodwill the university has generated by opening trails to "the dish" off Junipero Serra Boulevard, former councilman Steve Schmidt wanted to know why Stanford has resisted extending trails on its land to connect with the

Arastradero Preserve. Doing so would please locals, and wouldn't hamper the university's future plans for the foothills, Mr. Schmidt maintained.

While repeatedly insisting that Stanford has no plans to develop its foothill land, Mr. Etchemendy said the university is reluctant to put a trail through the middle of that land, because there may be some future use it can't foresee. For instance, he said, when Leland Stanford set aside land for the university, he couldn't have anticipated the need for a radio

reflector ("the dish"), or for a linear accelerator.

"It's that kind of uncertainty about the future needs of the university that makes us unwilling to permanently restrain" land use possibilities, he said.

But couldn't the university build trails, then close them when it decided it wanted to use the land for another purpose?

"We would have to view that as a permanent dedication of the land," Mr. Etchemendy said, adding that he feared the possibility of lawsuits. ■

Meeting on raising fees in Atherton

There's no such thing as a free lunch, and in Atherton, there could soon be no such thing as free copies. A special meeting is set for 9 a.m. Thursday, June 25, to discuss changes to the town's master fee schedule, covering everything from building permits to copying documents.

A recently completed cost study by consultants NBS reviewed all of the town's services and calculated the costs

associated with them. The proposed fee schedule would help the town recoup its costs by raising fees on things ranging from building inspections to renting out facilities at Holbrook-Palmer Park.

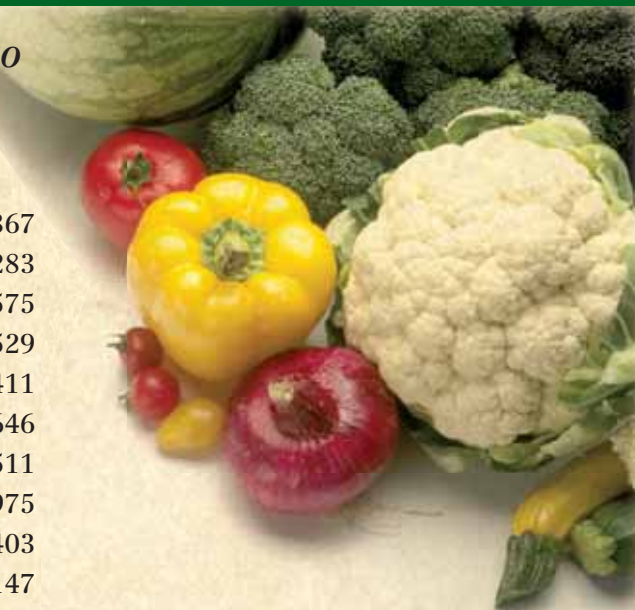
Under the proposal, some fees would stay the same and a few fees would be reduced. A report on the proposed changes to the master fee schedule is online at www.ci.Atherton.ca.us.



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Portola Valley set to act on budget, utility tax, police services

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

Portola Valley residents will have an opportunity to weigh in on several matters set for Town Council action on Wednesday, June 24, including the town's budget for the next 12 months, the contract for police services with the county Sheriff's Office, and a utility users tax election.

The council is set to vote on a budget in which some \$420,000 in cuts have been proposed, includ-

ing freezes to Town Hall salaries and reduced capital spending, in order to balance income and expenses. The council meets at 8 p.m. in the Historic Schoolhouse at 765 Portola Road.

The tight budget highlights the importance of about \$500,000 the town collects each year from the 4.5 percent utility users tax. The tax, which is up for renewal in November, can be renewed with the approval of a simple majority of Portola Valley voters.

Complaints about the utility tax tend to focus on its impact on

residents living on fixed incomes and the fact that it is not deductible.

The new police-services contract with the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office would boost the town's costs by 30 percent over three years. The increases are mainly the result of higher employee benefits packages, Town Manager Angela Howard has said.

The council also makes its fifth attempt to introduce an

update to the noise ordinance. The delays have been due to the council's making changes to the proposed new language that were significant enough to require another public hearing on June 24.

At the June 10 meeting, the council agreed to add a provision covering "special circumstances" that would allow the town to require holders of conditional use permits—typically businesses and institutions—to

adjust a noise source to a level below what is acceptable in most communities. ■

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First swine flu death reported

A middle-aged San Mateo County woman with "underlying health conditions" has become the first county resident to die of swine flu, health officials announced on Monday, June 22.

The county did not make the name of the victim or her town of residence available.

There have been 31 confirmed cases of swine flu in the county — 1,076 statewide, according to the county public health department.

Dr. Scott Morrow, the county's health officer, said the woman's

death is "a sad reminder of the serious threat posed by influenza."

Because the virus remains widespread later in the season than usual, he said, people should continue to take precautions, such as remaining at home when sick, coughing and sneezing into a tissue or your elbow, washing your hands often with soap and water and using a hand sanitizer, and avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

More information is available at smhealth.org/swineflu.

Music in the park, block party in Menlo Park on Wednesday

Santa Cruz Avenue will turn into a pedestrian mall Wednesday, June 24, for the first of two summer block parties.

Local businesses and non-profits will line the street for the block party, scheduled to run from 6 to 9:30 p.m.

The evening will also mark the start of Menlo Park's summer concert series, with a performance by Johnny Cash tribute band Rusty Evans & Ring of Fire, scheduled for 6:30 to 7:30 in Fremont Park, at Santa Cruz Avenue and University Drive.

Several other groups are expected to perform at Santa Cruz Avenue and Crane Street, in this order: Showbiz Dance, United Studios of Self Defense, the Menlo Park Chorus, and the Hillview Jazz Ensemble. The Stanford Band is also expected to make an appearance, according to the Chamber of Commerce.

Kids can eat cotton candy, get fake tattoos, and play on



Rusty Evans & Ring of Fire will cover Johnny Cash at the first of Menlo Park's summer concerts Wednesday, June 24, from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. in Fremont Park.

an inflatable slide, according to the chamber.

The city plans to hold eight concerts during the summer, every Wednesday until Aug. 12 — also the date of the second and final block party.

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Community

NEWS OF LOCAL PEOPLE AND EVENTS IN THE COMMUNITY



Photo by James Tensuan/Special to The Almanac

Luciana Doria walks through the Webb Ranch berry farm, looking for ripe berries. "It's great, it's organic and you know where it's coming from," she says.

Time to pick your own berries at Webb Ranch

By **Alexandra Baum**

Special to The Almanac

Webb Ranch, located at 2720 Alpine Road near Interstate 280, is hosting U-Pick weekends on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 26-28 and July 3-5, from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. each day.

Visitors must first register at the Webb Ranch farmer's market, located off Alpine Road about 200 yards east of I-280.

After paying a \$3 entrance fee, customers can pick a variety of pesticide- and herbicide-free berries for \$3 per pound, according to

a Webb Ranch handout. Children under age 5 and seniors over 65 are admitted free.

This year, the farm is selling Butte blackberries, Ollalie blackberries, raspberries, and loganberries. A strawberry U-Pick is planned for late July.

The farm advises visitors to wear sunscreen, a hat and comfortable shoes when picking berries.

"We love to see the kids come back with bright purple tongues and berries all over their faces," said Gary Webb, who runs the ranch. "We want it to be a fun family experience for everyone."

Many of the people at the U-Pick

events are families who have connections to farming, he said. "Parents often want to expose their children to the outdoors and the lifestyle of their ancestors."

For more information, call the farm at 854-5417; send an e-mail to the4webbz@aol.com; or go online to www.webbranchinc.com. ▀

Relaxing after berry-picking

at Webb Ranch are from left, Jacqueline Galbraith (twirling hay between her fingers), Alexis Galbraith (who digs for the ripest berries), and Anna Micklelesen (who inspects her berry-stained hands).

Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac



Family farming lives on at Webb Ranch

By **Alexandra Baum**

Special to The Almanac

While traditional family-run farms are becoming more and more scarce, Webb Ranch and family farm continues to grow and thrive off Alpine Road, near Interstate 280.

Gary Webb, vice president of Webb Ranch, says his family's farming tradition began in 1880,

"From now on, all of our crops will be organically grown," says Gary Webb, who runs Webb Ranch.



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

when George Webb rode from Texas to California to start his own ranch. In 1922, the family leased

300 acres from Stanford University at the present-day location, 2720 Alpine Road.

Management of the ranch was turned over to Stanley Webb in 1958, according to the Webb Ranch Web site. His son, Gary Webb, took over in 1980 and has remained in charge of management ever since.

Currently, there are about 17 Webb family members living on the ranch. In addition, about 30

farm workers live on-site, said Mr. Webb.

"My family loves living on a ranch," he said. "It is a great setting, and the commute to work is literally 100 feet everyday. It is a beautiful place to come home to each night."

Mr. Webb, who's been married for 26 years, added that the lifestyle is harder on the in-laws because they are less accustomed to the lack of privacy one has on a farm.

In recent years, Mr. Webb insti-

gated various changes to ensure that his farm would remain competitive in the agricultural field.

"From now on, all of our crops will be organically grown," he said. "I also have other local farmers deliver their crops to the ranch, so that I have plenty of food to sell at our farmer's market."

The farmer's market at Webb Ranch, located 200 yards east of I-280, is open seven days a week, and sells produce grown locally, he said. ▀

Town in tough spot, with rising costs, declining income

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

■ PORTOLA VALLEY

It has been “especially difficult” to balance the new budget for the town of Portola Valley, Town Manager Angela Howard told the Town Council during a June 10 review of her proposed budget for the fiscal year that begins July 1.

Ms. Howard’s routine calculations of the town’s operating expenses this time around left a hole of \$420,000, a far cry from the usual \$40,000 or \$50,000, she said in remarks to the council.

Expenses are up, from police services to facility maintenance to increases in the number of town staff, while revenues are down and could go lower — if the state borrows property tax revenues, and/or if voters decide not to renew the town’s utility users tax in November.

The consequences for the 2009-10 fiscal year: a staff salary freeze, no new hiring, and some funding cuts for committees, consultants, services and supplies, Ms. Howard said. Most capital improvements and equipment purchases would be cut except for annual road work and finishing up the new Town Center.

The council will hold a public hearing and possible vote on the budget at its Wednesday, June 24, meeting, which begins at 8 p.m. in the Historic Schoolhouse at 765 Portola Road.

The town anticipates taking in \$5.4 million in revenues and spending a little over \$5.5 million, with \$1.8 million in reserve. (The figures are about 50 percent lower than last year, but a comparison is not meaningful since the still-unfinished complex at Town Center involved millions in donated funds.)

The 2009-10 cuts could go deeper for Portola Valley by about \$208,000 if Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger makes good on an option to help close the state’s \$24 billion budget gap by borrowing up to 8 percent of property tax revenues from cities and towns.

To arrange the loans, the governor would have to declare a fiscal emergency and win the backing of two-thirds of the state legislature.

“It’s going to be ugly, let me tell you,” Ms. Howard said in response to council inquiries as to what such a loan could mean. “We’re going to have to raise revenues somewhere.”

Another worry for Portola Valley, though not for the current budget, is the possibility that residents would vote down a renewal of the 4.5 percent utility users tax in the November election. A simple majority of voters is required for passage. Loss of those revenues would cut 9 percent, or about \$500,000, from the budgets in 2010-11 and beyond, Ms. Howard said.

Expenses up

The San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office is demanding a 30 percent increase from Portola Valley for police services over the next three years, mainly to cover officer benefit packages, Ms. Howard said.

“We are sort of being held hostage,” Councilwoman Maryann Moise Derwin remarked.

‘It’s going to be ugly,’ says town manager, if state borrows from town revenues.

“Well,” added Councilman Steve Toben, “we’re tiny and they’re big and we have no good options.”

The town has one new and

one nearly new soccer field and a new baseball diamond, all covered in real grass and all demanding water and upkeep to cope with the high demand for their use.

Should field-use fees rise? “I don’t want to make it onerous for soccer players,” Councilman Ted Driscoll said. “On the other hand, I don’t want to massively subsidize it.”

The new Town Center complex has lots of new windows to wash, which increases janitorial service costs. New native plants are all around and require extra care until they’re ready to make it on their own. Landscaping is expected to cost \$13,500 for 2008-09, with \$35,000 set aside for 2009-10.

New picnic tables at a price of \$15,000 might have been put off, but their plaques have the names of Town Center donors. “We have to buy the tables,” Ms. Howard said.

Town staff has grown by three full-time positions over the past year: an office assistant, a building and planning assistant, and a coordinator for environmental initiatives.

Although the Town Center generates much of its own electricity with a 70-kilowatt array of solar panels, rising water costs

See **BUDGET**, page 25

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- For Girls: Mondays, July 20 & 27: 6:30-8:30 pm

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Is state's financial stress a lesson for Menlo Park?

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

The state of California got into trouble because it spent its reserves during the boom years, instead of holding onto them, says Menlo Park Councilman Andy Cohen. The city of Menlo Park should take that into consideration when setting a policy on when and how much to draw from its sizable reserves, he says.

Mr. Cohen's remarks were part of a discussion at the June 16 council meeting on the merits and pitfalls of spending from its general operating fund reserve.

Finance Director Carol Augustine has said that establishing a policy will give the council a clearer idea on how much to maintain in its reserve, and on what uses the city could dedicate some of the funds to.

Council members didn't set a policy, saying the city needed more time to work on it.

As of summer 2008, the city had a general fund reserve of \$27.3 million, according to Ms. Augustine — 74 percent of the

\$37 million the city expects in general fund revenues for the 2009-10 fiscal year, which begins July 1. Based partly on the recommendation of a city-hired consultant, Ms. Augustine had recommended that the city establish a range of 43 percent to 55 percent of annual general fund revenues as the target level for the fund reserve.

Councilman Heyward Robinson has said the city could dedicate the excess funds to catching up on maintenance, but added that his instinct is "not to get anywhere close" to drawing down reserves to only 55 percent of annual revenue.

Councilman John Boyle said the policy should allow council members flexibility in making decisions on spending reserves if an "emergency" or one-time opportunity arises.

Mr. Cohen said opportunities to spend money on things that could save the city money in the long run, such as new lighting systems, should be considered before uses that don't provide a financial return.

Council members also alluded



Photo by James Tensuan/Special to The Almanac

Summer days

Kids jump out of bouncy house on a hot summer day at the Burgess Recreation Center on June 18.

to the political reality that the idea of spending reserves tends to raise hackles, and to provide election-season fodder. Councilwoman Kelly Fergusson suggested that the city establish a second purse for budget surpluses, calling it an "opportunity fund," so that council members don't feel prohibited

from spending reserves.

"I am concerned the community is not going to understand this," Mr. Cohen said, arguing that the city needed to do more outreach surrounding the policy.

The council is tentatively scheduled to revisit the issue at its Aug. 25 meeting.

NOTE: A story in the June 17 Almanac stated that as of summer 2008, the city's general fund reserve was \$24.6 million. That figure does not take into account a budget surplus from the 2007-2008 fiscal year, which would bring the total to \$27.3 million. ■

CITY OF MENLO PARK

Summer Concert Series



Date	Band	Genre
6/24*	Rusty Evans & Ring of Fire	Johnny Cash Tribute
7/1	Caravanserai	Santana Tribute
7/8	Livewire	70s, 80s, & Current Rock/R&B
7/15	Rumbache	Cuban/Latin/Jazz
7/22	CHELLE! & Friends	Creole/R&B/Soul
7/29	Cocktail Monkeys	60s-Today Rock & Pop Covers
8/5	Dave & The Diamonds	R&B/Soul/Funk
8/12*	Sun Kings	Beatles Tribute

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Cleanup work under way at SLAC

Cleanup work to remove contaminated soil and debris is under way at SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory.

The Regional Water Quality Control Board of the California Environmental Protection Agency recently released the fourth in a series of "fact sheets" to inform the community about the work at SLAC, located on Sand Hill Road in Menlo Park. Soil containing organic and metal contaminants will be excavated and transported to off-site commercial landfills, the board said in the "fact sheet."

While the contamination does not pose a risk to nearby residents or SLAC workers, it could pose a "marginal risk" if the land is used for a different purpose in the future, according to the board.

Work on the site is scheduled to be completed in late 2009, though further remediation may be required in years to come.

The contaminants, which include PBCs and TPH, were released into the soil when the site was used for industrial operations, before its current configuration, the board said.

For more information, contact Erich Simon at 510-622-2355, or via e-mail at ersimon@waterboards.ca.gov.

BUDGET

continued from page 25

are likely to offset any savings, Ms. Howard said.

When planning for the new Town Center complex began in 2003-04, the town's operating budget was \$2.6 million, she said. It's grown 38 percent, to \$3.6 million, for 2009-10.

Revenues down

Property tax revenues aren't expected to drop, but the budget shows them not rising much either, about 2 percent.

The town's investments are shown earning 24 percent less interest than previously, but the good news is that the reserve itself is intact, Ms. Howard said.

The town expected to earn \$100,000 in 2008-09 in transfer taxes, revenues that come to the town when a property changes hands, but it's been adjusted down to \$31,500, with \$40,000 budgeted for 2009-10.

Likewise, revenues from building permits, originally set at \$400,000, is now expected to be \$210,500, with \$221,500 for next fiscal year. The fee structure is 10 years old and needs an analysis as to the appropriate fee levels, Ms. Howard said. ■

Can't park in front of your own home?

■ New resident complains about lack of notice.

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

One Menlo Park resident received a rude surprise recently, when she was slapped with a \$45 ticket for parking in front of her apartment overnight.

Hollis Stahl, who moved from Millbrae in November 2008, said she wasn't aware of the city's ban on overnight parking until she received the ticket in April. She had parked on the street when she found another car blocking the driveway to her garage.

Now, she is asking the city to better notice the policy, which prohibits residents from parking overnight on residential streets between the hours of 2 a.m. and 5 a.m.

"It's not as if I'm asking for bill-

boards to be taken out, just little teeny signs" alerting people that they'll get a ticket for parking overnight, said Ms. Stahl, who sent an e-mail to the City Council complaining about the lack of notice. "Unless someone has taken a psychic ability 101 class, how would somebody who's not a resident know it's not OK to park there?" she asked.

According to City Attorney Bill McClure, the city isn't required to post signs on every street, because the ordinance is city-wide. All the city's landlords are aware of the policy, he said, adding that the city mails a warning

to people the first time police find a car parked overnight, rather than issuing a ticket.

Ms. Stahl said that her landlord didn't tell her about the policy, that she never received the warning, and didn't even get a citation on her windshield. The only notification she received was the DMV's second "pay now"

missive, though she said she registered with the DMV at her new address when she moved.

The ordinance was enacted in 1963, "has been upheld by the courts, (and by) several different majority votes of city residents," according to the city's Web site. According to the police department, the policy allows police to

check suspicious vehicles, and makes the city "cleaner" and "better-looking."

Mr. McClure added that every time the issue comes up, there's strong community support for maintaining the policy.

But to Ms. Stahl, the justification that streets look better without cars sounds "very Menlo Park."

"If it's to prevent congestion, okay," she said. "If it's for security reasons, that's understandable. If it's because they think it looks bad ... that's ridiculous."

"It's a charming city, but this one thing just seems really ridiculous."

Ms. Stahl said that Councilman John Boyle responded immediately to her e-mail, but that she has yet to hear from a city staff member.

Residents can purchase temporary overnight parking permits through the police department's Web site: www.menloparkpolice.org. ■

'It's a charming city, but this one thing just seems really ridiculous.'

HOLLIS STAHL,
RESIDENT OF MENLO PARK

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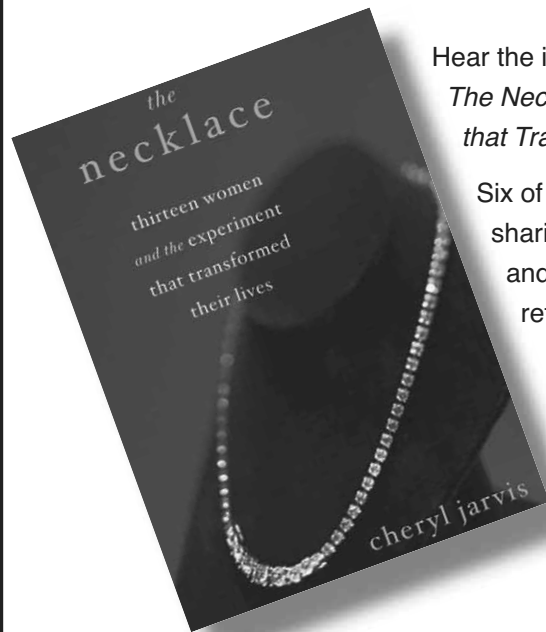
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Photo by Sue Olson, Menlo Park resident

M-A Little League AAA champion Bulls. Back row, from left, players John-Paul Gray, Griffin Kardos, Johnny Hamren, Josh Olson, Ian Rosenfeld. Front row, from left, players John Crevelt, Ryu Frank, Jake Simon, Owen Grierson, Kris Liang. Not pictured: Graham Hughes and Jack Wolf. Coaches: Paul Gray and John Crevelt. Picture Taken: June 7.

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Menlo-Atherton Little League: Bulls wins AAA Division

This story was submitted by Paul Gray, a Menlo Park resident and coach of the Bulls.

The Bulls defeated the Scappers, 14-1, on June 7 to secure the 2009 Menlo-Atherton Little League AAA championship at Tom Harrison Field in Menlo Park.

The evenly matched teams entered the double-elimination playoff tournament as the No. 1 seed Bulls and the No. 3 seed Scappers. The Bulls narrowly edged the Scappers in both of their regular season match-ups, 10-9 and 17-14.

Leading up to the championship game, the teams had met twice in the tournament. The Scappers captured the winner's bracket in an impressive 14-9 victory on June 2. After clawing their way through the loser's bracket, the Bulls prevailed 14-9 against the Scappers on June 6, to force a do-or-die finale.

In the championship game, the Bulls jumped out to an early 4-0 lead in the first inning. Evan King, pitching for the Scappers, settled down and pitched strong in the second and third innings. Kris Liang, for the Bulls, was equally impressive.

Each team eked out a single run in the third and the score remained 5-1 until the top of the sixth. Walks and timely hit-

ting enabled the Bulls to break open the game with 9 runs. Pitcher Ryu Frank closed out the bottom of the inning without allowing a run, giving the Bulls the victory.

For the Bulls, Frank and Kris Liang combined to allow just one run, and were backed by defensive plays from Ian Rosenfeld at catcher, Josh Olson on a line drive at third, and John-Paul Gray on a hustle foul-ball catch at first.

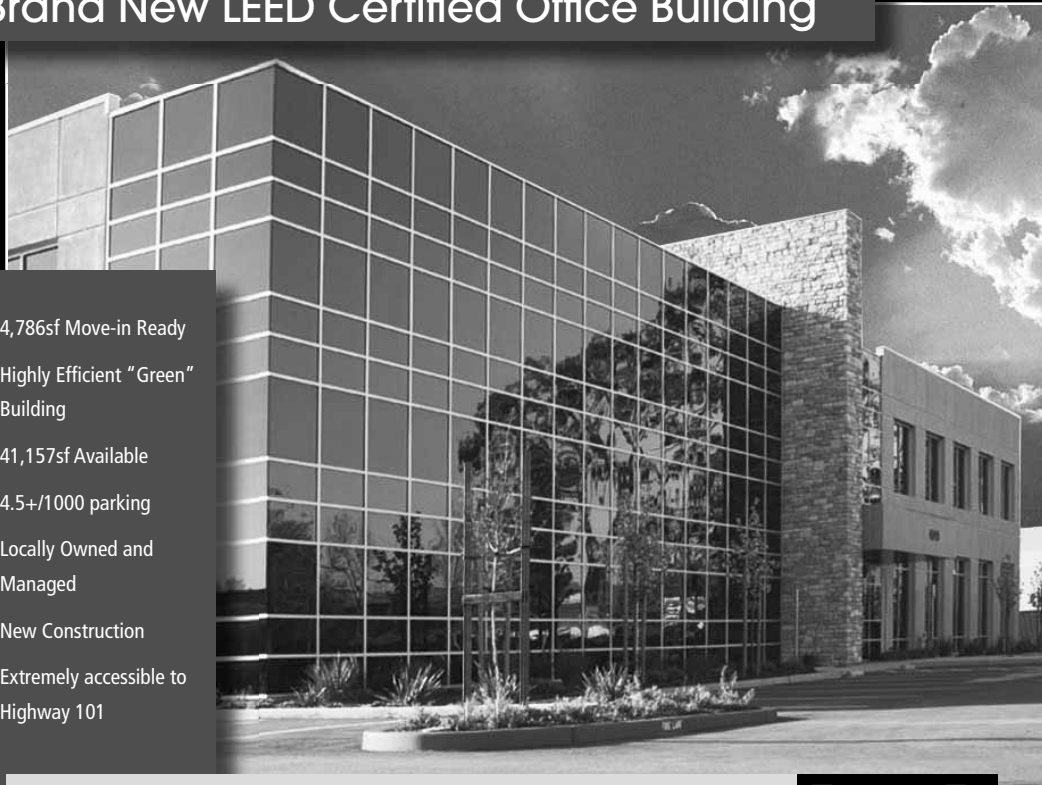
Offensive stars for the Bulls were Griffin Kardos (3 hits, 4 RBIs, and 2 runs scored), John Crevelt (2 hits, 2 RBIs, 1 run), Ryu Frank (2 hits, 1 RBI, 1 run), Johnny Hamren (1 hit, 2 RBIs, 1 run), and Josh Olson (2 RBIs, 2 runs).

For the Scappers, King and Larson pitched well early, but ran out of pitches, giving way to less experienced pitchers. Defensively Marco Papadoyannis had several throw-outs from his backstop position and Evan King made a bang-bang catch on a screaming line drive in the sixth.

"These two teams epitomize Little League baseball," said Bulls Coach John Crevelt. "It is a major achievement to win two games in one weekend against such a talented Scappers' team and coaching staff."

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M-A Little League Majors Division champs. Back row, from left, Coach Mike Kardos, Noah Schneider, Reed Fratt, Jackson Salabert, Holden Kardos, Samson Dark, and Coach Ken Salabert. Front row, from left, Brandon Fischer, Jack Gray, Zach Novak, Austin Wilson, Rio Zelaya, Clay Prosser and Cole Hagerman.

Mike's Cafe wins M-A Majors Division

This story was submitted by Coach Mike Kardos.

Mike's Cafe won a hard-fought game to edge Draeger's 11-10 and capture the 2009 Menlo-Atherton Little League Majors championship on June 7 at Tom Harrison Field in Menlo Park.

The teams entered the double-elimination playoff tournament as the No. 1 seed (Draeger's) and No. 2 seed (Mike's Cafe) and had split their four regular season matchups at two games apiece.

Leading up to the championship game, the teams had met twice in the tournament: Mike's Cafe captured the winner's bracket in convincing fashion (18-2 v. Draeger's, May 30); then, after securing the loser's bracket, Draeger's turned in an equally impressive performance (14-5 v. Mike's Cafe, June 6) to force the final game.

In the rubber match, pitchers from both sides struggled to find the strike zone and the teams were deadlocked at 5-5 after three innings.

In the bottom of the fourth, Gunnar Jongbloed walked for Draeger's and later scored on a double by Michael Maineiro to make it 6-5 Draeger's.

In the top of the fifth, Mike's

Cafe capitalized on three walks when Brandon Fischer hit a grand-slam home run to make give Mike's Cafe the lead, 9-6.

Draeger's was un-phased in the bottom of the inning and answered with four runs of its own, including an RBI single by Jessica Koenig and a two-run single by Ben Boggs, to take a 10-9 lead after five.

In the top of the sixth, Cole Hagerman singled early for Mike's Cafe and found himself on third base with two outs and down a run. With the batter swinging on a pitch in the dirt, the ball skipped by the catcher allowing Hagerman to score, tying the game at 10-10.

Jack Gray took the mound for Mike's Cafe in the bottom of the sixth and the defense held the score and forced an extra inning.

In the top of the seventh, Gray led off with a double and moved to third on a sacrifice fly by Holden Kardos to left field. With one out, Samson Dark smashed a line drive to left, scoring Gray and putting Mike's Cafe up 11-10.

Mason Randall, Draeger's No. 2 batter, led off in the bottom of the inning with a walk. Randall moved to second on a towering sacrifice fly by Andrew Daschbach, caught

by Hagerman in right field, and then moved to third on the same play following an overthrown relay to the infield. The next batter hit a grounder up the first-base line, allowing Jackson Salabert to field the ball, tag out the runner and hold Randall at third.

With two out and the count at 2-2, Gray coaxed a fly ball to shallow left-center field, which was caught by Kardos to seal the win for Mike's Cafe.

Riley Haught, Daschbach and Randall each scored two runs for Draeger's and Koenig was 2-4 with 3 RBIs and a run scored.

For Mike's Cafe, Gray was the winning pitcher (no runs in two innings pitched) and scored two runs, including the game-winner in the seventh. Dark scored three runs and Fischer finished the day with six RBIs.

"It was an incredible, exciting game with both teams battling back and forth," said Mike's Cafe coach Mike Kardos. "Many of our games this year were come-from-behind wins, which earned us a reputation as the 'Comeback Kids.' So, we knew we were capable of battling back and that same spirit showed again today. I'm very proud of all the players and the heart they showed."

Men's volleyball: Kings Mountain Fog teams win gold

The Kings Mountain Fog men's volleyball team defeated the defending champions, Sao Paulo Masters from Brazil, in the men's 55 and over division to win gold at the recent U.S. open volleyball tournament, held in Minneapolis May 23-30.

The Kings Mountain Fog 50s team also won gold and the Fog 60s won silver at the tournament, organized by USA Volleyball (usavolleyball.org). More than 400 team competed in about 20 divisions, said Linda Grazier, a spokesperson for the Fog teams.

Twenty teams competed in the 55s division, two from Brazil and

one from Venezuela, giving the tournament "an international flavor," said Greg Close of the Kings Mountain Fog.

The Kings Mountain Fog 55s team includes coach and libero Greg Close, formerly of Kings Mountain and now living in Princeville, Hawaii; and outside hitter Frank Fredericksen of Menlo Park.

Mike Graham, a setter from Redwood City, was selected to the all-tournament 55s team.

The Kings Mountain Fog was formed 30 years ago with players from Kings Mountain, near Woodside. Greg Close is the only remain-

ing original member. Both he and his wife Linda Grazier lived on Kings Mountain for 34 years, and currently live in Princeville, Hawaii.

Another player on the team, Kirk Anderson, taught volleyball classes at Burgess Gym in Menlo Park, and coached the Menlo-Atherton High School girls volleyball team for many years.

Anderson also announces Stanford volleyball on Comcast and local cable. He currently runs the Industrial Volleyball League throughout the Peninsula. Many of the Fog members play at Burgess Gym on Thursday night.



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In order to get the full benefit from prescription lenses, eyeglass frames must fit properly. For a lens prescription to work as intended, the optical center of the lens should sit directly in front of the pupil. If the frame slides down the nose, the optical center of the lens is not properly aligned with the eye. This improper positioning, which robs the wearer of the full vision-correcting potential of his or her eyeglasses, may result from loose hinges, bent frames, or loose

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P.S. The three measurements required for the proper fit are bridge width, frame width, and temple length.

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

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT 500 LAUREL STREET MENLO PARK, CA 94025

NOTICE IS GIVEN that the District Board of the West Bay Sanitary District will conduct a public hearing on Wednesday, July 22, 2009, in conjunction with the regularly scheduled meeting, which commences at 7:30 p.m. The meeting will be held in the District's offices at 500 Laurel Street, Menlo Park.

The purpose of this Public Hearing is to consider a resolution of intention to Annex Certain Territory in Portola Valley (12 Redberry Ridge - APN 080-241-180) to the West Bay Sanitary District On-Site Wastewater Disposal Zone. The resolution is available for review at the District's offices, Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

At the Public Hearing, any interested person may address the District Board. Written comments may be submitted at or before the Public Hearing by addressing them to the District Board at the address indicated above.

Dated: May 27, 2009

Vivian Housen, Interim District Manager

Pursuant to Government Code 6066, this notice will be published in The Almanac on June 17, 2009 and June 24, 2009.



TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY

NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING ON REQUEST FOR AMENDMENT TO CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

THIS IS TO NOTIFY YOU that an application for an amendment to Conditional Use Permit (File X7D-5) has been submitted for review by the Town of Portola Valley Planning Commission. The application involves amendment to the Use Permit to allow for additions and renovations of Fire Station No. 8. The property is owned by Woodside Fire Protection District, and is identified as, 135 Portola Road, Portola Valley, CA, APN: 079-171-220

The Planning Commission public hearing is scheduled to review the subject Conditional Use Permit Amendment on **Wednesday, July 1, 2009 at 7:30 p.m.**, in the Town Council Chambers, (Historic Schoolhouse), 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, California.

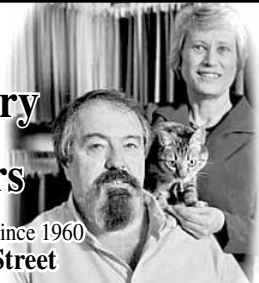
Information pertaining to the proposal may be viewed at Town Hall Building and Planning Department, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. All interested persons are invited to appear before the Planning Commission to be heard at the time and place herein above mentioned.

Dated: June 18, 2009

Leslie A. Lambert
Planning Manager

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NOTICE OF GENERAL MUNICIPAL ELECTION

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a General Municipal Election will be held in the Town of Portola Valley on Tuesday, November 3, 2009, for the following officers:

A member of the Town Council to fill the office now held by Maryann Moise Derwin is for a full term of four years;

A member of the Town Council to fill the office now held by Edward C. "Ted" Driscoll for a full term of four years;

A member of the Town Council to fill the office now held by Richard T. Merk for a full term of four years; and

If no one or only one person is nominated for an elective office, appointment to the elective office may be made as prescribed by Section 10229, Elections Code of the State of California.

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

Sharon Hanlon
Clerk of the Town of Portola Valley

June 12, 2009

James Joseph Arnstein

Management consultant
and musician

A celebration of the life of James Joseph Arnstein will be held at 3 p.m. Saturday, June 27, at the Elks Lodge, 2255 Santa Clara Ave. in Alameda. Mr. Arnstein, who grew up in Atherton, died June 9 at his home in Alameda. He was 50.



James Arnstein

A third-generation California, Mr. Arnstein was born in Redwood City and graduated from Woodside High School in 1977. He received a degree in economics from UC Berkeley in 1981. At Berkeley, he was president of Phi Delta Theta fraternity and played keyboard in a campus rock band.

After serving as a loan officer at Wells Fargo Bank in Marin County and San Francisco, he earned an MBA at Columbia Business School in New York City. Upon graduation, he joined Coopers & Lybrand, where he served as a manager in New York and San Francisco.

He formed Arnstein Consulting in 1995, where he worked with a variety of businesses. His areas of expertise were public power, communications, and waste management utilities, say family members.

Mr. Arnstein was a pianist and keyboard player, playing as a soloist and also leading small ensembles. Groups he performed with in the Bay Area include: the Back Nine Blues Band, Pillar of Fire, Forest Hill Underground, Jason Davis and the Jazz Pirates, and the Tombshakers. Most recently, he performed at the Socha Cafe and the Revolution Cafe in San Francisco.

A lover of sports, Mr. Arnstein was an avid golfer and skier. He grew up playing at the Stanford Golf Course with his father, the late Peter Arnstein, and his two brothers.

One of his greatest pleasures was watching his two sons

SPITZ-BLUM

continued from page 19

tion, and warm and considerate hospitality, says Ms. Duhl,

Ms. Spitz-Blum is survived by a son, John Shippee of Atlanta; a daughter, Lisa Duhl of Berkeley; one grandchild; and two great-grandchildren.

The family suggests donations to the Eva M. Spitz Blum Family Legacy Fund of the Archives of the History of American Psychology, c/o The University of Akron Foundation, Akron, Ohio, 44325-2603.

OBITUARIES

perform in athletic events and musical performances, say family members. He volunteered in the Alameda Little League and Babe Ruth baseball leagues (where his sons played), serving as an umpire and assistant coach.

Mr. Arnstein is survived by his sons, Daniel and Matthew, of Alameda; their mother, Stacey Perkins; his mother, Marianne, of Atherton; and brothers John of Encino and Peter of Lake Bluff, Illinois.

Donations may be made to the Alameda Education Foundation, (www.AlamedaEducationFoundation.org), 510-748-4008; Jewish Family and Children's Services of San Francisco (www.jfcs.org), 415-449-1206; or a favorite charity.

Barbara Gorman

Longtime Woodside resident

A celebration of the life of Barbara L. Gorman will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday, July 11, at Woodside Village Church, 3154 Woodside Road in Woodside. Ms. Gorman died June 4 at the age of 85.

Born in San Francisco, Ms. Gorman danced with the O'Neill Kiddies dance group as a child. After the family moved to Burlingame, she attended local schools and graduated in 1941 from Burlingame High School, where she was president of the Association of Girl Students. She graduated from the Stanford School of Nursing in 1946. In 1945 she married Ernest J. Gorman Jr.

After living in Redwood City, the Gormans moved to Woodside in 1955. Ms. Gorman was active in the Woodside Hills Garden Club, was a Girl Scout leader, and volunteered for Coyote Point Museum, Allied Arts Guild, Red Cross, American Cancer Society, Friends of St. Pius Church, Friends of Woodside Village Church, and, most recently, St. Francis Center of Redwood City.

Ms. Gorman is survived by her son, Jim Gorman; daughters Kate Parker and Trish Gorman; three grandchildren; and a great-grandson. Her many friends include Jacqueline Murphy and George Cator. Her husband, Dr. Ernest J. Gorman Jr., died in 1989.

Donations may be made to a favorite charity or Mission Hospice, San Mateo.

Mary Louise "Maggie" Arnold

Portola Valley resident

Following a long illness, Mary Louise "Maggie" Arnold died June 3 at her home in Portola

Valley, just two weeks after the death of her husband, Richard, on May 17. She was 85.

Born Mary Louise Blair in Memphis, Tennessee, she lived in the Philippines and Colorado, where her father was an Army colonel. She later lived with her mother and stepfather in Chicago, Arkansas, and Ross.

She attended the Katherine Branson School in Ross, graduating with honors in English in 1941. In 1945 she graduated from Stanford University, where she met her future husband, Richard. They were married in 1946.

The Arnolds shared a love of literature, music and art. They were married for 63 years and were never separated, except during World War II, say family members.

Ms. Arnold is survived by her son, William Arnold of Menlo Park; a brother, William Blair of Huntington Beach; and a half-brother, Frank Hawkinson of Forks, Pennsylvania.

Anne Marie Kennelly

Hewlett Packard attorney

Anne Marie Gilles Kennelly, the first woman lawyer hired by Hewlett Packard Corp., died June 8 of pancreatic cancer, surrounded by family and friends, at her home in Menlo Park. She was 60.

One of six women in her class, she graduated from the University of San Francisco Law School in 1972. She spent 37 years with Hewlett Packard, working as corporate counsel up to a few months before her death. Her entire legal career was spent at Hewlett Packard, where she handled corporate credit structuring and collection, and had extensive international legal experience.

Ms. Kennelly graduated from the Convent of the Sacred Heart (now Sacred Heart Preparatory) and did undergraduate work at Santa Clara and Stanford universities. She enjoyed travel, golf and gardening, read voraciously, and graciously entertained family and friends, say family members. Her faith was very strong and she took great pleasure in participating in the choir and as a lector at St. Raymond Catholic Church in Menlo Park, they say. In her final days, the choir came to her bedside to perform her favorite songs.

Ms. Kennelly is survived by her husband, Dennis Kennelly of Menlo Park; daughters Margaret Hazelrig and Maureen Kennelly of San Francisco; mother Margaret Gilles of Palo Alto; sisters Paula Maurano of Menlo Park, Teresa O'Rourke of

See OBITUARIES, next page

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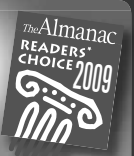
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In this year's Readers' Choice, we salute the Menlo Park superheroes of the local economy: the best businesses and hot spots in or around town. Click that mighty mouse and salute 2009's incredible!

Vote for your SuperHeroes at www.TheAlmanacOnline.com

—Vote for 2009's Incredibles by July 12th

■ 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.

MENLO PARK

Theft reports:

- Pekinese dog stolen, intersection of Gilbert Ave. and Menalto Ave., June 12.
- Global positioning device stolen from vehicle, 300 block of Marmona Drive, June 16.

Residential burglary reports:

- Entry through unlocked rear window and Apple iPod and video games stolen, 1300 block of Hollyburne Ave., June 12.
- Door and lock broken but nothing missing, 1900 block of Menalto Ave., June 15.

Commercial burglary reports:

- Coin bank containing \$50 and other items stolen from office, 200 block of Oak Grove Ave., June 17.
- Daniel E. Alvarez, 19, of Redwood City arrested on burglary charges involving stolen beer, Safeway at 525 El Camino Real, June 18.
- **Auto burglary report:** Laptop computer, camera and other items stolen, 1300 block of Crane St., June 14.

Stolen vehicle report: Stolen white 2009 Lexus RX400H with keys left in vehicle overnight, 300 block of McHenry Drive, June 16.

Fraud reports:

- Loss estimated at \$2,000 through unauthorized access to account, 1500 block of El Camino Real, June 17.
- Check fraud and loss estimated at \$800, 700 block of Ivy Drive, June 17.

Child Protective Services report:

Main police station at 701 Laurel St., June 14.

Spousal abuse report: 300 block of Terminal Ave., June 15.

Unlawful sexual intercourse report:

Two juveniles charged with misdemeanor in consensual intercourse incident in which more than three years separated the participants, main police station at 701 Laurel St., June 18.

Indecent exposure report: Man in vehicle exposed himself to woman, 900 block of San Mateo Drive, June 18.

PORTOLA VALLEY

Fraud report: Check written to closed account, 4400 block of Alpine Road, June 8.

Construction yet to begin on substation

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

Construction has yet to begin on a long-awaited police substation in Menlo Park's Belle Haven neighborhood.

The police department held a groundbreaking ceremony for the substation in February 2008, with the building expected to be ready by October 2008.

But work halted when the developer who owns the land discovered a high-voltage power line running underneath the property. The developer is still working to get PG&E to move

the line, according to city officials.

"It's really frustrating, but we're trying to get it going," said City Manager Glen Rojas in an interview. "It's needed in a big way. I think we're seeing some movement."

City Attorney Bill McClure sent a letter to PG&E that "ramped up the pressure" on the power company, he said, adding that he thinks the issue is close to a resolution.

Lisa Ekers, the city's engineering services manager, said she isn't aware of a new expected date of completion. The city

would own part of the building, but not the land, she said — as if it were buying a condominium.

The new center will function as a satellite to the main police station, as well as a service center for the community, according to the city. Residents will be able to obtain police reports, parking permits, pay water bills, and receive other useful information from the center.

The building will replace an existing police substation at Newbridge Street and Willow Road. It will be more than three times larger than the current substation. ■

OBITUARIES

from previous page

San Ramon, Kathleen Gilles of Menlo Park; and brother Mark Gilles of Menlo Park.

Services were held June 12 at St. Raymond Catholic Church

with interment at Holy Cross Cemetery.

Donations in Ms. Kennelly's name may be made to the American Cancer Society or the Religious of the Sacred Heart, Oakwood Community, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

BIRTHS

Atherton

■ Lisa and Yehiel Biton, a daughter, May 22, Sequoia Hospital.

Menlo Park

■ Alicia and Darren Phelan, a son, June 3, Sequoia Hospital.

■ Sarah McGill and Diego Jimenez, a son, June 3, Sequoia Hospital.

Woodside

■ Tara Crowder and Knut Skarpaas VIII, a son, Knut IX, March 11, at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford.

■ Janet and Alex Alviar, twin sons, May 22, Sequoia Hospital.

La Honda

■ Laura and Scott Hayes, a son, May 15, Sequoia Hospital.





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The Almanac, established in September, 1965, is delivered each week to residents of Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside and adjacent unincorporated areas of southern San Mateo County. The Almanac is qualified by decree of the Superior Court of San Mateo County to publish public notices of a governmental and legal nature, as stated in Decree No. 147530, issued November 9, 1969.

Voluntary subscriptions are available for delivery to homes in Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside at \$30 per year or \$50 for 2 years. Subscriptions by businesses or residents outside the area are \$50 for one year and \$80 for two years.



WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

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

TOWN SQUARE FORUM

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

EMAIL your views to:

letters@almanacnews.com 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.

What a difference a county line makes

After viewing Stanford's generous \$124 million-plus offer to Palo Alto for new bike lanes, an improved shuttle service and affordable housing in return for approval of its \$3.5 billion hospital expansion project, Menlo Park officials might be saying, "What's in it for us?"

Stanford made the extraordinary offer to Palo Alto last week as it cranked up its drive to win approval to add about 250 hospital rooms and one million square feet of space at Stanford Hospital and Clinics and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital on Sand Hill Road. The entire project is in Santa Clara County, just a stone's throw across San Francisco

Creek from San Mateo County and Menlo Park.

But even though many of its homes and streets are closer to Stanford than most Palo Alto neighborhoods, Menlo Park is not likely to receive a dime of impact money from the hospital project for a simple reason: it has absolutely no authority over the hospital sites, which are located within the Palo Alto city limits.

Despite their bad geographic luck, Menlo Park city officials have argued for years that Stanford development projects, particularly those on the north side of the campus near the creek, are just as likely to create an impact in Menlo Park as Palo Alto. Both cities will be eager to view an environmental impact report to be issued later this year that will include specific detail on the added car trips expected as a result of the project.

EDITORIAL
The opinion of The Almanac

Cyclists harassed on Kings Mountain Road

Editor:

What I thought might be a great challenging bicycle ride with a few of my friends up Kings Mountain Road a few weeks ago was marred by some extremely hostile car drivers I can only describe as needing to take a course in anger management.

These wild ones swerved around us while we were headed down the hill, all the while sticking their middle fingers at us out their window or blaring their horn at us.

This is inexcusable behavior. Share the road please.

Celia Boyle
Palo Alto

Columnist strikes nerve in letter to her daughter

Editor:

I love Barbara Wood's writing. This one made me cry — not just once — but for a second time when I read it aloud to my husband. He cried too.

Though the specifics may be different for each one of us, I think every child needs to hear this kind of message from parents, not to speak of the child in all of us who

waits inside for confirmation. It is so essential to be seen and loved for who we are.

Perhaps this "Letter to my Daughter" could be more widely published to reinforce those parents and teachers who are trying in the face of student desperation to let their kids know they don't have to succeed on the culture's terms — rather, that it's more than enough to be themselves.

Anne Hillman
Portola Valley

We don't think there is any doubt that the project will increase traffic on many West Menlo Park streets, and it is just as likely that the EIR's conclusions will bring howls of protest from West Menlo residents who say they have enough traffic already.

Another question that could come up is where the 2,300 new hospital workers will find housing. Although Stanford has offered to donate \$23 million to Palo Alto for affordable housing, we expect many of the new workers will include Menlo Park in their search for new homes, which is likely to drive up rents and housing prices in some areas. And even though \$23 million is a lot of money, Palo Alto officials have asked Stanford for much more — to build 594 units of housing to make up part of the increase in the jobs/housing imbalance that will be caused by the hospital job.

There are few, if any, provisions in the law that would compel Stanford to reimburse a neighboring, out of county, community for impacts caused by development on its own property. In other words, Menlo Park should not expect a check from Stanford to ameliorate the hospital expansions anytime soon.

Instead, we expect local residents, and perhaps some City Council members, to grumble about deteriorating traffic conditions expected from the hospital expansion, and perhaps the impact of Stanford's new employees on the local housing market. And yes, there may be some city officials who quietly envy Palo Alto's \$124 million windfall, which jumps to \$142 million when all building and impact fees are included. And some might even mutter that old real estate mantra: location, location, location.



Portola Valley Archives

Our Regional Heritage

This attractive wedding party lined up for a photo on Oct. 23, 1915. The bride is Evelyn Cunningham, third from left, who married Joseph Donohoe III. Other members of the bridal group are, from left, Evelyn Barron, Christine Donohoe, maid of honor Genevieve Cunningham, Elizabeth Cunningham, and Katherine Donohoe.

City should stay away from its reserve fund

Editor:

In the never-ending quest for funds, the Menlo Park City Council recently spent 90 minutes discussing possible uses and minimum amounts needed in the city's reserve fund.

Presently the fund is at 70 percent of the city's current budget, about \$26.6 million. A hired

consultant concluded that the city could get by with a target as low as 43 percent, which would be \$16 million. If adopted as a policy, this could free up around \$10 million for council to spend on other items.

Traditionally the Menlo Park councils have been very conservative, which is why the city possesses a AAA bond rating. The present council has already tapped the

See **LETTERS**, next page

LETTERS

reserve fund for over \$9 million to cover funding employee benefits. The use of the reserve fund for that purpose was appropriate.

Some council members feel that the reserve fund is too large and can be tapped for other purposes. Mayor Heyward Robinson responded to my earlier statement that “usage of this fund should be reserved for emergencies,” stating “he thought it might well be used for other purposes.” Member Kelly Fergusson some time ago offered that she thought the reserve should be about 1 year’s revenues, about \$37 million today.

Led by member Andy Cohen and supported by John Boyle, the council took no action on this policy and decided to get some input from the finance committee. Mr. Cohen noted that no public outreach on this subject had been done. Putting off action seemed very appropriate. I would hope the public would voice their opinions.

Morris Brown

Stone Pine Lane, Menlo Park

Independent analysis needed of library plan

Editor:

The transaction, or lack of one, by the Atherton Library to either renovate, enlarge, move or acquire other property or land should be based solely on the willingness of the buyer, the Atherton Library, and not upon the eagerness or lack of full and complete disclosure of any seller, be it the Atherton Library or any other selling entity.

Most buyers and sellers in either a commercial or a residential real estate transaction rely upon an independent property evaluation or financial appraisal of any potential acquisition.

So this begs the question: What is the independent evaluation of the Town Council space? Let’s all see the independent figures please.

Mary Perkins

Mountain Home Road, Woodside

Caltrain should carry more bikes on board

Editor:

Caltrain was recently awarded \$9 million in stimulus funds for capital expenditure on track, bridge, signal, and bicycle improvements.

Given Caltrain’s current fiscal emergency, the funds are best spent in a manner that quickly generates more operating income. The money for bicycle improvements should be used to increase onboard bike capacity to eliminate bumping, so cyclists who have abandoned Caltrain can return and new cyclists can come aboard, resulting in more passengers and increased farebox revenue for Caltrain.

Caltrain is currently implementing a modest increase in bike capacity, after which there still will be inconsistent service with 40, 48, or 80 bikes per train. Inconsistent service drives away paying passengers, something Caltrain cannot afford in light of its declining general ridership.

The stimulus funds should be used to replace empty seats with bike racks, so that all trains carry 80 bikes to eliminate bumping, address latent demand, and increase Caltrain’s revenue stream. Increasing onboard bike capacity is a win-win for Caltrain customers and Caltrain’s bottom line.

Shirley Johnson

San Francisco

Perspective on downtown planning was helpful

Editor:

Hooray for your journalist Sean Howell and The Almanac’s excellent coverage of Menlo Park’s downtown planning in last week’s edition. Well done.

As an outsider from the local political contests over the years, I have never understood why our wonderful town is so divided when it comes to planning for the inevitable growth of the Peninsula and the sensible modernization of Menlo Park. Your article explained so much about the roots of that division, which has held us back from our potential.

I believe, and I believe so do a majority of my neighbors, that when we cast our ballots for city council, we tend to support the more centrist candidates and those who have the most common-sense platform.

I just don’t comprehend the fear of change of the no-growth voter. Personally, over the years I have grown to trust my city, its leaders, my fellow citizens, and our strong city staff. In fact, I think this is the wisest five-some I’ve seen on the council in years.

Regarding visioning for the future, what the Almanac article did for us all was to explain the historical hurdles of past planning efforts. Since so much has changed since the 1970s and the booming 1990s, it really is time to move forward. We are an upscale town like our neighbor Palo Alto, with an equally smart citizenry. Our downtown main-street area will grow just as nicely as theirs has.

The current downtown visioning process has been excellent so far, carefully listening to the voices of the moderate middle, and of the city council and city commissioners. The resulting standards to guide development on El Camino Real and downtown will sustain our quality of life, our local economy, and our classy town. It’s time to have faith in ourselves as a city.

Clem Molony

Menalto Avenue, Menlo Park
(Willows resident for 40 years)



Computer illustration from California High Speed Rail Authority

High-speed rail’s hidden partnership

By Martin Engel

In past discussions about high-speed rail, I’ve talked about various “elephants in the room,” by which I mean highly obvious and consequential factors that have received little or no attention. Here’s another one.

We all know that there is an Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (PCJPB) that operates Caltrain, and the California High Speed Rail Authority. In that agreement, there is — in effect — a business deal.

The deal states that the rail authority will provide the funding and construction of all grade separations, electrification, signaling hardware and some other stuff. The authority projects costs for the rail corridor to be \$4.2 billion. The joint powers board, in turn, will provide the rail corridor itself as its part of the bargain.

Although the joint powers board claims in this MOU that they are the “sole owner” of the corridor, elsewhere they agree that they are “stewards.” And that, as you will see, is a far more appropriate term.

SamTrans purchased the rail corridor from Southern Pacific, precursor to Union Pacific. At that time, SamTrans was the only functioning organization in San Mateo County with authority to sign such a purchase. That is, the rail corridor transferred from private to public hands.

The funding for this deal came from the three Peninsula counties. Our tax dollars at work. Therefore, the Caltrain corridor actually belongs to the citizens and taxpayers of the three counties. As a consequence of the sale of the corridor, the Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board was created to administer the rail corridor and what came to be called Caltrain, the rail commuter service.

Administer is not the same as ownership. All of which is to say, the JPB represents all of us in administering this public rail corridor. And the JPB is no more the owner of the rail corridor than the National Park Service owns our National Parks. Both have decision-making powers but cannot claim “ownership.”

A bad business deal

Put these two situations together — we, the public, own the rail corridor and we got a bad deal — and we discover that Peninsula taxpayers are about to get the short end of a very long stick. Let me explain.



The Caltrain Strategic Plan 2025, with their expectations of high-speed rail development investments on the corridor, might lead one to believe that Caltrain would be receiving rent or lease fees from the high-speed rail authority in payment for sharing the use of the corridor. Don’t we charge grazing fees to ranchers who feed their cattle on federal public lands?

But that’s not what is happening here. An inter-city rail operator is going to use our rail corridor after making self-serving extensive improvements in order

to operate this high-speed rail system at a profit. The high-speed rail authority will pay for those improvements, but then, when that investment has amortized, their use of the rail corridor will be free in perpetuity.

Caltrain representatives have told me that they are the “hosts” of this partnership and high-speed rail will be the “guest.” Rather than “guest,” I would prefer the word “tenant.” We, the people, are the owners of the corridor and the rail authority will be the tenant. However, with this current arrangement, they will pay no rent. That’s not right.

It should be pointed out that we have them over a barrel. High-speed rail authority officials Quentin Kopp and Rod Diridon insist, absolutely, that they must use the Caltrain corridor. They refuse to go anywhere else. They also insist that they will generate \$2 billion in annual profits. Why must we let them do this for free, forever?

If such an arrangement is acceptable to the Joint Powers Board, as it appears to be, and they represent us, they are doing a very lousy job and should be called to task. They have not negotiated in good faith on our behalf.

What’s in it for us?

How about using those fees from the high-speed rail authority to finally resolve Caltrain’s perennial structural operating deficits? How about reducing ticket fares and thereby increasing Caltrain ridership? How about borrowing against that income revenue as the “local” contribution to tunnel high-speed rail beneath those cities that want the trains out of sight?

If I have my facts wrong or if I am not understanding something in this argument, I invite anyone to please correct me. If this bad deal slips past us and we do nothing about it, we have only ourselves to blame.

Martin Engel lives on Stone Pine Lane in Menlo Park and writes frequently about the high-speed rail project.

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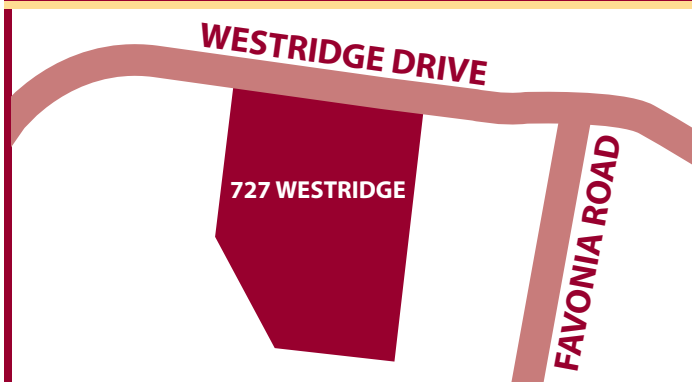
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