

2009 Fall Real Estate

INSIDE THIS ISSUE: Updates on real estate markets and trends

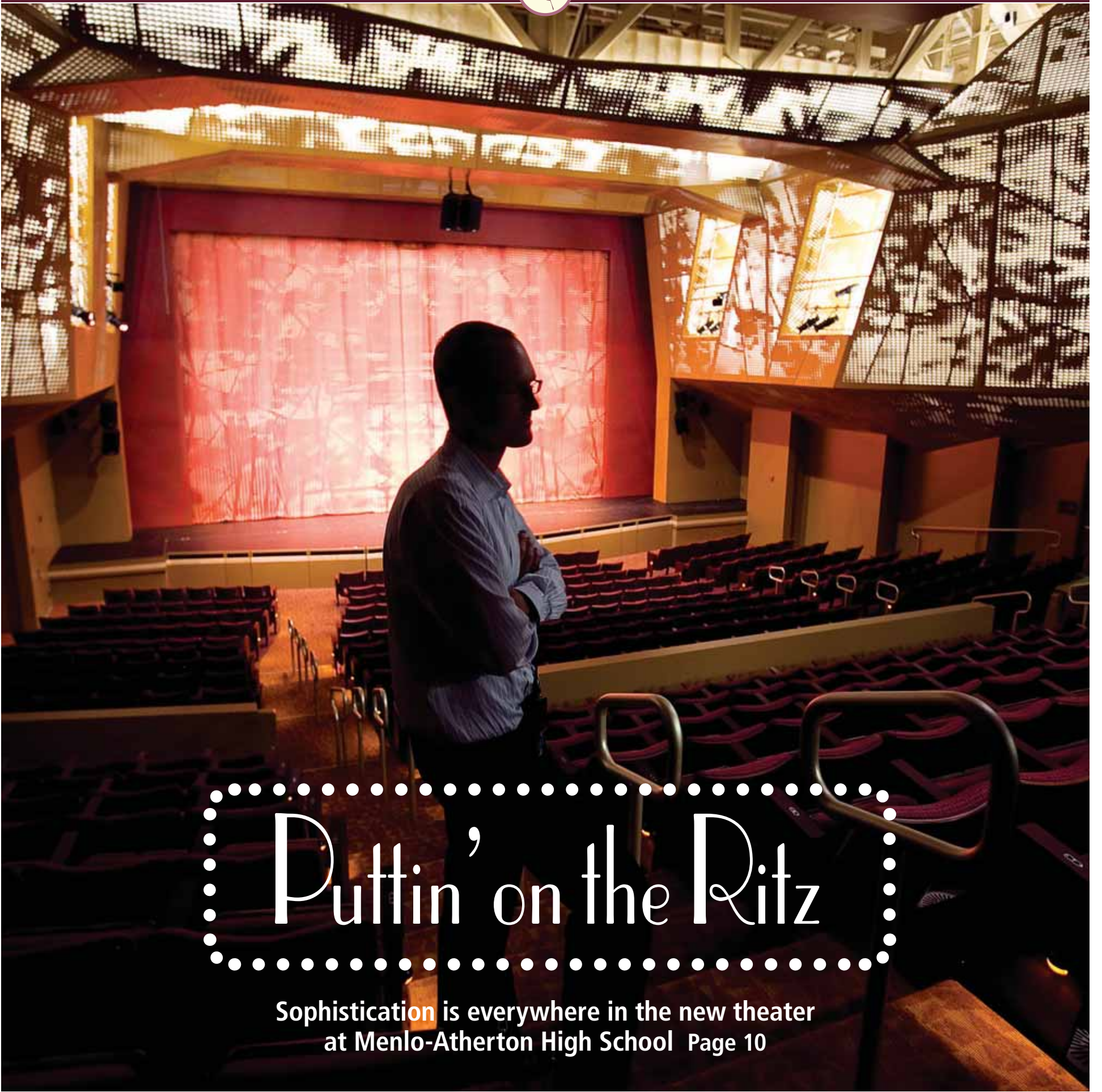
The Almanac

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

OCTOBER 7, 2009 | VOL. 45 NO. 6



WWW.THEALMANACONLINE.COM



Puttin' on the Ritz

Sophistication is everywhere in the new theater at Menlo-Atherton High School Page 10

Woodside Day of the Horse

The first horse came to Woodside and Portola Valley in 1769 with Gaspar de Portola.

They camped in a nearby valley and discovered the Bay. Now the Woodside horse population is by far the largest of any Peninsula town.



The San Mateo County Sheriff's Mounted Search and Rescue Unit

consists of civilians who volunteer their own time, money and horses for search and rescue operations work as a team with the Sheriff's Office and other emergency agencies.



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Founded shortly after Pearl Harbor to help guard our rugged coast, the **Mounted Patrol of San Mateo County**



evolved into a community service organization which participates in rodeos, equestrian events, charitable activities and assists the Sheriff's search and rescue team.

The beautiful 100 year old Folger Stable in Wunderlich Park will be renovated thanks to the efforts of over 600 community donors dedicated to preserving our equestrian heritage. Public horse boarding will continue a century old tradition at the Stable.



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This message sponsored by Bill and Jean Lane to salute those who appreciate the history and joy of the horse.

Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

FIRST SHOT



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Shaking hands

There weren't any babies to kiss, but Atherton resident and former eBay CEO Meg Whitman gave her stump speech to a crowd at Atherton Councilman Charles Marsala's house on Sept. 30. More than 300 people gathered to hear Ms. Whitman's plans for the state as she campaigns for the Republican nomination in the race to be California's next governor. The event was not a fundraiser, but a chance to meet the gubernatorial hopeful, said Mr. Marsala.

Menlo Park

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Woodside

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Crime

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Schools

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People

- Mounted Patrol pioneer Rich Delucchi celebrates 100th birthday. **Page 7**
- Donne Davis: She's ga-ga about being a grandma. **Page 8**

Fall Real Estate

- Sink or swim? Downturn in home sales make buyers look longer before they leap. **See special publication inserted in this issue.**

Also Inside

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On the cover

Matthew Zito, principal of Menlo-Atherton High School, recently gave reporters a tour of the school's new theater, a \$32 million, 492-seat complex that has re-invigorated the Middlefield Road edge of the campus and should wow theater-goers with high-end acoustics and sophisticated lighting and sound systems. Photo by Don Fera. Story begins on **Page 10**.

CALLING ON THE ALMANAC

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

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Adoption of the Community
Development Agency
Implementation Plan for Fiscal Years
2009-2010 through 2013-2014

The Menlo Park Community Development Agency (Agency) will be conducting a public hearing on the following item:

Public review and consideration of adoption of the Agency's proposed new five-year implementation plan (Implementation Plan) for the redevelopment of the Las Pulgas Community Development Project Area (Project Area) covering Fiscal Years 2009-10 through 2013-14.

The public hearing will be held in the Council Chambers of the City of Menlo Park, located at 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, on the date listed below at which time and place interested persons may appear and be heard thereon. If you challenge this item in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Menlo Park or the Agency at, or prior to, the public hearing.

City Council: Tuesday, November 3, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.

The proposed Implementation Plan sets forth, for the five-year planning period comprised of fiscal years 2009-10 through 2013-14, the specific goals and objectives of the Agency for the redevelopment of the Project Area, potential programs and projects, estimated expenditures proposed to be made during the planning period, and an explanation of how the goals and objectives, programs, and expenditures will eliminate blight within the Project Area, and implement the affordable housing requirements of the California Community Redevelopment Law (Health & Safety Code Section 33000 et seq.). The proposed Implementation Plan has been prepared, and this notice is being provided, in accordance with Health and Safety Code Section 33490.

For questions or additional information, or to receive or review a copy of the proposed Implementation Plan, please contact Dr. Douglas Frederick, Housing Manager, at 650-330-6724 or email at dfrederick@menlopark.org.

DATED: October 1, 2009 Margaret Roberts,
City Clerk

PUBLISHED: October 7, 14, and 21, 2009

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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

You want nuts on that?

Kids participating in the gift-wrap fundraiser at Corte Madera School in Portola Valley have an extra source of motivation this year. Principal Carol Piraino says that if the students hit the \$22,000 mark in wrapping paper sales, she has to do “something really awful. I have to be a human sundae.”

Talk about a sticky situation.

Over there

Nicholas Caine of Atherton seems to have a surplus of stamina. The 16-year-old junior at Sacred Heart Prep successfully swam across the English Channel this summer. The swim took a lot longer than expected — 13 hours, rather than eight or nine. As he accepted a certificate of achievement from the Atherton City Council recently, he mentioned that he’d like to swim the English Channel again, only this time, he’d make it a round-trip.

A boy’s life

It’s a young man’s world in the Portola Valley School District these days. Enrollment numbers for the current school year show that boys outnumber girls in the K-8 district by 56 percent to 44 percent.

And in some grades, the disparity is startling — out of the 96 first-graders, 68 are boys and only 28 are girls. In fact, all but one grade — grade 5 — has a majority of boys.

District officials said they have no explanation for the trend.

Some taxing news

This month’s Athertonian newsletter is pretty much a one-issue issue. Instead of the usual hodgepodge of articles on town activities and projects, it’s all about the renewal of the parcel tax on the November ballot as Measures S and T. If there’s anyone in town who is wondering exactly what gets funded with the \$750-per-parcel annual tax, it’s all spelled out in the fall edition of the Athertonian, along with voter information.

Draeger’s says it might close if council approves El Camino development project

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

If Menlo Park’s City Council doesn’t require the developer of the site of the defunct Cadillac dealership to provide housing, not to worry: the Draeger family could build residential units — after shuttering its market.

At least that’s what the family has threatened to do if the council allows for retail space in a project proposed for the site at 1300 El Camino Real, which the Draegers fear would be occupied by a grocer.

“You should be aware that if this project is approved Draeger’s will be forced to consider the conversion of

our building from grocery retail to another economically viable use, such as office space or residential,” the Draeger family wrote in an e-mail to the council on Oct. 1. The council could approve the project in a public hearing Tuesday, Oct. 6.

Under the proposal by Sand Hill Property Co. for the El Camino site, the development would include 51,000 square feet of retail space and 59,000 square feet of office space. A grocery store is among the tenants that could occupy the space, but it could also be filled by a combination of other retailers, restaurants, or a gym.

In a separate letter, John and Daniel Beltramo — owners of Beltramo’s Wines and Spirits on

El Camino Real, a stone’s throw from the site of the proposed new development — also sent a letter to the city, urging it to minimize the amount of retail space it approves, replacing it with housing.

Not the first time

This is not the first time owners of the markets have cautioned the city against allowing chain retailers to set up shop in Menlo Park.

In 2006, Draeger’s and Beltramo’s joined with five other alcoholic beverage vendors to oppose plans by nationwide retailer Beverages & More (BevMo) to open downtown.

Draeger’s has said that previous plans for a Whole Foods Market

at the 1300 El Camino site would render its Menlo Park operation “unfeasible.”

While Whole Foods executives have since said they have no interest in the site, the Draeger family said in its letter that it still assumes Whole Foods intends to move in.

Both Draeger’s and Beltramo’s said they fear that any new retail operation would draw business from existing Menlo Park retailers.

Responding to a request for an interview, Draeger’s co-owner Anthony Draeger referred The Almanac to the letter his company sent to the city.

The city has not studied

See **DRAEGER’S**, page 8



TheatreWorks has installed in its costume warehouse a lighting system pioneered by a Menlo Park company.

Photo by Michelle Le

Smart lights: MP company addressing energy drain

■ HID Labs is trying to bring an ancient lighting technology up to date.

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

The difference between today’s manufacturing plants and those of the 1940s is night and day. Sophisticated robots that swivel and bend and do most everything else wheel around the floor, replacing men in overalls. Factories that used to produce Packards are now popping out Priuses.

The lights that illuminate those warehouses, however, have not changed much in the last 70 years. They are “high-intensity-discharge” (HID) bulbs, and they produce luminescence through a simple design: electricity flowing between two electrodes in a glass chamber. If that description doesn’t do anything for you, look up the next time you’re in a Costco. Like most manufacturers and “big-box” retailers, that’s what the company uses to light its stores.

“Literally lightning in a bottle” is how Kurt Buecheler, vice president of sales for Menlo Park-based HID Labs, describes the primi-

tive technology. HID lights are so effective, producing a high-wattage beam that closely resembles sunlight, that the companies that use them are loathe to switch to anything else.

As it turns out, HID lamps also suck an incredible amount of energy. Electricity in the industrial sector accounts for nearly 14 percent of the country’s end-use greenhouse gas emissions, according to information from the Environmental Protection Agency and the Department of Energy. HID lights are used

See **LIGHTS**, page 8

Fragile comity unwinds between Everest and district

■ Sequoia trustee's use of enrollment data infuriates charter official.

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

The discord between Everest (charter) Public High School and the Sequoia Union High School District took a turn for the worse last week after Sequoia board President Don Gibson, with the help of the district's public affairs officer,

wrote a personal opinion intended for publication in The Almanac that reportedly mischaracterized the school.

The opinion leaked data obtained in confidence from Everest about student enrollment. Mr. Gibson also leaked the data to the two school board candidates endorsed

by Sequoia board members.

He later withdrew his letter at the request of board member Olivia Martinez, who had obtained the information in delicate negotiations with Everest co-founder Diane Tavenner.

It's the latest incident in a catalog of district efforts to prevent the school from opening in Redwood City this school year. Everest, which has sued the district over its offer of facilities in East Palo Alto, is sister to popular Summit Preparatory Charter High School. Both were heavily over-subscribed in the spring.

The Sequoia district pays Everest about \$6,700 per student. Ms. Martinez's negotiation provided Sequoia with a snapshot that included Everest's out-of-district student population. To recoup funding for such students, Sequoia must arrange for reimbursement from their home districts.

Enrollment data is typically made public through the school's sponsor in January, Ms. Tavenner said. Everest's sponsor is the state Board of Education.

In his letter, Mr. Gibson claimed that Everest, as late as July, was "still scrambling for students" and opened with "just 90 students who actually live in the district and, to reach the required 100 students to open, Everest enrolled students from outside the district."

In March, Everest had 325 applicants for its 100 freshman seats. Names not chosen became a waiting list from which names were

drawn. Families chose other schools over the summer, given significant uncertainty as to whether Everest would open on schedule, but there was no "scrambling for students," Ms. Tavenner said.

Mr. Gibson's allegations are "a false, vicious and public attack on the school, its faculty, students and founders," she said.

Sequoia attorneys recently proffered settlement talks with Everest over the lawsuit, but upon learning of the content of Mr. Gibson's letter, Ms. Tavenner said she has cancelled all such talks.

Mr. Gibson also admitted sending his latest letter to two of the eight candidates running for two open seats on the district board: Alan Sarver and Virginia Chang Kiraly, who noted Everest's out-of-district students in an interview with The Almanac.

Ms. Martinez, who described herself as "livid" over the matter, said she faults Mr. Gemma for the data's release. Mr. Gemma had no comment.

Mr. Gibson's passing of the numbers to Mr. Sarver and Ms. Kiraly was "unfortunate," Ms. Martinez said, adding that its only purpose should have been for preparing reimbursement claims.

She said she also considered it "inappropriate"

for Ms. Smith and Mr. Gemma to be involved with Mr. Gibson's personal opinions. "Frankly, I hold the superintendent responsible for that," she added. "That was not something that he should have allowed and supported and encouraged, and in the end, he agreed" to withdraw Mr. Gibson's letter.

Mr. Gemma had no comment other than to say that he was "told" about intentions to withdraw the letter.

Feeling betrayed

Of Everest's 106 freshmen, 16 do not live in the district. After 106 names were chosen by lottery in March, the remaining names became a waiting list.

Everest staff spent over 30 hours collecting student residency data for the Sequoia district, Ms. Tavenner said.

Everest Executive Director Jon Deane said the data was prepared "in a very urgent fashion," and that he now feels betrayed. "I feel that the district is sending us a clear message that they don't want to collaborate with us," he said. ■

Mr. Gibson's allegation is 'a false, vicious and public attack on the school,' said Everest co-founder Diane Tavenner.

Complicating the matter for the district is Mr. Gibson's claim that his letter, as well another that was recently published, were personal opinions. But he said he enlisted help from taxpayer funded district staff, including public affairs officer Bettylu Smith.

Ms. Smith edited Mr. Gibson's drafts on her computer, Mr. Gibson said in an interview, adding that he considered their efforts "collaborative writing." Ms. Smith did not respond to repeated requests for comment.

"I wrote the majority of it (and) I believe it's all fact," Mr. Gibson said, adding that he needed help to avoid complications associated with the Everest litigation and because he has dyslexia.

Superintendent Pat Gemma served as a reviewer, Mr. Gibson said. Mr. Gemma told The Almanac that he had read, but not commented on, several drafts, and was "aware of" Ms. Smith's participation.

Mr. Gibson said he withdrew the letter because Ms. Martinez "is in the process of trying to build a bridge with Diane, so I figured I wouldn't get in the way."



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■ POLICE CALLS

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

ATHERTON

Stolen vehicle report: 1999 green Dodge Grand Caravan with purse inside, Middlefield Road and Encinal Ave., Sept. 25.

Burglary report: Laptop computer stolen, El Camino Real, Sept. 27.

Auto burglary report: Window smashed and wallet stolen including cash, credit cards and ID, Santiago Ave., Sept. 27.

Grand theft report: Apple I-phone stolen, El Camino Real, Sept. 29.

MENLO PARK

Stolen vehicle report: Maroon 1989 Toyota Camry, Willow Road and Ivy Drive, Sept. 25.

Grand theft report: Jewelry valued at \$4,700 stolen from residence while victim was in process of moving, 2300 block of Sharon Road, Sept. 26.

Residential burglary report: 1100 block of Henderson Ave., Sept. 26.

PORTOLA VALLEY

Theft report: Wallet stolen from parked vehicle, 4500 block of Alpine Road, Sept. 23.

100th birthday party for Rich Delucchi

Rich Delucchi of Woodside, who was 100 year old on Sept. 14, was honored by members of the Mounted Patrol of San Mateo County with a birthday dinner at the Patrol grounds on Sept. 29. About a hundred members and guests, as well as a dozen members of Mr. Delucchi's family, dined on prime rib and salmon.

Some of his younger friends and members (now in their 70s and 80s) shared stories about Mr. Delucchi. A film was shown of a 1963 Mounted Patrol ride in the Sierras when Mr. Delucchi was the group's captain. A chocolate birthday cake prepared by Mark Sweyer of the Woodside Bakery capped the evening.

Mr. Delucchi, a retired building contractor, has lived in Woodside since 1951. A San Francisco native, he began riding horses in the early 1930s and moved down the Peninsula so he could keep horses.

Although he has owned



Rich Delucchi is a pioneer with the local Mounted Patrol.

a variety of horses over the years, including a Tennessee Walker and a Morab, for many years he was known for riding around Woodside on one of his two mules, Black Jack and Jennie, according to an article

in the Jan. 25, 2006, issue of *The Almanac*.

He was instrumental in putting together the purchase of the Mounted Patrol grounds in 1947 and was a founding member of the organization. He used his building expertise to construct the Patrol's first clubhouse and original bleachers, as well as many other projects on the grounds. He was named outstanding horseman-citizen of 2005 by the Mounted Patrol of San Mateo County Horsemen's Association.

Mr. Delucchi helped convince San Mateo County officials to build horse trails along Canada Road, Kings Mountain and Greer Roads, according to *The Almanac* article.

He has been involved with the Woodside Trail Club since its inception, and helped start the San Mateo County Horsemen's Association's horse shows, play days, and Fourth of July Rodeo.

Longtime resident Pete Dias celebrates 90th birthday

Irene Diaz Oncley, a niece of Pete Dias, submitted this information.

Pete Dias, a resident of Menlo Park since 1941, celebrates his 90th birthday on Oct. 11.

Born in Navamorcunde, Spain, in 1919, he emigrated to California in 1935 with two of his brothers to work at their uncle's grocery store in Sunnyvale.

In 1941, Mr. Dias and his brother Tony found work at Menlo Fruit & Meat Market (at the corner of El Camino Real and Oak Grove



Pete Dias in 1942 (left) and in 1999 on his 80th birthday. He's lived in Menlo Park since 1941.

Avenue), where they worked for 14 years and provided groceries to many homes in



Atherton and Menlo Park.

In 1955, Pete moved to Menlo Food Center on El Camino (next door to Le Pot au Feu), where he worked another 10 years. He retired from Midtown Market in Los Altos in 1981. He is a proud member of the Retail Clerk's union.

Along with sister Pauline, Mr. Dias is a loyal parishioner of St. Denis church, and a resident of Valparaiso Avenue for 61 years.

Woodside: Another school board candidate withdraws

By Renee Batti
Almanac Staff Writer

A second candidate for the Woodside Elementary School District board has announced he is withdrawing from the race — leaving only three candidates for three seats, but five names on the November ballot.

Millo Fenzi announced Sept. 28 that he is no longer asking voters to support him for a seat on the board. His withdrawal follows that of Elianne Frenkel-Popell, an incumbent

who withdrew from the race on Aug. 31.

Because Ms. Frenkel-Popell and Mr. Fenzi changed their minds after the official filing period, their names will remain on the ballot, along with the three candidates who still appear eager to serve on the board: Marc Tarpenning, Wendy Warren Crandall, and incumbent Bettina Pike.

Mr. Fenzi, who has been concerned about the safety of children going to and from Woodside Elementary School, said

in a written statement that he's withdrawing from the school board race because he has agreed to head a "Safe Routes to School" subcommittee for the school's site council.

"My belief is that I can make a greater contribution to our community by championing a Safe Routes to School initiative than I can as a school board member."

He also said he believes the three remaining candidates "will provide excellent leadership for the school."

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Gloria Darke



Trade-up Now?

Dear Gloria,

We are bursting at the seams with three young children in our present house. What should we know about trading up in these challenging times?

Sandra P.

A. Knowledgeable homeowners, who wisely purchased homes in the past, are now discovering they can more easily afford their dream home. They are investing accumulated equity, even though it may be less than it was 18 months ago, taking advantage of attractive financing, and legally maximizing favorable tax laws to their advantage. Besides being able to enjoy the space, comfort and amenities of a large home for some

buyers trading-up makes good financial sense.

Because the IRS has eliminated many tax shelters and personal interest deductions, trade-up buyers are using the higher mortgage interest and increased property taxes as major deductions. These deductions can help make a more expensive home more affordable. Owning higher price real estate can also be an excellent basis for building a sizeable, long term estate. This is not to suggest that anyone should buy beyond their means.

To learn your current equity position and to see if trading-up makes sense at this time, call your realtor or I would be happy to do a comparative market analysis for you.

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Underground high-speed rail option still on the table

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

Peninsula residents studied maps and discussed potential plans last week for the California high-speed rail system, which could bring trains shooting along the Caltrain corridor at up to 125 miles per hour.

They crowded around tables, shared opinions and asked questions of high-speed rail officials on the evening of Sept. 30 at the SamTrans headquarters in San Carlos.

Then, in a two-day workshop at the Sheraton Hotel in Palo Alto over the weekend, residents drew up plans for a revamped Caltrain corridor, with rail lines running underground in a trench or a tunnel, and a bike path/pedestrian walkway from Atherton to south Palo Alto at ground level. That workshop was organized by a group of local architects, and sponsored by the Peninsula Cities Coalition, a group including Atherton and Menlo Park that discusses high-speed rail issues.

Rail agency representatives presented the Sept. 30 meeting as an opportunity to educate residents about the possible configuration of the rail system, and to gather feedback. They said no decisions have been made yet on the alignment of the tracks, and that they are evaluating all options in earnest.

At the weekend workshop, residents were encouraged to think big, making a wish list for the things they would like to see included as part of the \$40 million project approved by voters in November 2008. The list included new parks, sculptures, and open space along the Caltrain corridor, along with an enhanced busi-

ness district, urban gardens and rebuilt civic centers.

"What we've seen in the last 48 hours is the creation of a vision for our communities — a vision we all know is idealistic, but we feel parts of it are achievable," event organizer Brian Steen said.

The main hurdle to achieving that vision is the expense. Rail officials have estimated that boring tunnels would cost about 6.5 times as much as building the rail line at grade.

Still, the eight-mile stretch between Atherton and south Palo Alto is one of five sections of the route where rail officials are considering running the trains underground, including a short dip below the Redwood City train station. The trains could also run on an elevated berm, or at ground level, with streets either raised or lowered as they cross the tracks.

The rail authority presented its own vision of what the various rail alignments could look like as the train passes through local jurisdictions. At its Sept. 30 meeting, it unveiled a slick video animation tracking the train between the downtown Palo Alto and California Avenue stations.

The agency hasn't yet posted the new video on its Web site, though the Palo Alto Weekly has posted its copy of the video on YouTube, available at tinyurl.com/HSRvideo.

In addition to Palo Alto and Redwood City, the rail agency is now considering Mountain View for a potential fourth high-speed station in the region, representatives said at the Sept. 30 meeting.

—Gennady Sheyner
and Royston Sim of the Palo Alto Weekly contributed to this report.

She's ga-ga about being a grandma

By Jane Knoerle
The Almanac Lifestyles Editor

After witnessing the birth of her first grandchild, Juliet, six years ago, Donne Davis of Menlo Park says she "went completely ga-ga."

So much so that she founded the GaGa Sisterhood, an organization of enthusiastic grandmas; started a blog (gagasisterhood.com); and began writing a column, "The Go-To Grandma," for Parenting on the Peninsula newspaper.

She has also contributed a chapter, "How to Become a Go-To Grandma," to a new book, "The Art of Grandparenting," to be released soon by Nightengale Press. The book, which is edited and published by Valerie Connelly in Tennessee, is a collection of essays, stories and tips by 20 professional writers who are also grandparents.

The local Silicon Valley chapter of the GaGa Sisterhood has 50 members, Ms. Davis says. Ms. Davis estimates 15 to 20 grannies regularly attend meetings held every other month.

"We always have a speaker or a discussion group," she says.

Why do today's grandmas need a special organization? Can't they just rely on their natural instincts, as they have since time began? "There is such a difference between how

with their daughter, Deborah Mills, and family for two nights. Juliet has stayed with her grandparents at their Menlo Park home for a five-day visit. "I arranged play dates for her through other grandmas," says Ms. Davis.



'There is such a difference between how we raised our children and how children are raised today.'

DONNE DAVIS, FOUNDER OF GAGA SISTERHOOD

we raised our children and how children are raised today," says Ms. Davis. "We have to learn to respect (our children's) parenting."

"It's the right book for the right time," editor Connelly states in a press release, "because there's really no precedent for baby-boomer grandparents. Making these relationships work truly is an art. It takes finesse, creativity, teamwork, a free spirit and nonjudgmental, unsolicited love."

Ms. Davis now has two grandchildren, Juliet, 6, and Amelia, 2. Since the children live with their parents in Sacramento, Ms. Davis and her husband, Herb, drive to Sacramento twice a month to stay

Ms. Davis stresses that those belonging to her organization lead busy, fulfilling lives. A former feature writer for the Los Angeles Times, she has been a freelance writer, conducted workshops, and practiced yoga for 20 years. She also loves to hike, she says.

"Our mission is to inspire grandmas to continue growing and evolving," she says.

The most important lesson she's learned? "Getting time with your grandchildren requires building trust and respect with their parents. Trust is the foundation for having access to your grandchildren."

Copies of "The Art of Grandparenting," signed by Ms. Davis, can be ordered through her blog site (gagasisterhood.com) for the pre-publication price of \$13.95, plus \$4.95 shipping. It can also be ordered online through Keplers.com. ■

LIGHTS

continued from page 5

in the vast majority of industrial-sector facilities, according to Mr. Buecheler.

While it's unlikely that manufacturers could be convinced to give up the lights they've relied upon for so long, HID Labs thinks it has found a way to reduce the energy used by high-intensity-discharge bulbs by 40 percent or more. Helmed by Menlo Park resident Antonio Espinosa, the company has created a device that plugs into existing HID light fixtures, making them brighter and more efficient. In the handful of warehouses where the company has tried the technology, it has reduced electricity consumption by up to 67 percent, according to Mr. Buecheler.

He calls lighting "one of the last bastions of low-tech" in the world of energy consumption.

A smart light

The new technology has made a big impression on the folks at TheatreWorks. The Menlo Park-based repertory has been using the lights in its sewing shop on Hamilton Court since November 2008.

Energy costs have dropped by 25 percent, and the lights are brighter and more faithful to sunlight than the traditional metal halide lamps the company previously used, said assistant production manager Jim Gross. The costume manager doesn't have to take costumes out in the sunlight anymore to tell what color they are, he said. "Our costume storage manager came back thrilled, because for the first time in years, she was able to look at two pieces of clothing and tell which one is black, and which one is navy."

The product HID Labs makes substitutes for a simple transformer. Equipped with a circuit board, the device changes the shape of the frequency of energy coming into the light fixture, allowing for about a 10 percent increase in wattage. It also allows the bulb to turn on in a way that keeps degradation to a minimum, giving it a longer shelf life and keeping the light intensity high over time.

The combination of these factors allows manufacturers to replace their 400-watt bulbs with 250-watt bulbs, according to Mr. Buecheler, accounting for most of the energy savings.

The fact that the bulbs wouldn't have to be replaced as often is a major consideration when it comes to cost, Mr. Buecheler says, considering that changing bulbs in a warehouse with high ceilings is a labor-intensive process. And fewer fixtures would have to be installed in new facilities, because the modified lamps provide more light.

It would take a company retrofitting its warehouse between 6 and 24 months to recoup its investment, HID Labs estimates.

The device also allows facility managers to set up an automatic system to dim or brighten each bulb, depending on a number of factors, such as how much sunlight is coming through the windows, or where workers are on the floor — something that isn't possible with standard HID lamps.

The image of row after row of overhead bulbs thumping to life in a warehouse? This would be more like a light show, at glacial speed.

The system does, however, have its limits. You probably wouldn't want high-intensity-discharge bulbs in your home, for instance, unless you happen to have 50-foot-high ceilings. You could almost see Mr. Gross' brow furrow when he was asked over the phone whether TheatreWorks planned to use the lamps on the stage.

For more information on the technology, visit HID Labs' Web site: HIDLabs.com. ■

DRAEGER'S

continued from page 5

whether there's a market for additional retail in general, because "the answer is highly dependent on what the store is selling," city planner Megan Fisher said.

In approving the 1300 El Camino Real project, the council could restrict the types of businesses that could occupy the space, according to Ms. Fisher.

But Councilman John Boyle,

who sits on the city's business development subcommittee, said he was wary of meddling too much in the workings of the free market.

"As a community, we do value small, local, independent businesses," Mr. Boyle said. "On the other hand, our residents also value a good mix of some larger chains, or stores that are approaching chains. ... I think there's a place in Menlo Park for both." ■

■ INFORMATION

Menlo Park's City Council could approve a proposal for a 40-foot-high building at 1300 El Camino Real with 110,000 square feet of retail and office space at its meeting Tuesday, Oct. 6. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. in the City Council chambers in the Civic Center complex, between Laurel and Alma streets.



At Cafe Borrone

Twelve photographs by Ira Kahn are on exhibit at Cafe Borrone, 1010 El Camino Real in Menlo Park, through Oct. 18. He says he was introduced to photography as a 7-year-old living in Cambodia. He is a 1972 graduate of Stanford, where he studied studio art and filmmaking.

Day of the Horse Saturday in Woodside

Expect to see "Annie Oakley," "Wyatt Earp" and "Calamity Jane" riding the roads in Woodside on Saturday, Oct. 10, as part of the "Characters of the Old West" theme of this year's Day of the Horse.

This is the fifth year for the event, which takes place from 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., and includes a Horse Fair at Woodside Town Hall, 2995 Woodside Road, and a progressive trail ride from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Blessing of the horse ceremonies will take place at the Mounted Patrol Grounds, 521 Kings Mountain Road in Woodside.

Blacksmithing demonstrations, an equine petting zoo, cookie decorating, local horse group information, and complimentary carrot cake and apple juice will be offered at Town Hall. Visitors can also step back in time with a ride on the Wells

Fargo Stagecoach.

Riders are invited to come in costume to the progressive trail ride, which includes 15 destinations with treats for horses and humans. To qualify for a goodie bag, riders must ride to a minimum number of stops and obtain a stamp for each one. Pre-registration is required, along with a tax-deductible donation. Some 250 horses and riders took part in last year's ride.

Day of the Horse is sponsored by the Woodside-area Horse Owners Association (WHOA), with participation by the town of Woodside. To date, the event has raised more than \$30,000 for such horse-related causes as the Folger Barn Preservation, Woodside Junior Riders, town of Woodside trails, and the proposed mare and foal sculpture on Village Hill.

No cell phone antenna at Portola Valley school

By **Andrea Gemmet**

Almanac Staff Writer

Everyone wants good cell phone reception, but no one seems to want the cell phone antennas that make it possible.

The board of the Portola Valley School District turned down a proposal from T-Mobile to install cellular phone equipment atop the roof of the district office located on the Corta Madera campus.

T-Mobile would have paid the district \$30,000 a year to lease the rooftop space.

The vote at the Sept. 30 board meeting was 4-0, with Steve Humphreys absent.

Public sentiment ran against the proposal at a public hearing last month, and at the board meeting, district staff recommended against it.

"We just don't feel it's a viable proposal at this time," said Assistant Superintendent Tim Hanretty.

People at a Sept. 4 hearing expressed concerns about radiation, cell phone coverage and the operations of the cell phone equipment, board member Judy Mendelsohn told The Almanac.

Besides getting approval from the five-member school board, the project would also have required review and approval by the town of Portola Valley. If

the project had been education-related, it could have bypassed the town's approval process.

The board made its decision with little comment.

"At the last meeting, we discussed this pretty extensively," said board President Donald Collat.

Most of the board's discussion revolved around whether a vote to decline the offer was needed at all.

"Why do we need to vote if we don't want to do it? Just don't do it," said board member Ray Villareal.

A couple of board members favored taking no action, but Mr. Collat convinced them to go ahead with a vote. ▀

Portola Valley school board seeks applicants

There's a seat to fill on the Portola Valley School District Board, and volunteers are invited to apply for a four-year term. The deadline is 5 p.m. Thursday, Oct. 8, and the seat is available to registered voters who are residents of the district.

Applicants will be interviewed on Oct. 14, and a majority vote of the school board at the Oct.

21 meeting will select the newest board member.

The terms of three of the five board members end this year, and only two incumbents filed for re-election. The third, board president Donald Collat, is stepping down after one term, leaving an open seat.

Anyone interested in serving must submit a letter of inter-

est describing experience with youth, education and community activities, along with the application. Applications are available at the district office located at the Corta Madera School campus, 4575 Alpine Road, Portola Valley. For information, call Superintendent Anne Campbell at 851-1777, extension 3010.

Wildfire preparation program Tuesday in Portola Valley

A presentation on wildfire preparation will be held at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 6, in Hansen Hall, The Sequoias, 501 Portola Road in Portola Valley.

There will be speakers representing the Office of Emergency Services, Woodside Fire Protection District, San Mateo County Sheriff's Department, Citizens

Emergency Preparedness Program, and Portola Valley School District.

Refreshments will be served.

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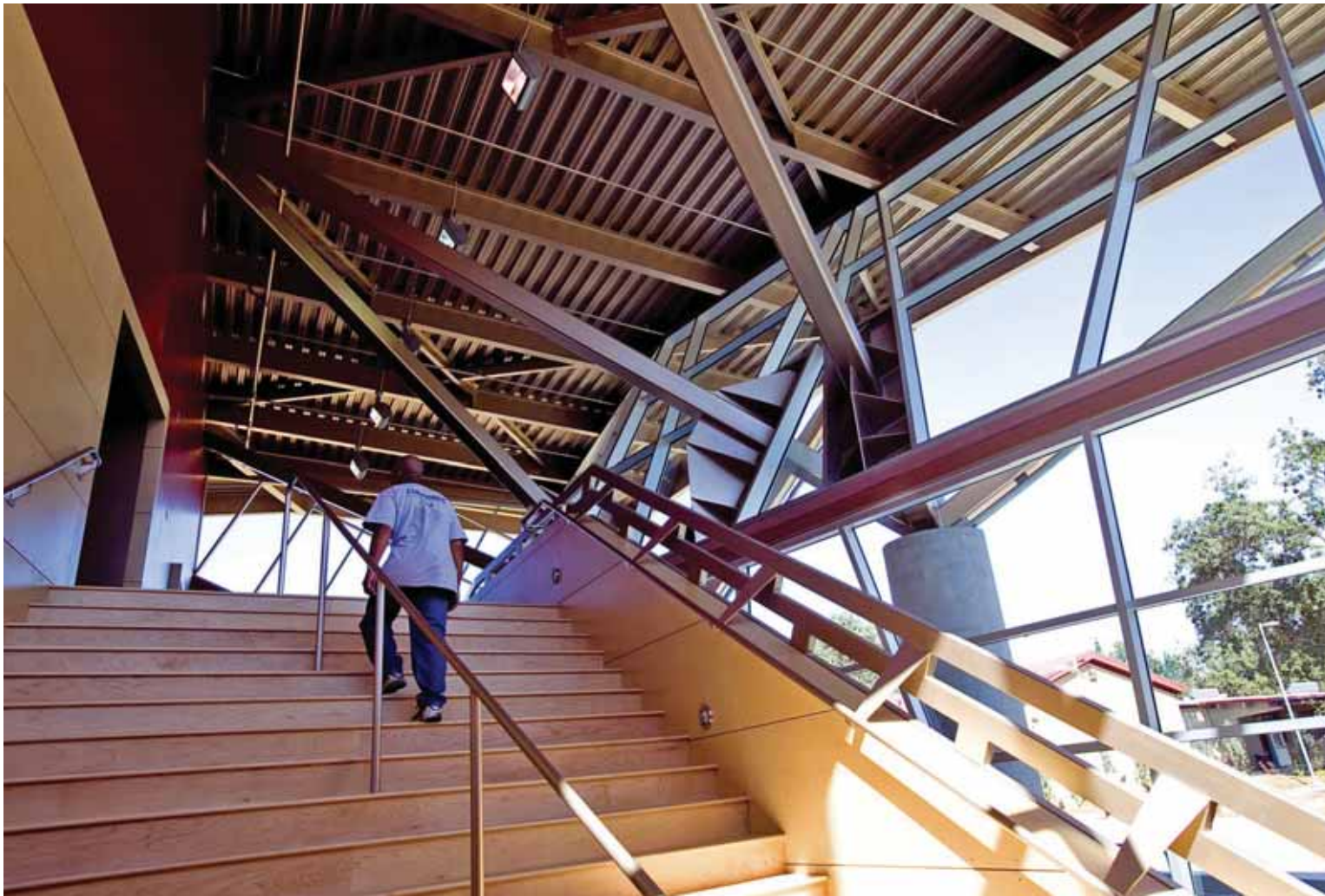


Sophistication is everywhere in the new theater at Menlo-Atherton High School

It's big. It's bold. It certainly is bodacious. Perhaps the new performing arts center at Menlo-Atherton High School is also beautiful in its panorama of beige angles rising at the intersection of Ravenswood Avenue and Middlefield Road in Atherton.

Beauty depends on the eye of the beholder, of course, and in this case, possibly where the beholder is standing. The \$32 million theater opens this weekend. It seats 492, encloses 31,000 square feet under its sloping roofs, and will not infrequently be available to the Menlo Park community.





Opposite page:

At Menlo-Atherton High School's new performing arts center, the landscaping has a ways to go yet, but the building is ready for prime time with sophisticated lighting and sound systems and acoustics designed by a nationally known engineer.

Left: The theater's grand entrance includes an upstairs lobby framed by structural members that display the mechanical forces that hold up the roof.

Below: The theater's duct work and wiring are intentionally left in view to provide teachable moments for students, educators and visitors, the architect said.

The stage can accommodate an 80-piece musical ensemble, and has a vast empty space above it to store theatrical backdrops. In a gesture to the traditions of show business, the winches raising those backdrops are hand-operated rather than computer-controlled. The acoustics are reportedly first rate, as are the systems for lighting, sound and temperature control. There are practice rooms, large makeup rooms, a set-design workshop, storage cabinets for sheet music and instruments, and spaces for outdoor concerts and indoor/outdoor get-togethers.

The green room is actually green and includes a green couch.

Proposed in 2005 at a cost of \$17 million, begun in 2007 amid worldwide competition for building materials, and opening Friday, Oct. 9, the first weekend will include drama scenes, choral and guitar performances and concerts by the school's jazz band and by Music@Menlo, a professional chamber music ensemble.

(The school's celebration is by invitation only; the chamber music concert was sold out long ago.)

"We've been waiting quite a few years for this," M-A Principal Matthew Zito said during a recent tour of the facility. "Good things come to those who wait."

And to the city of Menlo Park,

which contributed \$2.4 million toward construction and can now reserve the theater for 55 performances per year. Most of those dates will be during the summers, Mr. Zito said.

Commenting on the theater's extraordinarily robust construction, a result of the state's seismic requirements for school buildings, Mr. Zito said that he expects the theater to be good for 150 years. "It's really built for the ages," he said. "It's the best construction that's on any campus in the country."

"Who said that?" a reporter asked, figuring that he was quoting someone with nationwide connections to the campus construction scene. "I said that," Mr. Zito replied.

In 2005, in giving guidance to representatives from the six architectural firms that competed for the right to build the theater, Mr. Zito said: "This building has to be useful, but it also has to look good when you're driving by at 35 mph in your Mercedes."

How does the finished product measure up? "I think it's accomplished both of those tasks very, very successfully," he said while rapidly ascending an outdoor ramp to the students' entry to the theater's upper lobby.

Inside and out, the theater

reflects the millions of dollars and countless decisions involved in its construction. Mr. Zito led The Almanac on a tour of the building in September, from the spectacular main entrance to the aeries high above the stage to the auxiliary spaces to the indoor/outdoor setting and catering kitchen at the rear entrance.

An echoing of oaks

A grove of mature oak trees stands between the theater's main entrance and Ringwood Avenue. With the trees as old neighbors, the entrance is an architectural attempt to become one with the neighborhood.

Turn around so the trees are at your back and look up at the entrance from a certain angle and you'll see the oak canopies reflected in glass amid cantilevered steel "branches" extending from twin concrete "trunks."

It's dramatic; it's artful; it's also simple. The structure is out where you can see it working. "I think the building has a vitality about it. It's raw by design," said lead architect Craig Hodgetts of Hodgetts + Fung Design and Architecture in Culver City.

Mr. Zito was a "very, very big advocate" of exposing the structure of the building, including the duct work, wiring and lighting,



Mr. Hodgetts said. "He was huge on that, to make the building an educational device in itself."

The community also lent a hand. Architects met with parents and representatives from the Sequoia Union High School District and the city of Menlo Park. "Those were very, very intense in-depth programming sessions," Mr. Hodgetts recalled. "At a creative level, the building really was shaped by all those forces. It was terrific. It's been a long haul but very satisfying."

The theater has revitalized the front of the campus, Mr. Zito said. Many of the campus buildings are from the 1950s; the theater's roof slopes back to meet them, and echoes their beige colors.

"I do think the building blends very nicely," he said. "Even though it is almost 70 feet high, it isn't

imposing." When challenged by a reporter on that, Mr. Zito said he distinguishes between large and imposing, and that this building is large. It's also "3,000 times nicer" than the J Building it replaced, he added.

The project's beneficial side effects include new sewer, water and irrigation components, a new electrical transformer, new paving and a 300-space parking lot for students on school days and theater-goers the rest of the time.

One expectation did not come to pass: While there now appears to be an entrance to the campus at Ravenswood and Middlefield, it's a decoration.

A traffic engineer said an entry there would have complicated the intersection and made it unsafe, Mr. Zito said. There had been "considerable discussion" about



**NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING
AND
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
CITY OF MENLO PARK
PLANNING COMMISSION
MEETING OCTOBER 19, 2009**

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

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

Use Permit and Architectural Control/Roger Kohler/344 Waverly Street: Request for a use permit and architectural control for a 210-square-foot second-story addition to an existing fourplex that is nonconforming with regard to the number of dwelling units and is located on a substandard size lot with regard to lot area in the R-3-A (Garden Apartment) zoning district.

Appeal of Administrative Permit/Safeway, Inc./515 El Camino Real: Appeal of the Community Development Director's approval of an administrative permit for outside seating in conjunction with food services (both Peet's Coffee and Rubio's Restaurants) and to allow the sale of beer and wine in conjunction with a restaurant use (Rubio's Restaurants only) in the C-4 ECR(X) (General Commercial, Applicable to El Camino Real, Conditional Development) zoning district.

Use Permit/Entos Design/1040 Hamilton Court: Request for a use permit for a dialysis clinic to be located in an existing office building, and for a change of use in a building that is nonconforming with regard to parking where 112 parking spaces are required per the Zoning Ordinance and 92 spaces would be provided in the M-2 (General Industrial) zoning district.

Use Permit/Pacific Biosciences/1392 Hamilton Avenue: Request for a use permit for indoor use and indoor and outside storage of hazardous materials for manufacturing of single molecule, real time (SMRT) chips and reagents for use in association with genome sequencing in the M-2 (General Industrial) zoning district.

PUBLIC MEETING ITEMS - None

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that said Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on public hearing items in the Council Chambers of the City of Menlo Park, located at 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, on Monday, **October 19, 2009**, 7:00 p.m. or as near as possible thereafter, at which time and place interested persons may appear and be heard thereon. If you challenge this item in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Menlo Park at, or prior to, the public hearing.

The project file may be viewed by the public on weekdays between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday, with alternate Fridays closed, at the Department of Community Development, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park. Please call the Planning Division if there are any questions and/or for complete agenda information (650) 330-6702.

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

DATED: October 1, 2009 Deanna Chow,
Senior Planner
PUBLISHED: October 7, 2009 Menlo Park Planning
Commission

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

COVER STORY

continued from previous page

it with officials from Menlo Park, Atherton and the school district, he added.

In a nod to the often awkward quick left turn from Ringwood Avenue when entering the campus from the west, the school moved the entrance further east on Ringwood to allow more vehicles to stack up.

Hidden in plain sight

Steel, concrete and glass present the tangible side of this theater, but its secrets, the pulse of sophistication that runs through it, is found in the intangibles and hidden components.

The acoustics, for example, are by Paul Scarbrough, head of Connecticut-based Akustiks LLC and a leading participant in renovations of Cleveland's Severance Hall and the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Scarbrough's touch is in every space where music will be played, including the three individual practice rooms — named Earth, Wind and Fire — and the band practice room, Mr. Zito said.

The delicate, back-lighted oak-leaf motif on the airy wooden panels that surround the stage echoes the oak foliage outside and cleverly disguises the panels' role in directing music up and out to the audience.

Oak leaves also show up on the rugs running up the aisles, but most of the floors are intentionally bare, another acoustics-related decision. For speaking engagements, curtains can mask the elements designed to enhance the music.

"Every inch (of the interior) was designed to maximize the acoustic properties," Mr. Zito said.

It's common practice these days



The main stage at M-A's new theater is expected to draw orchestral, jazz, choral and dramatic performances from the school. The city of Menlo Park, which helped fund construction, will have 55 dates reserved every year, though most will happen during the summer, Principal Matthew Zito said.

to tune heating and cooling systems to the presence of people, who are themselves heat generators. Temperatures in the lobby and main theater are controlled in this way.

But in this building, these environmental systems also sit on a separate concrete pad, Mr. Zito said. Their vibrations as they turn themselves off and on will not interrupt the audience's concentration on the performance.

The state requires the cycling of interior air, so the theater has huge variable-speed fans that can turn "very, very slowly," Mr. Hodgetts said. It's a "Rolls Royce" of an air-handling unit, he said.

When the heat does come on in the main theater, it seeps up from under the seats and is meant to warm only the five feet of air above the floor — where the audience sits.

"You basically almost never have to heat an auditorium," Mr. Hodgetts said. "The heat given off by 500 people is very considerable.

The mechanical systems, I think, are highly optimized," well beyond the state's efficiency standards.

The vast expanse of steel on the roof shades the windows to keep out the sun's heat, can accept solar panels, has highly efficient insulation under it, and will be recyclable, Mr. Hodgetts said, adding: "Of course, I hope they don't recycle it in my lifetime."

Asked if the building as a whole could be in the Rolls Royce category, Mr. Hodgetts replied: "No, I think we have a Prius."

Would he have done anything differently? He would have sunk the building further into the ground, he said, but the high water table on the campus made that impossible. "We could have reduced the overall mass of the building considerably, but it just wasn't in the cards," he said.

Had it been designed for evaluation by the U.S. Green Building Council, Mr. Hodgetts guessed that it might have earned a silver rating, or third-place score. ■

Numbers tell a tale

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

Theaters have appeared on many local campuses, including Menlo-Atherton and Woodside high schools and Woodside Priory, a private school in Portola Valley for grades 6-12.

Taxpayers in the Sequoia Union High School District are paying for the theaters at the public schools — M-A and Woodside — from the district's sale of municipal bonds, part of \$323 million from three bond measures approved by voters since 2001.

At \$32 million, M-A's 31,000-square-foot theater ran about \$1,032 per square foot. Asked about the escalation from the original estimate of \$17 million, M-A Principal Matthew Zito replied: "What we asked for was not going to fit in a \$17 million budget, and so the price went up."

Construction began in 2007 during a frenzied and worldwide search for building materials. M-A's theater contains 3,600 yards of structural concrete, 455 tons of structural steel, 207 tons of reinforcing steel and 5,230 square feet of glass, Project Executive Ken Schroeder of San Jose-based Blach Construction told The Almanac.

It's built to last, lead architect Craig Hodgetts said in an interview. The size of the beams and the extent of cross-bracing is extraordinary, "presumably because it's a seismic zone," he said, adding: "It's on steroids."

At Woodside High, the theater that was completed in 2004 encloses 27,300 square feet and cost \$16 million, or \$586 per square foot.

The smaller theater at the Priory was finished in 2007. Its 3,800 square feet cost \$14 million, or \$3,684 per square foot, according to a school spokesman. ■

Menlo Park hikes developer fees

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park's City Council looks set to approve an ordinance Tuesday, Oct. 6, that would in many cases greatly increase fees paid by real estate developers for traffic mitigation.

The fees go toward improving traffic flow and carrying out other measures to soften the impacts of additional traffic generated by new development. On projects that require City Council approval, the council can still choose to levy additional traffic fees on developers.

Commercial developers would pay anywhere from 83 cents to \$8.98 per net additional square foot, depending on how the space is used. Previously, the city had charged \$1.60 per square foot for commercial space.

While the consultant's study had indicated that developers should pay \$6.39 per square foot for retail space, and \$16.50 per square foot for restaurants, the City Council dropped both those rates to \$3.87 per square foot, with council members saying they didn't want to discourage shop owners and restaurateurs from opening.

Builders of new houses will pay \$2,623, while apartment or condominium developers will pay \$1,610 per unit — up from a flat fee of \$708 per residential unit.

"The (new) fees are relatively high, but as a community, in general we're not out to attract a whole bunch of new development," said Councilman John Boyle.

Habitat renovates Menlo Park home

A family is poised to move into a home renovated by Habitat for Humanity at 230 Market Place in Menlo Park. It's the first home the nonprofit housing organization has finished work on in a joint program with the city to buy foreclosed houses in the Belle Haven neighborhood, and resell them to people on the city's below-market-rate housing list.

Work is progressing on two other houses, both expected to be completed within the next three months. Habitat plans to purchase two more houses through the program, and is about to start the process of identifying potential buyers for those homes.

Through the program, the city contributes \$100,000 toward the purchase of each the five houses. The money comes from its below-market-rate housing fund — not its general operating fund.

Transportation Manager Chip Taylor said the city hasn't received any complaints from local developers.

According to the consulting firm that prepared the report, the city will need to do \$39.5 million worth of work by 2030 on intersections, sidewalks, transit systems, traffic signals, traffic "calming," and bicycle circulation, in order to complete efforts planned by the city to build sidewalks and bike lanes, and to mitigate current and projected traffic issues.

Developers would contribute a total of \$22.4 million, with the city pitching in \$16.8 million, and grants making up the rest. The city is not obligated to spend anything, according to Mr. Taylor.

Behind schedule

While the city will be responsible for funding most of the bicycle circulation and sidewalk improvements, developers are required to fund all future intersection improvements, Mr. Taylor said.

The city, however, is on the hook for \$7.9 million in improvements to intersections that are already "deficient."

Why haven't developers already

covered that?

Part of the reason is that Menlo Park's rates have fallen far below those charged by similarly sized local jurisdictions, according to information provided by the city. While Mr. Taylor thinks the city should update its fees every five years, Menlo Park fees have not changed since 1995.

Along with most of the city management responsible for overseeing city fees, Mr. Taylor only began working for the city recently.

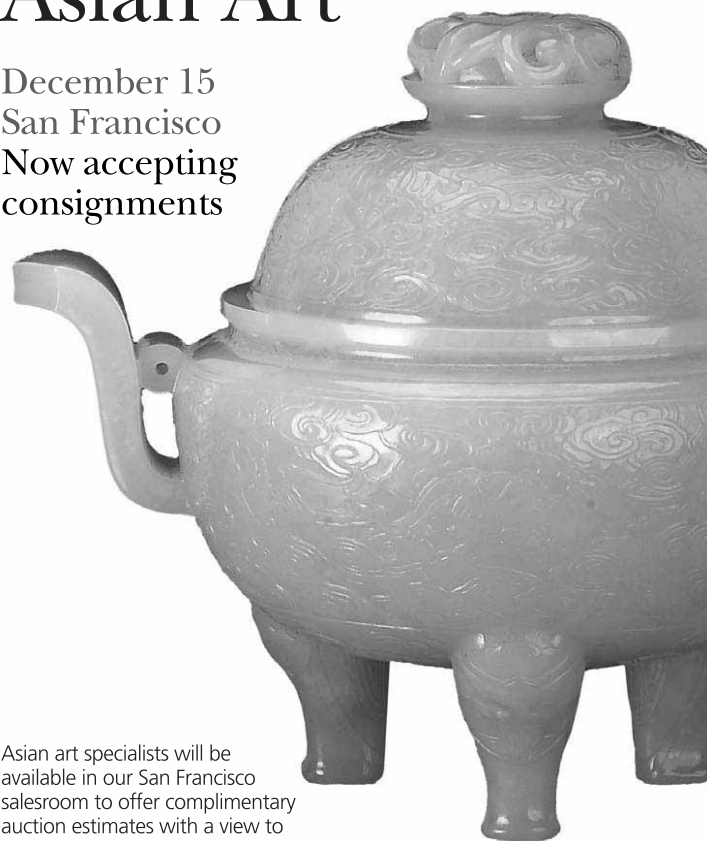
"We are certainly behind as far as getting (the new fee schedule) developed," he said.

"At least now we've got a model, that says, gee, we've been undercharging," Mr. Boyle said. "These projects do create a lot of traffic, and if we haven't been collecting sufficient fees to pay for it, we've got to dip into reserves or figure out something else."

A separate fee study completed in 2008 revealed that the city had only been charging developers about half of what it costs the city to process development applications, leaving taxpayers on the hook for about \$600,000 per year. ■

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CITY OF MENLO PARK CITY COUNCIL

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the City Council of the City of Menlo Park, California is scheduled to consider the recommendation of the Planning Commission and take action on the following item:

Use Permit, Architectural Control, Tentative Subdivision Map, BMR Agreement and Environmental Review/Joe Colonna for 1706 ECR LLC/1706 El Camino Real:

Request for a use permit, architectural control, tentative subdivision map, and environmental review to demolish an existing one-story, 6,875-square-foot commercial building (formerly Gaylords Restaurant) and construct a new two-story, 10,148-square-foot office building for medical/dental office use and the related on-site and off-site improvements, including new entry monuments on Buckthorn Way, at 1706 El Camino Real located in the C-4 (General Commercial, applicable to El Camino Real) zoning district. The proposed project would require the following approvals: 1) Use Permit for construction of a new building; 2) Architectural Control for design review of the new building and related site improvements; 3) Tentative Subdivision Map for the creation of six medical/office condominium units within the buildings; 4) Below Market Rate (BMR) Agreement for the payment of in-lieu fees associated with the City's BMR Housing Program; and 5) Mitigated Negative Declaration to analyze the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. In addition, the proposed project includes a resolution to establish a no parking zone along the property frontage on Buckthorn Way.

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that said City Council will hold a public hearing on this item in the Council Chambers of the City of Menlo Park, located at 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, on **Tuesday, October 20, 2009, 7:00 P.M.** or as near as possible thereafter, at which time and place interested persons may appear and be heard thereon.

Documents related to this item may be inspected by the public on weekdays between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday, with alternate Fridays closed, at the Community Development Department, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park. Please call Deanna Chow, Senior Planner, if there are any questions or comments on this item. She may be reached at 650-330-6733 or email at dmchow@menlopark.org.

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

DATED: October 1, 2009 Margaret Roberts
City Clerk

PUBLISHED: October 7, 2009

Visit our Web site for City Council public hearing, agenda, and staff report information: www.menlopark.org In addition, the City has prepared a project page for the proposal, which is available at the following address: http://www.menlopark.org/projects/comdev_1706ecr.htm. This page provides up-to-date information about the project, allowing interested parties to stay informed of its progress. The page allows users to sign up for automatic email bulletins, notifying them when content is updated.

REXFORD IANSON
MENLO PARK FIRE BOARD

Occupation: Incumbent/ Retired Firefighter



- Retired Firefighter - 36 years
- AA Degree Fire Science
- California State Teaching credential - life time
- California State Fire Marshall Instructor
- FEMA Urban Search & Rescue Instructor

Priorities:

- Maintain present budget priorities and reserves
- Seek alternative retirement options
- Improve relationships with Fire District Employees

For more information go to: <http://www.smartvoter.org>

Man shot, killed in front of his apartment

Menlo Park resident Oscar Martinez, 23, was shot to death in front of his Menlo Park apartment Tuesday, Sept. 29.

Officers received a call at 9:09 a.m. from a "hysterical" female reporting a disturbance at 835 Pierce Road, Menlo Park police spokeswoman Nicole Acker said.

A second call came in a short time later reporting shots fired. Officers responded within minutes, according to Ms. Acker.

Police found Mr. Martinez in front of his apartment with multiple gunshot wounds. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

The suspect is described as a Hispanic man in his 20s wear-


ing all black. Witnesses reported that he fled east on Carlton Avenue in a white car.

No motive has been established, Ms. Acker said.

The death marks the city's first homicide since May 2008.

—Bay City News Service contributed to this report.

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Are you expecting twins, triplets or more? With the potential for early delivery, expectant parents of multiples are encouraged to learn everything there is to know about carrying and delivering multiple infants.

- Sunday, November 1: 12:30 - 5:00 pm
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- Tuesday, November 3: 7:00 - 8:00 pm
- * CHILDBIRTH PREP CLASS**
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Martel Scroggin: Ad executive, novelist

Martel Scroggin, a resident of Menlo Park and Atherton since 1953, died Sept. 20 of cancer in Prineville, Oregon. He was 80.

Mr. Scroggin, a retired advertising agency executive, was born in Albany, Oregon, and graduated from the University of Oregon with a degree in journalism.



Martel Scroggin

He started his advertising career in San Francisco with Batten, Barton, Durstine and Osborn, where he was an account executive for U.S. Steel and Pacific Gas & Electric accounts.

In 1958 he left BBDO to become co-founder of Allen, De St. Maurice & Scroggin. Nine years later, he founded the agency that was to become Scroggin & Fisher, handling such accounts as the San Francisco Examiner, Chevron, China Airlines, Fairchild Semiconductor, Otis and NEC Corp.

After his retirement, the company was acquired by Batten, Barton, Durstine & Osborn, the ad agency where he got his start.

Mr. Scroggin served on the board of directors of the Transworld Advertising Agency Network (TAAN), a group of 49 agencies throughout the world. He became the only chairman in the history of the organization to be re-elected for four consecutive terms, family members said.

After retiring, he wrote three fiction-based-on-fact books about the history and development of Central Oregon, where he had a cattle ranch. All three books, "Wasco," "The Moonlighters," and "The Sheepshooters," were taped and distributed by the National Library and the Library of Congress for the blind and physically handicapped.

Mr. Scroggin was a veteran of the Korean War. He served on the steering committee for the Friends of Radiology at Stanford, and was an active member of the Family Club and the Oregon Historical Society. He also belonged to the Benevolent & Protective Order of Elks (BPOE) and Western Writers of America.

He is survived by his daughters, Leslie Fajardo and Wendy Frazier; son Jeff; and five grandchildren. His wife, Gretchen, preceded him in death in 1989.

OBITUARIES

Robert Charles Wersted

Retired building contractor

Longtime Menlo Park resident Robert Charles "Bob" Wersted died Sept. 28 in Arcadia. He was 93.

He was born in Evanston, Illinois, and spent his early years in the neighboring town of Winnetka. He graduated from New Trier High School in 1933 and headed west to live with his maternal grandparents in Sierra Madre.

He studied engineering in college and pursued a career as a general contractor. In 1935 he formed R.C. Wersted Construction and built commercial and residential buildings. The company incorporated in 1959 and became R.C. Wersted Inc.

During World War II, he contributed to the war effort, building mine sweepers and liberty ships in the Long Beach shipyards.

In 1940 he married Beatrice "Betty" Jane Taylor in Winnetka. The newlyweds returned

to Los Angeles where three children were born. The family moved to San Francisco in 1953, then to Atherton. In 1962 the couple and their four children moved to Menlo Park.

Betty Wersted died in 1998. Mr. Wersted later moved to Arcadia, where he married Shirley Spencer in 2002.

A member of Holy Trinity Episcopal Church and, later, St. Bede's, Mr. Wersted was a charter member of Sharon Heights Golf and Country Club. He will be remembered as a man who was dedicated, hardworking, and self-disciplined, say family members. Strong and independent, he suffered from ill health for many years without complaint, they say.

Mr. Wersted is survived by his wife, Shirley; children Marilyn Knorr of Citrus Heights, Judy Kelley of Fall City, Washington, John Wersted of Elk Grove, and Bruce Wersted of Sacramento; stepchildren Jim, Carolyn, Betsy, Stephen and Margie; seven grandchildren; and nine great-grandchildren. His eldest great-grandchild, Danielle, preceded him in death in 2000.

A private family gathering will be held to celebrate his life.



Robert Wersted



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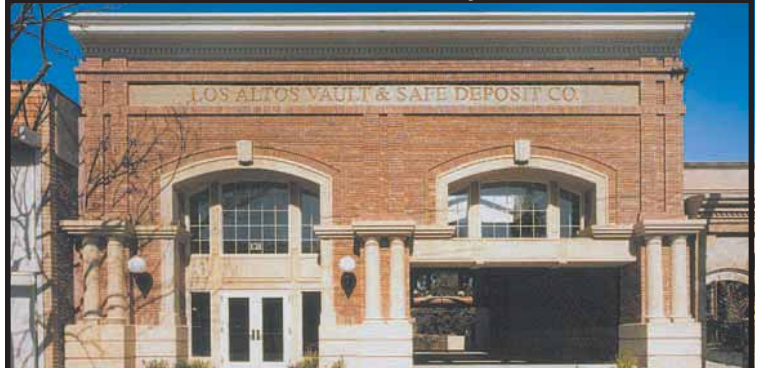
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Benefits for Village Enterprise Fund

The Village Enterprise Fund is sponsoring a series of local events Oct. 10-17 to raise funds for its mission of helping the rural poor of East Africa start small businesses.

African singer Omega Bugembe Okello will give a benefit concert at 7 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 10, at the Little Fox Theatre, 2209 Broadway in Redwood City. Tickets are \$100 for general admission and \$150 for reserved seating. For more information, call 802-8891, ext. 115.

On Saturday, Oct. 17, several local businesses will donate a portion of customers' purchases to Village Enterprise Fund.

Go to TheAlmanacOnline.com for a list of the participating businesses and more information about the fundraisers. More information is also available by calling 802-8891, ext. 115, or visiting www.villageef.org.

Talk: Bridging gap between teens, parents

Wondering what's going on in your teenager's head? You're not alone. Chap Clark, an author on youth culture, will speak at a free event from 5 to 7 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 10, in the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church meeting room at 700 Santa Cruz Ave. in downtown Menlo Park.

Mr. Clark promises to take parents "Inside the World of Today's Teenagers," the topic of his talk. He is the author of "Disconnected: Parenting Teens in a MySpace World."

No RSVP is needed for the free event, which is open to the

AROUND TOWN

public. For more information, contact Shelly Sousa at 323-8672 or ssousa@mppc.org.

Opera previews

Musicologist Mary Ann Smart will provide an in-depth look at Donizetti's opera, "The Daughter of the Regiment," at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 6, at St. Bede's Episcopal Church, 2650 Sand Hill Road in Menlo Park. "Daughter of the Regiment" will be performed at San Francisco's War Memorial Opera House Oct. 23-31.

Richard Taruskin, professor of music at UC Berkeley, will give a preview/lecture on the opera "Salome" at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 13, at St. Bede's. The opera will be performed Oct. 18 through Nov. 1 at the War Memorial Opera House.

Both lectures are sponsored by the South Peninsula chapter of the San Francisco Opera Guild. Tickets are available at the door for \$8 or \$10. For more information, call 329-1374.

Polo game

Pony up, lads. The Menlo Circus Club in Atherton will be the site of the first alumni polo game between Stanford and Cal Poly on Sunday, Oct. 11.

The event is free, although there is a suggested \$10 donation to the Stanford Polo Club. Gates open at noon for picnicking, with the game set to run from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. The Circus Club is located at 190 Park Lane.

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OA STUDENT-CURATED OPENING ACT TBA

A Stanford student-curated ensemble (TBA) opens the show with a short set at 8pm.

* Part of the **KORET**
JAZZ PROJECT

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Judo artist arrested in assault

An international judo artist was booked into San Mateo County jail on Sept. 29 after a late-night incident at the Menlo Park train station that began as horseplay and ended with two men being taken to a hospital, according to the District Attorney's Office.

The victims were Bradford DePeyster, 25, of Menlo Park and Michael Seiler, 23, of New York, said Deputy District Attorney Karen Guidotti. Mr. DePeyster suffered a broken leg and facial lacerations; Mr. Seiler suffered facial lacerations and was knocked unconscious, said Chief Deputy District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe.

Matthew Walker, 25, of Tacoma, Washington, and Robert Eugene Davis, 22, of Redwood City were arrested on charges of assault and robbery, Mr. Wagstaffe said.

Mr. Davis pleaded not guilty, posted \$50,000 bail and is out of custody; Mr. Walker is in custody and scheduled to enter a plea on Monday, Oct. 5, Mr. Wagstaffe said.

All four men were returning from a San Francisco Giants game and all got off the train in Menlo Park. The fighting took place at the Menlo Park station.

Police picked up the suspects in a nearby parking lot.

Fire board candidate forum Oct. 14

The six candidates for three seats on the Menlo Park Fire Protection District board are expected to attend a candidates' forum from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Wednesday, Oct. 14, at the fire district headquarters.

The forum, sponsored by the League of Women Voters of South San Mateo County, will take place in the Station 1 classroom, located off the parking lot behind the main fire station at 300 Middle-

field Road in Menlo Park.

There will be a question-and-answer period, with written questions from the audience.

Of the six candidates, only one is an incumbent on the five-member board.

The fire district serves Menlo Park, Atherton, East Palo Alto, and nearby unincorporated areas. For more information, call the LWV office at 325-5780, or e-mail info@LWVSSMC.org.

Go online to see Police Calls, Vikings

Go to TheAlmanacOnline.com to see Police Calls, the Vikings Pop Warner football report, and other news and sports reports.

PATRICK B. BUELL

RESIDENT OF SAN CARLOS

Patrick B. Buell passed away on September 24, 2009 at the age of 56. He is survived by his husband of 14 years Miguel Rios, brother; Michael Buell and his wife Luanne, sister; Linda Staggs, 2 nieces; Stephanie & Christina; nephew Daniel, and best friend Willa Falk. Patrick is also survived by many other relatives. Patrick was a Real Estate Agent for Coldwell Banker for 14 years. He loved his Pug's; Gretta & Austin, gardening, cooking, jazz music. He was also a longtime member of Filoli. His passions in life were being around his family & friends and helping them at anytime. He will be truly missed by ALL who knew and loved him. Services were held on October 1, 2009. Burial followed to Santa Clara Mission Cemetery in Santa Clara.

Crippen & Flynn Woodside Chapel
650-369-4103

PAID OBITUARY

SUSAN MURDOCK VARIAN



In the arms of her family, Susan Murdock Varian passed away in Portola Valley on September 22, 2009 following a brave battle with ovarian cancer. Born April 5th, 1943, in Boston, MA to Blanche and David Murdock,

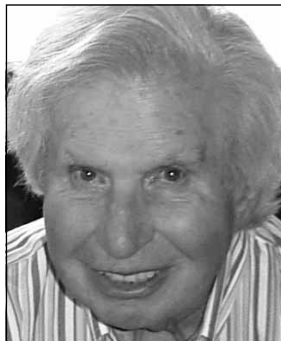
Susan is survived by her loving husband of 45 years George, her daughters Sidney, Holly and Claire, her sons-in-law John, Mitch and Dan, her grandchildren Ian, Hannah, Angus and Elizabeth, her brother David as well as many cherished friends and relatives. Susan was devoted to children and could instantly relate to them and make them feel special and important. She worked at Peninsula School for many years first as a pottery teacher and classroom

teacher and later as a librarian. After returning to school to earn a Masters in Family Counseling, she worked at the Children's Health Council before retiring to care for and delight her own grandchildren. Susan will be greatly missed by all who relished her remarkable wisdom, gentle advice and deep friendship. A memorial service is planned for October 16th at 11am at the Portola Valley Town Community Hall at 765 Portola Rd, Portola Valley. In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be contributed in her name to:

Peninsula School
(<http://www.peninsulaschool.org/DEVmemorial.htm>)
Tahoe Truckee Excellence in Education Foundation
(<https://exined.org/friends-education-membership>)
Ecumenical Hunger
(<http://www.ehpcares.org/>) or
The Sempervirens Fund
(<http://www.sempervirens.org/>)

PAID OBITUARY

GILBERT K. CAIN



Gilbert K. Cain departed this world peacefully in his sleep on September 18, at the age of 87. He will be survived by his loving wife Alyce B. Cain, but missed by her and all of those that loved him for his bright smile and strong sense of humour. Born on May 26th, 1922, in Colorado, to Samuel H. Cain and Jessie F. Cain, Gilbert attended the New Mexico Military Academy, served in the armed forces, fought bravely for his country and was awarded the Purple Heart. Gilbert met Alyce while on vacation in Mexico. They married on March 14th 1955 and later moved to the San Francisco Bay Area where he started his successful career as an independent Realtor. Their loving son Tony tragically passed away at the tender age of 17, but was loved and adored by both parents. Tony was a brilliant student with a smile that would rival even that of his fathers'. Gilbert and Tony are now forever reunited.

Gilbert's true happiness was with his art, travel and music. He collected a wide variety of modern art, on display constantly at his Atherton home. Gilbert would welcome the opportunity to tell you about each one in detail and at the same time share the stories of where they came from and the many pleasurable trips around the world he took to get them. When not admiring his art, Gilbert could be found anywhere there was the sound of jazz; whether it be at the Monterey Jazz Festival or on a cruise dedicated to the sound he loved the most.

A neighbored icon, Gilbert could be seen taking his daily exercise walking the streets that he felt so very proud to be living on. Although not everyone in Atherton knew Gilbert's name, generations of local families knew of the Santa Claus that would hang from his chimney every year over the Holidays.

A Memorial Service will be held on Monday October 12th, 2009 at 2.00pm. Friends and family are welcome. Please RSVP to DGonzalez@cbnocal.com. In lieu of flowers the family requests donations to be made to the charity of your choice.

PAID OBITUARY



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Thanks. *The* Almanac

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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.

Subscriptions are \$60 for one year and \$100 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.

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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.

Too late to change call on housing?

Although there is little doubt that Menlo Park missed a golden opportunity to approve a dense housing project near the Caltrain depot on El Camino Real, City Council members and the developer say it is too late to change commercial plans for the former Cadillac dealership.

Just as Sand Hill Property Co. readies plans to build 110,000

square feet of retail and office space at 1300 El Camino Real near the final approval phase, some Menlo Park residents and businesses have called for the council to change course and

force developer Jeff Warmoth to build housing on the property.

But Mr. Warmoth said last week that he is not interested in adding housing, and wants to complete the process now under way so he can move forward on the project. If his company were forced to go back to the drawing board, the approval process would reset to zero and could delay construction of any project.

Another factor is that the preliminary plans for downtown development include room for 680 units of housing along El Camino and in the downtown area, a huge bump that would go a long way toward meeting the city's requirement to build more housing.

Several City Council members told The Almanac last week that they felt they owed it to the developer to move the retail/office project along, in part because it does meet the guidelines of the city's general plan, although it would require a zoning change.

Mr. Warmoth said to change to housing now would be a betrayal of trust. "When we in good faith have been moving for-

ward in a process, we ought to be able to have those expectations protected," he said.

Certainly the council could change its mind in the final hour, but member Andy Cohen said he worries about the impact that might have on attracting other developers.

"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," Mr. Cohen said.

The council might find more complicated the concerns raised by the Draeger and Beltramo families, long-time Menlo Park retailers who believe housing should substitute for the retail component of the Cadillac site development. Draeger's even went so far as to say it might be forced to close and convert its property to office space or housing if the proposal moves forward with retail space included. Both businesses said they fear competition from the additional retail, which would come during the economic downturn and increased competition from a recently remodeled Safeway store.

All of this will make Tuesday's decision difficult for the council.

As for requiring housing at the Cadillac site, we doubt that the council will vote to change course at this late hour. There has been little opposition to Mr. Warmoth's project until recently.

If the council does approve the retail/office project for the Cadillac site, it will have missed a significant opportunity to build housing near transit. But if the city follows the direction of the early draft of its downtown plan, in the years ahead there will be plenty of opportunities to build housing within easy walking distance of Caltrain and the downtown shopping district.

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

LETTERS

Our readers write

Paul Collacchi invited to focus on his hometown

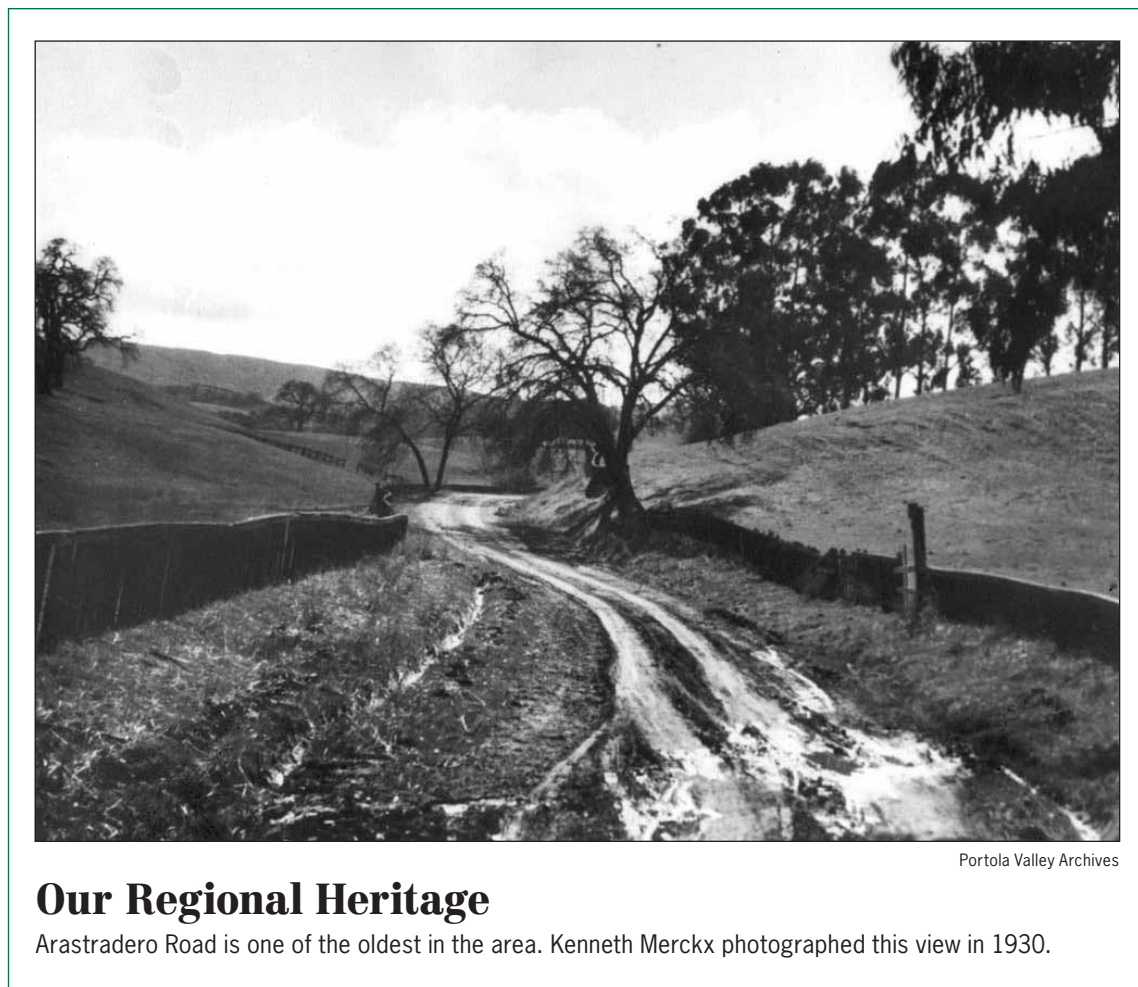
Editor:

If Paul Collacchi, who has lived in Redwood City for some years now, is so interested in the environment, he should spend his energy fighting the proposed new mini-city on the Bay at the Cargill salt ponds.

He should be going to his own city council and telling them they should not approve 25,000 homes on the Bay. He should tell them that wetlands, not housing in a flood zone, will be key to mitigating flooding as the Bay waters rise from global climate change. He should reiterate for his council members that the effects on the Bay, traffic, pollution and neighboring communities will be huge.

If Mr. Collacchi is still interested in meddling with the Menlo Park City Council, he could ask them to pass a resolution opposing the Cargill project. After all, the Cargill project dwarfs the Bohannon Gateway project by many magnitudes, especially environmental.

Mr. Collacchi, there is a huge battle waiting for you in Red-



Portola Valley Archives

Our Regional Heritage

Arastradero Road is one of the oldest in the area. Kenneth Merckx photographed this view in 1930.

wood City. Please go fight that battle and leave Menlo Park to the people who live here.

Elizabeth Lasensky
Fremont Street, Menlo Park

Burgess swimmer enjoys the benefits

Editor:
Swimming at Burgess Pool is

fun!

It can also be instructive at whatever level one chooses to

See **LETTERS**, next page

Shops help new businesses in Africa

By Debbie Hall

I've just had an education on Menlo Park's retail establishments.

In recent weeks I have marched into our city's shops and restaurants to organize an event called "Shop and Dine Out." In the midst of an economic downturn, I discovered two contradictory trends: While many established merchants' revenues are down significantly, our town is experiencing a resurgence in innovative boutiques and eateries.

I met a fascinating and passionate group of people. Farnad Fakoor left a career in health care to use her creative skills designing gorgeous made-to-order couture ("Farnad" on University Drive). Irina Feltsman was inspired while standing in her closet to leave the electronics supply firm she started 20 years ago and get back to a small business. She opened the clothing boutique Milana C (on Chestnut Street) with Biana Fridman. Even our established storefronts are setting new trends — like Marche's upcoming Chocolate Prix Fixe menu or Left Bank's new, lower pricing and specialty French daily entrees.

Shop and Dine Out is the brainchild of a local nonprofit,

Village Enterprise Fund, which helps start small businesses among the rural poor in East Africa to give them a sustainable income. With our economy in the tank, the staff canceled the usual fall fundraising banquet. In this environment, some are inclined not to donate to international charities with the local unemployment rate at 12 percent. So, the Village Enterprise Fund came up with the idea to support our local downtown businesses and start small businesses in East Africa.

In honor of World Anti-Poverty Day on Oct. 17, numerous Menlo Park shops and restaurants are partnering with Village Enterprise Fund through Shop and Dine Out by donating a portion of their revenue on that day to VEF.

Those donations will go far in rural East Africa. On Santa Cruz Avenue, a small boutique can cost \$75,000 to launch; a restaurant can require \$1 million to \$2 million. In East Africa, VEF invests \$200 to start a business, providing business training, \$150 in seed capital, and a year of mentoring to help each business succeed.

In Africa, the local businesses look completely different from ours — yet the aspirations are the same. Apofia, a

woman I met in rural Uganda, strives for the same success as Farnad and Irina do here. Widowed with four children, she struggled to find enough food to eat and every day was consumed with that one task.

She had no picture of her future, just the struggle of getting through today. Through VEF's program, she learned how to start and run a business, keeping some profit for her needs and investing more in her small venture. She now raises pigs, goats, and vegetables for sale in the local market. She beamed as she showed me her new one-room brick house and proudly announced she can pay tuition for secondary school.

I invite you to discover Menlo Park's great variety of world foods, creative gifts, green home decor, fun children's clothes and toys, and women's clothing, ranging from the whimsical to the sophisticated. Come Shop and Dine Out on Oct. 17 to benefit our local merchants and help needy but deserving people like Apofia provide food and education for their children. We can break the cycle of poverty and make a difference — helping local merchants and launching new micro-entrepreneurs in Africa.

Debbie Hall is a Menlo Park resident and board chair of Village Enterprise Fund.



GUEST OPINION

were many hours during the day and week that the pool was not open for swimming. Not so now that Menlo Swim and Sport is making the pools available to the entire community year round.

As a 78-year-old swimmer who receives great benefit, physically and emotionally, from being a part of the swimming programs at Burgess all during the year, I am very grateful to Menlo Swim and Sport for making it possible for me to maintain my good health in a safe and clean and nurturing environment.

**Vivian Knudsen Johsens
Camino a los Cerros,
Menlo Park**

Assemblyman helped on chloramine bill

Editor:

I want to thank Assembly member Ira Ruskin for working so very hard to get HR11 passed in the state Assembly.

He listened to his constituents who are having adverse dermal, inhalant and digestive problems since the 2004 changeover from chlorine to chloramine in the

water system.

This resolution finally addresses chloramine and requests that the state Department of Public Health review the public health concerns relating to the use of chlorine and chloramine as a drinking water disinfectant. The resolution also asks the department to conduct studies, particularly human health studies, as appropriate, to provide necessary public health information to further clarify the human health effects of chloramine; and to formally request the Environmental Protection Agency to conduct scientific testing of the immediate, acute, and long-term health effects of chlorine, chloramine, and other practical alternatives, when used as a secondary water disinfectant.

As someone who suffers with the digestive symptoms as well as my husband suffering with the dermal symptoms, I sincerely appreciate the possibility of finally having human health studies showing these adverse side effects.

**Claudette Main
Foster City**

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

participate, be that in a lower level fitness mode or at a higher level athletic intensity. Duncan Goodhew has pointed out that 30 minutes of activity in the water is worth 45 minutes of the same activity on land. And a new study shows that swimming cuts men's risk of dying by about 50 percent compared to runners, walkers and couch potatoes.

Menlo Swim and Sport at Burgess makes activity in the water available in numerous time slots during the day and throughout the week. They do so across the spectrum of those who want to do their own thing, those who wish to have a structured vigorous workout, those who want to have a gentle group activity, those who want to improve from where they are, those who want their children to learn water competency, and other skills.

At Burgess, before the pools we now have were built, there

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