



ADRIANA KWICINSKI and friends
stage benefit concert at Menlo School
in memory of her father | PAGE 7

The Almanac

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

NOVEMBER 18, 2009 | VOL. 45 NO. 12



WWW.THEALMANACONLINE.COM



Bursting at the seams

Despite a spate of new construction,
growing enrollment might induce
the Menlo Park school district to open
another campus [SEE SECTION 2]

REDEFINING QUALITY SINCE 1990

Reading between the emotional line makes the difference between finding a house and a home.



MENLO PARK

Stunning new 5bd/6.5ba custom home on 3 levels, including basement with 2nd family room/ game room, media room, exercise room, and wet bar. Main floor master suite with fireplace. Back yard features level lawn and a tremendous entertaining terrace that spans the width of the house and has an outdoor fireplace. Menlo Park schools.

\$3,495,000



WOODSIDE

Fabulous Craftsman log home with lodge spirit in a creek-side setting. Exquisite attention to detail and wood work. Includes 3bd/2ba with loft, sunroom/solarium, 2 kitchens, gorgeous fir and pine floors. Copper bathtub. Excellent Portola Valley schools.

\$1,269,999



MENLO PARK

Tastefully remodeled 4bd/2ba home located on a tree lined street in Suburban Park neighborhood. Updated with the finest materials, home features an open floor plan with a gorgeous kitchen accented by beautiful granite countertops, cherry cabinetry, hard wood flooring, stylish trim and moldings, luxurious fixtures. Lush landscaping front and back. Top Menlo Park Schools.

\$1,189,000

apr.com | **MENLO PARK OFFICE** 1550 EL CAMINO REAL, SUITE 100 650.462.1111

apr.com | **WOODSIDE OFFICE** 2930 WOODSIDE ROAD 650.529.1111

APR COUNTIES | Santa Clara | San Mateo | San Francisco | Alameda | Contra Costa | Monterey | Santa Cruz



Inside

This week's news, features and community events.

FIRST SHOT



Photo by Dave Boyce/The Almanac

Town salutes environmental champion

Bill Lane, Portola Valley's first mayor and a major force in sustaining the town's quality of life and culture of environmental conservation, received a proclamation at the Nov. 11 Town Council meeting in honor of his recent 90th birthday. Mayor Ann Wengert, right, congratulates Mr. Lane's wife, Jean Lane. The public is invited to a town party for Bill Lane from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 22, at Town Center, 765 Portola Road in Portola Valley. Mayor Wengert is expected to introduce Mr. Lane around 3 p.m., after which the honoree is expected to say a few words.

Atherton

■ M-A High football lights: a permanent fixture? **Page 15**

Menlo Park

- Laurel student, 6, dies following hit-and-run accident. **Page 5**
- Preuss Pharmacy to close; Safeway buys the business. **Page 5**
- Touchy debate over polarizing Bohannon project. **Page 8**

Woodside

■ Menlo Country Club faces uphill battle in opening door for expansion. **Page 11**

Portola Valley

■ Eileen Chamberlain Donahoe nominated to post of U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Human Rights Council. **Page 7**

Schools

- Menlo Park school district eyes parcel tax to boost revenue. **Page 11**
- Adriana Kwicinski and friends stage benefit concert in memory of her father. **Page 7**

Sports

■ Menlo School gains some revenge with Valpo Bowl win. **Page 19**

Also Inside

- Calendar 29
- Community 27
- Letters 22
- Police Calls 20
- Sports 19
- Viewpoint 22

On the cover

Additional classrooms and facilities, currently under construction at Oak Knoll school in Menlo Park, can't keep up with rising enrollment in the Menlo Park City School District. Officials are faced with the difficult (and expensive) decision to open a new school or find a way to accommodate more students than they planned for at the district's three elementary schools. Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac. **See Section 2.**

CALLING ON THE ALMANAC

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

Classified ads: 854-0858
Newsroom: 854-2690
Newsroom fax: 854-0677
Advertising: 854-2626
Advertising fax: 854-3650

- E-mail news, information, obituaries and photos (with captions) to: editor@AlmanacNews.com
- E-mail letters to the editor to: letters@AlmanacNews.com

To request free delivery, or stop delivery, of The Almanac in zip code 94025, 94027, 94028 and the Woodside portion of 94062, call 854-2626.

THE ALMANAC (ISSN 1097-3095 and USPS 459370) is published every Wednesday by Embarcadero Publishing Co., 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558. Periodicals Postage Paid at Menlo Park, CA and at additional mailing offices. Adjudicated a newspaper of general circulation for San Mateo County, The Almanac is delivered free to homes in Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside. Subscriptions for \$60 per year or \$100 per 2 years are welcome. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Almanac, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558. Copyright ©2009 by Embarcadero Publishing Co., All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited.



Always
BEST CARE
SENIOR SERVICES

Call (650) 299-0220

Helping others,
making life rich - *Always*

- Care from 4 hours to 24 hours a day
- Allows you to remain safe in your home
- Care Providers are well screened and trained
- FREE No obligation in-home care assessment

4 HOURS FREE

when you purchase 20 hours of in-home care

Coupon Valid Until: **12/31/09**

Code:

Not to be combined with any other offer and subject to change without notice. Offer valid for initial 20 hour order only.

www.alwaysbestcare.com

MOVING SALE PREUSS PHARMACY



50% OFF ALL ITEMS

Except Prescriptions
Plus Selected Fixtures & Equipment

SALE

844 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park
650-321-8045

All prescriptions, files & records and prescription inventory will be transferred on 11/20 to

SAFeway PHARMACY

525 El Camino Real, Menlo Park
Phone 650-847-2905

A TOWN MARKET PLACE
ROBERTS MARKET
 SINCE 1889

3015 Woodside Road Woodside, 650-851-1511
 4420 Alpine Road Portola Valley, 650-851-1711
 Open 6:30AM - 8PM



Sale Dates: Nov. 18-28

www.robertsmarket.com

CLOSED THANKSGIVING DAY

10% Wine Discount on 6 Bottles
 Effective immediately, Roberts is offering a 10% discount on the purchase of 6, or more, bottles of regularly priced wines. Red tag sale prices excluded.

Fresh
PRODUCE



Large, Washington
FUJI APPLES

79¢ lb.

California

LARGE NAVEL ORANGES



99¢ lb.

Clip Top

LOOSE CARROTS



59¢ lb.

Local

BRUSSEL SPROUTS



99¢ lb.

Robert's Homemade!

MEAT



SWORDFISH

\$17⁹⁸ lb.

NEW ZEALAND FREE RANGE RACK OF LAMB

\$16⁹⁸ lb.

FINGER LICKEN TRI TIP



\$8⁹⁸ lb.

CHICKEN THIGHS



\$2⁹⁸ lb.

On Sale

GROCERY



PEET'S FRENCH ROAST COFFEE
 12oz. — Also House Blend — Major Dickason's

\$7⁹⁹

CLOVER UNSALTED BUTTER

1lb. cubes — Also Salted

\$2²⁹

VITA ORGANIC EXTRA VIRGIN OLIVE OIL

1 liter

\$7⁹⁹

SARA LEE FRENCH STYLE PETITE CROISSANTS

6oz.

\$2⁹⁹

CARR'S BITE SIZE TABLE WATER CRACKERS

4oz. — Also Cracked Pepper — Whole Wheat

\$2⁴⁹

VANITY FAIR DINNER NAPKINS

40 count — Also all occasion

\$1⁹⁹

WINE

Thanksgiving Wines

What to serve with the eclectic montage of flavors that is the Thanksgiving experience?! It is a perfect opportunity to be adventuresome. No one wine can pair perfectly with all the assundry flavors, and textures, the meal provides. Why not try a Riesling, Gewurztraminer, Pinot Gris, or Viognier? And for the reads we recommend Pinot Noir, but feel free to serve Zinfandel, Cabernet, or Merlot. We do suggest avoiding heavy wines that are high in alcohol or overtly oaky. *Have Fun!*

Whites:

2007 *Hendry Pinot Gris, Napa* \$18.99

2007 *Trefethen Dry Riesling, Napa Valley* \$19.99

2007 *Cold Heaven Viognier "Le Bon Climat Vnyd.," Santa Barbara* \$29.99

Reds:

2007 *Baileyana Pinot Noir "Firepeak Cuvee," Edna Valley* \$22.99

2007 *Fort Ross Pinot Noir, Sonoma Coast* \$32.99

2007 *Varner Pinot Noir "Hidden Block," Santa Cruz Mtns.* \$38.99

2007 *Bobeme Pinot Noir Taylor Ridge Vnyd., Sonoma Coast* \$43.99

¡C'est Arrivé! Beaujolais Nouveau arrives Thurs., Nov. 19th!

DELI

Roberts Holiday Thanksgiving Menu

Stuffed Bake Brie

Stuffed with carmel apple or cranberry chutney and baked to a golden brown. \$14.50 ea

Pumpkin & Butternut

Squash Soup
 Savory with a hint of curry and cream. ...\$9.50 per qt

Free Range Diestel

Ranch Turkeys

The Diestel turkeys are pre-roasted and will need approximately 2 hours to re-heat at 300 degrees in your oven.

Small 10-12 lbs.

serves 8 to 10 people.....\$50.00

Large 16-18 lbs.

serves 14 to 16 people \$60.00

Traditional Stuffing

Mushrooms, onion, celery, water chestnuts and sage
 \$10.75 qt \$5.50 pt

Cornbread Stuffing

Dried cranberries, apricots and green onion
 \$10.75 qt \$5.50 pt

Mashed Potatoes

Fresh potatoes whipped with cream, and butter
 \$12.00 qt..... \$6.25 pt

Porcini Mushroom

Gravy

Rich and creamy made with turkey drippings
 \$12.00 qt..... \$6.25 pt

Onion Sage Gravy

With red wine, caramelized onion and sage
 \$12.00 qt..... \$6.25 pt

Green Bean

Almandine

Sauteed shallots, butter and almonds
 \$11.75 qt..... \$6.00 pt

Roasted Butternut

Squash with Apples

Seasoned with brown sugar and spices
 \$11.75 qt..... \$6.00 pt

Fresh Cranberry Sauce

Whole cranberries slow cooked with a hint of orange
 \$9.50 qt..... \$4.75 pt

Good Earth Bakery

Pumpkin Pie

8" pie serves 8 people.. \$11.99 ea

Gianna's Bakery

Apple, Cherry, 4 Berry, Sweet Peach and Pecan.
 9" pies serve 8 people ...\$15.99 ea

ROBERTS HARDWARE & TACK

3044 Woodside Road • 851-1084
 Hours: Mon.-Fri. 7:30-6:00, Sat. 8:00-6:00, Sun. 9:00-5:00

ENTIRE TOY DEPARTMENT

20% OFF



Limited to stock on hand

Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Laurel student, 6, dies in hit-and-run crash

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

Police are searching for the hit-and-run driver of a car that crashed into a family's Toyota Camry at the intersection of Willow Road and Bayfront Expressway just before 2 p.m. on Nov. 12.

Six-year-old Menlo Park resident Lisa Xavier, a student at Laurel school in Atherton and a passenger in the back seat of the car, died of her injuries the following day at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital.

The girl's mother was also injured in the accident and taken to Stanford Hospital.

The family was driving eastbound on Willow Road to the Sun Microsystems campus when their Camry was struck

by one of two vehicles engaged in a street race heading northbound on the expressway, said spokeswoman Nicole Acker of the Menlo Park Police Department.

Lisa's father was driving the car, but he was uninjured in the collision, said Ms. Acker.

Witnesses saw the driver of the black 1989 Ford Mustang that struck the family's car exit his vehicle and jump into a white Honda involved in the race, which then fled the scene, police said.

Police are "actively searching for" and want to question East Palo Alto resident Shannon Fox, 24, in connection with the accident, according to a police statement. Mr. Fox is described as a black man, 6 feet 2 inches tall, 220 pounds and muscular. He is not a suspect, but considered

a "person of interest" in the homicide investigation, said Ms. Acker.

The Mustang's owner was interviewed by police and is not believed to have been driving the vehicle at the time of the accident, Ms. Acker said.

A video clip from a surveillance camera at Sun Microsystems shows heavy traffic at the scene of the collision, and that at least one vehicle ran a red light before colliding with the vehicle carrying the victims, police said.

The intersection was closed for about two and a half hours after the accident, Sgt. Matthew Ortega said.

Police are asking anyone with information on this incident to call 330-6300 and ask for the watch commander. ■



Photo provided by Menlo Park police

Two mugs shots of Shannon Fox, whom police are "actively searching for" in connection with the fatal hit-and-run accident. Check TheAlmanacOnline for more pictures and updates.

High-speed rail planners ramp up communication spending; locals skeptical

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

The latest efforts by planners of the California high-speed rail system to gather community input and influence the flow of information about the project have not done much to assuage the concerns of local skeptics.

Rail officials have characterized two recent developments — the signing of a \$9 million contract with a public relations firm, and the rollout of a comprehensive outreach plan to communities along the rail line — as measures to provide accurate information and gather local feedback about the projected \$40 billion project, which would run high-speed trains from San Diego to Sacramento.

But for local residents and officials skeptical of the project from the beginning, those efforts don't do much to assuage fears that, when the dust settles, plans will call for trains to tear through local communities on an elevated platform. That design is thought to be several times cheaper than running trains underground, the stated preference of both Menlo Park and Atherton.

"As far as leading to a satisfactory, do-it-right solution, I'm skeptical that (increased outreach) is going to be the answer," Atherton

Mayor Jerry Carlson said in an interview. "I think the final answer's going to be made in Sacramento by the high-speed-rail board, regardless of what the consultants say." He added, however, that he hoped the outreach effort would at least get local residents more informed and involved.

As for the new \$9 million public relations contract, Mr. Carlson and others interpret it as an effort to stifle dissent, rather than promote dialogue.

"I characterize it as a propaganda machine, I really feel that way," he said. "That's the intended purpose, to get their message across, and they've singled out the Peninsula as being the one area where they've gotten beaten up on" in newspapers and online venues.

Some have latched on to remarks by board member Ron Diridon to a representative of the PR company during a recent meeting as the latest sign that board members are intent on squelching opposition to the project, rather than working with local critics.

"Misinformation is causing serious media relations problems in the Midpeninsula; Atherton, Menlo Park, Palo Alto area especially," Mr. Diridon said. He blamed project opponents for "blatantly providing false infor-

Critics see the new \$9 million public relations contract as an effort to stifle dissent, rather than promote dialogue.

See **HIGH-SPEED RAIL**, page 10



Michelle Le/The Almanac

John Celedon has sold the Preuss Pharmacy business to Safeway. He will work at the Safeway pharmacy on El Camino Real.

Preuss to close; Safeway buys business

By Jane Knoerle

Almanac Lifestyles Editor

Preuss Pharmacy, a fixture in downtown Menlo Park since 1947, is closing. The store at 844 Santa Cruz Ave. will shut down soon and the phone lines and prescription files transferred to the Safeway pharmacy at 525 El Camino Real in Menlo Park the morning of Friday, Nov. 20.

Safeway has bought the business, said Preuss owner John Celedon, who said he will be working at the Safeway pharmacy.

The Preuss store will remain open for a short period after Nov. 20 to sell out existing

merchandise, he said.

"In recent years the practice of pharmacy has changed in many ways, some very challenging to the community pharmacy," Mr. Celedon says in a statement on his Web site. With HMOs, PPOs, Medicare Part D, and mandatory mail-orders, "it has become increasingly difficult to compete and be profitable as an independent pharmacy."

Mr. Celedon said the transition to Safeway should go smoothly. He has fielded many calls from longtime patrons, assuring them that he will be working at the Safeway location.

"I'm just moving down the street and I'm going to continue to be a family pharmacist,"

he said.

Home delivery of prescriptions will still be available, according to the Preuss Web site.

Preuss has employed a staff of six, including Mr. Celedon's son Bryan Celedon and his daughter-in-law Iliana, wife of Danny Celedon. Bryan and Iliana are leaving for other pursuits. As for other employees, Mr. Celedon said there are "employment opportunities" at Safeway.

John Celedon began working as pharmacy manager at Preuss in 1983. In 1990, he and a partner bought the business from Lou Wollenberger.

See **PREUSS**, page 10



Packard
Children's
Heart Center



Pediatric
Cardiovascular
Intensive Care
Unit



Stanford
Hospital &
Clinics



Stanford
School of
Medicine



Packard
Children's
Hospital

TOGETHER
WE PERFORMED ONE OF THE WORLD'S FIRST
PEDIATRIC HEART TRANSPLANTS.



Lucile Packard
Children's Hospital
at Stanford

www.lpch.org

In 1984, we gave 2-year-old Lizzy Craze a new heart. Twenty-five years later, she's one of the longest surviving transplant patients - and she's thriving. Today, Lucile Packard Children's Hospital has one of the nation's largest pediatric heart transplant programs. Together, we continue to pioneer new treatments that reduce the need for heart biopsies, explore drug therapies that eliminate the need for transplants for many patients, and sustain patients who await transplants.

Visit lpch.org to see how we work together.

White House nominates Portola Valley resident for U.N. ambassadorship

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

The White House, in a statement released Monday, Nov. 9, announced its nomination of Stanford University scholar and Portola Valley resident Eileen Chamberlain Donahoe to the post of U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Human Rights Council, headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland.

Ms. Donahoe, 50, chaired the National Women for Obama Finance Committee during Barack Obama's campaign for the presidency. As a candidate, Mr. Obama visited Ms. Donahoe's home in February 2007 for a one-night fundraiser that took in \$453,000.

The Senate must confirm Ms. Donahoe's nomination.

The United Nations formed the Human Rights Council in March 2006 by a vote of 170 nations in favor and four opposed, including the United States under the George W. Bush administration.

During the council's first two years of operation, the Bush administration "expressed concern with the council's focus on Israel," according to a June 2009 report by the Congressional Research Service.

The council's 47 member countries are elected to three-year



Photo by Rod Searcey/CISAC Stanford University

The White House announced the nomination of Portola Valley resident Eileen Chamberlain Donahoe to the post of U.S. ambassador to the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland.

terms. The United States ran for election for the first time in March 2009 and was elected on May 12.

Ms. Donahoe, an attorney, has a bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College, a law degree and a master's degree in East Asian studies from Stanford, a master's degree in theological studies from Harvard University, and a doctorate in ethics and social theory from the Graduate Theological Union

at the University of California at Berkeley, according to her online biography at Stanford University's Web site. She is married to eBay chief executive John Donahoe.

Ms. Donahoe studied Mandarin for a year in China, clerked for Judge William H. Orrick at the U.S. district court for the Northern District of California, and practiced high-tech litigation for the Palo Alto law firm Fenwick & West, according to the biography.

Her career includes research on the nexus of U.S. foreign policy and human rights for The Lawyers Committee for Human Rights, and strategies on the human rights of women and children for Amnesty International's Ginetta Sagan Fund.

Ms. Donahoe is an affiliate scholar with Stanford's Center for International Security and Cooperation, where her research interests include the evolution of the use of military force, U.N. reform, and the international rule of law.

Among her colleagues at CISAC are former Secretary of Defense William Perry, and two retired U.S. Army generals: John Abizaid, a former commander in Iraq; and Wesley Clark, who led NATO military operations in Yugoslavia in the 1990s.

Adriana, friends stage concert at Menlo School

By Marjorie Mader

Adriana Kwicinski, a senior at Menlo School, will present — with her musical friends — a "Songs for Life" pop and jazz benefit concert at 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 22, in Florence Moore Auditorium at Menlo School in Atherton.

The concert benefits the Larry Kwicinski Pancreatic Cancer Action Network Research Fund, which she established in honor of her father, who died of pancreatic cancer in 2006 at age 57.

Just nine months before his death, Adriana and her father, an avid outdoorsman, were dog sledding in the snowfields of Canada and camping in the Arctic tundra. He was, she said, "the best dad any kid could imagine."

Adriana turned to her love of music to raise money for the research fund. She's raised \$55,000 so far toward the \$100,000 research grant commitment.

In addition to contributions from friends and family, she's raised money through the sale of two CDs she's recorded; singing at parties, receptions and bat mitzvahs; and organizing



Adriana Kwicinski will sing at the "Songs for Life" concert, which benefits a research fund founded in honor of her father.

events, such as a 10K run and the Menlo School concert.

Guest speaker at the concert will be Dr. Maxence Nachury of Stanford University, the first recipient of the Larry Kwicinski research grant.

Among those performing at

the concert will be Menlo student vocalists Andrew Sanford, Roxanna Meyers, Nicole Wolf, Harrison Nida, and Adriana; Seth Klebe from Aragon High School; the coed Menlo A Cappella Choir; and the Menlo Varsity Jazz Band, directed by Mark Warren.

Also performing will be the "Quintessential Jazz Band" with David Lee on percussion, Lucas Sokolsky on saxophone, Seth Klebe on bass; and Adriana as the vocalist. On the piano will be a pro — Larry Dunlap, the accompanist on Adriana's two CDs, "Irreplaceable" and "Day by Day."

To purchase tickets for the tax-deductible benefit, send an e-mail to akwicinski@hotmail.com and state the number and type of tickets. Prices are \$40 for reserved seating; \$25 for regular seating; and \$10 for students.

Send a check made out to the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network to: Adriana Kwicinski, 1000 Atkinson Lane, Menlo Park, CA 94025. Tickets will be available at will call before the concert.

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Gloria Darke



Why giving Home Buyers Early Occupancy Can Cause Major Problems

Dear Gloria,

Q: The sale of our home will be delayed a couple of months until the buyers home sells. Since we have a place to move, the buyer is asking for earlier occupancy. Is this a good idea or not?

- Carol D

A: Dear Carol,

Giving early occupancy is rarely a good idea because too many things could go wrong. For instance, what if your buyer's home doesn't sell on schedule or — worse yet — what if it doesn't sell at all?

However, if you must give early occupancy make certain that your contact covers critical items. First,

how much rent will be charged and when is it due? What kind of penalty will the buyers incur if the rent is late? Who will pay the utilities after you move out? Will the buyer be covered by adequate insurance while occupying your property?

What recourse will you have if buyer's sale falls through and they cannot buy your house? What if they don't want to leave?

The buyer's "walk through" inspection should be done before occupancy, just in case something happened to the property after they move in. Even if you can

satisfactorily answer these questions, this would be one area of real estate contact covers critical items. First, I would stick with "never"!

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

OPERA
SAN JOSE
PRESENTS ROSSINI'S
La Cenerentola
CINDERELLA

NOVEMBER 14-29, 2009 CALIFORNIA THEATRE
ORDER YOUR TICKETS NOW!
408.437.4450 OPERASJ.ORG

CHRIS AYERS PHOTO
CITY OF SAN JOSE
CAPITAL OF SILICON VALLEY

Touchy debate over polarizing Bohannon project

■ City's divided history, Bohannon family's Menlo Park ties complicate debate over huge office/hotel project.

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

Some Menlo Park residents are asking why the city hasn't moved quicker to approve the mammoth "Menlo Gateway" office/hotel project proposed by developer David Bohannon. Others are asking why the city hasn't already refused the project.

Such is the polarizing effect of one of the greatest things to ever hit Menlo Park.

Or ...one of the most hubristic, environmentally detrimental projects ever proposed in the city.

It really depends on whom you ask.

"We have been kicking this ball around for a long time," Rose Bickerstaff, a resident of the Belle Haven neighborhood, told the City Council at its Nov. 3 meeting. "I'd like to live to see something really fantastic for this city, and I can't imagine anyone not wanting to embrace this Gateway project. It is a fantastic project."

Arguments against the project are myriad, but Menlo Park resident Morris Brown gave a succinct summation at the same meeting.

"The project is just too big," he said. "It's way too big, and it's not suitable to Menlo Park. ... The city does not have in place the rules and guidelines for a massive project like this."

The current proposal includes plans for three eight-story office buildings, an 11-story hotel, a sports club, a restaurant, and over 800,000 square feet of parking garages — in addition to the 950,000 square feet of structures — near the intersection of Marsh Road and Bayfront Expressway.

As the approval process for the project accelerates — the City Council is expected to give guidance at its Nov. 17 meeting on negotiations with the Bohannon Development Co. — people on both sides of the fence are lobbying the council, in a debate made uncomfortable at times by geogra-

phy, and by the Bohannon family's history in Menlo Park.

While support and opposition to the project doesn't splinter cleanly along any one demographic axis, the most noticeable split has been between Belle Haven residents — many of whom support the project — and the political camp known in some quarters as "residentialists," who have voiced grave concerns.

That happens to be a racial and socioeconomic divide, as well: a fact that people on both sides have acknowledged makes the debate an uncomfortable one.

"I hate what's happening here," said Belle Haven resident Matt Henry in an interview. "Very slowly, it's almost becoming a black/white thing. That's really bad news, and this is the last thing we wanted. This could get kind of ugly."

Asked to clarify, Mr. Henry talked about what he perceives as the prevailing mentality in Menlo Park that "there's a certain way you have to deal with (minorities). ... 'We'll decide what's best for them, because they don't know what they want.'"

Mr. Henry cautioned that he's not saying "everyone (outside Belle Haven) should shut up," and said it's possible that "maybe we're looking at it wrong, we've got it all wrong, we're oversensitive and all of that."

Still, the insinuation by Mr. Henry and others that a rejection of the project would amount to a further isolation of Belle Haven has added an extra layer of touchiness to what was already promising to be a highly contentious issue.

Vince Bressler, a member of the city's Planning Commission, summed up the discomfort he felt in speaking about the project before his comments at the Nov. 3 council meeting.

"It's not easy talking here," he said. "I'm a little nervous because of some of the emotion here, and I'm concerned about being perceived as someone who is against this project. I want to make it clear that I just want to serve the council as a member of the Planning Commission."

Chuck Bernstein, a resident of

the Willows neighborhood, spoke to a different source of discomfort at the meeting. He prefaced an impassioned speech warning council members not to let Mr. Bohannon swindle them by acknowledging Mr. Bohannon's role in the community.

"I want to be clear: We're not talking about personalities here, or the character of Mr. Bohannon," he said. "He is a neighbor, I've shared schools with him, and that's not what's at issue. The issue is the project, and the impact on Menlo Park." ■

■ INFORMATION

At its meeting Tuesday, Nov. 17, Menlo Park's City Council is expected to give general guidance on negotiations with the Bohannon Development Co. over the proposed "Menlo Gateway" project. The meeting is scheduled to begin at 7 p.m. in the council chambers, in the Civic Center complex between Laurel and Alma streets.

Dreams of revitalization in Belle Haven

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

In a city where land development projects are often contested most energetically by the people living closest to them, the showing of support by Belle Haven residents for a towering office/hotel project a few blocks outside their neighborhood may not be axiomatic to many Menlo Park residents.

But according to Belle Haven resident Matt Henry, the reversal of traditional patterns of support and opposition in response to the project, proposed by the Bohannon Development Co., underscores a fundamental divide within the city.

"Menlo Park has a particular mindset, they really think they're Mayberry," Mr. Henry said in an interview. "Maybe a lot of people in Menlo Park, they can afford to be in dreamland. I can't. That doesn't work for me."

While people west of U.S. 101 are often intent on maintaining what they have, Belle Haven residents have long been struggling to improve conditions in their neighborhood, Mr. Henry said. Residents' support for the project perhaps makes more sense in the context of that struggle, including attempts to attract basic city services such as a grocery store.

Ash Vasudeva, president of the Belle Haven Homeowners' Association, said in an interview that the association supports the project because it believes it will "spur investment and development" east of U.S. 101.

The details of the project can be subject to debate, there are valid questions about scale and size and use, but the idea of upgrading the area is a good one that a lot of Belle Haven residents support, Mr. Vasudeva said.

"This will provide a major lift for the community," Nancy Cash, representing Belle

Haven's Mount Olive Church, said at the Nov. 3 City Council meeting. "It will attract other businesses, and it will have a positive impact on property values, and on the atmosphere of our community."

Residents have also said they would welcome the influx of jobs the project would generate, particularly in construction; the Bohannon Development Co. plans to work with JobTrain to provide work for Menlo Park residents.

Mr. Vasudeva acknowledged that there are concerns over how the city will deal with increased traffic, and said that Belle Haven residents are still waiting to see what kinds of public benefits the city will negotiate with the Bohannon Co.

Mr. Henry said he knows the project is not a panacea.

"I know it's not the perfect thing, but it's a start, to me," he said. "It's just a start."

The project does, however, offer the tantalizing prospect of succeeding where public efforts have failed in bringing private investment.

"What I'm really hoping is that sometime in the future, there will be no redevelopment zone, and Belle Haven will be just like the rest of Menlo Park," Mr. Henry said. "It just won't be a big deal when you come to Belle Haven."

As for suggestions that residents support the project because of promises made by Mr. Bohannon, Mr. Henry said: "We're not (voicing support) as a favor for Bohannon, we're doing it for the community. Bohannon's been coming over here long enough to know he can't shove anything down our throats, because we'll tell him to go to hell, too." ■

Perceived benefits a fantasy, some say

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

While supporters of the "Menlo Gateway" office/hotel project proposed by the Bohannon Development Co. say the project will bring money and jobs to the city, spurring private investment, critics have argued that perceived project benefits are based on wishful thinking.

Beyond concerns over how the nearly 1 million-square-foot project near Marsh Road and Bayfront Expressway would affect the surrounding area — myriad issues have been raised, from carbon emissions and traffic to light pollution and shadows cast by the buildings — questions have also been raised about hidden costs and exaggerated promises.

"This is not a project. Let's just be clear: This is not a project," Planning Commissioner Vince Bressler said at the Nov. 3 council meeting, noting that it could be decades before construction is completed, and arguing that the project might not have any kind of immediate impact on the city. "This is a development option worth \$100 to \$200 million," he continued. "This is not jobs, it just isn't."

Former council member Paul Collacchi said in an interview: "If they're going to make a long-term development agreement, they could be tying the hands of 10 generations of future councils. An entire generation of Menlo Park residents would be unable to do anything to change this."

While Menlo Park might benefit from the additional revenue brought by the project through hotel occupancy and property taxes, other regional govern-

ments would suffer by having to provide more housing, according to Mr. Collacchi. He argues that annual revenue to the city and annual costs to other public agencies via induced housing demand would essentially cancel each other out.

Bohannon Co. representatives have countered by saying the project would stimulate private development and new jobs in the Bay Area. But that's just the obvious outcome of increasing population, Mr. Collacchi said, drawing a line between bolstering productivity and simply adding people.

"Be a good neighbor" was the theme of Transportation Commissioner Charlie Bourne's comments at the Nov. 3 meeting. "If we approve this project, we would be doing a disservice to our neighbors," he said. "Why can't we just shrug this off?"

Critics have asked why the city is considering the project before conducting a study of future land use in its "light industrial" district, similar to the downtown planning process currently underway. They have asked if the policy at work is "zoning for sale," as the city prepares to enter into negotiations with the Bohannon Co.

Mr. Collacchi pointed to inadequacies in the city's review process, arguing that its regulatory system is simply not equipped to handle a "big-city" project.

Another question critics have raised — and one that council members said they are struggling with in giving guidance on how big a project they would approve — is whether the three eight-story office buildings are all necessary to support the

see **OPPONENTS**, on next page

Residents of The Sequoias endure 26 hours without power

■ Rat trips main circuit breaker; electrician delayed for hours in Oakland.

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

A tenacious Portola Valley rat, now deceased, shut down electrical service at The Sequoias retirement community on the morning of Monday, Nov. 9, when it managed to get into a large and supposedly rodent-proofed electrical shed on the grounds and place itself across the main circuit breaker.

Everything at 501 Portola Road went dark. Power at the health-care facilities came back up under on-

site generator power and residents did have a hot dinner. But for some 26 hours, employees in the non-medical offices and about 200 residents in apartments had to make do with flashlights and cold-water ablutions.

"We got some good practice on where our flashlights are and where our batteries are," resident and Almanac senior correspondent Marion Softky said in an interview. "I think it was a good lesson for us."

Ron Petersen, administrator for

health services at The Sequoias, agreed. "If it was a disaster drill, I would have given it an A-plus," he told The Almanac.

But 26 hours? For a circuit breaker that did what it was supposed to do? When it died, the rat, which lost all its hair and was literally petrified by the incident, had apparently created "a fireball, an electrical storm inside there" that damaged insulation on nearby components, Mr. Petersen said.

Since The Sequoias owns the equipment, Pacific Gas & Electric Corp., which owns and maintains the town's electrical grid, played a limited role in getting power

restored.

PG&E briefly shut down a section of the grid along Portola Road after the outage to allow The Sequoias to electrically isolate itself before beginning repairs, then reconnected the system to the grid after repairs were complete, PG&E spokesman Joe Molica said in an interview, adding: "We work with our customers as much as we can to assist them."

The outage required a private electrician with specialized equipment to safely bring the system back up, Mr. Petersen said. The electrician under contract with The Sequoias was busy in Oakland and unavailable, Mr. Petersen said, until PG&E arrived on that site to reconnect the grid over there.

"That created a delay of seven hours," Mr. Petersen said. Asked to comment, Mr. Molica said he didn't know anything about that part of

the day's events.

Meanwhile, The Sequoias' contract electrician arranged for a substitute who, as it turned out, did not have the necessary equipment to test the breaker, Mr. Petersen said. By the time the contract electrician in Oakland was free to leave, the evening rush hour had begun, delaying his arrival even more.

The contract electrician had the system ready for reconnection to the grid by 11:30 p.m. but despite "numerous" late-night calls to PG&E, the company did not restore power until around 11 a.m. the next day, Mr. Petersen said.

PG&E, Mr. Molica said, advised The Sequoias to "please call us as soon as the electrical work is done and we'll be back out there to connect the grid." PG&E records show that call coming in at 7 a.m., with power restored at 11:14 a.m., Mr. Molica said. ■



Photo by Dave Boyce/The Almanac

On the fault

Geophysicist and Portola Valley resident Sheldon Breiner explains tectonic plate movement, using a homemade seismometer (on the table) as a prop, during a recent meeting with Town Hall staff in the town library. The library's heritage room, which sits about 100 yards from the San Andreas Fault, houses a seismometer designed by Mr. Breiner.

OPPONENTS

continued from previous page

hotel and sports club, the components that generate the most revenue for the city. According to Mr. Collacchi, the mass of the entire University Circle hotel/office development in East Palo Alto would fit within Menlo Gateway's parking structures.

"Change is inevitable, but this would not be (merely) change," Frank Carney said at the meeting. "This would be like an earthquake in terms of the impact on the city, and the region." ■

SamTrans seeks comment on plan

The San Mateo County Transit District will implement plans in December that include eliminating one SamTrans local express bus to San Francisco, reducing service by half on the remaining express route, and increasing express fares by 10 percent.

The changes, set to take effect on Dec. 20, are a result of SamTrans' reported \$28.4 million budget shortfall for the fiscal year that began July 1. The district has a "structural deficit," SamTrans spokeswoman Christine Dunn said in a statement, adding that the revenue outlook is not expected to improve for

"several" more fiscal years.

With that bleak prospect in mind, SamTrans is asking for public comment on the district's 10-year plan, which includes proposed operational and capital expenses and financial projections used to qualify for state and federal funding.

Go to tinyurl.com/SamTrans to see the plan. To comment, send e-mail to SRTP@samtrans.com or write to SamTrans Short-Range Transit Plan, P.O. Box 3006, San Carlos, CA 94070.

Comments will be accepted through Wednesday, Nov. 25.



HE EARNED B.A. IN HISTORY FROM U.C. BERKELEY AND HIS MASTERS DEGREE IN EDUCATION ADMINISTRATION FROM STANFORD UNIVERSITY. HE'S WORKED IN EDUCATION FOR MORE THAN TWENTY YEARS.

He's one of a community of more than 16 faculty and administrators that live on campus. He's a former U.S. Navy pilot, served three years as a Peace Corps volunteer in Paraguay, guided whitewater rafting trips, bartended, hung aluminum siding in Fairbanks, Alaska, worked at the Lair of the Golden Bear (Go Bears!) helped set up the big top for Cirque de Soleil, loves to ride motorcycles but most importantly, loves to spend time with his wife Thea and their three-year-old son Augie.

He loves watching students blossom and believes that teaching is the noblest of callings, and also one of the most challenging to do well.

He hopes students leave the Priory with strong personal identities as students and community members. He hopes they have discovered things that they are passionate about and that they have confidence, garnered from real experience, to take intellectual risks.

BRIAN SCHLAAK

ONE OF THE MANY REASONS TO SEND YOUR CHILD TO:



Woodside Priory School

Admissions Office
302 Portola Road, Portola Valley, CA 94028
650/851-8223 ■ www.PrioryCa.org

OPEN HOUSE for Prospective Students and Families

Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2009 at 7 p.m.
Saturday, Dec. 5, 2009 at 10 a.m.

For information and to R.S.V.P. contact Admissions at 650. 851. 8223

Menlo Park, Atherton voice preference for underground rail

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

Responding to a request from the California High-Speed Rail Authority, Menlo Park and Atherton have both sent letters stating their preference for the high-speed trains to run underground through their communities, as opposed to at ground level or above ground.

While city officials from both jurisdictions have long stated their preference for an underground system, this is the first time Menlo Park has taken a formal stance, according to Public Works Director Kent Steffens.

In its letter, Atherton asks for

Caltrain and freight tracks to be stacked on top of high-speed rail tracks in a partially covered trench. That alignment would not require seizure of property along the tracks, and is not likely to permanently decrease property values, according to Public Works Director Duncan Jones, the letter's author.

Menlo Park makes a more general request for the rail agency to study the prospect of sending trains underground through local communities.

"Increased public outreach activities ... have clearly identified an overwhelming community preference for a below grade (underground) Caltrain/

High-speed-rail system through Menlo Park," the city states in its letter, drafted by Mr. Steffens.

Menlo Park also questions the rail authority's assertion that tracks could not run at a grade greater than 1 percent on the Peninsula, saying such a restriction would make it more difficult to send trains underground. The 1 percent limit is only in place to allow freight trains to carry more cars, the city argues.

Atherton's discursive, argumentative letter passed unanimously and without comment at its Oct. 21 council meeting.

Menlo Park's more general — yet also more direct — missive passed by a 3-1 vote after some

wrangling at the Nov. 10 City Council meeting, with Councilman John Boyle dissenting.

While council members agreed that the underground option would be ideal, Mr. Boyle took issue with a statement that Menlo Park would support the rail authority if it decided not to analyze other alignments. Given how little the city knows about the potential design or viability of the various options, it would be premature to ask the rail authority to rule out any of them, Mr. Boyle argued.

Councilman Rich Cline responded that the city needs to make its preference for an underground system as clear as

possible, and that he couldn't see any scenario under which a raised platform would be a desirable option. While Mr. Boyle took issue with what he believed was a disrespectful tone in the letter, Mr. Cline said the city needs to be forceful if it wants the rail authority to listen to Menlo Park.

"We need to help them get (to the underground option)," Mr. Cline said of the rail authority. "Otherwise, we're going to get a raised platform."

Menlo Park Councilman Andy Cohen was absent from the meeting, and is recused from discussing issues related to high-speed rail anyway, because he lives near the tracks. ■

Locals skeptical about high-speed rail PR spending

HIGH-SPEED RAIL

continued from page 5

mation to the media," and went on to say that the PR firm needed to correct that information immediately, to prevent it from becoming "a sore that festers," or "the rotten apple in the barrel." PR workers should see themselves as "flying squads of emergency responders" in correcting false

media reports, he said.

Mr. Diridon said the PR contract would help to streamline communication efforts and prevent employees of the rail agency from issuing conflicting or inaccurate messages.

One frequent poster on The Almanac's Web site saw evidence that the PR firm is already at it, accusing an anonymous poster — who defended Mr. Diridon,

the project, and the PR firm — of being an employee of the firm. The accused poster denied the allegation. The PR firm, Ogilvy, did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

At Menlo Park's Nov. 10 council meeting, Councilman Rich Cline said he saw mixed messages in the rail authority's communication efforts with Peninsula residents.

On the one hand, "you're saying, 'your input is something we want,'" Mr. Cline told Mike Garvey, who's heading up community outreach efforts for the consulting firm overseeing the project's two-year environmental review process. "On the other hand, you're saying, 'we have to do something about these bad apples, we have to eliminate the bad apples from the bunch, we need to get rid of 'em, let's get a PR firm to do it.' The two messages completely contradict."

Joking that remarks by board members might put his children through college, Mr. Garvey said that the goal of the environmental analysis is to "get away from the kind of emotion we've seen

up to this point — not only on the part of the public, but also on the part of board members."

The board is "free to do what it wants," but its members won't be able to simply disregard the environmental study, he said. Project engineers would consider input gathered from local residents in conducting that study.

"We welcome everyone, whether they are critical or supportive," Mr. Garvey said.

Beyond continued doubts over whether their solicitations, complaints and pleas will influence the thinking of rail authority board members, local officials have also expressed concern that residents will simply get lost in a deluge of information about the rail project in the two-plus years before the board's decision on the preferred alignment, scheduled for early 2012.

They fear that efforts by the rail authority, the environmental review contractor, a regional advocacy group, local jurisdictions, and involved residents will merge into a soupy muddle in the minds of casual followers.

"It's a bit of a blur," Menlo

Park Mayor Heyward Robinson told Mr. Garvey.

"How do we prevent burn-out?" Councilwoman Kelly Fergusson asked. "I'm afraid that people are going to feel like they have to come to a lot of meetings to get their voices heard."

Mr. Robinson proposed a more direct solution, saying that he's heard rail officials complain of "misinformation" several times, without offering specific examples.

"We haven't had a presentation from the High-Speed Rail Authority to this council and to this community in well over a year," he said. "There are a lot of legitimate questions, and we kind of keep hearing things from various sources that there's misinformation out there. And I'm sure there is. ... Instead of sort of throwing darts and saying, 'well, there's misinformation,' come! We're here every Tuesday night. ... Come and clear up some of these things." ■

"Doctor, there's nothing you can do to help my feet?"

Tens of millions suffer and often don't know where to turn...

The problem is often misdiagnosed, or not diagnosed at all. But, it affects the lives of between 10 and 20 million Americans. The problem can cause leg or feet:

1. Numbness.
2. Burning pain.
3. Cramping.
4. Sharp, electric pain.
5. Pain when you walk.
6. Difficulty sleeping from leg/foot discomfort and restless leg.
7. Prickling/tingling feelings.
8. Balance problems, tripping and falling down.



If you suffer from one or more of these problems, you may have peripheral neuropathy. And, if you do, you are not alone. These problems can be caused by diabetes, hereditary disorders, inflammation, medications such as cholesterol lowering (statin) drugs, and more. Dr. Craig Dano, DC has introduced a unique treatment program for peninsula residents to address these symptoms. Dr. Dano, DC is a member of the Neuropathy Treatment Centers of America. This gives him a unique set of knowledge and tools that have been tested, researched, and found to be effective. "I practice a multi-pronged attack to these problems. Our patients receive as part of the treatment Low Level Light Therapy (LLLT). It's a newly developed tool that is very safe. This non-invasive healing light uses pulsed infrared light that has been proven to work on peripheral neuropathy symptoms", explains Dr. Dano, DC.

What makes this program truly special is that the treatment is provided in the comfort and convenience of your home. "Many of my patients have mobility difficulty so offering care in their homes is a welcomed benefit. Also, I can spend focused time with each patient and not be rushed which is often the case in a clinic setting. Unfortunately, I can only accept a very restricted number of new patients each month", explains Dr. Dano, DC.

His cell phone number is (650) 630-5834. Call him and he will be happy to personally discuss with you over the phone your particular condition and help determine if you may be a candidate for this special program. There are still a few treatment spots open for November and December.

PREUSS

continued from page 5

In 1999, Mr. Celedon bought the business outright and moved from spacious quarters at 800 Santa Cruz Ave. to a much smaller space at 844 Santa Cruz.

Founded in the 1940s

Preuss Pharmacy was founded by Orville F. Preuss in the 1940s. The original store featured not only a pharmacy but 10 cosmetic lines, 10 jewelry lines, a vast greeting card section, and an assortment of gift items.

According to a June 20, 1973, article in the Menlo Park Record-

er, the pharmacy employed two full-time cosmeticians, as well as a jewelry manager. Delivery service and complimentary gift wrapping were popular with customers.

John Celedon has been commuting from his home in San Francisco to Menlo Park for 26 years. With Preuss closing, wouldn't this be the time to work closer to home? He says no. "My roots are here. This is what I know. My business relations are here."

Mr. Celedon will also continue to serve as chairman of the Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce board of directors. ■

Las Lomitas tours

Parents of students enrolling in kindergarten at Las Lomitas School for the 2010-11 school year can sign up for school tours that begin Tuesday, Dec. 1.

The tours are for adults only, and only 10 spaces are available for each tour. Tour times are 9:45 to 10:50 a.m. on these dates: Dec. 1 and 10; Jan. 13 and 21; Feb. 4, 11 and 24; and March 11 and 17.

A tour for parents of new first- through third-grade students is set for March 23.

To reserve a tour, call 854-5900. Kindergarten registration packets for the next school year will be available at the school office beginning Jan. 4. Las Lomitas School is at 299 Alameda de las Pulgas in Atherton.

Menlo Country Club faces uphill battle in opening door for expansion

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

The Menlo Country Club, a private golf course that sits along Woodside Road across from Woodside High School, may be thought of as venerable, given its founding in 1901. If its long presence confers any clout, that will be tested this week.

The club has asked the Woodside Planning Commission to review a decision by Planning and Building Director Jackie Young that denied a change of zoning,

thereby significantly complicating expansion plans, if any, that the club may have.

The commission meets at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 18, in Independence Hall at the corner of Woodside and Whiskey Hill roads.

In its appeal, the club is facing several overlapping obstacles:

■ Since the club's existence preceded the town's 1956 incorporation, it was allowed to continue operating but is considered "a non-conforming use" under current

zoning laws. That label precludes expansion, Ms. Young said in an Oct. 16 letter to Mark B. Pitchford, chair of the club's Golf & Greens Committee.

Golf courses are permitted on land zoned Community Commercial, but that category also allows "intensive commercial land uses" such as malls, a possible concern for the club's residential neighbors, Ms. Young said in a staff report.

■ In discussing topographic conditions with the club's chief engineer, a cursory review by

town staff of an aerial photograph of club grounds raised a question. The photo appears to show an average slope that would prohibit development of more than 67.5 percent of the site, a number the club has probably already exceeded, Ms. Young said.

■ Is it a "golf course" or a "private noncommercial club"? Ms. Young has settled on the former, but the club prefers the latter, in that it would no longer be non-conforming, Ms. Young said.

The San Mateo County Asses-

sor's Office calls it a golf course, Ms. Young noted, and golf is the land's primary use. The ordinance does not define it, and judicial precedent recommends the plain meaning of words to "avoid an absurd result." Her report includes three dictionary definitions of golf course.

In an Oct. 22 letter, club President Harry G. Whelan said the club will show that "golf course" is an inappropriate term.

The club did not respond to a request for an interview.

Menlo Park school district eyes parcel tax to boost revenue

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

Would residents support a new parcel tax to help fund the Menlo Park City School District?

With the revenue picture looking grim, the school board on Nov. 8 asked district officials to undertake a feasibility study of asking voters to tax themselves to supplement funding for the district's schools.

"To be clear, we're not calling for a parcel tax, there's no talk of amounts. It's just to get an understanding of the interest in the

community," said board member Laura Rich.

There are three existing parcel taxes in the district that, combined, cost homeowners almost \$600 a year.

Like nearly every California school district, Menlo Park is facing cuts in state funding and lower-than-usual increases in property tax revenues. Donations to the foundation that supports the school were down 18 percent last year. And the number of children enrolled in the district just keeps climbing, but as a basic aid district, Menlo Park receives no

extra funding when the student population grows.

"The basic aid district model works well when you have rising property tax assessments, rising community donations, and flat-ish enrollment," said board member Jeff Child. "When those get out of whack — our enrollment is up 4, 5, 6 percent and parent-giving through the foundation is flat — the model has to change."

The district already has made plenty of budget cuts, Mr. Child pointed out. The teachers' union agreed to go without raises this year, class sizes edged up to

avoid hiring more teachers, and the administration is very trim, he said.

The ratio of employees to supervisors is well beyond what's typical in the private sector and exceeds the state's standards, Mr. Child said.

"There are only so many levers you can push," he said. "It's not a business, you can't change the prices (to make ends meet)."

Some programs, such as music, have already taken hits. The same four music teachers are now teaching 25 percent more children, Superintendent Ken Ranella said.

Technology updates have been postponed, but that can't go on forever, he said.

"Frankly, the next level of cuts gets into the meat of the organism here," Mr. Ranella said.

If it comes down to cutting educational programs and dramatically increasing class sizes, it's clear that district officials hope that the community would step in with a new parcel tax to help the schools.

"Are we going to wait for an economic recovery, or look for additional revenue?" asked Mr. Ranella. "A parcel tax is a way to look for additional revenue, (but) it's a tough time economically to ask our constituents for more taxes."

THE ART OF CRAFTING DELI MEATS

NATURALLY SMOKED v. LIQUID SMOKE ADDITIVES



There are two ways to create deli meats: The Kingsley way, and every other way. Kingsley only uses whole breast turkey, ham and top-round beef. We believe in slow-roasting, hand-rubbed herbs and spices, and we only naturally smoke our meats with wood from the Black Forest in Germany. With Kingsley, it is just the meat. www.KingsleyDeliArts.com.

KINGSLEY

DELI ARTS™

AVAILABLE AT DRAEGER'S MARKET AND OTHER FINE SPECIALTY STORES. ASK FOR A SAMPLE.

© 2009 Kingsley Deli Arts

Stanford Hospital Health Notes

A community health education series from Stanford Hospital & Clinics

Rewriting Immunity's Rules: New Strategies Against Cancer

Watch 68-year-old Albert Yu's vigorous swing of a tennis racket and it's hard to imagine that he is the veteran of some tough years of chemotherapy and radiation, the kind often prescribed to beat back cancer. He plays with determined control and balance, keeping up even when he's challenged by a steady stream of machine-fed balls.

Just two years ago, Yu could barely get up out of a chair. He was at the end of an exhausting eight years of battle against lymphoma. That's a cancer that hits white blood cells and distorts their ability to protect the body from bacteria and disease. His physicians at Stanford Hospital had used the most advanced therapies available, even enrolling Yu in clinical trials of experimental treatments. The cancer would go away for a little bit, Yu said, then it would come back. It became more and more obvious, said his wife, Mary Bechmann Yu, "that the remissions were getting shorter and shorter and that we needed to rethink our strategy."

Replacing Yu's exhausted immune system with a transplant was the avenue his Stanford physicians suggested, a version of a whole system do-over first accomplished in 1956 by replacing a patient's diseased bone marrow with healthy marrow from his identical twin. The bone marrow is where the body generates cells for the immune system. Over the decades, the trans-

plant technique has been improved to make transplants possible between unrelated people. But the underlying challenge has remained the same: to provide a new immune system that recognizes the abnormality of cancer cells and destroys them while accepting the cells in its new body, just if they were original equipment.

Tricking immune cells

His Stanford physicians offered Yu a new treatment called, for short, TLI/ATG. The letters represent a two-part approach to manipulating the behavior of the immune system. The regimen is based on a discovery made by Stanford immunologist Samuel Strober, MD.

"You get to know everybody there and after a while, they're like family."

— Stanford Hospital patient Albert Yu

The TLI/ATG strategy, initially developed through animal studies, relies on the impact of radiation on certain cells in the immune system. Strober observed that those cells could be manipulated with radiation to increase in number and to do a better job of attacking cancer cells. The other trick in the strategy is to reduce the reaction of the transplanted immune cells to their new environment. Typically, they would at-



Albert Yu came through months of treatment that gave him a new immune system. Now, two years after the transplant that fought his cancer, he and his wife, Mary Bechmann Yu, are living a life renewed.

tack, in a behavior called graft versus host disease, but the TLI/ATG protocol suppresses that response.

"It's a wonderful example of bench to bedside research," said Robert Lowsky, MD, who worked with Strober, Judy Shizuru, MD, PhD, and other Stanford physicians to perfect the treatment they first saw work with mice in 2001. Yu read about the technique in 2005 and was intrigued because it offered someone like him, then beyond the standard age for transplant, a chance for a more sustained remission. "It was a higher risk," he said, "but a higher return."

Cellular transplants began at Stanford in 1986, with a bone marrow transplant for a child with leukemia. Since then, more than 3,800 adults and children have been treated. The program, with a 22-bed adult inpatient unit at the Hospital and 56-bed/chair outpatient infusion area, is recognized by the

National Cancer Institute for its excellence in care and research.

Scientific advances pushed a change in the program's name from "Bone Marrow" to "Blood and Marrow." The staff now includes a cadre of more than 50 nurses specially certified in oncology and chemotherapy. Some have been with the program since its inception. The program also includes collaborative care rooms so patients with cardiac issues can receive that extra layer of required attention.

"You get to know everybody there," Yu said, "and after a while, they're like family."

As it does with every patient, the BMT program creates a team of physicians who coordinated Yu's care. His group included his original oncologist, Ron Levy, MD; his chief transplant physician, Wen-Kai Weng, MD; and radiation oncologist Rich Hoppe, MD.

Preparing at home

Yu's treatment protocol allowed him to be physically conditioned and then transplanted almost completely without hospitalization, in comparison to the weeks of isolation behind double doors that some transplant patients must endure. But the treatment still requires juggling a complex set of interconnected events designed to push his immune system down to zero while keeping him from becoming infected. He was vulnerable to even one stray germ, his wife said. "It was a little bit like walking a tightrope and he was so fragile."



Albert Yu played tennis before he became ill with cancer and, since his bone marrow transplant, he's worked diligently to get back his game.

What to Know about Blood and Marrow Transplantation

- Bone marrow, the liquid center of our bones, produces red blood cells that carry oxygen, platelets that control bleeding and white blood cells, the vital part of our infection-fighting immune system. Inserting donated bone marrow builds a new immune system able to eliminate various kinds of cancers, including leukemia and lymphoma.
- Bone marrow can be withdrawn under regional or general anesthesia from the hip bones, but most donations of immune system-generating blood cells can be taken directly from the blood stream.
- After donation, a person's marrow is replenished within four to six weeks.

- To join the national registry, donors must be between 18 and 60 years old.
- The closer the match between donor tissue and patient, the better. Genetics determine tissue type, so the more complex someone's ethnic makeup, the more difficult it is to find a donor.
- The non-profit National Marrow Donor Program has been registering and connecting donors with patients since 1987. It now includes 7 million donors and works with a group of almost 500 hospitals, blood centers and laboratories. It is also part of a worldwide network that works cooperatively with service organizations, student groups and corporations to build the registry.
- For more information about the registry, visit bethematch.org. For more information about the Stanford Hospital BMT program, visit <http://bmt.stanford.edu/> or call 650.723.0822.

Yu said his wife made an extraordinary effort to make their home a totally clean place. They also asked to consult with someone who'd gone through the same procedure. Stanford made that introduction. Hearing about the experience first-hand, said Mary Bechmann Yu, "turned out to be a tremendous resource, medically and emotionally."

When, finally, Yu sat in a reclining chair at Stanford's Cancer Center so the transplant cells could flow through an IV into his arm, it was almost a non-event, Yu said. "They just bring in a bag and injected it into my vein. But it was very emotional for me. I felt somebody gave me life."

The BMT program found Yu a donor who was a perfect match. Future patients will benefit from work that continues to modulate treatment even further so those immune system cells can be even more precisely controlled, said Robert Negrin, MD, Chief of the Division of Blood and Marrow Transplantation. "There's a lot going on now to try to understand and figure out what controls the induction of an immune response how these cell populations talk to each other." Then comes the issue of how to use that knowledge to predict an individual's unique interaction to chemotherapy, radiation and transplanted donor cells.

"It was very emotional for me. I felt somebody gave me life."

— Stanford Hospital patient Albert Yu

The hope, Lowsky said, is to be able to manipulate the immune system to accept any donated cell or tissue, enabling any patient to have a transplant that would not trigger rejection.



Norbert von der Groeben

For months, Yu had to be very careful about his activities, especially those that exposed him to other people and possible infection. Now, his new immune system is strong.

Regaining power

Over the next nine months, as his new immune system built its ability to function at full strength, Yu took life slowly. Every day, he went to the Cancer Center where nurses would draw his blood, test it and give him additional treatments. "Then I'd receive whatever was needed that day to try to normalize my blood chemistry," Yu said, "and keep me going while I healed and until I could make immune cells on my own."

The TLI/ATG protocol produces such a long-lasting impact on the immune system that Yu does not need additional daily medication to suppress his immune system. He has also worked to regain his muscle tone and cardiovascular stamina, enrolling in an

exercise class and working out with weights. In addition to tennis, he's also swimming and playing golf.

"I feel that once you've had cancer, I don't think you want to say you can

be cured for sure. On the other hand, there's no point in thinking about it," Yu said. "We're way more conscious about how we spend our time," said his wife. "We have a very different yardstick to our calendar."



Stuart Brinin Photography

The BMT program hosts an annual reunion for its patients; this group, photographed at this year's gathering, represents some of those who've had their transplants 10 years.

Stanford Hospital & Clinics is known worldwide for advanced treatment of complex disorders in areas such as cardiovascular care, cancer treatment, neurosciences, surgery, and organ transplants. Consistently ranked among the top institutions in the U.S. News & World Report annual list of "America's Best Hospitals," Stanford Hospital & Clinics is internationally recognized for translating medical breakthroughs into the care of patients. It is part of the Stanford University Medical Center, along with the Stanford University School of Medicine and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford. For more information, visit stanfordmedicine.org.



STANFORD
HOSPITAL & CLINICS

Stanford University Medical Center

Willows burglaries: police on alert; 4 arrested

Menlo Park police report they are on "heightened alert" following what the police department has characterized as a recent increase in burglaries in the city's Willows neighborhood.

In an incident the department is showcasing as an example of police responsiveness, officers tracked down and arrested one adult and three adolescents following an attempted burglary in the Willows on the night of Tuesday, Nov. 10.

Two juveniles fled the backyard of a home in the 200 block of Walnut Avenue after the homeowner

confronted them. The juveniles ran to a waiting van, then took off on foot when the van crashed into a tree, according to a news release issued by the police department.

Officers soon found and arrested the two adolescents, and later arrested a 27-year-old Menlo Park man, Daniel Maldonado, for possession of stolen property when investigations led them to his home. They found items that had been reported stolen in a burglary earlier that day on Woodland Avenue, according to the news release.

On Nov. 11, officers arrested a

third adolescent believed to have been involved in the Willows burglaries.

"The Menlo Park police department will continue to take proactive steps in ensuring the safety of our residents and ask that any suspicious activity be immediately reported to our dispatch center," Sergeant Matthew Orgeta said in a statement.

The department is asking anyone with more information about the burglary to contact police at 330-6300, or call the anonymous tip line at 330-6395.

New Menlo Park police officers to be sworn in

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park will celebrate the hiring and promotions of several new police officers at a swearing-in ceremony Tuesday, Nov. 17. The ceremony will begin at 2:30 p.m. in the City Council chambers in the Civic Center complex between Laurel and Alma streets.

Kevin Paugh will be honored for his promotion to sergeant; he has spent 11 years with the department, most recently as a canine officer.

Ed Soares, snatched from the East Palo Alto police department, will be sworn in as an officer. Mr. Soares played a key role in the March gang bust in Menlo Park and East Palo Alto that resulted in the arrests of more than 30 alleged gang members.

Cristela Solorzano has also been promoted to an officer position, after working as a secretary with the department.

After serving for nearly seven years with the city as records officer, Claudio Ruiz will be sworn in as property and court officer.

Longtime community activist moving

Elizabeth Lasensky, who has been involved in a variety of community

■ MENLO WATCH

groups and activities during her 19 years in Menlo Park, is moving to San Carlos.

A member of the Housing Commission and an advocate for below-market-rate housing, Ms. Lasensky said her landlord forced her hand by raising her rent by 62 percent. Almanac readers might recognize her name through her many letters to the editor over the years.

Check next week's issue for a feature on Ms. Lasensky.

Dramatic rebound in child care revenue

With a decision looming on the future of the city-run child care program in Menlo Park's Civic Center complex, a recent report indicates that the program's revenue has far exceeded even optimistic expectations in the first quarter of the current fiscal year.

After becoming a drag on Menlo Park's budget to the tune of several hundred thousand dollars, the program more than covered its inter-departmental costs in the quarter, according to the report.

Earlier information provided by the city would suggest that the program is recovering roughly all

its overhead costs as well, though business manager Nancy Nuckolls said it was only recovering 22 percent of those costs.

Regardless, the program is far outpacing earlier estimates, which forecast that the program would not be able to cover any of its overhead. The city attributed the increase in revenue to higher fees and better-than-expected enrollment.

The program had been under-subscribed, despite the fact that the city maintains a wait list for it.

The program serves 56 preschool-age children and toddlers. The city also runs an after-school program in the Civic Center for older children; that program recovers its costs in full, according to city estimates.

Redevelopment plan approved by council

Menlo Park's City Council unanimously approved a five-year implementation plan for the city's redevelopment area at its Nov. 10 meeting.

While the council did not add recent suggestions by the Belle Haven Neighborhood Association to the list, city officials said that wouldn't prevent the city from adding those items at any time in the next five years.

Sexual assault victim 'very uncooperative,' police say

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

The victim of a sexual assault by two men near the footbridge to Palo Alto at the southern end of Alma Street in Menlo Park is being "very, very uncooperative" with investigators from the Menlo Park Police Department, police said.

The victim told police that he was attacked in a wooded area on the evening of Nov. 12 as he was walking from Palo Alto. During the assault, the victim's clothing was removed and one of the attackers sexually assaulted him, Sgt. William Dixon said in a news release.

Among the questions police are looking into is whether the victim knew his attackers, department spokeswoman Nicole Acker said. Detective Sgt. Jaime Romero, speaking through Ms. Acker, said he sees no reason for the public to be more than usually cautious when walking at night.

The victim gave police a description of a suspect, including very specific information on how the victim had significantly injured him, Ms. Acker said. Using that description, police found a match in Mountain View, took his picture and included it in a photo line-up, but the victim "could not or would not identify him," Ms. Acker said.

Lacking sufficient evidence, police did not make an arrest. (Ms. Acker said she plans to look into how the department released a Nov. 13 statement claiming an arrest had been made.) A forensic investigation is expected to produce useful evidence soon, she said.

Police, Ms. Acker said, are reminding the community of the standard advice for taking walks at night: buddy up and be careful in dark areas.

Anyone with information about the incident is asked to call the police department at 330-6300, or call the anonymous tip hotline at 330-6395.




GOT WRINKLES?

The Aesthetics Research Center is participating in a research study for crow's feet and forehead lines.

Looking for women, age 30-70, with slight to deep wrinkles.

The Aesthetics Research Center
525 Chesapeake Drive • Redwood City
Please Contact **Stephanie** for more information:
800.442.0989 or research@aestheticsresearchcenter.com

IF IT'S NOT IN THIS VAULT, IT'S NOT SAFE.



LOS ALTOS VAULT & SAFE DEPOSIT CO.

A private depository
Safe deposit boxes of all sizes
Strict and total confidentiality
Secured and ample parking
For your own sake we should have your business.
Visit our facilities and judge for yourself.
Data bank for important and confidential records.



**WE ARE #1!
There Is No #2
BELIEVE IT!**

SAFE FROM STATE & FEDERAL INTRUSION

IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR HACKERS TO PENETRATE OUR COMPUTER SYSTEM. REASON — WE HAVE NO COMPUTERS. WE DO BUSINESS THE OLD FASHIONED WAY.

121 First Street, Los Altos, CA 94022
Tel: 650-949-5891 www.losaltosvault.com

Ready for holiday entertaining? Shop Our November Sale.

BRICK MONKEY

Curious and distinctive home furnishing, accessories and gifts now in downtown Redwood City.

2400 Broadway, Redwood City. 650.260.1155 www.brickmonkeyonline.com

M-A football lights: a permanent fixture?

By Tim Goode
Palo Alto Online Sports

The temporary lights brought in by Menlo-Atherton High for last week's M-A vs. Sacred Heart Prep football game proved so popular that there is an aggressive push taking place to make the lights a permanent fixture.

The issue of permanent lights will be on the agenda at the Nov. 18 meeting of the board of the Sequoia Union High School District. Permission to put up the lights could come as early as January.

An estimated 1,500 people attended the Oct. 30 game between M-A and Sacred Heart Prep.

"We drew three times what we

did for Homecoming the week before," said M-A co-Athletic Director Mary Podesta. "(the game) was very successful. The students were in a good mood. It was a beautiful night. It was a good community event. Many of the Sacred Heart parents came up to comment how nice it was."

M-A boosters now are busy trying to gain community support for the lights. Emails have been sent to the community asking for letters to Sequoia Union High District board members and volunteers will be circulating petitions in Menlo Park in anticipation of the meeting.

"There's a lot of interest and we want to keep the momen-

tum going," said Susan Mohr, a member of the M-A Football Association and head of the committee in charge of lights.

M-A is on state property so school officials are not bound to earn neighbor or city approval for the lights.

"We would like to be good neighbors so there will be meetings to get input from the neighbors and come up with a plan that would self-regulate use," Mohr said.

The source of funding for the lights may come from the Measure J Bond passed last year. The Nov. 18 meeting is at 5:30 p.m. at the Sequoia District office at 480 James Ave., Redwood City. ■

Meditation group meets in Ladera

A Ladera meditation group, called Sunday Morning Mindfulness Meditation Sangha, is now in its third year.

Founded by Birgitte Moyer-Vinding and David Ostwald in 2006, the group practices meditation in the tradition of Vietnamese Zen master, Thich

Nhat Hanh. Regular members include residents of Ladera and nearby towns. New members are welcome, and instruction in meditation is provided.

The group meets Sunday mornings in Birgitte and David's home in Ladera for sitting and walking medita-

tion, readings, and thoughtful sharing, and typically holds one Day of Mindfulness a month, which expands the Sunday morning meeting to include a potluck lunch and activities in the afternoon.

For more information, call 854-4157 or e-mail Birgitte or David at bpmoyer@earthlink.net or dostwald@att.net.



Caring Community A * W * A * R * D * S

Call to Nonprofits

Sequoia Healthcare District Directors have established grant priorities for the 2010 Caring Community grant cycle and allocated \$2 million for the program. Priorities are: Basic health and nutrition needs, mental health services and programs that support "healthy, active, engaged older adults." District directors also are formulating policy for a fourth priority category, school health.

This is to announce that an informational meeting for potential applicants will be held Dec. 8, 2009 at 4 p.m. at district offices, 525 Veterans Blvd., Redwood City. Additional information is available on the district's web site at www.sequoiahealthcaredistrict.com



Caring Community grants benefit district residents.

Lee Michelson
Chief Executive Officer
Sequoia Healthcare District
650.421.2155

525 Veterans Blvd.
Redwood City, CA 94063



GREAT PASTAS • FRESH SALADS

880 Santa Cruz Ave
Menlo Park
(at University Drive)
(650) 329-8888

FREE DELIVERY
(with min. order)
"THE BEST PIZZA WEST OF NEW YORK"

—Ralph Barbieri
KNBR 680

226 Redwood Shores Pkwy
Redwood Shores
(Next to Pacific Athletic Club)
(650) 654-3333

Sacred Heart Schools
Where scholarship and values matter



OPEN HOUSE SCHEDULE

PRESCHOOL & K: 650.322.0176
GRADES 1-8: 650.473.4011

Tours available for preschool - 5
(please call for an appointment)

Open House for Grades 6-8
Sunday, November 1 at 1 p.m.
Saturday, November 14 at 10 a.m.
(registration required)

GRADES 9-12: 650.473.4006

Open House
Sunday, October 25 at 1 p.m.
Sunday, November 22 at 1 p.m.
(no registration required)

150 Valparaiso Avenue, Atherton, CA 94027
www.shschools.org
Inquiries and reservations: admission@shschools.org

BOWMAN

INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL



The Bowman program builds confidence, creativity and academic excellence.



Lower School - Grades K - 5



Middle School - Grades 6 - 8



Individualized, self-directed program

Rich international and cultural studies

Proven, Montessori approach

State-of-the-art facility

Low student-teacher ratio

www.bowmanschool.org
4000 Terman Drive • Palo Alto, CA • Tel: 650-813-9131

This Holiday Season Think. Shop. Buy... LOCAL



20% off any one item!

640 Santa Cruz Avenue, Downtown Menlo Park
650.328.7975

Complimentary gift wrapping & assembly

Expires Dec. 24, 2009. One coupon per customer. Offer subject to further restrictions; ask a sales associate for details.
Coupon code (online too!): LOCAL09

New expanded website with free in-store pickup!
www.cheekymonkeytoys.com



Why we should
shop locally this
holiday season

When you are shopping for the holidays, remember your community and support your locally owned independent businesses. When you do, more of the dollars you spend remain in the local community compared to big box and chain stores.

Local merchants know the community and are experts in selecting merchandise that is based on what you like and want. Shop with awareness. In a down economy with many businesses at risk, you are voting with your dollars. If you value a diverse local economy, choose to support these and other independent, locally owned businesses.

Draeger's
MARKET

*Holiday
Gift Baskets*



DELIVERED LOCALLY – SHIPPED NATIONWIDE!

ORDER ONLINE! WWW.DRAEGERS.COM

1-800-642-9463



**Thanksgiving Weekend
SALE!**

**30% Off Calendars
75% Off Selected Books**

Friday, November 27th
Saturday, November 28th
Sunday, November 29th

Present this coupon to receive
40% off any one book in stock

(Offer may not be combined with any other promotions or special offers.
One coupon per customer.
Offer good through 11/29/09.)



1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park
(650) 324-4321 www.keplers.com



BK Collections

Fine Gifts and Jewelry from Around the World

Whimsical, adorable
Krinkles
for all seasons

Add the special touch to your gift with a

Holiday Wine Tag

by Patience Brewster

We gift wrap and send.

342 State Street, Los Altos 650-948-0198

Shop locally this
holiday season

Think. Shop. Buy.
LOCAL

Happy Holidays

Your local patronage will make a major difference to our community this holiday season...thanks!

Think.Shop.Buy.
LOCAL

Here are some good reasons to shop at locally owned businesses this holiday season and all year:

- It keeps dollars in our economy. For every \$100 a consumer spends, local businesses give back \$68 to the local economy, chain stores only give back \$43.
- It makes us unique. There's no place like the Peninsula! Homegrown businesses are part of what makes us special.
- It creates local jobs. Local businesses are the best at creating higher-paying jobs for our neighbors.
- It helps the environment. Buying locally saves transportation fuel. Plus you get products that you know are safe and well made, because our neighbors stand behind them.
- It nurtures our community. Studies show that local businesses donate to community causes at more than twice the rate of chains.
- It conserves tax dollars. Spending locally ensures that your sales taxes are reinvested where they belong, right here in your community.

This message is brought to you by Hometown Peninsula, an alliance of locally-owned independent businesses. We strive to maintain our unique community character, to educate local residents that purchasing locally creates a strong local economy and bring back the vibrant hometown to our communities that is being displaced by national chains and online stores.

THE VERY BEST FOR LESS
"Best On The Peninsula" "Dealer Of The Year"
San Francisco Examiner Consumer Business Review 2009



40% OFF SALE ON NOW!
Offer good through 12-20-09

TOM'S OUTDOOR FURNITURE

OPEN 7 DAYS 10-5 650-366-0411
1445 Veterans Blvd, Redwood City www.tomsoutdoorfurniture.com

The Gift of Education-
Education-
the most valuable gift this season & beyond.



LYDIAN ACADEMY

815 El Camino Real, Menlo Park
650-321-0550 • www.lydianacademy.com

Almanac Readers' Choice 2008

"Best Intimate Dining"
-Almanac Readers

MARCHÉ

898 SANTA CRUZ AVENUE
MENLO PARK
650.324.9092
WWW.RESTAURANTMARCHE.COM

The Art of Being a Woman

ELA LINGERIE

1139 Chestnut St.
Downtown Menlo Park
650.325.2965 • Mon-Sat 11-6

Supporting our Community's Window Coverings & Custom bedding Needs for Over 20 Years

HunterDouglas Gallery
Exceptional Service Since 1989

Peninsula Window Fashions Gallery
Showroom & Service

1047 El Camino Real • Menlo Park • 650-853-9000
www.PeninsulaGallery.net

★ Holiday Calendar

MEETINGS, MUSIC, THEATER, FAMILY ACTIVITIES AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Think.Shop.Buy.
LOCAL

Submitting items for Holiday Calendar Submit information online. Go to TheAlmanacOnline.com and on the green navigation bar on the left, click on "Calendar Event."

■ AROUND TOWN

Gingerbread House class at Village Pub

Kristianna Zabala, pastry chef at The Village Pub, will hold a cooking class for kids from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 21, at the Woodside restaurant. Each child will have his own gingerbread house to prepare and decorate.

Parents are welcome to stay for complimentary beverages and hors d'oeuvres, while their children attend class.

Cost is \$50. To reserve, call Ashley Muggli at 851-6844. The Village Pub is located at 2967 Woodside Road in Woodside.

Holiday gifts go green

A special workshop on reducing the environmental impact of holiday shopping will be held at 2 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 29, at Kepler's bookstore, 1010 El Camino Real in Menlo Park.

Discussion topics will include: saving trees: greener ideas for gift wrapping and packaging; eco-party time, using of compostable dinnerware alternatives; top green gift-giving tips.

Peninsula Symphony's 'Holiday Celebration'

Peninsula Symphony will perform selections from Bach's "Christmas Oratorio" and

Reicha's (a colleague of Beethoven) "Requiem" from 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 22, at Stanford Memorial Church.

General admission is \$20. For more information, call 941-5291.

Sing-along at Stanford Shopping Center


Palo Alto High Choir alumni gather for an annual holiday sing-along at Stanford Shopping Center's Frog Pond Plaza (near Neiman Marcus), from 1 to 2 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 28.

Tree lighting at Four Seasons

Four Seasons Hotel Silicon Valley is holding a community tree-lighting ceremony Monday, Nov. 30, from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m., with roasted chestnuts, hot chocolate, cookie decorating, and other activities that will culminate with the lighting of the tree.

Following the event, the five "Community Trees" will be donated to local centers throughout East Palo Alto.

The hotel is at 2050 University Ave. in East Palo Alto.



ROLEX

OYSTER PERPETUAL GMT-MASTER II

Gleim
the Jeweler
SINCE 1931

Join us for our Annual Watch Fair – Dec. 19-20

OFFICIAL ROLEX JEWELER
ROLEX, OYSTER PERPETUAL AND GMT-MASTER II ARE TRADEMARKS.

STANFORD SHOPPING CENTER • (650) 325-3533




Ukrainian Egg by Laurel Rezeau

the
artifactory
COOPERATIVE

HOLIDAY FAIR
Fine Crafts ♦ Local Artists
December 11, 12, 13, 2009
Friday, Saturday & Sunday 10-5
Hoover House
(aka "The Girl Scout House")
1120 Hopkins, Palo Alto

for information:
650-625-1736 or TheArtifactory@aol.com

★ Think.Shop.Buy.
LOCAL



DON'T LEAVE YOUR HAPPINESS TO CHANCE.


Take action to restore meaning to your life and relationships.

Have you put your happiness on hold, secretly hoping your problems will solve themselves? In a safe and confidential space, Andrew Logan can help you identify issues, break old patterns, improve communication skills and enrich your relationships. Andrew counsels families, couples and individuals—including adults, adolescents and children. Call today for a complimentary consultation.

Andrew Logan™
PSYCHOTHERAPY

- › Licensed Marriage & Family Therapist **MFC #45196**
- › Member of the California Association of Marriage and Family Therapists
- › Board Certified Professional Counselor

510 Waverley Street, Palo Alto, CA 94301 | t 650.462.1100 | andrewloganmft.com



Rejuvenate yourself at Avenidas!

Explore our affordable services:

Reiki ♦ Feldenkrais ♦ Podiatry
Screenings ♦ Health Information ♦ Massage
Hypnotherapy ♦ Acupuncture

Holiday gift certificates available!

For more information, please call (650) 289-5400 or visit www.avenidas.org.

Avenidas
Aging Well for 40 Years

Menlo School gains some revenge with Valpo Bowl win

By Keith Peters

Palo Alto Weekly

It was only a year ago that the Menlo School football team finished the season on a five-game losing streak. To make matters worse, the final two losses were to neighborhood rival Sacred Heart Prep.

Menlo's seniors wanted to make sure their season didn't end that way again, and it won't — thanks to a 27-21 victory over the Gators in the seventh annual Valpo Bowl on Friday on the Knights' field.

"It meant everything," Menlo senior quarterback Danny Diekroeger said of the satisfying victory that left both teams 7-3 to end the regular season. "I'd had lost to Sacred Heart four times; never beaten them. Those two games (losses to SHP) last year definitely hurt. We've been thinking about that all year."

And on Friday the Knights did something about it with one of their best defensive performances of the year to cap a season-ending four-game winning streak.

Menlo coach Mark Newton knew his team needed to win at least two of its final three games to qualify for the CCS playoffs. The Knights pretty much had a berth locked up even before they took the field Friday.

"We were in the playoffs even if we lost this game," said Newton, who now holds a 5-2 series edge in the Valpo Bowl.

Sacred Heart Prep also had locked up a postseason berth by virtue of its second-place finish in the PAL Bay Division this season.

Thus, Friday's game pretty much came down to bragging rights, pride and one-year ownership of the Valpo Bowl trophy.

Getting a diving touchdown reception from Clay Robbins

with less than five minutes to play and a huge interception from Jordan Williams a few minutes later, Menlo took ownership of the trophy and celebrated wildly afterward on a cold, windy day that brought out crowds befitting a homecoming game.

In a contest that matched the top two offensive teams in San Mateo County, it was defense that saved the day for Menlo. After allowing 208 rushing yards on 41 carries in the first half, the Knights held

the Gators to 90 yards on 18 carries after halftime. And when the Gators threatened to win the game in the final moments with the ball on the Menlo 36, it was Williams who picked off a pass to end that threat with just over two minutes to play.

Sacred Heart Prep still rushed for 298 yards on 59 carries, but Menlo's balanced offense of 122 rushing yards and 256 passing yards by Danny Diekroeger made the difference. Diekroeger hooked

up seven times with fellow senior Robbins, who finished with 176 receiving yards. His 49-yard TD reception in the third quarter tied the game at 21 and his nine-yard scoring reception with 4:11 to play proved to be the winner.

Beau Nichols led a surprisingly effective Menlo ground game with 80 yards on 18 carries while Diekroeger also was effective with the run. Chris Gaertner led SHP with 114 yards on 20 carries while fellow senior Matt Walter added 109

yards on 26 carries. Those two, however, were limited to a combined 62 yards in the second half.

"The defense did a phenomenal job stopping a great team," said Newton.

Sacred Heart Prep came into the game averaging 417 yards per game on offense, but Menlo held the Gators to 347. SHP also did a good job of slowing down Menlo's No. 1-rated offense in the county, which was averaging 424.7 yards per game. Menlo netted just 378, but its balance (122 rushing, 256 passing) kept the SHP defenders guessing.



Personal care will get even better

More capacity. More access. More service.

Menlo Medical Clinic will open a second Menlo Park location

at 321 Middlefield Road to provide exceptional primary and specialty care for its community. Personal. Knowledgeable. Integrated. Soon

our family of physicians and practitioners will grow to 50+, our specialties will increase to 20, and our clinic will expand to two — all

in affiliation with Stanford Hospital & Clinics to better serve you.



Our second Menlo Park clinic at 321 Middlefield Road will open December of 2009.

Menlo Medical Clinic
1300 Crane St.
Menlo Park, CA 94025

650-498-6500
menloclinic.com

MENLO MEDICAL CLINIC
Affiliated with
Stanford Hospital & Clinics

1940s fashion show

Sketches of 1940s women's couture designs, photos of women from that era, and actual clothing items are on display in an exhibit at the Little House Activity Center in Menlo Park.

The sketches are designs that San Carlos resident Shirley Lake Crawford drew in the 1940s as a college student and professional designer, according to Program Manager Joan Currie. Women's hats, purses and gloves were donated by the American Heritage Museum in Palo Alto.

The exhibit will run through Dec. 15.

Little House is located behind Nealon Park at 800 Middle Avenue. It is open from 9 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday, and from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday. It's closed on weekends.



Winter Lodge

Now Open!

OUTDOOR ICE SKATING & TENNIS

SIGN UP FOR WINTER CLASSES NOW!

* Daily public sessions * Private parties available
* Lessons for all ages and abilities

Call for more information or to register **493-4566**
3009 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto • www.winterlodge.com

Free How-To Clinics

November 21

◆ Allison Olson *Dreamscapes*

Why Succulents in Your Garden, How to Pick and Plant Them

December 5

◆ Theresa Lyngso *Lyngso Garden Materials*

The Soil FoodWeb, Learning About Living Soils

Sign up to
reserve
your seat

www.lyngsogarden.com
650.364.1730

19 Seaport Boulevard
Redwood City
Mon-Sat: 7 to 5, Sun: 8 to 4

LYNGSØ
GARDEN MATERIALS, INC.



Menlo School

Why Menlo School? Come Find Out.



Rigorous. Engaging. Joyful.

Middle School Open Houses: 11/8/09 1:00 pm; 12/3/09 6:00 pm

Upper School Open Houses: 12/6/09 1:00 pm

50 Valparaiso Avenue, Atherton, CA 94027 • 650.330.2000 ext. 2600 • www.menloschool.org

■ 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

Grand theft report: Projector missing from video room, Menlo College at 1000 El Camino Real, Nov. 6.

Auto burglary report: Menlo School parking lot on Alejandra Ave., Nov. 9.

MENLO PARK

Robbery report: Gas station robbed of box cigars and \$700 to \$800, 1000 block of Marsh Road, Nov. 6.

Commercial burglary reports:

■ Gas station broken into, Coast Gasoline at 275 El Camino Real, Nov. 7.

■ Building broken into but no loss reported, 200 block of Van Buren Road, Nov. 11.

Residential burglary reports:

■ Television and DVD player missing, 300 block of Market Place, Nov. 9.

■ Belongings recovered except for stolen wristwatch and earrings with total value of \$2,100, in the 1200 block of Woodland Ave., Nov. 10.

■ Attempted burglary, 200 block of Walnut St., Nov. 10.

■ Camera, memory card, camera case and battery stolen for total loss valued at \$590, 1000 block of Woodland Ave., Nov. 10.

Auto burglary reports:

■ Break-in but no loss reported, 200 block of Hedge Road, Nov. 7.

■ Break-in and loss of credit cards, wallet, checkbook and GPS device, 1600 block of Marsh Road, Nov. 9.

■ Break-in but no loss reported, fist block of Scott Drive, Nov. 9.

■ Break-in and car stereo valued at \$100 stolen, 800 block of Alma St., Nov. 9.

■ Laptop computer stolen, 400 block of Ivy Drive, Nov. 12.

Fraud reports:

■ Credit cards opened in victim's name but no info on losses, 200 block of Marmona Drive, Nov. 6.

■ Check stolen and cashed for estimated loss of \$870, 800 block of Willow Road, Nov. 6.

■ Bad check given for \$1,753, reported at main police station at 701 Laurel St., Nov. 7.

■ Counterfeit \$100 bill exchanged, Willow Cove Gas Station at 500 Willow Road, Nov. 9.

Child Protective Service report: 300 block of Market Place, Nov. 10.



M-A boys cross country

Menlo-Atherton High School's cross country boys' varsity team includes, from left, Spencer Berry, Joe Ocon, Jarrod Nixon, Brendy Hale, Jordon Scandlyn, Mike Hester and Jack Beckwith. The team placed third in varsity, second in sophomore, and third in freshman divisions in the Lowell Cross Country Invitational Meet, held Sept. 19 at Golden Gate Park in San Francisco. Five M-A runners finished in the top 20 places: Joe Ocon, Mike Hester, Jack Beckwith, Spencer Berry, and Jason McGhee. In the Peninsula Athletic League cross country meet held Oct. 6 on the Crystal Springs course, the M-A team took second place in its race against 15 other teams. Carlmont was first, Woodside High was second. M-A was led by Joe Ocon, followed by Mike Hester and Jack Beckwith.

NOT the Same Ol' Holiday Music!

The Gryphon Carolers ... 28th Annual Holiday Concert

featuring Ed Johnson & Carol McComb

The Gryphon Carolers is a 40-voice ensemble with guitar, piano, mandolin, fiddle, saxophone, bassoon, bass, percussion, and more fun than a sleigh full of toys and St. Nicholas too!

December 12, 2009 – 8:00 p.m.

Spangenberg Theatre – Gunn High School

780 Arastradero Road, Palo Alto, CA

Premium seating: \$25 for adults and \$18 for seniors and children under 12.
General admission: \$15 for adults and \$10 for seniors and children under 12.

For more information and tickets visit: www.gryphoncarolers.com
Advance tickets also available at Gryphon Stringed Instruments in Palo Alto and Spangenberg Theater box office the night of the performance.

LETTERS

Continued from page 23

be safer, less attractive to drive-through-only drivers, and the pervious surface will act as a filter, allowing rainwater to replenish our groundwater. This will reduce our dependence on oil (for asphalt), and generally make our neighborhood streets more pleasant and in keeping with the more rural character of the neighborhoods that they service.

Geoff Brosseau
Encina Avenue, Menlo Park

New council member learns a lesson

Editor:
I always expected that running for office, even at the local town council level, would dish out some political lessons, but I was unprepared for them to show up before my very first meeting.

It turns out that the first lesson is: Don't joke around with reporters! When The Almanac reporter called and asked if I had any trepidation about being elected to the Portola Valley Town Council, I naturally joked that I was probably crazy for taking it on. But I also said that I was happy to have this opportunity to participate in my community, and that I had great respect for those who had finally talked me into it.

Why none of this was mentioned in the Almanac article last week, I can only speculate. But I want all of those good people who supported me, and who finally talked me into running, to know that I'm happy that it came about. I fully expect the next four years on the council to be a very rewarding experience.

John Richards
Portola Valley

City is losing Elizabeth Lasensky

Editor:
Menlo Park is losing one of its most active and informed volunteers. Elizabeth Lasensky is moving to San Carlos.

Elizabeth has served on many of the city's committees and also the Housing Commission. She was a founding member of the Friends of Bedwell Bayfront Park. She frequently writes letters to the editor on matters on which she feels strongly.

She is knowledgeable and dedicated to keeping the City Council informed on those issues in which she has involved herself, not the least of which has been the need for affordable housing.

Ironically this need is why we are losing her. It is common knowledge that rental apartments are expen-

sive in Menlo Park compared with neighboring communities. When properties change hands new owners often increase rents.

Menlo Park's loss is San Carlos' gain. Elizabeth, we will miss your voice, commitment, and perseverance. We wish you well in your new home.

Anne Moser
Sand Hill Circle, Menlo Park

Let's hold on to what we have now

Editor:
Gosh, I thought our council members were in office for the good of the fine folk here in Menlo Park. I didn't realize that their purpose was to compete with other cities. We certainly don't want "other cities to pass us by..." as noted in last week's editorial.

Do we want Menlo Park to become Burlingame with its plethora of chain stores? A downtown Palo Alto with scores of panhandlers and homeless sleeping in public places — and parking structures?

I prefer to "stubbornly hold on to what we have now," a beautiful downtown with a real sense of community. A downtown whose shops and restaurants have owners on site. A downtown that has convenient, open-air parking. A safe downtown where I can take my grandchildren to visit the candy store.

And just because "more than \$1 million" has already been invested in the process, it doesn't mean it is a good idea.

Let's not ruin the heart of our downtown with parking structures and dense housing.

Sara Shaw
Santa Cruz Avenue, Menlo Park

Redwood City Council married to Cargill project

Editor:
How is it that the rest of us (including towns up and down the Peninsula) can smell a bad idea before it's fully cooked and we're forced to eat it, but the Redwood City Council members seem to have their noses plugged?

How many times does the Redwood City Council have to tell us they "need more information" to make a decision on Cargill's planned new city in our Bay?

We've got reams of information; more than enough. What they are waiting for is something that's going to tell them that a city of 25,000 built below sea level makes sense. Well, sorry, that information just doesn't exist.

Really, what we have here is a group of people who have already made up their minds but

won't come clean on that score. Actions speak louder than words. Here's what the Redwood City Council has done by giving Cargill/DMB the green light to go forward: ignore the existing open space zoning, demonize anybody who expresses the obvious inadvisability about this plan; hire consultants with previous ties to the developer; and worst of all, collect paychecks from those who've made their support public (the mayor's day job with SAMCEDA is no secret).

The only explanation is that the city council supports the project and is unwilling to countenance its citizens' and its neighbors' well-documented strong opposition. Thus it continues to toss out the red herring of "more information" and pretend to their constituents that they're still getting to know Cargill/DMB, when in fact they eloped with them months ago.

Nancy Arbuckle
Nimitz Avenue, Redwood City

How can 'visioning' not see high-speed rail?

Editor:
The downtown Menlo Park "visioning" process is a joke for a number of reasons. Primary

among them is the fact that it studiously ignores the elephant in the room: high-speed rail.

In 15 years, the first, and probably only, segment of the California high-speed rail project will be operational along the

Caltrain corridor. Any purported planning process that ignores that fact on the ground deserves to be ignored itself.

Brian Schar
Laurel Avenue, Menlo Park

TOWN OF WOODSIDE
2955 WOODSIDE ROAD
WOODSIDE, CA 94062

INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE REVIEW BOARD

The Architectural and Site Review Board (ASRB) reviews and makes recommendations to the Director of Planning and Building on residential, site design and commercial applications.

Meetings are held on the first and third Monday of each month, 4:30 p.m. Appointment is for a term expiring in February 2013.

Interested residents may request information and applications from the Town Clerk's Office, Monday through Friday, 8:00 AM-12 noon and 1-5:00 PM, Woodside Town Hall, 2955 Woodside Road, by telephone at (650) 851-6790, or through the Town's web site at www.woodsidesidetown.org. Deadline for applications is Monday, January 4, 2010, 5:00 p.m.

VERA HILDA SUMMEY

JULY 27, 1916 – NOVEMBER 4, 2009



Vera Hilda Summey, of Moss Beach, California, passed away on November 4, 2009 at Kaiser Hospital in Redwood City, CA, following a brief illness. Vera was born in Phoenix, AZ, the fourth of seven children of Hugo and Emma Erickson. She grew up in Phoenix, Ashland, OR and Riverside, CA. Vera

graduated from Riverside Polytechnic High School in 1934 and attended Riverside Business College. Upon graduation she worked for the California State Relief Administration in Riverside.

In 1939, Vera moved to San Francisco, where she worked as a bookkeeper for Pacific Far East Line, and during World War II, for Western Cooperage. Vera and Lemuel Summey were married in San Francisco in 1946. They had two daughters, Karen Christine and Barbara Lynn.

In 1957, the family moved to Menlo Park, and in 1962, to Portola Valley. Vera worked in the library at Portola Valley Elementary School and Corte Madera Elementary School in Portola Valley from 1962 to 1980 where she formed many lifelong friendships with students and faculty.

In 1973, Vera moved to Menlo Park. She was a dedicated volunteer and Lifetime Member supervising Community Services at Little House senior center in Menlo Park from 1985 to 2006. Vera was awarded a 4,000 hours pin for her many years of devoted service. She moved to Moss Beach to reside with her daughter, Karen, in 2006. In January, 2009, she became a resident at Three Bells of Montara.

Throughout her life, Vera had many interests including travel, music, dance and art. For many years, Vera chaperoned groups of Portola Valley students on educational trips to Europe, the Mediterranean, and Egypt. She was an accomplished artist, and had an avid interest in music.

Vera is remembered and loved for her sweet and sunny disposition. She was always, in the words of one of her favorite songs, "on the sunny side of the street," and she brought that sunshine to all who knew her. Vera was an elegant, kind lady who lived her life with grace, and always had a smile on her face. She was a devoted and nurturing mother and grandmother, sister, aunt, cousin and friend. No words can express how dearly Vera will be missed.

Vera was preceded in death by her parents Hugo and Emma Erickson, siblings Eric, Carl, Jack, and Patricia. She is survived by her sister Lucile Whitehurst of McKinleyville and Harry Erickson of Angelus Oaks; by her loving daughters, Karen Summey of Moss Beach, and Barbara Schoeberl (Mark) of Silver Spring, MD; step-grandson, Obadiah Broughton (Amy), Boulder, CO; her grandchildren Aaron Broughton, McKinleyville, Cecily Broughton, Rohnert Park, Matthew Misroch, Silver Spring, MD; father to her children, Lemuel Summey; father to her grandchildren, Arthur Broughton.

Friends are invited to attend a celebration of Vera's life on Sunday, December 13, 2009 at 2:00 pm at the Community United Methodist Church chapel, 777 Miramontes Street, Half Moon Bay. In lieu of flowers, the family asks that donations be made to Little House (800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park 94025) and Senior Coastsiders (535 Kelly St., Half Moon Bay 94019). For information call 650 728-1545.

PAID OBITUARY

Editor & Publisher

Tom Gibboney

Editorial

Managing Editor Richard Hine

News Editor Renee Batti

Lifestyles Editor Jane Knoerle

Senior Correspondents

Marion Softky, Marjorie Mader

Staff Writers Andrea Gemmet,

David Boyce, Sean Howell

Contributors Barbara Wood,

Kate Daly, Katie Blankenberg

Special Sections Editors

Carol Blitzer, Sue Dremann

Photographer Michelle Le

Design & Production

Design Director Raul Perez

Designers Linda Atilano,

Laura Don, Gary Vennarucci

Advertising

Advertising Manager Neal Fine

Display Advertising Sales

Ella Fleishman

Real Estate and Advertising

Coordinator Diane Martin

Published every Wednesday at

3525 Alameda De Las Pulgas,
Menlo Park, Ca 94025

Newsroom: (650) 854-2690

Newsroom Fax: (650) 854-0677

Advertising: (650) 854-2626

Advertising Fax: (650) 854-3650

e-mail news and photos with
captions to:

Editor@AlmanacNews.com

e-mail letters to:

letters@AlmanacNews.com

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.

TOWN SQUARE FORUM

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

EMAIL your views to:

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

MAIL or deliver to:

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

CALL the Viewpoint desk at 854-2690, ext. 222.

Rotten apples and high-speed rail

When it comes to building big state projects like linking Los Angeles and San Francisco with a high-speed rail system, a key part of the lengthy process is an unbiased third-party environmental review.

Such a review is now under way up and down the proposed 300-mile route of the project that on the Peninsula would send trains zipping along at speeds over 100 mph in a narrow right-of-way that many residents hope will be buried underground.

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

But the same officials who will make a final decision on the environmental review recently agreed to spend \$9 million with a public relations firm that, among

other things, was charged to counter the "misinformation" about the project allegedly coming from the media and residents of Atherton, Menlo Park and Palo Alto.

Now, many local residents feel that whatever shortcomings an environmental review uncovers, the rail authority will dismiss local concerns about the impact high-speed trains would have on the environment and quality of life on the Peninsula and build the project as they want it.

Much of the local distrust comes after the unfortunate comments of rail authority board member Rod Diridon, who during a conversation with officials of the newly hired public relations firm compared opponents' criticism of the project to a "...sore that festers, or the rotten apple in the barrel ... And you've got to get that apple out of the barrel immediately..."

Mr. Diridon went on to suggest that the PR firm figure out

a way to deal with the rotten apples, and suggested how they could create "... flying squads of emergency response to nip those problems in the bud. You want to avoid them if you can but if you can't avoid them you need to have a way of countering them immediately so that misinformation isn't allowed to float around ... It's corrected. "

This is a terrible way to start off running a railroad. Mr. Diridon, who should know better, has rarely done more than ridicule the very legitimate concerns of Peninsula residents who are simply seeking ways to minimize the substantial impact high-speed trains will have on their communities. Rather than dismiss their concerns and criticism as "rotten apples" that must be tossed out of the barrel, the rail authority should pay close attention to the comments and make a good faith effort to do whatever is possible to soften the impact of the project.

With the city councils of Atherton and Menlo Park taking official positions that the trains be routed underground, the rail authority knows it has more than a few "rotten apples" on its hands. After an involved discussion before a 3-1 council vote on the resolution to recommend that the train be put underground, Menlo Park Mayor Heyward Robinson lamented that he had heard high-speed rail officials complain about "misinformation" several times before without ever citing specific examples.

"We haven't had a presentation from the High Speed Rail Authority to this council and to this community in well over a year," he said, adding that if rail officials attended, the charges of misinformation could be cleared up. "We're here every Tuesday night," he said.

LETTERS

Our readers write

Vision could ruin 'village' of Menlo Park

Editor:

I am writing in response to last week's editorial titled "Imagine Menlo Park 30 years from now."

I came to Menlo Park to start Boucher's Appliance business in 1960 for three reasons: there were no competitors in town; I liked the downtown village atmosphere with mostly independent retail stores; and the Menlo Park schools had an excellent reputation. My store was on Santa Cruz Avenue for the next 30 years.

I attended Downtown Vision workshop No. 3 on Oct. 20 and was appalled! What were they recommending? Why do they want to ruin this village?

Where else can you go and shop Flegel's, Draeger's, the Village Stationers, Peet's coffee shop, Hirzel's jewelry store, the Hoot 'n Toot laundry, have lunch at Carpaccio's and so on, where everyone knows your name?

The consultant at that Oct. 20 meeting said, "Our plan will add about 1,500 people to downtown Menlo Park." That number excludes whatever population



Atherton Heritage Association

Our Regional Heritage

The home of town namesake Faxon Dean Atherton was sold to educator Dr. Ira Hoitt in 1898 for \$33,000. The 52-acre property in what is now Atherton became the home of the Hoitt School for boys. Two fires destroyed the school in 1899, and although some of the structures were rebuilt, the school moved to Palo Alto in 1907.

increase happens on El Camino Real. Why is making Menlo Park a dense city instead of a relaxed village desirable?

It is my opinion that the vast majority of Menlo Park residents don't know that the plan asks for a three-story parking garage

behind Flegel's, a two-story parking garage behind the post office, a hotel behind Walgreen's and three-story buildings on Santa Cruz Avenue with retail on the first floor, office space on the second and apartments or condos on the third.

Yes, change is inevitable, but the changes mentioned in the editorial did not affect the village atmosphere. True, trees have been added, Draeger's

See **LETTERS**, next page

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

doubled in size and the Menlo Center has been added on El Camino, not downtown. It is still the best downtown on the Peninsula.

The Downtown Vision has cost Menlo Park taxpayers over \$1 million. In my opinion its focus should be on El Camino Real and should include a parking garage there instead of downtown.

Lee Boucher

Downtown property owner

Claiming victory from defeat at ballot box

Editor:

Ed Wells must have been involved in a different election this month than the rest of us in Portola Valley, judging from his Nov. 11 letter.

He seems to be claiming some kind of victory for the “no” side on the tax proposals on the ballot when, despite the most serious financial crisis in 70 years, our residents still voted significantly in favor of those tax proposals and against his arguments.

If you cannot defeat tax proposals with people staring at those kind of financial problems and uncertainties, I would say they unequivocally rejected your arguments. I am not sure how much credit he can claim for himself for “informing” residents if they reject that information and, in fact, question its veracity.

Whatever happened to trying your best in a democratic contest, then when defeated, acknowledging that the people have spoken and, though you disagree with

Another option for rail corridor

By Kathy Hamilton

Are there alternatives for bringing a high-speed rail connection from San Jose to San Francisco that won't involve a king's ransom or any major destruction and disruption of Peninsula cities?

Tunneling, particularly in an eight-mile stretch including Atherton, Menlo Park and Palo Alto, is one popularly favored alternative, but it could cost three to six times as much as the amount currently budgeted for a grade-separated solution.

And while cost is a huge discussion point, it is not the only element that is up in the air. Can those Peninsula cities develop air rights on the land reclaimed after tunneling? Will Union Pacific, with its retained freight rights on the Caltrain right-of-way, allow its tracks to be put in a tunnel? If the High Speed Rail Authority determines that even partial tunneling is just too expensive, we may be left with the cheapest grade-separated solution, exactly what was planned in the first place.

Instead we must take the initiative to explore a “no-build option” that allows Caltrain to be electrified and take the high-speed rail traffic from San Jose to San Francisco because, as Rich Talmach, president of California Rail Foundation has stated, the difference between 110 and 120 miles per hour is definitely not worth the additional \$4 billion to \$7 billion

of cost, or the disruption to everyone's life on the Peninsula. It saves less than three minutes on the San Francisco to San Jose segment. In what world is a three-minute time savings worth a 10-year construction project that will result in removal of thousands of trees and destruction of a whole swath of the Bay Area?



GUEST OPINION

We should be telling our Sacramento representatives to make the necessary changes to legislation so that high-speed rail service is not required to reach San Francisco non-stop with an HSR logo on the engine. We must insist that our state officials and our highest elected representatives, Senators Dianne Feinstein and Barbara Boxer, recognize that while high-speed rail projects may be good for the country, and good for California, they are not viable on the Peninsula in their current configuration.

We should demand that the high-speed rail authority re-examine the route alignment in the light of day through the project level environmental reviews as part of the alternative analysis.

Here is the justification that could force another look at the project, which says the route alignment must comply with the true intent of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, “because

an EIR [Environmental Impact Report] must identify ways to mitigate or avoid the significant effects that a project may have on the environment (Public Resources Code Section 21002), the discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives or would be more costly.”

The people of California were asked to vote for a ballot initiative that did not provide the information that they were voting for a certified EIR of a “preferred alignment” that was the Caltrain corridor.

The policy agenda of Ray LaHood, the secretary of transportation, asks for “a strong focus on people and the communities where they live and work [with] a commitment to the principles that some refer to as livability; that is, investing in a way that recognizes the unique character of each community. The era of one-size-fits-all transportation projects must give way to one where preserving and enhancing unique community characteristics, be they rural or urban, is a primary mission of our work rather than an afterthought.” Amen Ray.

Tunneling is the best-case scenario for the worst-case route.

Kathy Hamilton lives in Menlo Park and has been following the high-speed rail issue for the last six months.

them, graciously accepting your defeat and their decision and moving on? Self-righteousness is not self-justifying.

Don Perryman
Trinity Lane, Portola Valley

Trees will go with high-speed rail project

Editor:

The high-speed rail project has one devastating effect on the South Peninsula (Palo Alto,

Menlo Park, and Atherton) that few people know about: the cutting down and removal of 2,000 mature and lofty trees, including some heritage trees.

This will transform one of the most beautiful residential areas in California into a wasteland of concrete walls, steel poles, and protruding wires — similar to what you would see approaching cities like Philadelphia, Newark, N.J., and Chicago — a wasteland, devoid of vegetation and beauty.

Do the residents of our historic and beautiful South Peninsula really want this? Do they look forward to a concrete/earthen berm 20 feet high dividing our cities like the Berlin Wall? Do they look forward to seven years of incredible inconvenience and pollution during the construction period?

On the subject of trees, almost 20,000 trees are scheduled to come down from San Francisco to Gilroy. Our area will never be the same and can never return to

its aesthetic beauty.

What to do: contact your city councils; contact the local branches of the Sierra Club and the Audubon Society (raptors, a kind of hawk, nest in the tops of these lofty trees).

These thousands of trees also trap dust and pollution from the existing trains and traffic. When they are gone, the pollution and dust will be immensely greater.

Michael J. Brady
Marshall Street,
Redwood City

(The writer represents a Menlo Park man who has filed a suit naming the High Speed Rail Authority.)

Why chip-sealed roads would be better

Editor:

Has anyone noticed the nice sound made by cars driving over the chip-sealed surfaces of streets in Fair Oaks (before the subsequent slurry seal step)?

And how cars are driven more slowly — at or below the speed limit? I understand why we use asphalt on our arterial and larger roads to support higher speeds but it makes you wonder why we are not using packed and confined gravel or a similar surface other than asphalt on our more rural neighborhood streets?

By doing so, our streets would

See **LETTERS**, page 21

The Almanac has an attitude problem

By Carin Pacifico

Now that the election for the board of the Sequoia high school district is over, I would like to comment upon the very limited coverage that this newspaper gives to our local public schools and the consistently negative tone of that coverage.

It is really unfortunate, and short-sighted of your newspaper, which relies for its financial well-being on the local real estate market. The property values of Menlo Park, Ladera and Portola Valley are underpinned by the terrific public schools.

The Almanac's circulation area includes the three best public middle schools in the state of California. The schools are excellent because of the commitment of the teachers and involvement of neighborhood parents who donate time and energy to build and maintain these fine, humane institutions.



GUEST OPINION

When the Menlo Park moms had worked their magic on the elementary and middle schools, they then took up a bigger challenge, finding resources to improve the city's high school.

When we moved to Menlo Park 11 years ago, for the schools, the high school looked like a correctional facility. Through the dedicated work of the parents and several first-rate principals, bonds were proposed, campaigned for and approved. At the same time funds were raised for class-size reduction and teacher training and more Advanced Placement courses. Year by year M-A has improved and has come to present to the neighborhood and to itself a confidence in the quality of the education that is offered to all our children.

The social, economic and academic range at M-A could not be wider. M-A is possibly the most ambitious and hopeful public institution in the state. Principal

Matthew Zito and his administrative team are heroes. On top of the academic progress, Mr. Zito has also managed to give this neighborhood a new theater, a remarkable public resource. Building the PAC was an educational experience for the students, and it could also have been a community-enriching experience for Almanac readers as well.

Mr. Zito worked closely with the builder, recognizing his responsibility for this large investment. He brought the building in on time. It is the most architecturally interesting building on the Peninsula not owned by Stanford. I have heard two directors of classical music ensembles rave about the acoustics.

Do your readers know that Menlo Park has been given a treasure? The community owes Mr. Zito our thanks. I have not seen that sentiment expressed by this paper. The dismissive attitude is incomprehensible to me. Nothing would excite this neighborhood more than hearing about the success of our schools and our children.

Carin Pacifico lives on Crocus Place in Menlo Park.



Woodside, 15.75 acres
FOR SALE \$24,000,000



West Atherton, 1.6 acres
FOR SALE \$13,900,000



Portola Valley, Rare Opportunity!
FOR SALE \$4,950,000



Woodside, Views of Stanford Land
FOR SALE \$4,100,000



Woodside, Custom Built, Over an Acre
FOR SALE \$4,495,000



Woodside, Mountain Home Road
FOR SALE \$3,995,000



Woodside, 17.6-Acre forest
FOR SALE \$1,995,000



Woodside, 1 Acre
FOR SALE \$1,195,000



Woodside, Equestrian Estate
FOR SALE \$3,000,000



Woodside, Twenty-Nine Oaks
FOR SALE \$3,450,000



Menlo Park, Excellent Schools
SOLD \$2,650,000



Woodside, Country Estate
SOLD \$3,950,000



Woodside, Pristine Ranch-Style Home
SOLD \$3,275,000



Scott Dancer
650.529.2454
scottdancer.com
DRE# 00868362

Premier Properties
represented by **Scott Dancer**



Information deemed reliable, but not guaranteed.