



**RUSSIAN ORTHODOX** church in  
Menlo Park celebrates its feast day. | Page 5

# The Almanac

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

SEPTEMBER 30, 2009 | VOL. 45 NO. 5



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[ Second Section ]



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This week's news, features and community events.

## FIRST SHOT



Photo by Don Fera

### Getting ready for grand opening

Principal Matthew Zito in front of the new \$32 million Performing Arts Center at Menlo-Atherton High School in Atherton. The theater will hold its grand opening Sunday, Oct. 11. See **Page 12**.

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Photographer Frances Freyberg, a Menlo Park native, stands in front of her signature "parasols" photo, taken in Laos during her 2008 year-long, worldwide trip. Photo by Jack Hutcheson. See **Section 2**.

## CALLING ON THE ALMANAC

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Currently, she is the Department Chair of World Languages and holds the Kriewall-Haehl Family Endowed Faculty Chair in honor of Father Pius Horvath.

She's performed with the Stanford Symphonic Chorus for over thirty years, loves to read and travel to France and to Lake Huron in Canada. In addition, she is also Adjunct Professor of languages at Santa Clara University.

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# Local News

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## Collacchi presses council to act on climate change

■ Former council member urges city to set greenhouse gas standards for new development projects.

By Sean Howell  
Almanac Staff Writer

In the discussion surrounding one of the largest real estate development projects proposed in Menlo Park's history, a former Menlo Park council member has pushed the issue of environmental sustainability to the fore.

Paul Collacchi, who served on the council from 1996 to 2004 and now lives in Redwood City, is challenging the city's environmental review of the nearly 1 million-square-foot office/hotel project proposed by developer David Bohannon.

He said he doesn't plan to sue the city. His purpose, rather, is to press the council to step up to the plate and set greenhouse gas emission standards for development projects.

Mr. Collacchi's challenge came in the

form of a 19-page letter from his attorney disputing a finding in the draft environmental impact report that the Bohannon project would make a "less than significant" contribution to global warming.

Mr. Collacchi entered the usually staid environmental review process with a certain degree of panache: filing his letter on the last possible day to do so, and releasing copies with an accompanying press release to news outlets last week.

### Are they serious?

City Council members have repeatedly stated their commitment to addressing the issue of climate change, but the city has not set any emission-reduction goals, or strict standards for development projects.

Asked whether he thinks current City Council members are serious about their

commitment to addressing climate change, Mr. Collacchi said: "That's what we're wondering."

In the letter to the city, Mr. Collacchi's lawyer — Matthew Zinn, of the San Francisco-based firm Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger — argues that the environmental impact report is "fatally flawed," and in need of revision and re-circulation.

That process would almost certainly entail delays in the city's review, currently scheduled to culminate in a council vote in March 2010.

"I think he brings up some great points, and I think this could be a real positive," Mayor Heyward Robinson said, noting that viewing development projects through the lens of climate change is a recent phenomenon. "I think we're making this up right now."

City Manager Glen Rojas said the city has

not yet reviewed Mr. Collacchi's letter.

### Climate impact

While the consulting firm that prepared the environmental impact report noted that the city has not yet adopted a threshold when it comes to determining what constitutes a significant contribution to global warming, Mr. Zinn argued that the emissions the project would generate would "constitute a significant environmental impact by any reasonable standard."

According to the information contained in the report, prepared by San Francisco-based PBS&J, the greenhouse gas emissions generated by the project would represent 3 percent of all emissions citywide as of 2005, if the Bohannon Development Co. carries out mitigations proposed in the report. If it does not carry out any of the suggested mitigations, the emissions would represent 4.5 percent of the city's estimated 2005 total.

In a statement attributed to Mr. Bohannon, the company said it had implemented

See COLLACCHI, page 8

*Asked whether he thinks council members are serious about their stated commitment to addressing climate change, Mr. Collacchi said: 'That's what we're wondering.'*

## New parking restrictions along Woodside Road

By Dave Boyce  
Almanac Staff Writer

The rules for parking on Woodside Road in the vicinity of Woodside Elementary School will change now that the Town Council has signed off on a proposal to install no-parking and tow-away signs.

The council voted 5-0 on Sept. 22 to adopt a resolution authorizing the signs, with council members Dave Burow and Ron Romines absent.

The winding two-lane arterial road is popular with cyclists, motorcyclists and anyone needing a direct route up through the foothills to Skyline Boulevard.

Downtown near the school, this state highway has bike lanes, a horse trail and residences, but no sidewalks, no curbs and no place to park legally. The pedestrian traffic includes the young and the old, when they can find room to walk safely and even when they can't.

When the proposal for the no-parking signs came before the council in July, several parents spoke with emotion about the inconvenience the signs might bring to their daily routine of dropping off and picking up their kids. The council, citing safety concerns and the illegal-

ity of parking in bike lanes, had given the community until Sept. 22 to think about alternatives.

The state Department of Transportation, which has jurisdiction over the road, wrote to the town in September 2008 recommending no-parking signs after receiving a "citizen complaint" about parking in bike lanes. The town had asked for time to review the matter.

Comments from the public on Sept. 22 mostly praised the council, though one resident warned of possible long queues when the rains begin and during the many special events at the school.

At a recent K-4 orientation for parents, there was "no (parking) space at all on campus or Woodside Road," resident Daniel Hachigian said, after praising the school for rearranging on-campus parking to add 30 visitor spaces.

The school hosted two community forums in September on the issue and some 100 parents participated in a "high-level" discussion about safety, said Tim Hanretty, assistant superintendent of the Woodside Elementary School District.

"I think, overall, people under-

See PARKING, page 9



Photo by Don Fera

Bishop Benjamin, left, bishop of San Francisco and the West for the Russian Orthodox church, and Father Hermogen Holste, pastor of the Nativity of the Holy Virgin Church in Menlo Park, take part in a feast day procession.

## Russian Orthodox church celebrates feast day

By Jane Knoerle  
Almanac Lifestyles Editor

A procession, with parishioners bearing icons and banners, was a highlight of the recent feast day celebration of the Nativity of the Holy Virgin, a Russian Orthodox church in Menlo Park.

"Sept. 8 is the birthday of the Virgin Mary," says the church's pastor, Father Hermogen Holste. "However, since the church follows the 'Old Calendar' ways, we celebrate her birthday on Sept. 21. Besides the Russian Orthodox Easter and Christmas, this is our parish's special holiday. It's always a very dramatic event."

Bishop Benjamin, bishop of San Francisco and the West, and visiting priests and deacons took part in the two-hour service. Parishioners, dressed in their holiday best, and clergy then adjourned to the church social hall for a luncheon sponsored

See RUSSIAN, page 8

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# JFK friend Paul Fay dies in Woodside

■ He served as undersecretary of the Navy in the Kennedy Administration

A funeral Mass will be held at 3 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 8, at St. Ignatius Church in San Francisco for Paul Burgess "Red" Fay Jr. of Woodside. Mr. Fay died Sept. 23 at his home in Woodside surrounded by family, after suffering from Alzheimer's disease for a number of years. He was 91.

Mr. Fay was known for his close friendship with President John Fitzgerald Kennedy, whom he met while in PT boat training during World War II. They were assigned to the same base in the South Pacific, but Mr. Fay did not serve on PT 109, the boat John Kennedy commanded.

Mr. Fay worked on President Kennedy's election campaigns for the House of Representatives, Senate, and the presidency.

Born in San Francisco to a distinguished family, Mr. Fay was a graduate of the Thacher School in Ojai, California, and Stanford University.

After working briefly for his father's company, the Fay Improvement Co., a San Francisco construction contractor, he joined the Navy shortly after Pearl Harbor.

Upon graduating from Officer's Candidate School, he was sent to PT Boat School in Melville, Rhode Island. While serving in the South Pacific, Ensign Fay's PT boat was disabled by a torpedo from a Japanese plane, but managed to limp to base. He was awarded a Bronze Star.

At the end of the war, Lt. Fay



Paul "Red" Fay met John Kennedy in PT boat training during World War II.

was discharged from the Navy and rejoined the Fay Improvement Co. In 1947, he married Anita Marquez of Mill Valley.

Following John Kennedy's election as president in 1960, Mr. Fay was appointed undersecretary of the Navy, an office he held until January 1965.

When he returned to San Francisco, Mr. Fay wrote a book, "The Pleasure of his Company," about his close friendship with the late president.

In 1967 the Fay Improvement Co. was sold. Mr. Fay then became a founding partner of William Hutchinson & Co., an investment research and brokerage firm. In 1975 Mr. Fay reconstituted the Fay Improvement Co. as a financial consulting and business ventures firm.

He was for many years a

director of First American Financial and Vestaur Securities. He retired in 2005.

Mr. Fay was an accomplished master of ceremonies and reveled in the spotlight, say family members. At the drop of a hat, he loved to present his unique renditions of "Hooray for Hollywood" and "Me and My Shadow," they say.

An accomplished athlete, he was captain of the soccer team in his senior year at Thacher and played baseball at Stanford. He enjoyed touch football, pickup basketball, combative tennis and competitive golf. There were many days in his 80s when he would play both tennis and golf, say family members.

Mr. Fay was a member of the Pacific Union Club, Bohemian Club, Burlingame Country Club, Chevy Chase Club, California Tennis Club and the Vintage in Indian Wells, California.

He contributed his time to such charitable causes as the Robert Odell Foundation, the Robert F. Kennedy Foundation, the Youth Tennis Foundation, and the American Ireland Fund. The fund's San Francisco chapter named him "Man of the Year" in 1995.

He was a trustee of the Naval War College Foundation and of Mount St. Joseph-St. Elizabeth of San Francisco.

He is survived by his wife, Anita Fay, of Woodside; children Katherine Fay, Paul B. Fay III, and Sally Fay Cottingham; and seven grandchildren.

Memorial donations may be made to Youth Tennis Advantage, 610 Sixteenth St, #322, Oakland, CA 94612.

## REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



### Staging a Home in this Market

**Q:** I am going to sell my home and I don't plan to stage it or do any renovation such as painting, carpeting, etc. The house is in a good area and in livable but not pristine condition. I am concerned that I won't get back the money I will put into staging and painting. Do you think this is a good plan?

**A:** There are many sellers who are trying to decide whether it makes sense to invest in staging and renovation in this market. Prices are down from 2007 and early 2008 levels and buyers still maintain the upper hand in most negotiations taking place these days. If you are going to lose money on the sale of your house, you may decide

that it doesn't make financial sense to invest more in staging. This is an understandable decision.

However there are considerations in making this decision. If you are going to gain money in the sale of your home, you should evaluate the issue of staging more carefully. Most buyers don't want to see lots of deferred maintenance when they look at a property. Most of them would rather buy a property that they could move into without doing any work. Most will not have any funds left to do renovation once they move in so if the property is not in move-in condition, these buyers will turn away from it. By prepping and staging your home, you will appeal to a larger number of buyers and very likely achieve a higher price. It's something to consider.

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



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tion is crucial) and very active people. Lastly, library temples extend straight back and hold glasses by pressure, making the design best for those who take glasses on and off frequently.

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P.S. Library temples are very appropriate for reading glasses.

*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.*

## Atherton couple observes 60th anniversary

Dona and Damon Wedding of Atherton recently celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary with a family gathering. The Weddings were married on Aug. 19, 1949, in Fresno and have lived in Atherton for 52 years.




Ms. Wedding retired from the Los Altos School District after teaching for 32 years. Mr. Wedding plans to retire at the end of the year after 34 years as a Farmer's Insurance agent in Menlo Park.

The Weddings have been active in community organizations including Kiwanis, the Athertons and Peninsula Volunteers.




They are the parents of three daughters, Linda Bonini of San Pedro, Rosemary Wedding of Scottsdale, Arizona, and Cindy Keitel of Camarillo; and one grandson, Chris Keitel, also of Camarillo.



Dona and Damon Wedding were married Aug. 19, 1949.

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## Russian Orthodox church celebrates its feast day

### RUSSIAN

continued from page 5

by women in the Sisterhood of St. Elizabeth.

### First parish

Father Holste comes from a different background than his congregation, most of whom are of Russian descent. His parents were Southern Baptist missionaries and he has lived "all over." He converted to the orthodox faith while attending the University of Alabama, where he studied Russian.

Russian in Alabama? "It's a very small program," says Father Holste, with a smile.

"I came to the conclusion that the orthodox church was the most faithful to the teachings of Christ and the apostles," he says.

A graduate of St. Vladimir Seminary in Yonkers, the Menlo Park church is the 27-year-old priest's first assignment. He lives with his wife, Mary, whom he met in college, and year-old son Peter. Ms. Holste also speaks Russian and lived in Siberia for a year to learn the language.

Many of the 80 or so people who attend Sunday services at the Russian Orthodox church are those who came to work in Silicon Valley after the Soviet Union was dissolved and computer-wise workers were in demand.

While a core of 40 or 50 "old-timers" are the backbone of the little church, Father Holste's arrival two years ago has drawn more young families to the parish. Mothers with babies and toddlers in strollers were part of the feast day congregation.

### Menlo Park history

The structure now occupied by the Russian Orthodox church in Menlo Park was originally built in 1886 as the Holy Trinity Episcopal Church. When members of the Episcopalian parish decided to build themselves a bigger church in 1957, they offered the chapel to the fledgling Russian Orthodox parish, providing they would move it. The little building was moved from a few blocks east of the railroad tracks to the northwest edge of downtown, at 1220 Crane St.

The Orthodox parishioners have transformed the interior. There are no pews. Most people stand, or sit on the few benches along the wall. The walls are richly decorated. Parishioner Vladimir Ermakoff of Atherton is organizing the new iconography in the church, says Father Holste.

The parish is one of a minority of those in the Orthodox church in America that still has Russian services. About 70 percent of the Divine Liturgy is in church Slavonic, or "old Russian," says Father Holste.

During his two years in the parish, Father Holste has organized adult education classes, in English and Russian, and Sunday School for the children twice a month.

Tatiana Diedovitch is president of the St. Elizabeth Sisterhood, a group of women parishioners that raises money for the church through events such as the Christmas Bazaar and the annual rummage sale. The bazaar takes place the first Saturday in December, featuring traditional Russian foods and gifts. This year's rummage sale is slated for Friday and Saturday, Oct. 9 and 10, in the church hall, 1220 Crane St. in Menlo Park. ■

## Rail authority to hold 'open house' Sept. 30

The agency charged with designing the California high-speed rail project will hold a set of "open house" meetings in late September and early October, giving Peninsula residents a glimpse into the planning process now under way.

At the meetings, the High Speed Rail Authority will "share and discuss" initial plans for

how high-speed trains will shoot up the Caltrain corridor, the authority said in a press release.

The meeting for San Mateo County residents will be held Wednesday, Sept. 30, in San Carlos. It is scheduled to run from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the SamTrans Auditorium at 1250 San Carlos Ave., just off El Camino Real.



Chris MacIntosh, facing camera, has volunteered at Midpeninsula Open Space District for 30 years.

## Volunteer Chris MacIntosh is honored

Chris MacIntosh of Menlo Park, who was one of Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's first volunteers, was honored for her 30 years of service at the district's annual recognition event, held Aug. 22 at the Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve.

Known for leading the district's fungus hikes, she was presented with a large outdoor mushroom decoration and will choose a favorite photo of the district preserves to be printed and framed for her.

About 200 of the district's staff and volunteers attended the award event.

Ms. MacIntosh, a native of Britain, says volunteering is natural for her because she was "brought up and educated to public service."

An administrative associate in Stanford University's School of Medicine, she first came to California in 1975 to study for a master's degree at Stanford.

Ms. MacIntosh takes the public on hikes cov-

ering a range of topics, from fungus to insects to wildflowers. Her fungi hikes take place in the winter, when there's "nothing much to see." However, they introduce the public to "another world where they notice and appreciate the variety of fungi."

On the mushroom hikes, the rule is "touching is OK, ingesting is not."

Despite working full time, Ms. MacIntosh is an active Sierra Club volunteer. She is one of the founders of the Friends of Bedwell Bayfront Park in Menlo Park, where "we are just beginning to have monthly birding walks," she says. An avid "peak climber," she enjoys climbing 14,000-foot peaks in Colorado.

Reflecting on her 30 years of docent service to the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District, Ms. MacIntosh says, "My passion is for people to learn to love our open spaces so they will want to protect them and the natural environment." ■

### COLLACCHI

continued from page 5

"virtually all" of the mitigations proposed in the environmental impact report, and that it was "looking for additional measures that can be reasonably incorporated. ... We don't have all the answers today, but our goal remains making Menlo Gateway the green standard for private development on the Peninsula."

What would Mr. Collacchi's standard be?

"I'd like to see them mitigate the whole thing," he said, meaning the operation of the buildings would not emit any greenhouse gases. He argued that the project is "a huge emissions generator carefully hidden behind a green marketing campaign."

### Test for the city

Council members speak often of their commitment to address climate change, but it remains to be seen whether it will hold up when money is on the table.

The Bohannon project in its current form would add an estimated \$1.67 million annually to city

coffers. Would the council be willing to scale back the project, or give up money in its public benefit negotiations with the Bohannon Co. in exchange for design modifications, in the interest of reducing the project's "carbon footprint"?

Many advocates say that a radical approach will be required to mitigate the effects of climate change. In an impassioned speech to the council on the subject, Mitch Slomiak, head of the volunteer Green Ribbon Citizens' Committee, argued that the city should work to cut its emissions by 2 percent per year to do its part in achieving an 80 percent reduction in global emissions by 2050. That's the minimum level experts say will be required to avert the most severe effects of climate change.

For all the council's talk about the role the city can play in mitigating climate change, it can have perhaps its biggest impact in the way it handles real estate development projects, Mr. Collacchi said. And the Bohannon project, with three eight-story office buildings and a 230-room hotel, is the biggest of them all.

"I'm really challenging them to rise to the occasion, not to become defensive," he said of the council. ■

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# A missed opportunity?

■ Development project on El Camino Real that once featured 134 apartment units could get council approval with no housing included.

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

You won't get much of an argument from Menlo Park officials that the site of the old Cadillac dealership on El Camino Real would be an ideal spot to add much-needed housing.

Putting housing at the 3.5-acre site would help repair an imbalance in the city between jobs and housing, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and mesh with what the city hopes will someday be a vibrant, pedestrian-oriented community, centered around the downtown area and the train station, advocates say.

But a majority of City Council members say they're not inclined to require housing. At its Oct. 6 meeting, the council could approve a development proposal for the site that had initially included 134 apartments, but that now features 110,000 square feet of only commercial and office space.

Given that the addition of housing at the site seems to be on many peoples' wish lists — including, at one point, the developer's — why does it seem unlikely that it will be included in the final plans?

## Bad timing?

One reason is bad timing. Sand Hill Property Co., which owns the site, pulled its original proposal when residents led a successful referendum drive to repeal council approval of the adjoining Derry project. That approval would have roughly doubled the density allowed at both the Derry and Cadillac

sites under the city's general plan, according to city planner Megan Fisher.

As the council initiated a comprehensive downtown planning process to come up with new development guidelines, Sand Hill proposed a new project, saying it would rather develop the property under current zoning laws than wait for new ones to emerge.

At this point, requiring Sand

*The city went 'from 134 units to zero, because people with pitchforks in their hands scared the bejesus out of them? Where's the leadership, and the vision to do anything here?'*

ASH VASUDEVA, MENLO PARK RESIDENT

Hill to include housing in the project would be a betrayal of trust, developer Jeff Warmoth said.

"When we in good faith have been moving forward in a process, we ought to be able to have those expectations protected," he said.

Though Sand Hill evaluated an alternative project that would include 36 housing units, at the request of the council, "everyone's been aware (the proposal) does not include housing," he said. "We've been very open and honest with everyone about that."

For a housing project at the site to be successful, it would have to include at least 100 units, he said. And it's tough to get financing for housing these days, he noted.

Council members pointed out that the current proposal fits within the guidelines in the city's general plan, though it

would require a zoning change. They say Mr. Warmoth and Sand Hill have suffered the city's whims enough since it first proposed the project four years ago, and that they don't want to exacerbate the city's reputation for being a tough place to develop.

"My inclination — though I could be convinced otherwise — is to move this along, and move it forward," said Mayor Heyward Robinson.

"We have a bad reputation in this city of giving developers a hard time, and I think, in this case, he's earned the right to go ahead," said Councilman Andy Cohen. "Look, the basic thing is: Rich people are like the rest of us. They have their problems, they try to deal with them, to do the best they can, and we have to give them the consideration that we expect ourselves. That's what good law is all about."

## Weak defense?

Ash Vasudeva, who helped organize opposition to a city proposal to put 11 duplexes on a 1.5-acre strip of land behind a residential block in Belle Haven, was incredulous that the city isn't pushing for housing at the El Camino Real site.

The city went "from 134 units to zero, because people with pitchforks in their hands scared the bejesus out of them? Where's the leadership, and the vision to do anything here? I mean, my gosh, people, if you're going to get spooked by that, and not put housing where it actually belongs, on a mass transit corridor ... you're really not representing the city well."

Though a majority of Planning Commission members said

See HOUSING, page 11

## PARKING

continued from page 5

stood (the) proposal," he told the council. "They, I don't want to say, approved of it, but they accepted it."

The signs, when they go up in late October or November, will ban parking or stopping on the north side of Woodside Road in the vicinity of the school and along both sides of Albion Avenue, a residential side street across from the school, according to the resolution.

The same rules will apply to the south side of Woodside Road except on school days, when some parking will be allowed from 8 to 9:30 a.m. and 2 to 4 p.m. so parents can drop off and pick up their children. Parking near fire hydrants and

crosswalks will be banned completely.

"Pretty soon, we'll find out what the bottom line is, I think," Councilman Dave Tanner said. "If everybody works at making it work, it will work."

Public parking is also available at the town's library on the north side of Woodside Road "as long as there are not conflicts with library patrons," Public Works Director Paul Nagengast said in an e-mail. The ban on parking on the north side of the road should also open up the bike lanes as a route to crosswalks, he said.

The town needs multi-use trails so that kids can safely bike and walk to school, said Whiskey Hill Road resident Liz Dressel. Others agreed.

For details on the new parking restrictions, go to [tinyurl.com/yb3j4rv](http://tinyurl.com/yb3j4rv) and go to Page 25. ■

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Photo by Michelle Le

**Alys Grace** employee Betsy DeLong prices items as Linda Hadlock works in the background, preparing for the clothing boutique's scheduled Oct. 1 opening.

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**RAIN OR SHINE**

## Calla emerges from fire with new look

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

### ■ BUSINESS

On March 17, Phil and Tiger Bachler were planning to start work on a small remodel at Calla, the women's clothing boutique on Santa Cruz Avenue they had taken over in the fall of 2008. A painter was scheduled to come by that day to do some work — to "put some lipstick on the pig," in Mr. Bachler's words.

But Mr. Bachler found himself rushing to the boutique early that morning for a different reason. A fire that had apparently started in a utility closet above the boutique and Peet's Coffee & Tea had damaged the building's structure, ruining much of Calla's inventory.

"We were going to have a small remodel on the day of the fire," Mr. Bachler said. "Now we have a big remodel."

The Bachlers, who live in Atherton, say they view the fire as an opportunity, rather than a setback. It has given them time to focus on molding the boutique to fit their vision, they say. (It also doesn't hurt that they had insurance.)

First up is a name and logo change: Calla is now Alys Grace, a hybrid of the name of Phil's mother, and the middle name of the couple's youngest daughter. The boutique is scheduled to open in a temporary location on Chestnut Street Thursday, Oct. 1, before eventually moving back to the Santa Cruz Avenue storefront.

The Bachlers also plan to open an online operation, at alysgace.com, that they hope to infuse with the same small-town charm of their "brick and mortar" store.

They won't speculate on when the old space might be ready for business. They started searching for a temporary location after one of the property owners mentioned to Phil on the day of the fire that it might be a year before their boutique could re-open.

### New competition

Calla has gone largely unchallenged as the city's most popular women's clothing boutique, if 11 consecutive Almanac Readers' Choice awards are any indication.

But Menlo Park has been flooded with new women's clothing retailers in the months since the fire. Four new boutiques and one custom clothing designer have set up shop, one on the same block as Alys Grace's new location. No fewer than ten Menlo Park shops now sell women's clothing, according to Dave Johnson, the city's business development manager.

Are the Bachlers concerned about the competition?

"If Menlo Park could become a destination for shopping for women around the Peninsula, that would be great," Ms. Bachler said. "It makes my job a little more challenging because I have to be on my toes more, but it's good for the customer."

She says she's grateful for the traction Calla has in the community. Customers and vendors have remained loyal, despite the influx of new clothing stores.

"We miss having the store open," she said. "Phil and I have really enjoyed being a part of the community, and the fire has really been eye-opening to us. ... It's made us realize just how important that community is." ■

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## Consumer products commission issues recall for smoke alarm

The National Consumer Product Safety Commission has issued a recall for a residential smoke alarm, the Model PI2000 dual-sensor smoke and carbon monoxide alarm manufactured by Walter Kidde Portable Equipment Corp. of North Carolina.

In two reports, the device has

"malfunctioned" as a result of a static electricity discharge during installation, according to a recent statement from the Woodside Fire Protection District.

The units are easily identified by two buttons — "hush" and "push and hold to test weekly" — and sell at hardware and other retail

stores for \$30 to \$40, the statement said. This voluntary recall involves alarms sold between Aug. 1, 2008, and May 4, 2009. ■

The company will replace them free of charge. Call (877) 524-2086 weekdays between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Eastern Time, or go to [www.kidde.com](http://www.kidde.com).

## Missed chance for housing?

### HOUSING

continued from page 9

they would have preferred housing at the site, changing the zoning to allow for more density is outside the commission's jurisdiction, said Henry Riggs, the commission's chair. Pressed to put himself in the council members' shoes, he said he would offer the developer more density in exchange for building housing units.

He would feel emboldened, he said, by preliminary plans for downtown development that call for 680 housing units downtown and along El Camino Real, and for dense housing around the train station — about a block away from the old Cadillac site.

It would be tough for Mr. Warmoth to say no to more density, Mr. Riggs argued; what developer wouldn't jump at the chance to build bigger?

Mr. Warmoth wouldn't, apparently.

"It's time for us to move forward and build the best possible project that we can," he said, adding that he'd rather start work on a project he can get funding for than go back to the drawing board.

It may be a moot question, anyway.

"I hope not," said Councilman Rich Cline, asked if the council would offer more density. Mandating housing or proposing increased density would "feel backwards," he said.

Mr. Riggs made it clear that he would also support the alternative proposal that Sand Hill studied, which would not necessitate a general plan amendment. The council could approve that proposal at its Oct. 6 meeting.

Councilwoman Kelly Fergusson, who made the initial suggestion for the developer to study the option to

include housing in the new project, said she "hasn't seen anything" that would change her mind about her preference for housing at the site.

### Missed opportunity?

Council members' desire to appease residents upset by a previous council's decision to allow for bigger buildings at the site has resulted in a proposed project that no one seems to be very excited about.

But people shouldn't dwell on what could have been, said Mr. Warmoth.

"At the end of the day, our goal is to build a well-designed project with high-quality material ... even if somebody thinks there was a better use," he said.

If you're just trying to make a project that's "safe" — the approach taken by the city, "minority" Councilman John Boyle argued — "you end up with a boring, underutilized project, nothing new or exciting, nothing that has any character."

Mr. Boyle said he didn't agree with the council majority's decision to hold the developer to outdated city guidelines, but maintained that the entire community is to blame for having a vague vision when it comes to development, and unclear standards — a problem that both he and Mr. Warmoth say they hope the downtown planning process will correct. ■

### ■ INFORMATION

At its meeting Tuesday, Oct. 6, Menlo Park's City Council could approve a 110,000-square-foot, 40-foot-high development project at the site of the old Cadillac dealership on El Camino Real. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. in the council chambers, between Laurel and Alma streets.

## Election write-in filing period is open

It's not too late for would-be candidates for public office to toss their proverbial hats into the proverbial ring for the Nov. 3 election.

The write-in candidate registration period opened Sept. 7 and closes at 5 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 20, said Warren Slocum, San Mateo County's chief elections officer.

Write-in candidates must reside in the district in which they are running, and filing papers require endorsing signatures, with the number of signatures determined by the type of office and the number of voters in the district, Mr. Slocum said.

Filing papers are available from the election office associated with the position. The county elections office at 40 Tower Road in San Mateo oversees elections for

school districts and special districts. School districts electing trustees this time around include the Woodside Elementary School District and the Sequoia Union High School District.

The Menlo Park Fire Protection District and the Los Trancos County Water District are having elections for seats on their governing boards. For county-run elections, contact Lupe Sanchez at 312-5293 or write to lsanchez@smcare.org.

Town council elections this year include seats in Woodside and Portola Valley. For information, contact the respective city clerks. In Portola Valley, call Sharon Hanlon at 851-1700, ext. 210. In Woodside, call Janet Koelsch at 851-6790.

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### Living Well Classes

#### Managing Your High Blood Pressure

Wednesday, Oct. 14, 3 – 5 p.m., 650-853-2960

#### What You Need to Know About Warfarin

Wednesday, Oct. 21, 2 – 3 p.m., 650-853-2960

### Nutrition and Diabetes Classes

#### Prediabetes

Monday, Oct. 5, 9 – 11:30 a.m., Wednesday, Oct. 21, 4:30 – 7 p.m., 650-853-2961

#### Bariatric Class

Tuesday, Oct. 6, 9:30 a.m. – noon, 650-853-2961

#### Healthy Eating with Type 2 Diabetes

Tuesday, Oct. 13, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m., 650-853-2961

### Pregnancy, Breastfeeding and Child Care Classes

#### Moving Through Pregnancy

Mondays, Oct. 12, 19 & 26, 7 – 9 p.m., 650-853-2960



#### Breastfeeding

Thursday, Oct. 22, 7 – 9 p.m., 650-853-2960

#### Feeding Your Preschooler

Thursday, Oct. 22, 10 a.m. – noon, 650-853-2961

#### Preparing for Childbirth Without Medication

Sunday, Oct. 25, 9:30 a.m. – 1 p.m., 650-853-2960

#### Preparing for Birth

Thursdays, Nov. 5 – Dec. 17, 7 – 9 p.m., 650-853-2960

### Support Groups

#### Cancer

650-342-3749

#### CPAP

650-853-4729

#### Diabetes

650-224-7872

#### Drug and Alcohol

650-853-2904



## Redwood Shores Health Center 290 Redwood Shores Parkway

### Nutrition and Diabetes Classes

#### Prediabetes

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 5:30 – 8 p.m., 650-853-2961

## Mountain View Center 701 E. El Camino Real

### Lecture and Workshops

#### Setting Boundaries/Making Choices (parents of children grades 1 – 5)

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### Living Well Class

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Mondays, Oct. 12, 7 – 9 p.m., 650-934-7373

#### Teen Skin Care

Saturday, Oct. 24, 10:30 a.m. – noon, 650-934-7373

### Pregnancy, Breastfeeding and Child Care Classes

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#### Feeding Your Toddler/Preschooler

Tuesday, Oct. 6, 7 – 9 p.m., 650-934-7373



#### Infant Emergencies and CPR

Wednesday, Oct. 7 & 21, 6 – 8:30 p.m., 650-934-7373

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Monday, Oct. 12, 6 – 8 p.m., 650-934-7373

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## City of Sunnyvale Library 665 W. Olive Avenue

### Maintain Your Brain

A Conversation with Elizabeth Edgerly, Ph.D.  
Thursday, Oct. 8, 7 – 8:30 p.m., 650-934-7380



## M-A Performing Arts Center sets grand opening

The new performing arts center at Menlo-Atherton High School is said to be ideally suited acoustically for the intimate sounds of chamber music, and that assertion will be put to the test by top-flight performers at the center's grand opening on Sunday, Oct. 11.

Pianist Wu Han and cellist David Finckel — the two founders and artistic directors of the Music@Menlo chamber music festival — will join clarinetist Anthony McGill in a 4 p.m. concert that day.

Mr. McGill, principal clarinetist of the Metropolitan Opera Orchestra, has performed at Music@Menlo concerts, held at Menlo School in Atherton and several nearby venues. But many local people are more likely to have heard the acclaimed player when he joined violinist Itzhak Perlman, cellist Yo-Yo Ma, and pianist Gabriela Montero on Jan. 20, when the quartet performed during the inauguration of President Barack Obama.

The concert at M-A is sold out, but people can ask that they be notified by e-mail if tickets become available.

Works by two giants of the classical repertoire are on the program: Beethoven's cello sonata in G minor, Op. 5, No. 2; Beethoven's trio for clarinet, cello, and piano in B-flat major, Op. 11; and Brahms' trio for clarinet, cello, and piano in A minor, Op. 114.

Tickets start at \$50 for adults and \$25 for students. To be put on the ticket notification list, call 650-331-0202 or go to Music@Menlo.org.

A pre-concert reception for all ticket-holders begins at 2:30 p.m.

The new \$32 million performing arts center on the M-A campus, at 555 Middlefield Road in Atherton, includes music practice rooms and other instructional spaces for students at the school, in addition to state-of-the-art performance spaces.

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# Trying to get in

■ Tiny neighborhood seeks to transfer into Las Lomitas district.

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

## ■ SCHOOLS

A tiny neighborhood near Woodside High School is petitioning to be included in the Las Lomitas Elementary School District.

A public hearing on the request to transfer territory out of the Redwood City School District is set for 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 29, in Cano Hall at Las Lomitas School, 299 Alameda de las Pulgas in Atherton.

A second public hearing is set for 7 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 6, at the Redwood City School District office, 750 Bradford St.

Residents of the 43 residential parcels along Ward Way and Greenways Drive are no strangers to petitioning for entree. The unincorporated San Mateo County neighborhood successfully petitioned to become part of the town of Woodside in 2003.

A group of residents from the neighborhood, now part of Woodside Heights, submitted a petition with 43 signatures saying that all the children in their close-knit neighborhood should be able to attend public school together.

"These are the only two streets (in Woodside Heights) that are not in the Las Lomitas district," said George Mallinckrodt, the chief petitioner.

Las Lomitas School is only a mile away, much closer than Selby Lane, the nearest Redwood City district school, he told *The Almanac*.

Heavy traffic on Alameda and Woodside Road makes it dangerous to get to Redwood City schools, he said. Las Lomitas, on the other hand, has a school bus stop only a block away on Stockbridge Avenue.

"They'd have the ability to have a safe route to school. The kids could walk to the school bus, get onto the bus and not add to congestion and global warming," he said.

Superintendent Eric Hartwig of the Las Lomitas district said he and the school board have

not yet taken an official position on the transfer petition.

Jan Christensen, superintendent of the Redwood City School District, said she was concerned about the precedent that would be set by such a transfer.

"We've not passed a resolution against it at this point, but there does not seem to be any support among the board to agree with the petition, either," said Ms. Christensen.

According to Mr. Mallinckrodt, there are only eight elementary school-age children now living in the area proposed for transfer, and none are enrolled in Redwood City schools.

Ms. Christensen said that just because there aren't students from that neighborhood attending Redwood City district schools now doesn't mean there wouldn't be any in the future.

Mr. Hartwig said he's asked the district's demographer to find out what the likely number of future students would be.

"If (the area) came into our district, it's obvious that over time those parcels would become more like the others. It could go up from the eight (students) to a higher number," he said.

The Las Lomitas district is currently going through a surge in enrollment that's expected to continue for the next five years, and officials are studying where to find space for all the children, Mr. Hartwig said.

"This petition comes at a time when we are really feeling the pinch," he said.

### Financial issues

How the transfer would affect a district's bottom line is also an issue. If Redwood City loses students, it loses per-student funding from the state — known as "revenue limit" funding — along with a share of property tax revenue from the Ward/Greenways homes.

Las Lomitas has a different funding mechanism. As a "basic aid" district, Las Lomitas keeps

its full share of property tax revenue, allowing it to spend significantly more on each student than Redwood City can — about \$14,000 per student. Revenue-limit districts like Redwood City might spend about half that amount, Superintendent Hartwig said.

According to Mr. Mallinckrodt, all eight of the neighborhood's school-aged children attend private elementary schools, so the Redwood City district wouldn't really be losing students or funding. He's done his own rough calculation of the financial repercussions, he said.

"The benefit to Las Lomitas is about \$94,000 (in property tax revenue), based on \$40 million in assessed value of the neighborhood," he said. "I think they benefit financially from it, and Redwood City doesn't lose anything."

However, Ms. Christensen noted that, besides property taxes, there are two Redwood City school bonds assessed on the parcels. The district's chief business officer is researching the total fiscal impact of the transfer, she said.

Las Lomitas officials are doing the same.

### The process

There are number of hoops to jump through before such a transfer could take place. After the public hearings are held, the decision rests with the County Committee on School District Organization, said Peter Burchyns, the committee secretary.

If the committee approves the petition and both school districts agree, the transfer can go through. If either district does not agree, the transfer is put to a public vote. If the committee denies the petition, it can be appealed to the state Board of Education.

"From time to time these petitions are granted and nobody objects," Mr. Burchyns said. "Sometimes, they are hotly contested. School districts tend to contest losing territory, so they do their best to bring out their side of the argument."

The full petition, along with agendas for the public hearings, are online at [smcoe.k12.ca.us](http://smcoe.k12.ca.us). Click on "Transfer of territory."

## Two arrested for embezzling from elderly relative

Two people have been arrested and charged with embezzling more than \$13,000 from an 81-year-old Menlo Park woman, police said.

Giovanni Orlando Digiacomo, 44, of San Carlos and Mary Stuart, 51, of Menlo Park were arrested Sept. 18 on charges of elder abuse, conspiracy to

defraud, and embezzlement.

The money was stolen through unauthorized credit card purchases, said Menlo Park police spokeswoman Nicole Ackerman. Ms. Stuart, a relative who lives with the victim, allegedly intercepted the credit card bills in order to hide the purchases, Ms. Ackerman said.

The two suspects, who are unemployed, allegedly made thousands of dollars in purchases between May and July of this year, Ms. Ackerman said. The case originated from a report by San Mateo County Adult Protective Services, she said.



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## Big turnout for meet on public paycheck

By Sean Howell  
Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park saw a big turnout for a meeting on city employee pay and benefits, but the great majority of the people who showed up were the employees themselves — not the residents whose agitation encouraged the city to hold the meeting in the first place.

About 60 people packed the City Council chambers for a one-hour session before the regular council

meeting on Tuesday, Sept. 22. After city management delivered a presentation on how employee benefits and pensions are structured, six people spoke to urge the city to prevent employee spending from getting out of hand.

Rene Morales, who represents employees in the city union with the most members, offered a proposal that he said would do just that. According to Mr. Morales, the 152 members of the Menlo Park branch of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) are prepared to agree to extend their current contract with the city for two years, without accepting increases in salary or benefits.

The city is about to enter negotiations with that union, and with the union that represents 34 middle management employees.

### Is that enough?

The city is taking strides to rein in unsustainable employee costs, officials say, and looking for ways to thin its staff. City Manager Glen Rojas and Councilman John Boyle sit on committees that are examining the issue at a regional level.

Some residents, however, say the city will have to do more if it wants to keep employee costs from breaking the bank, citing among other things the rising cost of public pensions. The equivalent of 12 percent of the city's general operating fund goes toward pensions for public employees; the city's contribution to the state pension fund is expected to rise by 38 percent by the 2014-2015 fiscal year, assuming no new pay raises between now and then.

Reining in employee costs should be the council's top priority, said former council member Mickie Winkler. Others who spoke urged the council to not "kick the can down the road," leaving future elected officials to deal with the issue. Some drew parallels between the city's situation, and the position the federal government is in with escalating costs for Social Security and Medicare.

"This is the single biggest issue facing Menlo Park," resident Jim Long said, asking council members to "put away the rose-colored glasses."

Six employees or union representatives spoke at the meeting to defend their compensation, and the quality of their work. The city needs to provide good benefits, they said, in order to hang on to employees and attract new ones — especially because research shows that fewer people are interested in public service careers these days.

Henry Riggs, chair of the city's

Planning Commission, balked at the idea that the city needs to buy employee loyalty. He asked why some council members seem to interpret complaints about employee pay as personal attacks.

"The open checkbook concept has not worked for me," he said. "We need to approach the issue with balance, without anger, or the whitewash of magical new efficiencies."

Mr. Rojas cautioned that the

*Union that represents most city employees offers two-year freeze on salary and benefits.*

city had to approach the issue based on its own financial outlook — certainly not rosy, but by no means dire — rather than on the efforts taken by other jurisdictions.

"We understand the concerns, we know we have to be sustainable," he said. "We are taking steps to get there, but we are not going to slash and burn."

### Fairness issue

Many of the complaints the city receives on the issue revolve around the question of whether city employees deserve what they make, rather than whether the city can sustain its costs.

While city employees who spoke at the meeting maintained that they were foregoing hefty salaries and big bonuses that come with private sector jobs, some residents said that characterization wasn't in line with reality, pointing to generous benefits and pension plans.

"Historically, the bargain was, 'we'll accept lesser salary for better benefits, and absolute job security,'" Ms. Winkler said in an interview. "Well, they have much better benefits, they have absolute job security... I agree that it's difficult to compare (to the private sector), but all the Bureau of Labor stats would suggest that public employees are paid better than employees in private sector." (At the meeting, the city presented a graph that seemed to indicate that the city's salaries have kept pace with the consumer price index over the years.)

Is Ms. Winkler concerned that the city can't support employee costs, or that employees aren't working hard enough for their paychecks?

"You don't have to look beyond unsustainability of it," she said. "We'll have to increase fees and taxes, in order to support an ever-more costly employee base." ■



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Arthur Ammann, M.D.

President, Global Strategies  
for HIV Prevention  
Professor of Pediatrics,  
University of California at San Francisco

Paul Volberding, M.D.

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# Menlo Park residents get a look at preliminary downtown plans

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park residents got a look at a preliminary plan for zoning changes and capital improvements along El Camino Real and in the city's downtown at a community workshop Sept. 17. Aided by input received at that meeting, a consultant will develop a final plan, part of a \$1.2-million project to revamp the area and prepare for future development.

About 120 residents reviewed and commented on the plans at the meeting. The city will hold three additional public meetings over the next two weeks to cull input from stakeholders and city officials, before the consultant spends several months in hibernation drawing up the plan, and analyzing its potential ramifications.

Go to [menlopark.org/specific-plan](http://menlopark.org/specific-plan) to view drawings and diagrams presented at the meeting.

Nancy Couperus, a downtown property owner who fears the "emerging plan" will drive out local businesses and give Menlo Park a "big city" feel, has posted her interpretation of the con-

sultant's proposal at the Sept. 17 meeting on her Web site, [preserveMPdowntown.org](http://preserveMPdowntown.org).

Residents can attend and offer comments at meetings of the following city bodies, in the City Council chambers, located in the Civic Center complex between Laurel and Alma streets: the downtown steering committee (Oct. 1, 6:30 p.m.); the Planning Commission (Oct. 5, 6 p.m.); and the City Council (Oct. 13, 7 p.m.).

## City to negotiate new waste contract

The city of Menlo Park will negotiate a contract with a new waste management provider to take over collection services in 2011.

The City Council voted unanimously Sept. 22 to authorize the city manager to begin negotiations on a 10-year contract with Recology (formerly Norcal), the company that handles San Francisco's garbage collection.

With the new service, residents would be able to put food scraps into the organic waste bin, and would be able to put all their recyclables into a single bin.

## ■ MENLO WATCH

Recology will take over the contract from current provider Allied Waste.

The contract could also include a citywide collection day for bulky items, if the city find that residents are interested in that service.

The council also unanimously approved the recommendation by a regional body for South Bay Recycling to take over operation of the Shoreway recycling center in San Carlos after a planned renovation.

## New office building at Gaylord India site

A plan for a two-story office building on the east side of El Camino Real, near Buckthorn Way, could see approval from the Menlo Park City Council in October.

The proposal sailed through Menlo Park's Planning Commission in a series of unanimous votes Sept. 21.

The 10,100-square-foot medical and professional office building would replace a vacant 6,900-square-foot, one-story building, previously occupied by Gaylord India Restaurant.

"We felt (the proposed develop-

ment) was very attractive, and the applicant was very responsive to the neighborhood and city concerns," said Henry Riggs, chair of the Planning Commission.

Nearby residents had expressed concerns about parking and traffic, according to city staff.

The council plans to review the proposal at its Oct. 20 meeting.

## Bohannon backs job fair Oct. 3

JobTrain and the Bohannon Development Co. will sponsor a job fair Saturday, Oct. 3, at the site of the proposed "Menlo Gateway" office/hotel project.

Representatives from a number of companies will "be present to provide career guidance," according to a press release. The companies are not necessarily looking to hire people.

JobTrain focuses on providing people with vocational skills.

Though the Bohannon company will be among those represented, the job fair is independent of the company's proposed project, a spokesperson said.

The job fair is scheduled to run from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at 190 Independence Drive, just east of U.S. 101 near Marsh Road.

## Nonprofit pushes for tobacco licensing

A nonprofit group is urging the city of Menlo Park to require vendors to obtain a city license to sell tobacco.

El Concilio, which provides services for low-income residents in San Mateo County, conducted an operation with the Menlo Park Police Department on Sept. 16 when two vendors were cited for selling tobacco to minors, a spokesman for the group said. Requiring a license would allow for local law enforcement, the group maintains.

The state law requiring a tobacco retail license does not preempt local jurisdictions from setting their own licensing requirements through ordinances, said City Attorney Bill McClure. Cities and counties across the state have been implementing their own licensing requirements, he said, in an attempt to prevent sales to minors.

El Concilio made a presentation to Menlo Park's City Council on Sept. 22.

The group's membership includes students at Menlo-Atherton High School, the spokesman said.

## Google donates \$2.5 million to honor Rajeev Motwani of Atherton

Google Inc. has given Stanford University \$2.5 million to create an endowed chair in honor of a computer science professor who mentored Google's founders and died in a swimming accident at his home in Atherton in June, according to the university.

Rajeev Motwani, who was 47 when he died, researched data mining with Google co-founders Sergey Brin and Larry Page when they were graduate students at Stanford.

"The breadth and depth of Rajeev's contributions in academia and industry are unparalleled in computer science," Mr. Brin said. "Yet they pale in comparison to the impact he had through the many researchers and entrepreneurs whom he taught and mentored."

Mr. Motwani drowned in his

backyard pool.

The endowed chair was announced Friday during a memorial service for Mr. Motwani. The university will contribute \$1.5 million to help fund it.

A spokesman for the university said the new position is one of 10 endowed chairs that have been added to expand the computer science department and meet growing interest in the field.

Enrollment in the computer science program grew 12 percent last year, department chair Jennifer Widom said.

She said she hopes the additional faculty will foster more collaboration with other departments, including biology, linguistics, education and various engineering programs.

— Bay City News Service

## Commission to review Bohannon project


Members of Menlo Park's Planning Commission will start to grapple with the implications of the 950,000-square-foot office/hotel project proposed by developer David Bohannon at the commission's meeting Monday, Oct. 5.

The meeting follows on a public hearing designed to give commission members and residents a chance to weigh in on the city's environmental review of


the project. The commission isn't expected to provide direction to the council until January.

The project, located near the intersection of Marsh Road and Bayfront Expressway, would feature three eight-story office buildings, a 230-room hotel, and several large parking garages.

The meeting is scheduled to begin at 6 p.m. in the council chambers in the Civic Center, between Laurel and Alma streets.



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**Ann Skrabo Morey Goodwin**

## ■ OBITUARY

Member of Portola Valley pioneer family

A celebration of the life of Ann Katherine Skrabo Morey Goodwin will be held at 11 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 30, at the Church of the Nativity, 210 Oak Gove Ave. in Menlo Park. Ms. Goodwin died peacefully in her Menlo Park home on Sept. 17. She was 93.

She was born Sept. 15, 1916, to Stella and Chester Skrabo, immigrants from Croatia. The Skrabos were among the early

settlers of Portola Valley. She attended the Little Red School House in Portola Valley and Sequoia High School.

In 1942 she was married to Joe Morey, member of a well-known Menlo Park family. The couple settled in Atherton, where they raised four children. Mr. Morey died in 1962. In 1973 she married Dr. Rufus Goodwin.

When her children were young, she volunteered at their schools. In later life, she was devoted



Ann Goodwin

to the welfare of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart at Oakwood, say family members. She also loved to cook and entertain,

they say.

She is survived by her children, Joe Morey, Joanne Morey, Arlene Mariani, and Marty Morey; sister Betty Barnett;

stepchildren, Bill Goodwin, Sue Goodwin, Bob Goodwin, and Marilyn Goodwin; nine grandchildren, and 15 great-grandchildren.

The family expressed its gratitude to Holly Tuifua and her family, who were Ms. Goodwin's caretakers for several years.

Memorials in Ms. Goodwin's name may be made to Oakwood Religious Community, 150 Valparaiso Ave., Atherton, CA 94027; or Pathways Hospice, 585 N. Mary Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94085.

## ■ POLICE CALLS

**ATHERTON**

**Residential burglary report:** 100 block of Selby Lane, Sept. 18.

**Auto burglary report:** Vehicle broken into, Menlo-Atherton High School at 555 Middlefield Road, Sept. 24.

**Fraud reports:**

■ Man claiming to be attorney soliciting money for grandson injured in accident in Canada, first block of Adam Way, Sept. 21.

■ Unauthorized use of credit card, first block of Almedral Ave., Sept. 21.

**Stolen vehicle report:** first block of Callado Way, Sept. 23.

**MENLO PARK**

**Commercial burglary report:** Medical office broken into but nothing reported stolen, 800 block of Oak Grove Ave., Sept. 18.

**Auto burglary report:** Window smashed and two baseball gloves, sports bag and hat with total value of \$500 stolen, 200 block of Oakhurst Place, Sept. 19.

**Fraud report:** Unauthorized prescription, Willow Clinic at 795 Willow Road, Sept. 18.

**Spouse abuse report:** Arrest made, 400 block of Ivy Drive, Sept. 21.

**WOODSIDE**

**Vandalism report:** Vehicle collided with water main and caused damage estimated at \$3,000, not including loss of hundreds of gallons of water, 100 block of Farm Road, Sept. 19.

**PORTOLA VALLEY**

**Theft report:** Four Rolex watches and two cameras with total value of \$24,500 stolen from downstairs bedroom, first block of Pine Ridge Way, Sept. 17.

**Vikings football**

This report is from Adam Greenlow of Menlo Park, a player on the Pee Wee Vikings' team. He is a seventh grader at St. Raymond School.

The Menlo-Atherton Vikings of the Pop Warner football league played the Berkley Jr. Bears in the fourth week of the season. The games took place Sunday, Sept. 27, at Oakland Tech. High School in Oakland. Following are the game summaries (all players named are with the Vikings).

■ **Tiny Mites:** In a game where you don't keep score of the points, Justin Sinclair scored in the first half. The Vikings played their toughest opponents yet in a hard-hitting game. The heat and player injuries made the game hard for the Vikings. Lawrence Azzopardi, Ezra Bazan, Ian Collins, JT Hunsaker, and Darien Houston all played a great game.

■ **Mitey Mites:** The Mitey Mites won in an outstanding game, 18-0. This win, keeping the Mitey Mites undefeated, was made possible because of stellar defense. This defense included Floyd Gazaway, Lucas Andrighetto, Blake Stenstrom, and Brad Yaffe who kept the Bears from scoring. Keyshawn Ashford scored two touchdowns to pump up the crowd. Brad Yaffe caught a nice pass for a touchdown. The offensive line facilitated the touchdowns by assisting the running back and receiver.

■ **Junior Pee Wees:** The JPW played a tough game against the Bears, but lost 27-6. Lavell Gates started off the Vikings' game by putting points on the board with an explosive kickoff return. Nick Becker had a fumble recovery. Leamanaia Brown exhibited great effort on defense.

■ **Pee Wees:** The Pee Wees had a great first drive, but couldn't get the first down when they were inside the 10-yard line. The Vikings had some costly mistakes, resulting in touchdowns for the other side. The Vikings could not climb out of the hole to score. The final score was a 27-0.

■ **Junior Midgets:** The Junior Midgets were down 13-0, but came back with spectacular play to win 14-13. Malcolm Gates scored a touchdown off a 72-yard kickoff return. Isiah Nash scored on a pass from Royce Branning. The second half was scoreless on both sides. Outstanding games were played by Steven McColloch, Max Gardner, Robert Wang, Anthony Gabb, and Skyler Taulapapa.

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## Election forum Tuesday on charter schools

A Q-&A session on the election for two seats on the Sequoia Union High School District's five-member governing board is set for 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 29, at the Alpine Hills Tennis & Swim Club at 4139 Alpine Road in Portola Valley. The public is invited.

Only two of the six candidates — Atherton resident Bob Ferrando and Menlo Park resident Chris Thomsen — were invited because, according to forum organizer Andrew Thompson, the two have "clearly expressed" support for charter high schools as well as public education in general

and the need to improve graduation rates.

Both Mr. Ferrando and Mr. Thomsen have children at Summit Preparatory Charter High School in Redwood City. Mr. Thomsen also has a son at Menlo-Atherton High School. Mr. Thompson raised funds for Summit Prep for several years.

The guest list is likely to include a speaker representing Summit Prep or its recently opened sister school, Everest Public High School.

The forum, Mr. Thompson said, is meant to inform voters on the issues and specifically about charter schools.

## Rutters observe golden wedding anniversary

Dick and Joanne Rutter of Emerald Hills celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary on a recent trip to New York City, accompanied by their children. The Rutters were married Sept. 12, 1959, at Stanford Memorial Church and spent their honeymoon in New York.

The Rutters, who lived in Menlo Park from 1960 to 1986, have resided in Emerald Hills since 1996.

Ms. Rutter is a graduate of the University of California at Berkeley and the UC San Francisco School of Nursing. She has served as a deacon at Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, president of the Stanford Mothers Club, and chapter president of P.E.O.



Joanne and Dick Rutter.

She has also been active with her sorority, Alpha Delta Pi.

A four-generation San Franciscan, Dr. Rutter is a third-

generation graduate of Stanford University, where he was a member of Alpha Tau Omega fraternity. He was an orthodontist in Palo Alto for 25 years and taught orthodontics for 51 years at the Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry at the University of the Pacific. He served as chairman of the department of orthodontics at the school for 15 years.

Active for many years in Kiwanis and youth sports, Dr. Rutter is also an avid Stanford football fan, say family members.

The Rutters have two children: Karen Rutter Weber of Richmond Beach/Seattle, Washington, and Jim Rutter of Redwood City; and five grandchildren.



Photo by Megan Mathews

## Tennis team advances to nationals

The Courtside women's 4.5-level tennis team, made up of women who live on the Peninsula, will advance to the U.S. Tennis Association national tournament, to be held Oct. 28-Nov. 1 in Las Vegas. To compete at the nationals, the team had to win the Northern California sectional championship, held Aug. 28-30 in Carmel. Players are, front row, from left, Tanya Gacs (Portola Valley), Ellie Victor (Menlo Park), Mary Gustafson (Los Altos), and Susan Lynch (San Mateo); second row, from left, Mary Harris (Campbell), Grace Salapatek (Campbell), Erin Green (San Jose), and Brook Hartzell (San Jose); and top row, from left, Jane Solomon (Palo Alto) and Rasha Dessouki (Los Altos).

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### BIRTHS

#### Menlo Park

- Juliane Remold and Jose de Barros, a daughter, Aug. 29, Sequoia Hospital.
- Mary Beth and Robert Carpenter, a daughter, Sept. 1, Sequoia Hospital.

#### Emerald Hills

- Andrea and Adam Torres, a daughter, Aug. 29, Sequoia Hospital.

## JASON JAMES MULVANEY AND JENNIFER ANNE MULVANEY

In loving memory of Jason James Mulvaney, April 11, 1997 - September 15, 2009, age 12; and Jennifer Anne Mulvaney, May 7, 2002 - September 15, 2009, age 7.

Beloved children of their Mom, Ms. Julie Anne Mulvaney of Thousand Oaks, California. They were happy children. They lit up the room when they entered, running, bounding, sliding in.

In addition to their Mother, the children are survived by their aunt, Karen Preston (Mike and cousins, Danny and Steven), their uncle, David J. Goerz, III (Kristin and cousins, Lauren and Ashlynn), and their maternal grandparents, Mary and Dave Goerz, Jr.

Jenny and Jason are at home with their heavenly Father.

A memorial service was held on Tuesday, September 22, 2009 at 12:30 pm at the Church of the Reformation, Forest Lawn Cemetery, Glendale, California.

Memorial gifts may be made in honor of Jason and Jennifer Mulvaney. Checks made payable to: Childrens Hospital Los Angeles (In the Memo line: Library). Mail to: Childrens Hospital Los Angeles, 4650 Sunset Boulevard, Mail Stop 4, Los Angeles, CA 90027.

PAID OBITUARY

## BERTHA F. KIEM (1914 - 2009)



Bertha F. Kiem, a resident of Menlo Park for 32 years, died on September 18, 2009 at Glenwood Inn Assisted Living in Menlo Park. She was 95.

She was born in Plover, Iowa, where her mother and father owned a farm. She had eight siblings. She attended nursing school for several years at the University of Minnesota, until the Great Depression prevented her from continuing. She worked for an insurance company in Des Moines, and then moved to Washington, D.C., where she worked for the War Department.

In 1941, she married William F. Kiem. After the war, the couple moved to Chicago and started their family. In 1950, the family relocated to Spokane, Washington. Several years later, Bertha began work at the Social Security Administration as a claims representative. She took the job to ensure funds for her children's college education.

Following the death of her husband of thirty

years, Bertha moved to Menlo Park in 1977, and worked in medical records at Stanford Hospital. After retirement, she worked as an administrative assistant at her daughter's law office. She also helped raise her daughter's three children, leaving the law office at 5 pm to start dinner and oversee the grandchildren's homework. Ever generous and gentle in her manner, she exemplified the benefits of hard work and accountability.

Bertha enjoyed travelling with her family, as well as gardening at her home. She also kept up with politics and sports news.

She is survived by her three children: Patricia L. Kiem of Spokane, Washington; William F. Kiem of Pacifica, and his wife, Louisa; Barbara J. Kiem of Atherton, and her husband, Lawrence E. Eiselstein; three grandchildren, Lisa K. Eiselstein, Alex K. Eiselstein, and Laura K. Alcaraz, and one great grandchild, Nahla L. Alcaraz. A fourth grandchild, Ethan G. Kiem, resides in New Mexico.

A memorial service has been held. The family invites you to contribute, in lieu of flowers, to the Mid-Peninsula Boys and Girls Club, located in San Mateo ([www.midpenbgc.org](http://www.midpenbgc.org)).

PAID OBITUARY

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## City pay in the spotlight

There is no shortage of advice from residents offering ways for Menlo Park to reduce, or at least not increase, its employee costs, the most expensive chunk of the city's annual budget.

And at a meeting last week where residents were given a tutorial on how the city sets wages and benefits, the city's biggest labor union, which represents 152 employees, lobbed a pre-emptive strike on any effort to rein in pay by offering to forgo any salary or benefit increases for the next two years.

**EDITORIAL**  
*The opinion of The Almanac*

The city has not responded to the offer publicly, but in today's economic climate, it has to be welcome news as potentially difficult labor negotiations are about to begin.

And former council member Mickie Winkler laid out a plan she said could reduce the size of the city's workforce in a way that would not require negotiations with the city's unions. The city could save by reorganizing some departments and contracting out services such as child care, she said.

City employees were a big part of the crowd at the meeting, and librarian Jennifer Wilkins urged the council not to lose sight of the quality work done by staff members, who, she contended are not overpaid when compared with private sector employees.

That may be true, but pension costs are another matter. More and more companies are trading defined benefit pension plans like the city's for 401(k) accounts that are subject to the ups and downs of the marketplace. There are no guarantees with a 401(k), as many retirees found out in the recent downturn, when many saw 20- and 30-percent losses in the value of their accounts.

City employees who retire receive a fixed sum every month,

and in the case of police officers, can earn 90 percent of their highest salary for life. Such pensions are becoming increasingly costly for cities, including Menlo Park, due to losses suffered by CalPERS, the state retirement plan. When CalPERS' funds drop significantly due to faltering investments, cities must increase their contributions to the agency, which can add thousands of dollars to the city's pension costs.

Over the years, Menlo Park has used pay scales in other Peninsula cities to set compensation levels and remain competitive in the market for police officers and other city workers. But that strategy has backfired, as wages spiraled upward, beyond comparable pay in the private sector. For example, Menlo Park felt compelled to adopt a 30 percent salary increase for police sergeants last year to remain competitive with other Peninsula cities.

But now, the economic downturn is putting tremendous pressure on the City Council and others to regain control of employee wages and benefits. Residents are more aware and concerned about compensation than ever before, and rightly so.

The days of the council approving a never-ending upward spiral of salary and benefit increases without any comment from residents must stop. More transparency is needed, including a more publicized means for the public to comment on proposed contracts before they are approved by the council.

The Menlo Park Fire Protection District has instituted this policy, and it is time for the city to adopt it too. With more awareness of proposed contract terms, residents could bring pressure to bear on the council before salary increases are approved. This transparency would not guarantee lower contract terms, but it would force council members to defend their decisions before approving pay increases, as they have in the past.

**LETTERS**  
*Our readers write*

**Jury member disputes criticism of report**

*Editor:*

I am shocked at Kelly Ferguson's attack on the county grand jury report titled "Reversing the Upward Trajectory of Employee Costs in the Cities of San Mateo County."

She really is off base in attacking the motivation of the members of the grand jury as being "political." She did so last month in a City Council tirade and last week in The Almanac in a guest opinion which misrepresented the report.

It took many months of work by the grand jury to interview city managers, finance directors and a union official before writing the report.

Our jury was comprised of citizens with diverse backgrounds and talents, including former bankers, investment professionals, human resource administrators, educators and business owners and executives.

Newspaper reports were

See **LETTERS**, next page



Atherton Heritage Association

**Our Regional Heritage**

Early estate owners in Atherton often vied to see who could bring the most exotic trees and plants to their homes. Florence Atherton Eyre wrote about the gardens and unusual trees on the Flood Estate, which had species from many countries. The Araucaria bidwillii or Bunya-Bunya tree, at right, is shown on the Flood Estate in 1891. Other examples of the tree can be found today at Holbrook-Palmer Park in Atherton.

## LETTERS

Continued from previous page

researched and sources checked. Comparisons between cities of similar sizes in population and city staff positions were made. Each city completed an extensive survey of its finances and personnel costs.

I was proud to have been selected to serve on the grand jury which issued the report and I take issue with Ms. Fergusson's criticisms, especially her venomous attack on a former city council member who was also a fellow member of the grand jury.

**Thomas Mein**  
Avy Avenue, Menlo Park

### Disappointed in opinion on grand jury

*Editor:*

After last week's Menlo Park City Council meeting I decided to check out what's been written about the county grand jury report mentioned at the meeting. Unfortunately, I was very disappointed by what council member Kelly Fergusson wrote in her guest opinion piece in last week's Almanac.

Under the ironic banner of "let's not politicize the issue," Ms. Fergusson does just that by dissing the report without providing any details; accuses county grand jurors of political, not taxpayer, motives; and rehashes a past political fight with ad hominem attacks on those she disagrees with.

It's sad to see an elected representative avoid the real issues, going so quickly to the negative, divisive political rhetoric that completely misses the real issue here: How do we control our long-term city costs? The people of Menlo Park deserve better leadership.

**Jim Long**  
Menlo Park

### Advice on competitive salary approach

*Editor:*

On the discussion about Menlo Park employee salaries, two items should be considered.

First, adopting a "competitive salary" approach to setting compensation puts Menlo Park in a race with other cities toward bankruptcy. Compensation consultant Graef Crystal years ago pointed out the dangers of this compensation methodology in producing ever increasing salaries.

Other jurisdictions are of course facing similar budget problems. I would like to see Menlo Park take a leadership stand and say no to this approach in negotiating future salary increases.

Second, I would like to see what portion of our city budget is spent on current services versus past services. It would be instructive to see what that trend line shows.

## Why we need a staff-size reduction policy

By Mickie Winkler

**W**hy do we care about employee costs? Not surprisingly, employee costs constitute the single largest city expenditure. When employee costs rise, city services are curtailed, fees and taxes are increased, and, most unfortunately, infrastructure maintenance is deferred.

From fiscal years 2006 through 2008, employee costs increased about 11 percent each year. Going forward, even if employee salaries and current benefits remain exactly where they are today, employee costs will continue to escalate. That is because CalPERS, the state employee retirement system, took a beating in the market, and can no longer meet its pension pay-out obligations without assessing cities more.

The City Council has very little wiggle room for reducing current or future benefits for existing staff. Legally, all such changes must be negotiated with the unions. So the most productive and immediate approach to cutting employee costs is to reduce staff size. I believe we can do so with minimal service sacrifice.

The council needs to adopt an explicit "employee size-reduction policy." It is not enough for the city manager to propose

staff cuts without the public cover a council policy provides.

The good news is that Menlo Park has more staff than any other local city of comparable size, even cities that are very well run. So we know that reductions can be achieved rather seamlessly. A program for implementing a size-reduction policy is offered below.

■ **Departmental reorganization:** The city manager is currently reorganizing departments, and presumably eliminating the need for some department heads. Good.

■ **Contracting out services:** The city has recently outsourced custodial services. Hopefully, a long overdue decision will soon be made to let child care professionals run — and improve — our child care facility. Other ways to off-load jobs should be explored, such as combining the payroll function for all cities in the county, just as the county Office of Education does for over 150 schools.

■ **Creating smart government:** More good news. The opportunities for stream-

lining city processes are plentiful. For example, our residential and commercial zoning ordinances, not just on El Camino Real, are still convoluted. Ordinances which create staff efficiencies have already been framed and should be enacted.

■ **Exercising discipline:** If concrete goals for staff size reduction are implemented, we will stop restudying issues that have been studied before, or studying projects we cannot fund. We will be forced to focus on the most important priorities.

Staff-size reductions do not have to be negotiated with the unions. They do not put us at a disadvantage when compared to other cities. They do not have to impact services. In fact, as the outsourced Burgess Pool program demonstrates, we can actually improve service quality.

It is unfortunate that good people may be let go. Employees who do leave will, at least, have access to excellent retirement benefits when they are 55.

Going forward, every action the council takes and every issue it studies must be filtered through the policy of reducing employee costs.

**Mickie Winkler is a former Menlo Park City Council member.**



Increasing expenditures for past services (pension and post-retirement health costs) will slowly take a larger portion of our budget, thus requiring reductions in current services. Long term, this will make the city less attractive to business, labor and residents.

**Claudia Newbold**  
French Court, Menlo Park

### Las Lomas teachers still lack contract

*Editor:*

As a parent of three children attending Las Lomas and La Entrada, I am incredibly proud of the district's students for achieving in two straight years the top California API scores.

I am equally proud of the teachers who work tirelessly, educating our boys and girls.

What many district parents may not know, however, is that these exceptional teachers worked the entire year without a settled contract. They still do not have one. Yet they selflessly continue to put the needs of their students above their own.

While I am deeply grateful for this, I worry we may lose these superb educators to other top-notch districts. I encourage district parents who value the investment we're making in our children's education to contact the school board and superintendent's office, and urge swift passage of a contract that will maintain the excellence in education with which we are so richly blessed.

**Evan Reis**  
Hedge Road, Menlo Park

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