



ELEANOR BOUSHEY, a founding force
in Portola Valley, dies at 97. Page 7

The Almanac

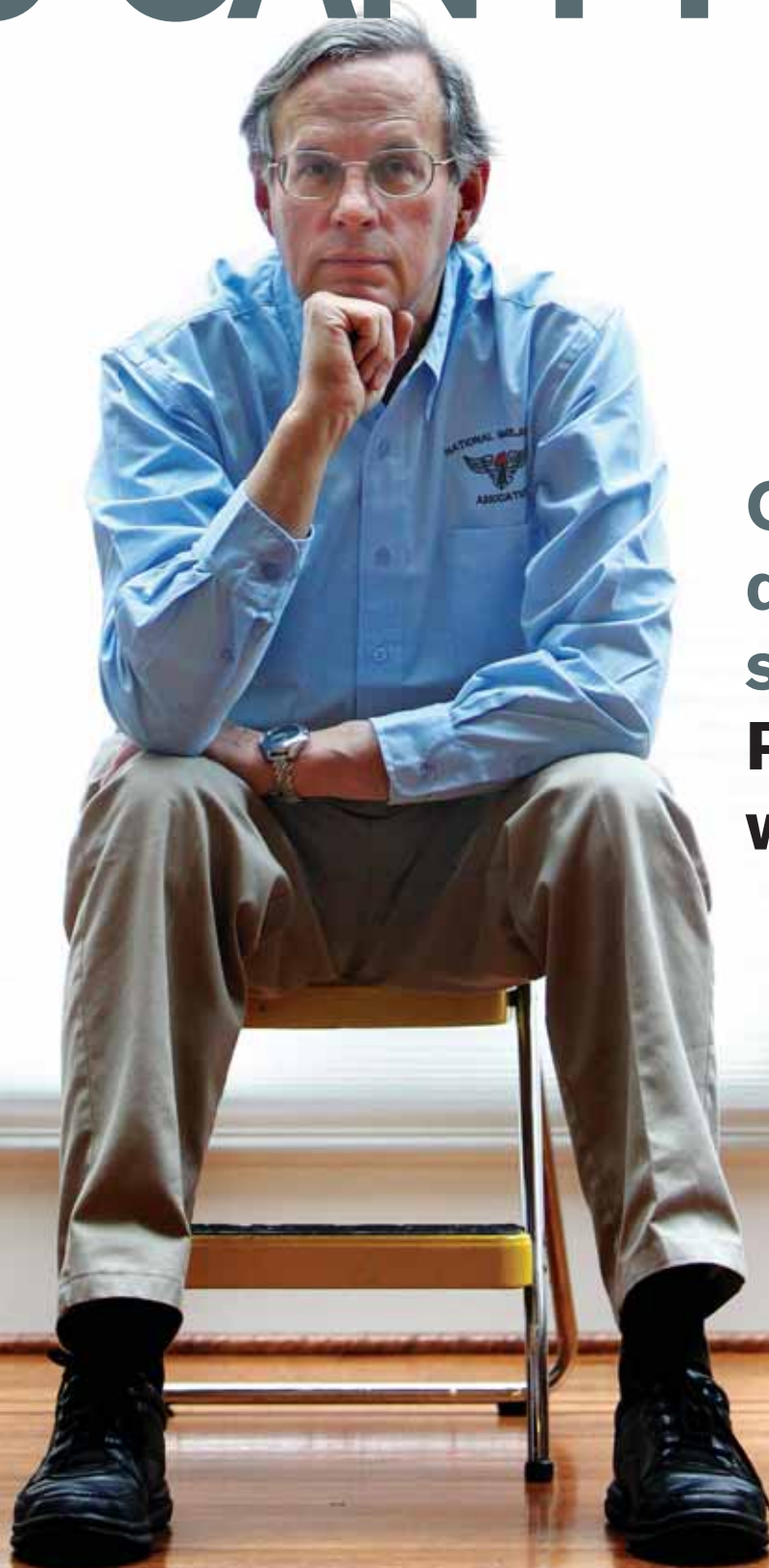
THE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER FOR MENLO PARK, ATHERTON, PORTOLA VALLEY AND WOODSIDE

JANUARY 27, 2010 | VOL. 45 NO. 22



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Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

At St. Raymond School in Menlo Park, Kathy Cronin's second-grade class take their turn to donate to a fund for Haiti relief. Sister Suzanne Lasseigne is off to Haiti and is bringing \$500 raised by St. Raymond students. Among the big contributors: fourth-grader Emma Connors, who stood outside Draeger's for 90 minutes and raised \$137.

Nun will deliver money to Haiti

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

For some, the recent earthquake that devastated Haiti provided a reason to travel there, or send money. For Sister Suzanne Lasseigne, it was, briefly, a reason to reconsider.

Sister Lasseigne had purchased her ticket before the earthquake struck near the capital city of Port-au-Prince on Jan. 12, she said. Though she initially revisited her decision to go after the earthquake, her hesitation did not last long. She left on Friday, Jan. 22, and will deliver over \$500 raised by students at Menlo Park's St. Raymond School, which the order will put toward helping in the relief effort.

A member of the Religious of the Sacred Heart order, she was approached by her congregation on Jan. 3, and asked if she would travel to Haiti to assist two nuns based in Port-au-Prince who were teaching children how to read and write.

"For about 12 hours (after she heard the news of the earthquake), I was thinking, should I go? Then I thought, this is when the need is the greatest. They need me even more now. People were asking me about it, and I knew I couldn't just say, 'No, I'm not going.'"

Originally, she had planned to assist the nuns for about two months, filling in for a third nun who is taking a trip to the United States for medical treatment. Now, she said she is less certain of what her charge will be, and is prepared to help in whatever

Sister Suzanne Lasseigne had purchased her ticket to fly to Haiti before the earthquake struck.

Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac



way is needed.

Sister Lasseigne had been contemplating doing missionary work abroad for some time, but until recently, the opportunity hadn't presented itself.

"I have never been on a missionary trip outside the country, and I'm 64 years old, so it's getting kind of late," she said. Haiti appealed to her because of

the poverty, though strangely enough, her decision to go was also influenced by an article she read about the fact that Haitians compost human waste. A "master composter" herself, Sister Lasseigne wanted to learn about the practice, designed to replace topsoil that had been stripped from the land after intense logging.

"I began putting all these pieces together, and I started thinking, maybe this is the Spirit going in this direction," she said.

Sister Lasseigne stocked up on camping supplies — she'll be sleeping under the stars with the other nuns outside Port-au-Prince, as the building the order was using collapsed in the quake — and is bringing plenty of medical supplies, such as bandages, iodine and creams, she said.

The trip will provide a break from her social work assisting infirm seniors. She spends most of her time helping them with Medicare paperwork, she said.

"I'm very hopeful. I'm looking forward to this," she said. "This will be an adventure for me, and I'll help people, hopefully.

"What's life for if it's not worth enjoying? You take a few risks, and you just go." ■

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Local News

MENLO PARK | ATHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Retired – but not retreating

Peter Carpenter pushes for transparency, broader public participation in government

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

For nearly nine years, Peter Carpenter immersed himself in local fire prevention issues as a member of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District board. Now that he's retired from that position, his mission, it appears, is to set a few fires.

Set fires — as in lighting a fire in the bellies of younger residents who, he believes, are urgently needed on public boards and city councils. As in setting a fire under the sometimes sluggish posteriors of public officials to get them to act on urgent needs such as disaster preparedness. And, as in sparking public debates on important local issues, prompting people to become more engaged in their government.

Mr. Carpenter, 69, stepped down from the fire board last month with no intention of ending his work as a disaster preparedness advocate or, as Atherton residents may have noticed during the last few months, a crusader for open government.

An Atherton resident since 1982, he was highly critical of town officials for failing to inform the public of a recent \$230,000 settlement of a sexual harassment and disability discrimination lawsuit filed by former police officer Pilar Ortiz-Buckley.

He also publicly criticized City Manager Jerry Gruber for the behind-closed-doors appointment of a new police chief, without advertising the position or holding a competitive selection process.

Councilman Jerry Carlson, who was mayor at the time the police chief was appointed, said he discussed the matter with Mr. Carpenter and explained that doing another extensive public outreach and competitive search for a police chief when one was done just a year earlier was deemed expensive and unnecessary.

He said that Mr. Carpenter agreed with him that the city manager's action — to hire the department's second-in-command, Mike Guerra — was the right decision. But, Mr. Carlson added, he agreed with Mr. Carpenter that the process

wasn't communicated well to the residents.

Councilman Charles Marsala said he's struggled to bring certain issues to light for years, and he sees Mr. Carpenter as an ally in his efforts to get the council to discuss controversial topics in open session.

"I think he's pushed us to be more public in some of our debates," Mr. Marsala said. "I think he's going to help us let those differing views out there and push for freedom of speech. I see that as a good thing."

Mr. Carpenter spoke out for the public's right to know during a Jan. 11 council workshop, during which the council, smarting from criticism over the town's lack of transparency, debated the question.

The council decided to create an ad hoc subcommittee to come up with a policy on public information and council communications. It appointed Mr. Carlson and Councilwoman Elizabeth Lewis, and next month will officially vote on forming what it is calling the Town Communications Committee. The council appears to be leaning toward allowing public members, which

As a public official, Peter Carpenter has held an uncommon position in the traditional tug-of-war between government and the public over access to information pertaining to the public's business. He's been on the side of the public, a position with deep roots.

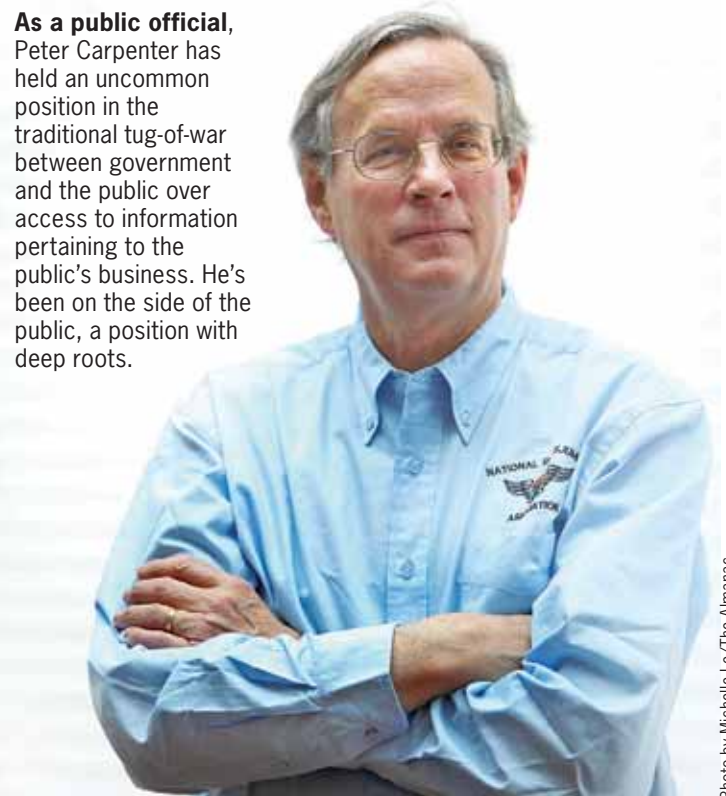


Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

would make the meetings open to the public and subject to the state's open meeting law, the Brown Act — a law close to Mr. Carpenter's heart.

In his blood

As a public official, Mr. Carpenter has held an uncommon position in the traditional tug-of-

war between government and the public over access to information pertaining to the public's business. He's been on the side of the public, a position with deep roots.

"While other kids were talking baseball at the dinner table, in my family, the discussions were about

See **CARPENTER**, page 8

Atherton council may open info committee to public

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

Will the public be allowed to attend meetings about improving the town of Atherton's communication with the public? Possibly.

In a second reversal on the topic, the Atherton City Council at its Jan. 20 meeting indicated it would likely create a new committee with resident members and make its meetings open to the public and subject to the Brown Act, the state's open meeting law.

At the meeting, Mayor Kathy McKeithen proposed the creation of a Town Communications Committee to write a town policy on public information and work on improving communication with residents. The council unanimously agreed to put it on the agenda of its next meeting on Feb. 17.

The formation of the committee comes in the wake of criticism about the behind-closed-doors appointment of the new police

chief and lack of disclosure about a \$230,000 sexual-harassment lawsuit settlement with a former police officer. Mike Guerra, the police department's second-in-command, was appointed without the national search and public input process that went into hiring his predecessor, Chief Glen Nielsen.

At a Jan. 11 study session, the council initially agreed to create a committee made up of council members and residents to improve the town's openness and transparency. Upon learning that including residents would trigger the Brown Act, requiring public meetings with posted agendas, the council reversed itself and said membership would be restricted to two council members and no residents.

"The Almanac chastised us pretty hard on this," said Councilman Charles Marsala, referring to a recent editorial. He said he was in favor of Ms. McKeithen's proposal. ■

City may help fund new Hillview field

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

With land for new playing fields scarce and demand showing no sign of slowing, Menlo Park may share the cost of a new synthetic field at the renovated Hillview Middle School, in exchange for use of the field.

City management is recommending that the city put \$500,000 toward the field, provided the city and the Menlo Park City School District can come to terms on details such as fees, scheduling, maintenance, and design.

The City Council could authorize negotiations with the school district at its meeting Tuesday, Jan. 26. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. in the council chambers, located between Laurel and Alma streets in the Civic Center complex.

The city and school district share use of the existing Hillview field. Demolition of that field and construction of the new campus is scheduled to begin this spring.

■ MENLO WATCH

The money would come out of the city's recreation-in-lieu fund, which developers pay into in order to mitigate the effects of development, according to city staff.

Council to honor community activist

Menlo Park Mayor Rich Cline will read a proclamation honoring community activist Elizabeth Lasensky at the City Council meeting Tuesday, Jan. 26.

Among other things, the proclamation recognizes Ms. Lasensky's involvement in the campaign to preserve Bedwell Bayfront Park, her advocacy of the city's need for rental housing, her involvement with an environmental group, her service on the Housing Commission, and her frequent letters to the editor.

Ms. Lasensky recently moved to San Carlos, forced out of Menlo Park by a big rent

increase. The idea to honor her came out of conversations between Mr. Cline and Councilman Heyward Robinson.

"We felt that, she's been on the Housing Commission, she's been a great volunteer, so the honorable thing to do would be to recognize her as she moves on to another city, and to encourage more volunteers to step up and try to fill her shoes," Mr. Cline said in an interview. "I hope it's not controversial. There's some subjectivity to this, and you've got to be sensitive about that."

Menlo Park residence wins green award

A Menlo Park home will be recognized by Sustainable San Mateo County for its use of environmentally friendly construction methods in a renovation.

Homeowners Cathy Ricke and Bruce Schena expanded and modernized their 1939 cottage using a variety of "green" meth-

See **MENLO WATCH**, page 8



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Eleanor Boushey, a founding force in Portola Valley, dies at 97

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

Eleanor Boushey, a member of Portola Valley's first Town Council, and a force in environmental protection, died Friday, Jan. 22, at The Sequoias retirement community, where she was a resident for 26 years. She was 97.

Ms. Boushey was the "town mother" and set a precedent, Nancy Lund, the town historian, told The Almanac. "There's been a very, very small number of years when we have not had a woman on the council," Ms. Lund said.

A memorial service is set for 3 p.m. Sunday, March 7, at Christ Episcopal Church at 815 Portola Road in Portola Valley.

Ms. Boushey's involvement with Portola Valley government began when she became secretary for the advisory group that organized the town's 1964 incorporation, according to an Almanac story from February 1977.

In setting up its first council, town leaders asked Homer Boushey, Eleanor's husband, to run for a seat, according to the story. He declined, she stepped up and won the seat and went on to serve 14 years, retiring in 1978.

She was once re-elected with a 97 percent majority, relatives said.

Her gender did present "some problems" on the council initially — she did not elaborate — but as she took a tougher line, the problems faded, Ms. Boushey told The Almanac in 1977.

"I think every city council should have at least one woman member," she said. "We see things a little differently, from a different point of view."

As a champion for the environment, she worked to designate Skyline Boulevard as a scenic highway, which happened in 1968, relatives said. Governors Pat Brown and Ronald Reagan appointed her to scenic highway advisory committees, relatives said.

She was an early member of the Committee for Green Foothills and an advocate for social justice, women's rights and nuclear disarmament. She once traveled to the Soviet Union with her husband as an "ambassador for peace," relatives said.

Eleanor Spratt Boyd was born in Los Angeles in 1912 and grew up in the mining town of Ray, Arizona, where she loved exploring the surrounding hills, relatives said.

After the family moved to Hillsborough in 1927, she enrolled at Stanford University and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. She was "a disciplined student," relatives said.

She had two children in her first marriage to Guy Kimball Dyer. A widow, in 1941 she married Mr. Boushey, a former Stanford classmate and an officer in the Army Air Corps, and later the U.S. Air Force.

The couple had three children while living the itinerant military life.

She was always active in the Episcopal church wherever she lived, and involved herself with her children in Cub and Boy scouts, and Brownies and Girl Scouts, relatives said.

In a letter to The Almanac upon her retirement from the council, she summed up her thoughts. "A town without places or reasons for people to come together, a town where people only sleep and spend all their real lives outside (the town) is a town without a soul," she said. "People need to have a feeling of belonging."

Ms. Boushey is survived by her younger brother, Robert Mitchell Boyd of San Rafael; sons Boyd Kimball Dyer of Santa Rosa, and Homer Astley Boushey Jr. of San Francisco; daughters Helen Boushey and Annette Boushey Holland of Northern California; and 15 grandchildren, 13 great-grandchildren and one great-great-grandchild.

Donations in her memory may be made to Oxfam America or to Save-the-Redwoods League. ■



'A town without places or reasons for people to come together ... is a town without a soul.'

ELEANOR BOUSHEY

Eleanor Hutson Lloyd: Fan of trains and ships

Eleanor Hutson Lloyd, a 35-year Portola Valley resident and former Redwood City travel agent, liked to travel herself, preferably with her husband Arthur and preferably on the water or on the rails.

Ms. Lloyd, who fought a long battle against Alzheimer's disease and emphysema, died in Palo Alto on Jan. 11, her husband said. She was 81.

The couple visited South America five times and crossed the Andes Mountains seven times on high-altitude trains, including in Chile and Bolivia, said Mr. Lloyd, a railroad historian and a member of the Caltrain governing board.

To get to Hawaii in 1958, the Lloyds berthed on the SS Matsonia, a passenger steamship with a regular route between San Francisco and Honolulu, Mr. Lloyd

OBITUARY

said. They traveled to Australia in the same way.

"She loved to travel," Mr. Lloyd said, adding that she worked as a travel agent for 20 years.

A preference for ships may have come naturally for the Philadelphia native. Her father was Capt. Albert Hutson, who commanded the destroyer tender USS Dixie during World War II. She and Mr. Lloyd were married on the Dixie in San Diego harbor in 1946.

The couple met, Mr. Lloyd said, as lab partners in a zoology class at the University of California, Berkeley, where both were in the pre-med program. Mr. Lloyd later changed his mind about medical school and pursued a career in

business.

Her initiative was instrumental in the couple getting together. "Mr. Lloyd, would you like to come to my sorority dance?" Mr. Lloyd recalled her saying at one point. "It took me about half a second to reply," he added. "We've been married 63 years."

She became a "wonderful wife" and mother for their three children, he said.

Ms. Lloyd is also survived by daughters Lynne Rosenberg of La Honda and M-A English teacher Liane Strub of Redwood City; son Lawrence Lloyd of Chico; seven grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

Memorial services have been held. Donations in Ms. Lloyd's name may be made to a charity of one's choice.

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Gloria Darke



Competitive Pricing

Dear Gloria, I am going to be putting my house on the market in 3 weeks. I have called in three different realtors from three companies and have gotten such a difference in opinion as to what the price should be that I am very confused. Of course, the temptation is to go with the one who believes in the highest price but I have heard that this can be a mistake. How do I make a decision as to pricing?

- Gracie W.

Dear Gracie W, You didn't say where you are from but I will say in the geographic area in which we work, it isn't that difficult to price a home. There are usually comparable sales in the neighborhood and if they aren't as recent as we would like we can make adjustments accordingly. The computer even does a price per square foot analysis for us now. While that is a bit too objective, it is often not far off and coupled with the subjectivity of a realtor's eye and experience it should be close to right on.

Perhaps some of what you are seeing has to do with the downward pressure on pricing that some segments of the market are experiencing. The challenges associated with even well qualified buyers obtaining loans has resulted in fewer people vying for the same property.

Another possibility is that you may be inviting one or two agents who are fairly new to the real estate industry and have never experienced a market where a property is on for much more than a week. We have been in a situation where you could NOT under-price a property. The market would carry it up to market value and above. If we are not already there, we are heading for a market where accurate pricing is going to be more important than ever in order for you to realize a sale in a relatively short period of time and for the highest possible price. I suggest you sit down with the agent with whom you have the best rapport, has the best references and the most experience. Then sharpen your pencil and come up with the most competitive price with which you are willing to sell.

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.



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Not retreating

CARPENTER

continued from page 5

democracy and politics and leadership," he says. And, he adds, "I learned a lot from my uncle, Bud Carpenter."

The elder Carpenter was legal counsel for the League of California Cities in the early 1950s, when a San Francisco Chronicle reporter wrote a multiple-part series titled "Your Secret Government." The series sparked a push for a state law that would require elected officials to do the public's business in public, with a few exceptions.

"Uncle Bud" was a key player in drafting the bill and persuading state Assemblyman Ralph M. Brown to carry it, Mr. Carpenter says. Today it is known as the Brown Act.

As a member of the fire board, Mr. Carpenter kept a watchful eye on Brown Act compliance, and pushed for improving the fire district's transparency by posting documents — from employee salaries and contracts to budgets and staff reports — on the district's Web site.

"I'm very proud of... the tremendous increase in transparency," he responds when asked what he regards as his biggest accomplishments as a board member.

Fire district service

Mr. Carpenter says he's also proud of his role in pushing the district's cities to adopt residential fire sprinkler ordinances, noting that Atherton and East Palo Alto have "really good

ordinances" in place now. He places Menlo Park's failure to endorse an ordinance on his list of disappointments.

Other accomplishments, he says, include helping to keep the fire district on a stable financial footing, sounding the alarm on the projected decline in the district's revenue projections over the last two years, and highlighting "the long-term adverse implications of current firefighter salary and retirement benefits."

His biggest disappointment, he says, "is the fact that (the board has) such a poor relationship with the union leadership."

"Every individual firefighter — I have tremendous respect for. They are superb. ... But labor relations are my biggest disappointment."

The district and firefighters, who have worked without a contract since June 2008, remain at impasse in contract talks, and there has been much finger-pointing and charges of bad faith on both sides.

He lists as a "failure" during his tenure his 2003 vote for an increase in firefighters' retirement benefits.

Current efforts

Since leaving the fire board, Mr. Carpenter has assumed the presidency of the Atherton Civic Interest League (ACIL). He also continues key involvement in a citizens' disaster preparedness committee, which has its roots in a successful citizen effort, aided by Board Member Carpenter, to make the Walsh Road neighborhood safer in the event of a fire or other disaster.

"With my ACIL hat on and my



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Splish splash

Caltrain maintenance worker Alberto Cortez directs overflowing water out of a parking lot at the Menlo Park train station on Wednesday, Jan. 20, during a week of heavy storms.

disaster preparedness hat on, I will try to get more people involved in community service," he says. The ACIL is currently trying "to identify more young people who will become involved."

As a fire board member, Mr. Carpenter prodded residents to be more involved with and informed about the fire district, which serves Menlo Park, Atherton, East Palo Alto and nearby unincorporated areas.

During election season, he worked to stir up interest among community members to run for a board seat, even when incumbents were running for re-election.

"You can't sit and complain

if you're not willing to take action," he says.

Mr. Marsala, the Atherton councilman, says Mr. Carpenter's position as ACIL president will lend credibility to his efforts to make the town more transparent.

"Peter is going to be good. We clearly need to listen to the different views of residents. The concept that we can be benevolent

dictators, and the council knows what's best for the town, that doesn't work anymore."

When Mr. Carpenter is asked if he will apply for membership on Atherton's Town Communications Committee, his response is short — and no surprise. "Yes." ■

Staff writer Andrea Gemmet contributed to this story.

MENLO WATCH

continued from page 5

ods. They used "cool" roofing, natural lighting and ventilation techniques, recycled and non-toxic materials, among other environmentally sound measures, according to the city of Menlo Park.

The homeowners, along with architect Ana Williamson and Drew Maran Construction, will receive one of three green building awards at a dinner and banquet March 11.

Three spots open on Planning Commission

Three spots on Menlo Park's seven-member Planning Commission are up for appointment for four-year terms, which would begin May 1. Applications are due by Friday, April 2.

The commission considers use permits and variances, and makes

recommendations to the City Council on whether or not to rezone properties. It is the only one of the city's commissions with the authority to make final decisions, except for a small number of matters such as rezoning.

Two commissioners, Melody Pagée and Henry Riggs, have reached the two-term limit. Commission Chair Jack O'Malley, appointed by the previous council majority, told The Almanac he plans to apply for another four-year term.

The commission meets twice a month on Mondays at 7 p.m. The council makes all appointments.

Go to tinyurl.com/CommApp to download an application, or pick one up at the city administration building in the Civic Center complex, between Laurel and Alma streets. For more information, contact City Clerk Margaret Roberts at MSRoberts@menlopark.org or 330-6620.

County holding seminars for candidates

Potential candidates for any office that will be decided in the June 8 Gubernatorial Primary can attend one of two seminars, hosted by San Mateo County.

The first seminar will run from 10:30 a.m. to noon on Thursday, Jan. 28. The second will run from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

on Friday, Feb. 18. Both will be held in the county elections office at 40 Tower Road in San Mateo.

For more information, call the office of Chief Elections Officer Warren Slocum at 363-4988, or e-mail Mr. Slocum at wslocum@smcare.org.

#2 Monthly Workshop Series by Harrell Remodeling

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\$35.00 pp / \$5.00 instructor fee

Do Cargill accusations of ‘backroom deal’ hold water?

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

Should local residents be concerned about claims by food processing giant Cargill/DMB that a Menlo Park official was involved in “backroom dealings” surrounding Cargill’s proposal to build a mini-city on the Bay? Or is Cargill merely trying to tar project opponents and avoid scrutiny of the project, as some local activists suggest?

Over the weekend, Cargill spokesman Pete Hillan provided The Almanac with a 2-inch-thick stack of e-mail correspondence between Councilman Andy Cohen, Councilwoman Kelly Fergusson, and Stephen Knight, political director of the environmental group Save the Bay. The e-mails were obtained and given to Cargill by an unidentified Redwood City resident through a public records act request, Mr. Hillan said. The resident who filed the request is not affiliated with Cargill, to the best of his knowledge, Mr. Hillan said.

Mostly, the e-mails show the council members discussing the project and working out the details of a draft resolution opposing any development on the Cargill site.

Mr. Hillan focused his attention on one e-mail in particular that Mr. Cohen sent to Mr. Knight on June 9, 2009. That e-mail reads:

“just met with paul Collacchi and

talked about a regional approach to housing cooperating with Redwood City to provide some higher density in our El Camino Real visioning process along El Camino in exchange for Cargill project going away — you’d have to work this out in greater detail with paul, but it’s consistent with my earlier stand.”

“He’s suggesting something of value to Redwood City in exchange for Cargill going away,” Mr. Hillan said. “This is evidence of a backroom deal that was not done in a public way.”

Mr. Cohen said he was simply mentioning an idea. He said he didn’t try to construct any kind of deal with fellow council members or with Redwood City, which has jurisdiction over the Cargill property.

“I did not, certainly, speak for anyone other than myself, and there was never a dialogue about it with Kelly (Fergusson) that I recall,” he said. “I think they’ve not really produced anything — I’m certainly not intimidated. I was always willing to be open and transparent about my thinking on this, and I continue to feel that way.”

Brielle Johnck, a Menlo Park resident who had urged Mr. Cohen and Ms. Fergusson to bring the resolution to the council, accused Cargill of running interference.

“Cargill wants to distract Peninsula residents who are concerned about paving the Bay, and it also wants to give the

impression that council members from cities who will be adversely impacted by Cargill’s massive development are conducting secret campaigns against the project,” Ms. Johnck wrote in an e-mail to The Almanac. “Cargill is running scared. The Peninsula cities are waking up and realizing that a new city of nearly 25,000 residents will be a disaster for the region.”

Mr. Collacchi, a Menlo Park council member from 1996 through 2004, described the policy he discussed with Mr. Cohen as one he has advocated for years. Through a complicated arrangement, nearby cities would agree to allow for denser development in exchange for keeping the Bay undeveloped, with some of the proceeds going to Cargill. That would “give Menlo Park a more constructive way to participate than simply opposing,” Mr. Collacchi said. “Cargill political operatives seized upon the words ‘going away’ to misrepresent and impugn” the good intentions of Mr. Cohen and Mr. Knight.

Menlo Park Councilman John Boyle, who in October voted against placing the resolution on Menlo Park’s agenda, said he wouldn’t want to rush to the conclusion that Mr. Cohen had done something wrong.

“I don’t have a strong opinion, but I do hope that at some point, (his idea) gets discussed in a public meeting,” Mr. Boyle said. “I welcome any creative ideas on how to address (the project), and that’s great if people have out-of-the-box thoughts.”

Mr. Hillan, the Cargill spokesman, criticized Save the Bay’s involvement in drafting the resolution, saying the group should lobby Redwood City directly. Mr. Cohen, Ms. Fergusson and Mr. Knight want to “give us a real fair trial before they hang us,” he said, arguing that the city of Menlo Park should restrict its comments on the project to those solicited through the state’s environmental review process.

“There are rules in place as to how it will be reviewed, it’s a very public process,” Mr. Hillan said. “Why would you try and stop something before the public has an opportunity to vet it?”

“I think that they are getting desperate,” Mr. Knight said, adding that you don’t need an environmental impact report to know what the project would do to the Bay. “Cargill is getting desperate, and there is nothing out of the ordinary or secret about the fact that Save the Bay, for 50 years, has been working with cities around the San Francisco Bay Area to protect the Bay from exactly this sort of thing. ... The era of filling the Bay is over.”

Menlo Park has delayed its vote on the resolution until after Redwood City holds a study session on Cargill’s proposal, scheduled for early February.

“I think it’s really important, as a neighboring city, to give them a chance to discuss this in a public session” before Menlo Park takes up the resolution, Mayor Rich Cline said. ■

Duboc says pension initiative is a go

Details were not immediately forthcoming, but former Menlo Park council member Lee Duboc says “a group of residents” will launch a drive for a ballot initiative, aimed at scaling back pension benefits for Menlo Park employees.

“We’re just dotting our i’s and crossing our t’s,” Ms. Duboc said. “We have to keep it close to the vest right now, but we’re planning a big roll-out.”

Ms. Duboc would not say which residents would be involved, or how much money she has raised for the effort. She had originally proposed the idea in a Jan. 11

e-mail to supporters.

Menlo Park Mayor Rich Cline said he didn’t have an immediate reaction to the news, adding that he wanted to talk to Ms. Duboc to better understand her plans.

Councilman John Boyle, who ran on a slate with Ms. Duboc in the 2006 election, also said he hadn’t formed an opinion as to how the city should respond, but that the effort is consistent with what the city is trying to do.

“I think it’s noteworthy that there’s a pretty strong sentiment amongst residents to more aggressively pursue pension reform,” he said.

County charter review panel meets on changing how supervisors are elected

The San Mateo County Charter Review Committee will meet Wednesday, Jan. 27, to discuss the county’s law regarding electing representatives to the Board of Supervisors.

The civil grand jury of San Mateo County has recommended that each of the board’s seats be decided by voters in only the district that the seat represents. Such a change would make elections more competitive, would

make the board more diverse, and would allow for better representation in rural, less-populated areas, the grand jury argued.

The county is the only one in the state to hold county-wide elections for its board of supervisors, according to the grand jury.

The meeting of the San Mateo County Charter Review Committee will begin at 5 p.m. in Room 101 of the county office building at 455 County Center in Redwood City.

City employee union opens door on negotiations

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

Service Employees International, the union that represents 152 Menlo Park employee positions, has publicly detailed its negotiations with the city in a post on its Web site.

The union, which has been without a contract since late October 2009, provided a summary of negotiations with Menlo Park in a document dated Jan. 21, apparently addressed to its Menlo Park employees. It asked its members to come to the City Council meeting Tuesday, Jan. 26, to “let (the city) know that we want to help but do not want to begin eroding our benefits and our Union rights.”

Facing falling revenues and rising costs, the city is working to close what it calls a structural budget deficit. The negotiations come amidst higher-than-usual interest from some residents in the topic of employee pay, with former council member Lee Duboc planning a voter initiative aimed at scaling back pension costs.

In addition to a two-year pay freeze, the union claims the city is asking for 50-50 cost sharing between employees and the city of any increase in pension or medical benefit costs, and the right to impose 5.5 days of furlough time each year on any SEIU employee.

The union also claims that the city is asking for the right to replace union workers with contract labor at the city’s discretion. Under

the current contract, the city must notify and confer with the union before contracting out a position, but does not need the union’s approval, according to Personnel Director Glen Kramer.

The union estimates that the new conditions would result in a 5 percent reduction in take-home pay for workers by October 2011.

Noting that the city is “not willing to commit that executive staff will not get any raises, one-time payments or bonuses,” the union asks: “Why isn’t executive management committed to help out the same way we are willing to help out? Why will the City not consider our proposals to save money that would have no impact on current workers?”

“We need to make the Council understand that we are grateful and committed to be providing for the needs of the City, but that we should also be treated fairly and respectfully.”

In mid-December, the city finalized a deal with the union representing 33 city supervisors that calls for a two-year pay freeze. The contract also calls for potential sharing of increased medical and pension costs, though at a lower rate than what the city is reportedly asking SEIU workers to accept.

Calls to the SEIU and to Menlo Park City Manager Glen Rojas were not returned by press time.

As of Monday afternoon, the document was available at tinyurl.com/ydu7thx.



Jackie Holmkvist

Allied Arts Guild Auxiliary



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The complex is owned and operated by the Allied Arts Guild Auxiliary - an organization formed for the purpose of promoting the health, welfare, maintenance, and care of children, and acquiring funds to be donated for the benefit of the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford. The Auxiliary owns and operates the historic Allied Arts Guild; all property and income of the Auxiliary is held solely for the purpose of supporting the Hospital.

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Allied Arts Guild

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Residents clash over high-speed rail

By Gennady Sheyner

Palo Alto Weekly

California's proposed high-speed rail system is either a badly needed boost to the state's workers and commuters or an overpriced, shoddily planned boondoggle that needs more oversight and a better business plan.

Both positions were well represented by close to 100 speakers at Thursday night's public hearing on the controversial train project, which initially would stretch from San Francisco to Los Angeles and pass through the Peninsula along the Caltrain tracks. Ultimately it would reach from Sacramento to San Diego.

More than 200 people crammed into the Palo Alto City Council chambers to share their concerns or express their enthusiasm for the high-speed-rail project to state senators Joe Simitian and Alan Lowenthal.

As in previous meetings, dozens of Peninsula residents and a handful of local officials asked state officials to increase their oversight of the California High-Speed Rail Authority and to bolster public outreach for the planning process. But for the first time their views were counterbalanced by a crowd of labor leaders, pro-rail bloggers and other supporters of the \$42.6 billion project.

The senators, whose budget subcommittee is charged with vetting the voter-approved project, focused on the rail authority's recently released business plan. Sen. Lowenthal, who chairs the Senate Transportation and Housing Committee, said some of the rail authority's ridership figures seem far too high and appear to have been "pulled out of a hat."

Sen. Simitian, who chairs the Senate Budget Subcommittee on Resources, Environmental Protection, Energy and Transportation, said the new business plan has made significant progress from the 2008 version. But he added that there's much room for improvement.

He also urged rail officials to improve their communication efforts.

"I thought the High-Speed Rail Authority needs to do a better job in engaging the public," Sen. Simitian said. "It means not simply selling the project but genuinely responding to people's legitimate concerns when they're raised."

Local officials also questioned the numbers in the business plan and the rail authority's outreach methods.

Palo Alto Mayor Pat Burt, who serves on the board of the Peninsula Cities Coalition, derided the new business plan's ridership figures. He said the rail authority expects Gilroy to attract roughly as many rail passengers as Amtrak currently draws in the Northeast corridor. Mr. Burt, a Gilroy native, said he finds these numbers at once humorous and misleading.

Menlo Park Mayor Rich Cline, a longtime critic of the rail project, also said he was concerned about the business plan's "inaccurate ridership figures." Mr. Cline, who chairs the five-city Peninsula Cities Consortium,

said city officials cannot support the \$42.6 billion project given the lack of reliable information coming from state officials.

"There are so many unanswered questions that we can't possibly raise the flag on high-speed rail," Mr. Cline said.

Other critics questioned the rail authority's plans for obtaining funding for the project. The authority is hoping for \$10 billion to \$12 billion in private funding; at least \$17 billion in federal grants; and more than \$4 billion in local funds to pay for the project.

California voters approved \$9.95 billion for the project in November 2008, when they passed Proposition 1A.

Sen. Lowenthal said he was skeptical about the authority's plan to collect about \$3 billion annually from the federal government over the next six years. He said the state currently gets about \$3 billion in federal funding for all of its transportation needs.

He suggested that the authority consider focusing on one particular segment of the

high-speed-rail line rather than seeking to build all eight segments simultaneously.

"Why don't you complete one section to demonstrate it can work other than doing something that can turn

into a high-speed-rail project to nowhere?" Sen. Lowenthal asked.

The project has drawn great scrutiny on the Peninsula, where criticism of the rail authority has snowballed over the past year as details about the project have emerged. Hundreds of residents on the Midpeninsula turned against the project after they realized that the new rail system might include elevated tracks splitting their communities, which authority officials say is only one possibility.

But the project also had a large base of support at Thursday's meeting. Many speakers characterized the rail project as a desperately needed panacea to the state's high unemployment rate and persistent traffic jams.

Dozens of union leaders, business officials and members of the grassroots group Californians for High-Speed Rail asked the two senators to support the project and fund it accordingly.

"It is now incumbent on both the (rail) authority and the Legislature to ensure the will of the voters, as expressed by Proposition 1A, is put in place," said Brian Stanke, executive director of Californians for High-Speed Rail.

Cindy Chavez, CEO of the South Bay Labor Council, said the project would produce 36,000 jobs for every \$2 billion spent. Jim Lazarus, vice chair of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, argued that the project is needed to support the state's growing population.

Rail authority officials acknowledged Thursday that many details of the business plan, including federal funds and private investment, are yet unknown. Jeff Barker, the rail authority's deputy director, called the business plan a "dynamic document" that will be continuously revised as more information is gathered. ■

*More than 200 people
crammed into the council
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or express their enthusiasm for
the high-speed-rail project.*

State law will require fire sprinklers

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

After trying for several years to persuade the city of Menlo Park to adopt an ordinance requiring fire sprinklers in new and remodeled single-family residences, the Menlo Park Fire Protection district has decided to simply wait for a state law that would accomplish that goal to take effect.

The California Building Standards Commission adopted the new fire codes Jan. 12, requiring fire sprinklers in all new single-family dwellings in the state as of Jan. 1, 2011. The City Council was poised to take up the ordinance proposed by the fire district at its Jan. 26 meeting, but City Manager Glen Rojas removed the item from the agenda at the request of fire district officials.

The district's decision to stop pushing the council to adopt an ordinance represents the conclusion of several years of unsuccessful lobbying. The City Council in 2004 rejected a law that would require automatic sprinklers in new and some remodeled single-family homes, saying the potential safety improvements didn't justify the high cost to homeowners.

This time around, the fire district was planning to propose an ordinance that would only require the sprinklers in new

homes, not remodels, said Fire Marshal Geoff Aus. The fire board had decided to scrap the proposition that the law apply to remodels because it was skeptical the council would approve it.

Because the new state law would accomplish the same thing as the proposed ordinance, the district decided to drop the issue, according to Mr. Aus.

In an interview, Fire Chief Harold Schapelhouman said he was disappointed the city, with the help of the district, missed the chance to lead on the issue. East Palo Alto and Atherton, the other two jurisdictions within the district's boundaries, have had residential sprinkler ordinances on the books for over six years, though Atherton's does not apply to remodels.

The fire district says it will continue to work with the city to update its commercial sprinkler ordinance, which dates back to 1984. A clause necessitating sprinklers in commercial buildings is often triggered by relatively minor improvements, said Mr. Aus.

A new ordinance proposed by the district would require sprinklers only if over half the building is renovated. Menlo Park City Manager Glen Rojas said the city will "sit down with the district and figure out how best to do that, because that's definitely something we want to see changed." ■

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Guillaume Bienaimé

Executive Chef
at Marché Restaurant



"A dish is only as good as its weakest ingredient; a great ingredient is a dish in itself."

Born in France, Marché Executive Chef Guillaume Bienaimé was exposed to French cooking through his mother and grandmother at a young age and it has influenced his culinary style to this day. Guillaume spent much of his childhood on the San Francisco Peninsula and moved to Pennsylvania with his family as a teenager. His first experience in the restaurant industry was at the age of 15, working at Peace a Pizza, a small but growing chain outside of Philadelphia. During his early college years, a stint as a line cook at "Z" in Los Gatos influenced Guillaume's career path back into restaurants.

While obtaining an Associate of Arts degree in Culinary Arts and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Foodservice Management at Johnson & Wales University in Providence, Rhode Island, Guillaume apprenticed at such acclaimed restaurants as La Méditerranée in Paris, The French Laundry in Yountville, and Marché. Additionally, he was selected to be a member of the Culinary Olympic Team, obtaining a gold medal in hot food competition at the ACF national convention, a bronze at the Culinary Olympics in Erfurt Germany and two gold medals at the New York Food Show.

Guillaume returned to Marché as banquet sous chef in 2005 after graduation. Recognizing his talent, then chef Howard Bulka promoted Guillaume to sous chef in 2006. Guillaume was awarded the position of chef de cuisine in early 2008, then was promoted to executive chef in April 2009.

Each night Marché offers a chef's tasting menu with suggested wine pairings in addition to an à la carte menu. Guillaume has a strong affinity for seasonal French and American regional cooking and it's evident in his menu at Marché.

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The family business was established in 1899 when Josiah Roller organized his first funeral. As a retired cabinet maker who was often called upon to craft coffins, (he) agreed to organize a funeral for a friend whose father had died in Palo Alto.

In those days, bodies had to be transported by horse and buggy either to San Francisco or San Jose for burial. Josiah agreed to make the arrangements in exchange for help in establishing a funeral home in Palo Alto, something he thought was long overdue. As the only funeral home this side of San Francisco, Roller's business quickly grew.

In 1906, Josiah Roller's son, Arthur, took over the burgeoning business, and in 1912 Frank Hapgood joined as a partner. In 1951, they moved the business to its current location at the corner of Addison and Middlefield streets.

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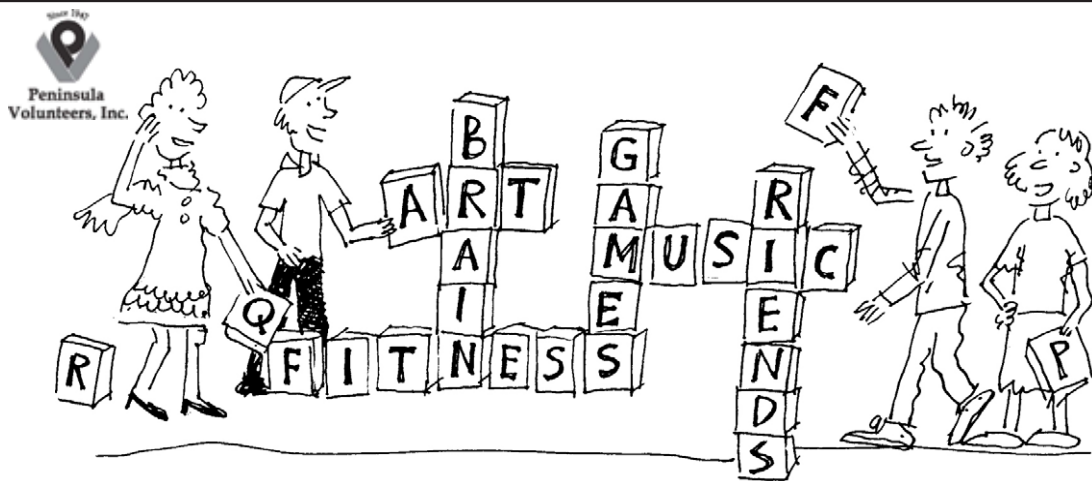
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As soon as possible, call your funeral home. The professionals at Roller Hapgood & Tinney are available day or night to answer your questions, provide guidance, and arrange for transportation of the body. Call us at (650) 328-1360.

If death occurs away from home or out-of-state, we'll make the necessary arrangements to prepare and transport the body to our funeral home. If the person who has died must be transported out-of-state, we can make necessary travel arrangements and coordinate services with the destination funeral home.

The Staff, clockwise from above: Jenna Moerk, General Manager, Funeral Director and Embalmer; Donavon Dilworth, Funeral Director and Embalmer; Benjamin Bilbro, Funeral Counselor; and Avisha Nair, Office Manager.

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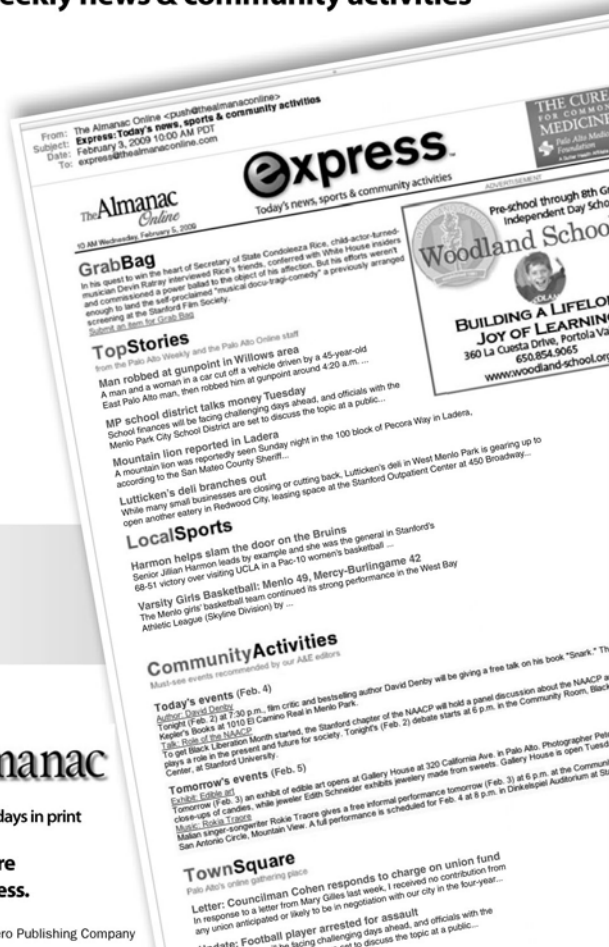
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Former editor pleads no contest

Brian Bothun, a former editor for the Palo Alto Daily News and former reporter for the Daily Post, pleaded no contest to a misdemeanor charge of possession of pornography on Friday, Jan. 22, said San Mateo County Chief Deputy District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe.

The plea bargain ends his prosecution on felony charges of possessing child pornography on his home computer.

A sentencing hearing is set for 8:30 a.m. April 6 in San Mateo County Superior Court in Redwood City, Mr. Wagstaffe said.

Mr. Bothun faces a sentence of up to 204 days in county jail — the 180-day maximum jail sentence, plus an additional day

for each of the 24 pornographic images on his computer, Mr. Wagstaffe said.

Mr. Bothun was arrested on child pornography charges in March 2008, when his partner called Atherton police to report domestic violence. When police officers showed up, he told them about pornographic material on Mr. Bothun's computer, according to Mr. Wagstaffe.

Mr. Bothun was also charged at the time with possession of a glass pipe, which is considered drug paraphernalia. He has been out of jail on \$100,000 bail, but has been arrested twice since on drug-related charges: once in July 2008 in Menlo Park, and again on April 5, 2009, in Santa Clara.

Atherton police log goes online

Wondering about crime in your neighborhood? The range of police calls, from vandalism to traffic accidents, medical aid to credit card fraud reports, is now available. The Atherton police department is posting its daily police log online for

the first time, says Chief Mike Guerra.

Go to athertonpolice.wordpress.com to view the previous day's police calls. The new service also has an RSS feed to alert readers to updates to the site, Chief Guerra said.

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Courtesy Robert Lewis

Portola Valley: Trailhead parking to shrink by 20 percent

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

For hikers who use the Coal Mine Ridge or Windy Hill trails in Portola Valley and drive to the trailhead, the limited parking along upper Alpine Road near Willowbrook Drive is on track to become more limited.

A three-person Town Council on Wednesday, Jan. 13, decided unanimously to accept a plan for a new home whose driveway will truncate a town-owned strip of roadside parking along the frontage of a residential property at 4860 Alpine Road.

The 3-0 decision — with council members Maryann Moise Derwin and Ann Wengert absent — reduces the number of parking spaces to 16 from the current 20. The loss will strain a parking area that is often full and spilling over on to Willowbrook.

In granting an appeal to property owners Annette Achermann and Rick Friedman, the council overturned an October 2009 decision by Public Works Director Howard Young and is allowing the couple's driveway to bisect the parking area and use up four spaces rather than the two Mr. Young had in mind.

The couple objected to Mr. Young's plan to locate it at the eastern end of the lot. Such a

driveway would be too steep and would have inadequate views of passing traffic, they said, adding that the town should have said something much earlier in the planning process.

"Having this thrust upon us in the 11th hour was a big shock," Ms. Achermann said. The couple has already spent \$45,000 on permits and consultants for the current design, Mr. Friedman added.

The council had rejected an earlier plan on Dec. 9. The

recent decision reflected a compromise crafted, in part, by council members John Richards and Ted Driscoll.

Anomaly occurred

The Architecture & Site Control Commission (ASCC) approved the couple's house design in May 2009. Mr. Young was on the distribution list for design review in March but did not comment, Planning Manager Leslie Lambert said in an interview.

In a Dec. 9 memo, Mr. Young said his comments were "inadvertently not submitted," allowing the application to proceed. "Public Works never intended the parking area to be adversely affected or diminished," he added.

"Staff acknowledges that it is unfortunate that this anomaly has occurred," he said, and added that the planning staff is reconsidering the review process.

Also on the distribution list in March was the Trails & Paths

Committee, which had no comment, Ms. Lambert said.

The committee's comment now is unanimous opposition to the couple's plan, committee member Elizabeth Rubin told the council. "Our trail system is the underlying ethic for the culture of Portola Valley," she said.

Giving up four parking spaces, a 20 percent change, was a hard pill for Mayor Steve Toben. "It is painful for me to contemplate the loss of more parking," he said before calling for a vote. "This will not go down well with the trails community." ■



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Stanford Hospital & Clinics thanks the 50 Stanford physicians and 65 medical students per quarter who volunteer at Arbor Free Clinic for their commitment to community service. The Arbor Free Clinic fills an important role in our community by providing health services and medications free of charge to uninsured patients in San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties.

Patients are accepted on a walk-in basis every Sunday from 10 am–2 pm. The Clinic is located at the VA Palo Alto Health Care System, Menlo Park Division. For more information, visit <http://arbor.stanford.edu>



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Drug bust in Willows

Police arrested a Menlo Park couple allegedly selling crack cocaine out of their apartment near Menlo Park's Willows neighborhood Tuesday, Jan. 19.

Marcus Lovelace, 26, was booked into San Mateo County jail on a variety of charges, including possession of cocaine base for sale and possession of an assault rifle, according to police. Police also arrested Danielle Filice, 27, who will be booked on the same charges, Sgt. Eric Cowans said.

In an afternoon raid on the apartment in the 500 block of Willow Road, police found several ounces of crack cocaine, along with the assault rifle, Sgt. Cowans said.

Mr. Lovelace was in the apartment when police arrived, and officers staked out the parking lot until Ms. Filice returned to the apartment, Sgt. Cowans said. Both were taken into custody "without incident."



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■ POLICE CALLS

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

MENLO PARK

Residential burglary reports:

■ Bicycles valued at \$7,000 stolen from garage, 1600 block of Bay Laurel Drive, Jan. 18.

■ Laptop computer and pain relief pills stolen for total loss of \$3,000, 300 block of Santa Monica Ave., Jan. 17.

■ Wallet, three blank checks, necklace and digital camera stolen for total loss of \$309, first block of Lorelei Lane, Jan. 15.

Auto burglary report: Apple iPod stolen, 100 block of Terminal Ave., Jan. 20.

Stolen vehicle reports:

■ Gray 1992 Toyota Camry, 500 block of Hamilton Ave., Jan. 19.

■ Gray 2005 BMW X3, 1300 block of Carlton Ave., Jan. 20.

Fraud report: ID theft, 800 block of Willow Road, Jan. 17.

Spousal abuse report: 1300 block of Willow Road, Jan. 17.



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Councilman says he hasn't left Atherton

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

Atherton Councilman Charles Marsala says he hasn't moved out of Atherton. Responding to a complaint from a neighbor who thought he'd left town, Mr. Marsala said that he is leasing his home for a couple of months to a Stanford Hospital patient and her family.

In the meantime, he's been staying at a friend's house in Atherton, and he spent about a week in the guest cottage in his backyard, he told The Almanac. The rest of the time he's been traveling, either for business or back to his native city of New Orleans, he said.

"I'm helping out someone from out-of-state (who is) having brain surgery at Stanford," he said. "The inconvenience

to me is minimal because my dad just passed away and I've been going back to Louisiana to help my mom clean out their house."

A friend approached him with the idea of leasing his house to the patient and her family for seven weeks, Mr. Marsala said.

"Having just seen my dad in hospice care, trying to help someone out seemed like the right thing to do," he said.

Atherton City Attorney Wynne Furth confirmed that there are no issues with Mr. Marsala's residency that would impact his ability to serve on the Atherton City Council. ■

■ ONLINE

Go to TheAlmanacOnline.com for more community news, sports, information and photos.

MARY SUMMERS LEWIS APRIL 19, 1921 - DECEMBER 31, 2009



Mary S. Lewis, Ph.D., of Menlo Park, Palo Alto, Berkeley, and Washington, D.C., passed away gently at Woodside Terrace in Redwood City surrounded by her four daughters. Mary grew up with her artist parents and brother, Carol Summers, in Woodstock, New York.

She came to California to attend U.C. Berkeley where she met and married her husband, David E. Lewis. She will be missed by her large family including Wendy Lewis-Rakova (Mikhail), Ellen Rief (Bob), Kathy Lewis (Cathy Boe), Sutie Wheeler (Jim), four grandchildren, two nephews, and their families.

Mary was the Director of Parents' Nursery School in Palo Alto for twenty years, where she wrote the first Head Start proposal in Santa Clara County. She went back to school, attending Vassar, Stanford, and San Francisco State University, where she also taught and did research, and earned her

Ph.D. in Child Development from U.C. Berkeley. She went on with the career of her dreams as regional and national Early Childhood Specialist for Head Start, visiting Native American and Trust Territory programs, including those in Micronesia and Samoa. She became an international consultant, working all around the world until she was 85. Among the many awards she received, she was proudest of the Native American Educator of the Year, in 1984. In February she will be posthumously awarded the first Lifetime Achievement Award from the California Head Start Association. Mary retired to Palo Alto and continued her global travels up to her final illness, resulting from complications of hip surgery.

A celebration of her life will be held April 17, 2010, at 1pm at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto, 505 East Charleston Road. Contact kathrynclewis@sbcglobal.net for more information. In lieu of flowers, please donate to the National Head Start Association in the name of the Mary S. Lewis Scholarship Fund, P.O. Box 890080, Charlotte, North Carolina 28289-0080 or to the charity of your choice.

PAID OBITUARY

ALCENA LEIGH NORLING

Alcena Leigh Norling died peacefully Saturday, January 9 with her son and daughter at her side. She was born September 14, 1947 in Perryton, Texas to Ovie and Alcena Doane.

As a child, Leigh moved to San Francisco and later to Pacifica where she attended Terra Nova High School. In 1972 she moved to Kings Mountain above Woodside, California. Leigh was an active volunteer in her community. For many years she was chief dispatcher for the Kings Mountain Volunteer Fire Brigade, was editor of the Kings Mountain Echo, was a founding board member and secretary for many years of the Kings Mountain Education Fund that supports the local school. She helped form the local parents coalition that still today hosts the Halloween party for children and was extremely active in the Kings Mountain Art Fair serving in various roles including its Board of Directors. Leigh's most recent gift was volunteering as a docent to protect the seal pupping area in MacKerricher State Park in Mendocino County.

Leigh had an amazing ability to form lasting friendships wherever she lived and worked. Most of her adult life was spent on Kings Mountain working for various companies including the family business, Skywood Realty, kitchen design shops in San Francisco and Honolulu, and Stanford University. Her most recent endeavor was building a real estate portfolio in Austin, Texas.

Leigh is survived by her former husband Chris Norling of Woodside, her son Nathaniel Norling of Fort Bragg, her daughter Jessica Norling of Woodside, her son Mark Graham and his wife Gill, her granddaughter Nicole and grandson Andrew all of Lafayette, her brother Gerry Doane and his wife Mary of Dundee, Oregon and numerous cousins, nieces and nephews.

A memorial gathering - service will be held 2 p.m. Sunday January 31, at the Kings Mountain Community Center, 13883 Skyline Boulevard, Woodside, Ca.

In lieu of flowers contributions to her memory can be made to the Marine Mammal Center, Marin Headlands, 2000 Bunker Road, Fort Cronkhite, Sausalito, CA 94965 or to the Kaiser Hospice Program, 180 N. Wolfe Rd., Ste. SW3-160, Cupertino, CA 95014.

PAID OBITUARY



TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY PUBLIC HEARING

The Town Council for the Town of Portola Valley will conduct a public hearing to consider an increase to rental fees associated with use of the Community Hall and Activity Rooms. The proposed fee increase will include an annual Consumer Price Index adjustment.

The public hearing will be held as part of the Town Council's regular meeting on:

Wednesday, February 10, 2010
7:30 p.m.

The Historic Schoolhouse
765 Portola Road
Portola Valley, CA

For more information, please contact Janet McDougall at (650) 851-1700, ext. 218 or through e-mail at jmcdougall@portolavalley.net.

KRISTEN OLSON



Kristen Olson, 60, passed away in her sleep Wednesday morning, January 6, 2010, unexpected- and prematurely. Born and raised in Berkeley, CA where she attended Berkeley High School, Kris received her BA in English Literature from

Stanford and would later go on to earn her MAT from Harvard and MBA from Stanford Graduate School of Business.

In 1981, Kris joined Apple Computer and worked or consulted for the next two decades at software firms such as Microsoft and McAfee Associates. Her true business passion, however, was with start-ups, where her energetic personality fueled stints on the founding teams of Upshot and Ansa Software as well as marketing consulting to many others. It was a testament to her strong character and ebullient personality that she thrived in developing environments - working to build and shape companies' strategy,

brands, products and culture.

Beyond being a part of Silicon Valley's bustling high-tech world, Kris also dedicated much of her time to volunteer work. As a 13 year Girl Scout troop leader, she saw two of her scouts go on to earn Gold Awards - the highest award in the Girl Scout community. She was active in the Mid-Peninsula chapter of National Charity League and a member of local school site councils. An avid birder, Kris served on the board of the Sequoia Audubon Society and participated in numerous San Mateo County bird counts and spent many of her weekend mornings, and afternoons, trudging through marshes with her binoculars.

Forever enthusiastic, outgoing, caring and always the wonderful listener, Kris will be sadly missed by her husband, Mark Fowle, her children Erik, Kelsey and Monika, her father Austin as well as a legion of friends and community members. In lieu of flowers, her family asks that donations be made either to Northern California Girl Scouts (www.girlscoutsnorcal.org), or to the Sequoia Audubon Society: PO Box 620292, Woodside, CA 94062. A memorial service is planned at Menlo Atherton High School's Performing Arts Center on Saturday, January 30th at 10 A.M.

PAID OBITUARY

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Tom Gibboney

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

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

■ **WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?**

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

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Viewpoint

Ideas, thoughts and opinions about local issues from people in our community. Edited by Tom Gibboney.

Holiday Fund raises nearly \$130,000

Contributions to The Almanac's Holiday Fund drive hit nearly \$130,000 this year, somewhat less than last year but continuing the solid trend in local communities of reaching out to help the less fortunate.

The total includes more than \$30,000 from the Rotary Club of Menlo Park, and the William and Flora Hewlett and David and Lucile Packard foundations, all three longtime donors who supplement the fund every year.

Slightly more than 200 Almanac readers sent in donations, similar to the number of participants in prior years. These donors are helping to address the fallout from the sagging economy that has raised demand for services on the Peninsula to its highest level in many years.

This year \$129,246 will be distributed in equal shares of \$12,924 to

10 nonprofit organizations that provide those in need with food, shelter, medical treatment and other services.

The Holiday Fund is a partnership of The Almanac, the Hewlett, Packard and Rotary foundations and the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, which processes all contributions. No fees or other charges are assessed to any Holiday Fund donations; 100 percent of all funds raised go directly to the participating nonprofits. Each of the following agencies will receive checks next month:

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula

Provides after-school academic support and enrichment activities for 1,000 youth each day, ages 6 to 18. Operates clubhouses in Menlo Park's Belle Haven neighborhood, East Palo Alto and Redwood City, and after-school programs at schools in these communities designed to extend the learning day and supplement the school's curriculum.

Ecumenical Hunger Program

Provides emergency food, clothing, household essentials, special children's programs and sometimes financial assistance to families in need, regardless of religious preference, including Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for more than 1,500 households.

Ravenswood Family Health Center

Provides primary medical care, behavioral health services and preventive health care for all ages at its clinics in Belle Haven and East Palo Alto. It also operates a mobile clinic at school sites. Of the 22,700 registered patients, most are low-income and uninsured.

LETTERS

Our readers write

Collacchi explains intentions on Cargill project

Editor:

The recent Cargill attack on Menlo Park City Council member Andy Cohen and Save the Bay's Stephen Knight for discussing Cargill's Saltworks project misrepresents their intentions.

I met each independently to talk about a resolution opposing the project. Based on my prior experience from Sand Hill Road, I advised each that in the face of neighboring opposition, cities usually get defensive and assert sovereignty. I proposed an alternative that imagines a regional land-use policy enabling property owners to sell and transfer development rights regionally, a policy I have advocated for years.

See **LETTERS**, next page

St. Anthony's Padua Dining Room

Serves hundreds of hot meals six days a week in a social and friendly atmosphere to anyone in need. Funded entirely by contributions from the community, St. Anthony's is the largest soup kitchen between San Francisco and San Jose. It offers groceries to take home and distributes clothing to families.

Second Harvest Food Bank

The largest collector and distributor of food on the Peninsula, Second Harvest Food Bank distributed 30 million pounds of food last year. It gathers donations from individuals and businesses and distributes food to some 162,000 people each month through more than 700 agencies and distribution sites in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

Shelter Network

Provides short-term shelter and transitional housing services to more than 3,700 adults and children each year. Offers programs for families and individuals to become self-sufficient and return to permanent housing.

Youth and Family Enrichment Services

Provides many programs to help people who struggle with substance abuse, domestic violence, mental health, relationship and communications issues. Helps strengthen youth, families and individuals to overcome challenges through counseling, education, and residential services.

Project Read-Menlo Park

Provides free literacy services to adults in the Menlo Park area. Trained volunteers work one-on-one or in small groups to help adults improve their basic reading, writing and English language skills so they can achieve their goals and function more effectively at home, at work and in the community. In 2007-08, a total of 120 volunteer tutors assisted more than 300 students.

Teen Talk Sexuality Education

Provides educational programs for youth and adults to help teens make healthy choices that will result in lower rates of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases. Its "Teen Talk" program last year served thousands of youth at public school sites in San Mateo County.

Fair Oaks Community Center

Serves more than 2,500 households each year with services ranging from food assistance to shelter referral to rental and crisis assistance. The center also has a subsidized child-care program and a fully operating senior center, and offers a variety of other social services and programs throughout the year.



Portola Valley Archives

Our Regional Heritage

The mansion Herbert Law built in the 1920s for his 5-year-old daughter Patricia in the hills of Portola Valley burned in a horrendous fire in September 1971. The ruins still stand.

First, do no harm

By Michael Lambert

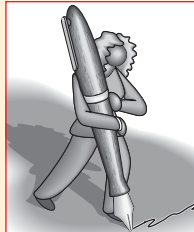
After reading the staff report circulated in December regarding "Water Efficient Landscaping" that will be discussed at the Jan. 26 City Council meeting, I hope that city staff and council members take the phrase "first, do no harm" to heart.

These days, we are buried in "conventional wisdom" and "political correctness" and too often do not consider the unintended consequences of our actions. Countless times I have heard local politicians say their goal is of protecting our "quality of life."

Despite this, our city and other public agencies at times erode rather than protect our "quality of life," most often with "politically correct" ordinances and administration.

A major part of our "quality of life" is keeping Menlo Park an affordable place to live. And for the homeowner, it is the freedom to make his or her home their castle, with the freedom to create and care for their own environment.

Unfortunately, if the city staff and City Council have their way, how you design and maintain your landscaping will be a matter requiring conformity to a litany of municipal code requirements at a significant added cost to the homeowner, including time and costs for plan check and building permits, for landscape architects, irrigation design consultants, not to mention the deed restriction that will need to be filed at the county. And when



**GUEST
OPINION**

you think that you have spent enough, you have the cost of an irrigation audit performed by a certified irrigation consultant every five years. And, then there are the costs of enforcement, a city cost, and potential fines.

Amazingly, when asked to do outreach on this item, the city staff consulted with our water service providers. Because this will become a new burden for homeowners, it probably makes more sense to schedule a meeting with interested homeowners to inform and field their concerns before enacting such an onerous ordinance.

How do we currently discourage excessive water use? It is the tiered water rate program that is currently employed by our water providers and approved by the California Public Utilities Commission. Unit water costs increase the more water you use. If you don't use water prudently, you will see some seriously expensive water bills.

In this case I think the better approach is the carrot rather than the stick. Most everyone wants to do the right thing; it is an inherent human quality. Perhaps education and incentives are the answer. With sponsorship from landscape designers, contractors and perhaps even Sunset magazine, quarterly classes at the city's recreation center could be offered in fundamental landscape and irrigation design, with emphasis on better water management. Another possible incentive: The city could waive or reduce the cost of building permits and inspection fees for landscape projects that conform to an elective water management standard.

Think about it. Should the city be the adversary or the partner?

Michael Lambert is a Menlo Park architect.

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

If applied to the salt ponds, Cargill would be rezoned with some amount of development rights to build housing but must sell those rights to property owners who own infill sites specifically zoned to receive them, hopefully in cooperating nearby cities like Redwood City, Menlo Park, and Belmont.

The proposed policy would allow Cargill to re-monetize the salt ponds without developing the site. It would create more housing units in appropriate sites in nearby cities, and it would give Menlo Park a more constructive way to participate than simply opposing.

The language in Mr. Cohen's e-mail, "... regional approach to housing cooperating with Redwood City ... providing higher density ... along El Camino ... in exchange for Cargill going away [transferring development rights] ..." accurately describes using property derivatives to both satisfy property owners and permanently preserve open space by transferring development rights.

Mr. Cohen and Mr. Knight were both interested in pursuing the idea. The Cargill public relations political operatives twisted the words "going away"

to misrepresent and impugn their intentions.

Paul Collacchi
Redwood City

Rail authority won't listen

Editor:

Having attended the Jan. 19 high-speed rail hearing in Sacramento held by the state Senate Transportation and Housing Committee, I again saw that the authority really has no intention of cooperating and implementing anything the public may desire.

The rail authority chairman Pringle and director Crane, as well as Morshed, attended part of the meeting, but they all left the meeting before any comment was made by the public. They have no interest in what the public has to say.

How many times have we seen this kind of behavior? Director Rod Diridon has stated very clearly to the press when asked, "What will you do if local communities oppose your plan?" that, "They will be overridden."

Quite clearly the authority must be removed as the agency that is directing this project. Legislation has already been introduced that could achieve this goal. Support SB409 that would replace the authority with a new governing group.

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