



**ASSEMBLY RACE:** Menlo Park venture capitalist Josh Becker stresses his networking skills. | PAGE 5

# The Almanac

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

FEBRUARY 10, 2010 | VOL. 45 NO. 24



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[ Section 2 ]



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Photo by Don Feria

## A century and change

Steve Cortez celebrates his 102nd birthday with family, friends and the staff at Rosener House in Menlo Park on Feb. 1. Mr. Cortez, who attends Rosener House's adult day programs run by the Peninsula Volunteers, is a Filipino veteran and avid fan of arm-wrestling and boxing.

## City takes another crack at landscaping law

By Sean Howell  
Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park's City Council will continue to grapple with revisions to the city's water-efficient landscaping ordinance in a study session Tuesday, Feb. 9.

The city has refined its recommendations since the council first took up the issue at its Dec. 15 meeting. One key clarification is that a controversial proposal to limit lawn size in homes with new or renovated landscaping would only be optional, with homeowners allowed to calculate a "water budget" instead of adhering to the limit.

Engineering Services Manager Lisa Ekers told The Almanac that the limit on lawn size had been optional all along, though it wasn't communicated in the sketchy outlines of the ordinance as first presented. As an alternative to limiting lawn size to the greater

of 500 square feet or 25 percent of total landscaped area, residents could adhere to water-use limits under a formula issued by the California Department of Water Resources, she said.

Still, that may not be enough to garner the support of Councilman John Boyle, who has argued against a restriction on lawn size — a concept the council majority supports. In an interview, Mr. Boyle said he is concerned that the city is trying to graft complicated and burdensome rules designed for large-scale landscaping projects onto smaller ones, resulting in "unintended impacts on quality of life for the typical Menlo Park resident."

The city is recommending that the revised ordinance apply to renovated landscaping projects of 1,000 square feet or more, following the guidelines set forth by the Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency. Mr.

Boyle said he would prefer that threshold be raised to the state's limit of 5,000 square feet.

His colleagues on the council, meanwhile, say that the ordinance represents a good first step toward getting residents to conserve water. It would require water-efficient irrigation systems and practices, and limit homeowners to using their irrigation systems at night.

Since the council last discussed the ordinance, the city's Environmental Quality Commission has recommended requiring covers for new or replacement pools or spas — a measure that would be difficult to enforce, according to Ms. Ekers.

The city expects to have an approved ordinance in place by the end of the month.

Tuesday's meeting will begin at 7 p.m. in the council chambers, located in the Civic Center complex between Laurel and Alma streets. ■

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## On the cover

Behind every snow pea in Brad Peyton's Portola Valley home garden are billions of microbes that help plants thrive and that are best left undisturbed by tillers, shovels and leaf blowers, says soil professional and gardening consultant Terry Lyngso. Photo by Michelle Le. See Section 2.

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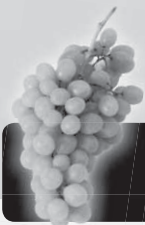
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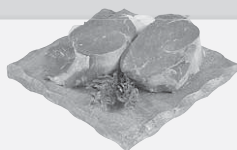
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# Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

## PV schools put tax on ballot

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

Voters will be asked to help fill an estimated \$500,000 gap in the Portola Valley School District's budget with a four-year, \$168 parcel tax in a special May 4 mail-in election.

At a sparsely attended Feb. 3 meeting, the school board voted 4-0, with Steve Humphreys absent, to place the tax on the ballot.

The parcel tax won't fill the entire budget gap, but will be used to maintain core academic programs such as reading, science and math, as well as to keep class sizes relatively low, Superintendent Anne Campbell

told The Almanac.

The district is expecting another round of cuts in state funding amounting to about \$300 per student in the coming school year, she said. While enrollment isn't expected to grow much next year, neither are property tax revenues, she said.

The parcel tax would not be used for administrative expenses, and would have an exemption for senior citizens, Ms. Campbell said. There's no provision for cost of living increases to the parcel tax amount, she said.

Property owners in the district currently pay a \$290 annual parcel tax that passed in 2004 and lasts for 10 years. ■

## String of daytime burglaries target homes in Atherton

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

A home on James Avenue in the Lindenwood neighborhood was burglarized on Thursday, Feb. 4, the latest in a string of bold daytime burglaries in Atherton over the past week.

The thieves appear to be targeting "older, understated" homes and looking for jewelry and silver, Atherton police said.

One of the residential burglaries was interrupted by the homeowner, who spotted a person running away from the house and jumping over the fence, said Chief Mike Guerra. The suspect had long dark hair, and was presumably female, he said. The homeowner

did not see the suspect's face, he said.

The other four burglaries resulted in thefts, he said. There's no estimate yet on the value of the stolen items, he said.

The string of burglaries began on Jan. 28 and have occurred all over town, Chief Guerra said. On Feb. 1, there were two burglaries reported, one on Nora Way and the other on Maple Avenue. Burglaries were also reported on Linda Vista Avenue on Feb. 3, and on Linden Avenue on Jan. 28.

Police sent out an automated phone message to residents, encouraging them to be vigilant and report any suspicious people or activity to the police department at 688-6500. ■

## Menlo Park sales tax receipts take dive

A key source of revenue for Menlo Park fell by 21 percent in the first quarter of the current fiscal year, making an already dour revenue picture even bleaker.

Sales tax revenues declined by 20.6 percent, or \$335,000, in the quarter ending Sept. 30 from the same quarter in the previous year, according to tax receipts recorded with the State Board of Equalization.

That drop was higher than the 12.9 percent decline seen in the Bay Area over the same period, the 14 percent decrease in Northern California, and the 14.8 percent drop statewide, according to Carol Augustine, Menlo Park's finance director.

The decline doesn't bode well for the current fiscal year (which began

July 1), as the city had expected to receive more money from sales tax in 2009-10 than it did in 2008-09.

"Business-to-business" tax revenues in the area east of Middlefield Road accounted for most of the drop, falling by 37 percent, or \$263,000.

In the four-quarter period from October 2008 to September 2009, total sales tax receipts dropped by 19.4 percent from the year-earlier period. That was the largest drop in any four-quarter period since 2002, according to Ms. Augustine.

City management plans to present the City Council with a mid-year budget report at the council's Feb. 23 meeting, with recommendations on possible budget cuts to follow.

## MP district to seek \$178 parcel tax

■ Revenues are down, but enrollment is up in the K-8 district.

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

Voters will be asked to help the Menlo Park City School District bridge a projected \$2 million budget shortfall with a \$178 annual parcel tax.

The school board voted Feb. 2 to put a seven-year parcel tax measure on the ballot on a May 4 special mail-in election. The \$178 tax is expected to raise enough to save teachers' jobs, but not cover the entire shortfall, said Superintendent Ken Ranella. Budget cuts and dipping into reserve funds should make up the difference, he said.

The \$178 parcel tax would be in addition to the \$565 in annual parcel taxes paid by property

owners in the K-8 school district, which includes much of Menlo Park and Atherton.

Like current parcel taxes, there would be an exemption for senior citizens. However, the other parcel taxes have no expiration date, while the proposed tax would expire in 2017.

The district has a projected \$30 million operating budget for the 2010-11 school year.

"We're not asking the community for the full amount of the deficit or need. We recognize that these are tough times, and we will tighten our belts as well," Mr. Ranella told The Almanac. "What we're really trying to do is ensure that we can maintain services to our kids, even though there will be other kinds of reductions."

Raising enough to bridge the entire projected shortfall would have amounted to a \$303 annual parcel tax, but board members didn't think that would pass, said Jeff Child, the board president. Asking voters for \$178 was deemed a safer number that would be more like to be approved.

"We think it's a number that makes sense. It's 50 cents a day," said Mr. Child. "It's not nothing, but to protect our schools and the quality of our schools, that's a reasonable number."

Cuts in state funding, flat property tax revenues and surging enrollment are to blame for the district's budget woes, said Mr. Ranella. As a basic aid district, Menlo Park doesn't get additional funding from the

See **PARCEL TAX**, page 6

## Josh Becker, The Connector?

Menlo Park entrepreneur is in the race for the local Assembly seat

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park venture capitalist and social entrepreneur Josh Becker is stressing his networking abilities in campaigning for the California Assembly's 21st district, saying that the district needs someone who can unite disparate groups of people to rally for change. In the months before the Democratic primary, his main challenge is likely to lie in convincing voters that those abilities would serve him well in public office.

The district encompasses The Almanac's entire circulation area, including Atherton, Menlo Park, Portola Valley and Woodside. Mr. Becker is one of three candidates running in the Democratic primary on June 8, competing to replace termed-out Assembly member Ira Ruskin.

In a recent interview, Mr. Becker spoke energetically and cogently of jumpstarting a state with constant budget troubles, and in need of new jobs. He expressed a desire to make California a leader in energy, and to "bring the spirit of Silicon Valley to Sacramento."



"I think that what's needed right now is my kind of background," says Silicon Valley entrepreneur Josh Becker, a Menlo Park resident.

This is one in a series of stories on the 2010 elections. Related stories are on Page 8.

His private sector career has centered on bringing innovators together in various coalitions. He is the founder and chair of the Full Circle Fund, a San Francisco-based philanthropic organization that gives grants to nonprofits and boasts on its board of directors Congressman Mike Honda, Netflix founder Reed Hastings, and Brian David, director of

the National Broadband Task Force.

Mr. Becker also founded New Cycle Capital, an "early stage" venture capital firm based in San Francisco. He also sits on the board of trustees for the University of California Merced.

He has delved into politics only recently: His involvement in the Silicon Valley for Obama campaign sparked his interest in running for the Assembly, he said. According to Mr. Becker,

See **BECKER**, page 6

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## Spangler closes mortuary in Menlo Park

Spangler Mortuary closed its Menlo Park funeral home chapel at 650 Live Oak Ave. on Feb. 1 after the landlord said the rent would be doubled, said Scott Spangler in an interview.

"We were not willing to pass this increased cost along to the community we serve," he said.

He said the family, which runs chapels in Los Altos, Mountain View and Sunnyvale, hopes to find a new place in Menlo Park in the near future.

Meanwhile, Spangler Mortuary staff will meet with Menlo Park residents in their homes or other

locations of their choice to make arrangements, and will continue to work with Menlo Park churches for services, he said.

"We've been in Menlo Park for 14 years, and we want to continue to support the community," Mr. Spangler said.

Go to [SpanglerMortuary.com](http://SpanglerMortuary.com) for more information.

With the Spangler facility closing, Menlo Park no longer has an in-town mortuary. John D. O'Connor Menlo Colonial Chapel at 657 Oak Grove Ave. closed several years ago.

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### PARCEL TAX

*continued from page 5*

state when enrollment rises. State funding cuts amount to \$1.4 million, and property taxes in the district are tracking at a 0.83 percent increase, Mr. Ranella said.

"This is as grim as it can be for us right now," he said. "We could probably withstand this time of reduced revenue, but we're growing and not getting funding with our growth. There are more children so we need more classes and more teachers. We have to accommodate that, or our whole program starts to erode."

Without the parcel tax, the district is looking at \$800,000

in cuts to certificated personnel, which includes teachers, administrators, librarians and school nurses, Mr. Ranella said.

To make up the entire shortfall, the district would need to take about \$800,000 from its reserves as well as make \$1.2 million in cuts in the 2010-11 school year and another \$850,000 to \$1 million in cuts in 2011-12, he said.

A special meeting to go over potential budget cuts is set for 7 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 25, at Laurel School, 95 Edge Road in Atherton. Preliminary layoff notices have to be given to teachers by March 15, so officials must plan next year's budget without counting on the parcel tax revenue, Mr. Ranella said. ■

### BECKER

*continued from page 5*

he helped launch "Cleantech and Green Business for Obama," which raised funds for the 2008 presidential campaign, as well as the Clean Economy Network.

The home page of his campaign's Web site features a photo of Mr. Becker standing shoulder-to-shoulder with Al Gore.

He would seem to fit the profile of a "Connector," a term popularized by Malcolm Gladwell in his 2000 book, "The Tipping Point." According to Mr. Gladwell, Connectors can spark a new trend by virtue of their wide networks: "One of the key things she does is to play an intermediary between different social worlds," he writes.

And that, essentially, is Mr. Becker's pitch.

"I think that what's needed right now is my kind of background," he said. "The other people who are running are good people, but what's really needed right now are innovative ideas, and people who can bring together different coalitions."

He stressed his connections to Silicon Valley innovators, saying he's working to get people with

good ideas involved in his campaign, people who may have sat on the sidelines in past Assembly races. If his fundraising so far is any indication, he's succeeded, having leapfrogged the other candidates in money raised after just over three months of campaigning.

He may, however, face a challenge in convincing voters he is ready to confront the realities of serving in the California Legislature. Mr. Becker's two opponents, San Mateo County Supervisor Rich Gordon and former Palo Alto City Council member Yoriko Kishimoto, have a long history as elected representatives.

Asked whether he was prepared to deal with the slow pace and frustrations inherent in government bureaucracy, Mr. Becker said: "I'm not a big believer in people saying, 'we can't do things.'"

"This is a critical time," he said. "I just got off the phone with a friend of mine who asked, 'Can California really be saved? Why should we send you up there?' I said, 'Yes, it can be, but it's an all-hands-on-deck situation.'"

Mr. Becker, 40, has lived in Menlo Park for 15 years, with a brief hiatus in Palo Alto, he said. ■



Michelle Le/The Almanac

The Navigato family, the owners and operators of Cedro Ristorante Italiano, include, from left, Giuseppe, Elizabeth and Maria.

## Cedro Ristorante, a family affair

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

When Elizabeth Navigato told her parents, Giuseppe and Maria Navigato, that she wanted nothing more than to open a restaurant, her mother worried that her eldest child, barely 20 years old, didn't know what she'd be getting herself into.

"I told her she needed to work at her aunt's restaurant before she thought of opening her own place," Maria says.

Elizabeth agreed. For some time she could be seen at Mona Lisa restaurant in San Francisco, waiting and bussing tables, fulfilling her management duties, even standing just outside the doorway, encouraging North Beach strollers to come in and sample the food.

It was hard work, sometimes beginning at noon and ending at 3 the next morning. But it didn't change her mind.

The Menlo-Atherton High School grad persisted in trying to persuade her parents to join her in her dream enterprise of operating a family restaurant, and last fall, opportunity knocked. Family friends Renato and Diane Cusimano of Atherton were looking for buyers of their Palermo restaurant, which they opened in 2005 in the Menlo Center, near Kepler's bookstore and Cafe Borrone. It seemed as if it were meant to be.

The Navigatos, longtime Menlo Park residents, took over the comfortable, smartly designed space that was formerly Palermo by mid-November, and have been serving up lunch and dinner every day, and breakfast on the weekends, ever since. Elizabeth is at the helm of the business — at the tender age of 23 — and her mother is executive chef, an important element of Elizabeth's dream of a family restaurant.

"I told my mom, 'If you cook the way you cook at home, (the restaurant) will succeed,'" Elizabeth says.

Elizabeth's father, Giuseppe, and one of her brothers, David, also work at the restaurant, although Giuseppe also works as a distributor and David is a college student.

The restaurant's name changed with the new owners: It is now Cedro Ristorante Italiano — the cedro being the large citrus fruit grown by Elizabeth's grandfather, Osilio Navigato, in the Italian region of Calabria.

It was Osilio's wife, also named Maria, who taught the woman who would become her daughter-in-law how to cook, according to the younger Maria Navigato. That was when Maria's mother and her future mother-

in-law were good friends, working together at the long defunct Parsons Manufacturing Co. in Menlo Park.

"She was like a second mom to me," the younger Maria says, adding that she was in her early teens when her own mother died.

Growing up in Menlo Park and East Palo Alto, Maria started cooking when she was about 9, and regularly cooked for her large family.

Before the restaurant opened, she worked as a personal chef, which became easier as her own children got older and developed a love of cooking themselves. "My brothers and I all know how to cook," Elizabeth says, adding that growing up they would rotate cooking nights. "The kitchen has always felt more like a family room to us than any other room in our home."

Maria hasn't had any trouble adapting to the larger kitchen and greater number of people at the restaurant because her cooking standards haven't changed, she says. "When people come here, they're coming to my home," she says. And that means the freshest ingredients available, homemade sauces and stocks, and creative desserts.

Elizabeth says she and her mother shop for the restaurant, choosing organic and local foods whenever possible. The goal, she adds, is to eventually be "100 percent sustainable" in everything they serve.

The lunch and dinner menus feature a range of pastas, risottos and salads. Panini are also available for lunch, and the dinner menu includes meat and fish dishes. Wine and beer are available, and there's a full bar.

The family is eager to open the restaurant's doors to community events, and two are coming up in the next month.

On Feb. 24, Cedro will co-host an event with its neighbor, Kepler's bookstore, that will include a presentation by author Valentina Cirasola, whose cookbook, "Come Mia Nonna — A Return to Simplicity," features food from the Puglia region of Italy. The event will include a five-course meal cooked by Maria Navigato, showcasing some of the recipes in the cookbook, Elizabeth Navigato says.

The event is set for 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.

A fundraising breakfast for Haitian emergency relief is set for Sunday, March 14, from 6 to 11 a.m. Elizabeth explains that on a recent day, her youngest brother, Josef, a Hillview School eighth-grader, came home

See CEDRO, page 12

## REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Gloria Darke



### Timing the Market

**Dear Gloria, We need to be moved by the first of June. When would be the best time to put our home on the market? We think we should wait until April when our garden is in full bloom and our escrow wouldn't need to be so long. What would you advise?**

- Linda G.

**Dear Linda,** In a perfect world, one in which you could count on interest rates remaining low, the stock market being somewhat stable, our country being free from outside attacks and balanced real estate inventory, it would seem to make sense to wait. But our whole economy is so uncertain right now with no guarantees that things will not worsen in the near future. All one can know is what the local market is doing right

now, this minute, this month and it is doing very well, especially for sellers. Our market is somewhat out of balance in favor of sellers, meaning there is more than one buyer for many of the well-priced homes.

Although you are not moving until June if you put your house on the market by mid to late February you should be ahead of the many sellers who waited out last year to sell their homes because of the depressed prices. Both buyers and sellers are feeling more optimistic this year and it should be an active Spring market. It does take more time now for financing, appraisals, inspections, etc. so you might look toward a mid-April close. That would leave 6 weeks for you to rent back, or make some other accommodation to encourage a strong sales price.

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

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# Becker takes funding lead in race for Assembly seat

By Gennady Sheyner

Palo Alto Weekly

Menlo Park venture capitalist Josh Becker has surged past two political veterans in campaign fundraising, all but ensuring a tight three-way primary-election contest for Ira Ruskin's seat in the state Assembly.

Mr. Becker received \$219,643 in campaign contributions in 2009, according to financial statements filed Feb. 1. His two opponents in the June Democratic primary, San Mateo County Supervisor Rich Gordon and former Palo Alto Councilwoman Yoriko Kishimoto, had raised \$195,360 and \$161,464, respectively, by the end of the year.

Mr. Gordon has received much of his support from San Mateo County attorneys, Realtors and labor leaders. Ms. Kishimoto has relied on checks from local environmentalists, politicians and neighborhood leaders.

Mr. Becker has been boosted by the district's high-tech sector. His more than 300 contributors include many technologists and CEOs, including professionals from such firms as Google, Hewlett Packard, Microsoft, Apple and Cisco, and executives from companies in which Mr. Becker's venture firm, New Cycle Capital, has invested.

Like Mr. Becker, Mr. Gordon presents himself as a "change" candidate, even as he emphasizes his decades of public service in San Mateo County. Mr. Gordon, who officially announced his candidacy last March, is currently in his 12th year on the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors and has previously served on the county Board of Education.

On his campaign Web site, Mr. Gordon calls for the abolition of a law that requires two-thirds approval in the Legislature for passing the state budget. He also calls for increased education spending and universal health coverage for California's children.

Mr. Gordon's list of endorsements includes U.S. Congresswomen Anna Eshoo and Jackie Speier, Assemblywoman Fiona Ma, and a long roll of local officials. They include John Boyle and Andy Cohen of the Menlo Park City Council and former council member Mickie Winkler, Portola Valley council members Maryann Moise Derwin and Steve Toben, and Chris Thomsen and Lorraine Rumley of the Sequoia Union High School District.

His campaign also received

\$7,800 in contributions from the Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 467 and six \$3,900 checks from attorneys in the Burlington-based law firm Cotchett, Pitre & McCarthy.

Ms. Kishimoto, who served on the Palo Alto City Council for eight years before reaching her term limit in November, has her base of support in Santa Clara County. She has received fewer four-figure checks than her two Democratic opponents, but has earned the support of council members, neighborhood groups and local officials from all over the Peninsula.

Her campaign chest was bolstered by a \$65,000 loan she made to her campaign.

Ms. Kishimoto's list of supporters includes Atherton council members Jerry Carlson and Elizabeth Lewis, Menlo Park Mayor Rich Cline and former council members Chuck Kinney and Steve Schmidt, and Portola Valley Councilman Ted Driscoll. She also said she is in the process of putting together a signature drive in hopes of widening her base of support. ■

—Sean Howell contributed to this report.

## Local donors to Assembly race

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

Local residents are shelling out big bucks to the three candidates in the race for the 21st District Assembly race: Josh Becker, Rich Gordon, and Yoriko Kishimoto.

Many of Mr. Becker's local contributors are involved in venture capital and tech companies. Mr. Gordon draws from a range of tradespeople, real estate interests, doctors, attorneys, financial workers, and retirees, while environmental advocates and teachers have lined up behind Ms. Kishimoto.

Names of a few local city officials and newsmakers showed up on the list of contributors in the campaign finance period ending Dec. 31. Menlo Park Councilwoman Kelly Fergusson donated \$250 to Ms. Kishimoto, with whom she has joined in the past on environmental and high-speed rail-related issues. Menlo Park Councilman John Boyle and City Attorney Bill McClure contributed \$250 and \$500, respectively, to Mr. Gordon's campaign.

Audrey Rust, president of the



Rendering courtesy of San Mateo County Parks Foundation

The ceremonial groundbreaking for the Bill and Jean Lane Education Center will take place at 2 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11, at Edgewood park. The entrance is about a half-mile east of Interstate 280 on Edgewood Road.

## Groundbreaking for Lane Education Center

A groundbreaking ceremony will be held at 2 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 11, for the Bill and Jean Lane Education Center at Edgewood County Park and Natural Preserve on the western edge of Redwood City.

The \$1.3 million center will be a showcase for environmental education and volunteerism, said Julia Bott, executive director of the San Mateo County Parks Foundation, which led the campaign to raise funds for the center. The building will be 1,200 square feet with another 1,000 square feet for decks and amphitheaters.

A grand opening is expected to take place later this year, she said.

The center was named for Bill and Jean Lane of Portola Valley because of their many contributions to the community and to parks, said Rich Gordon, president of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors.

"The Lanes were instrumental in bringing about many of the treasures in our community that we enjoy today," he said in a statement. "They provid-

ed a significant gift toward building the center."

The center's design incorporates many "green" features, including reused materials, solar power, and insulation made from recycle blue jeans.

Built on the site of an old house and using existing oak trees for shade, the building will have two outdoor amphitheaters and exhibits that involve touch and listening, Ms. Bott said.

The education center will be a portal to the "natural wonders to be found at Edgewood," she said. Although the park is only one square mile in size, it is home to more than 500 plant species that provide habitat for frogs, lizards, foxes, coyotes, bobcats, raccoons, deer, and more than 70 resident and migratory bird species, she said.

More than 100,000 people visit the park each year, Ms. Bott said.

Volunteers contribute more than 10,000 hours a year at Edgewood, she said, working on trail maintenance, removal of invasive weeds, and conducting spring wildflower walks and educational field trips for schools and youth groups.

Peninsula Open Space Trust, gave \$800 to Mr. Gordon, while Valerie Gardner, active in Atherton's volunteer environmental programs committee, chipped in \$100 to Ms. Kishimoto's campaign.

Here is a list of local donors who contributed at least \$1,000. The maximum donation is \$3,900.

■ **Josh Becker's campaign:** Teymour Farman-Farmaian of Menlo Park, Zynga general manager (\$3,900); Gary Kreman of Menlo Park, chairman of Clean Power (\$3,900); Joe Ross of Menlo Park, Cisco Systems (\$3,900); Sheryl K. Sandberg of Atherton, facebook.com (\$2,000); Amy E. Cheun of Menlo Park, volunteer (\$1,000); Patrick Jabal of Menlo Park, Google (\$1,000); Michelle Sandberg of Atherton, physician (\$1,000); Laura Lauder of Atherton, venture capital (\$1,000).

■ **Rich Gordon's campaign:** Sherrilyn A. Fisher, real estate manager (\$3,900); Alison S. Elliott of Menlo Park, Stanford administrator (\$3,900); Steven Blank of Menlo Park, Stanford lecturer (\$3,900); Dennis J. McShane of Menlo Park, phy-

sician (\$3,900); Steve Westly of Menlo Park, The Westly Group (\$2,500); Roberta Carcione of Menlo Park, homemaker (\$1,000); Vivienne Virani of Menlo Park, interior decorator (\$1,000); Thomas Baillard of Atherton, investment management (\$1,000); Joan Sanders of Atherton, not employed (\$1,000); Robert B. Flint Jr., of Woodside, retired (\$1,000).

■ **Yoriko Kishimoto's campaign:** Nancy

Yoshikawa of Atherton, Environmental Protection Agency (\$3,900); Aki Yoshikawa of Atherton, chairman of Global Health Consulting (\$3,900); Keiko Franklin of Atherton, not employed (\$1,000); Ken Fong of Menlo Park, venture capital (\$1,000).

Source: sos.ca.gov, the Web site of the California Secretary of State. ■

## Candidates forum

Democratic candidates for a seat in the state's 21st Assembly District will debate and answer questions from the audience at a candidate forum Wednesday, Feb. 24, sponsored by several area Democratic clubs.

The event will run from 6:30 to 8 p.m. at the Veterans Memorial Center, 1455 Madison Ave. in Redwood City. It's free, though

people are encouraged to reserve a ticket online: assemblyforum.eventbrite.com.

The candidates are Rich Gordon, Yoriko Kishimoto and Josh Becker. The organizations sponsoring the forum are the Redwood City Woodside Democratic Club, the Menlo-Atherton Democrats, the Peninsula Democratic Coalition, and San Mateo County Democrats for America.

## Las Lomas school district faces big cuts

■ Board to consider hiring freeze, larger class sizes, program cuts.

By Renee Batti  
Almanac News Editor

Faced with the prospect of a \$1.6 million deficit next school year if significant cuts aren't included in the new budget, Las Lomas School District officials are recommending that the school board approve reductions that include a hiring freeze, larger class sizes, cuts in or elimination of some enrichment programs, and shrinking the summer school program to mandated classes only.

The school board may approve these and other cuts at its Feb. 10 meeting at the Las Lomas District office, 1011 Altschul Ave. in Menlo Park. The meeting begins at 7 p.m.

Superintendent Eric Hartwig said in a staff report that "almost zero local revenue growth" is predicted for the 2010-11 school year. That, coupled with Gov. Schwarzenegger's proposed permanent per-student cuts in state funding, requires the district to cut about \$1.2 million of ongoing expenditures and find about \$200,000 in temporary savings to get out of deficit spending by 2011-12, he said.

Mr. Hartwig said the district is projected to "deficit

spend" by about \$481,000 this fiscal year.

The proposed cuts, totaling about \$1.1 million over the next two years, are the result of an effort by district staff to identify and prioritize possible cuts to the budget, Mr. Hartwig said. After reviewing more than 50 options, district officials came up with a recommended list that "would be least likely to affect the educational program or involve reducing staff," he said.

About 75 percent of the proposed cuts would be put in place in the next fiscal year, with the remaining cuts intended for the 2011-12 fiscal year, he said. Some of the cuts proposed for 2011-12 will require negotiated agreements, and if the agreements aren't achieved, another \$214,000 in cuts would have to be made, Mr. Hartwig said in the report.

In addition to the cuts listed above, other proposed reductions include up to five non-instructional furlough days for all employees; lengthening the computer replacement cycle from four years to five years; eliminating traditional GATE (Gifted and Talented Education program) projects; hiring teachers in the early years of their careers; and cutting special education spending.

For more information, call the district office at 854-2880. ■

## How should school district tackle growing enrollment?

The Las Lomas School District is holding a meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 9, to discuss options for addressing the district's growth in enrollment that is squeezing space and resources on the district's two campuses.

The meeting is set for 7 p.m. in Cano Hall at Las Lomas School, 299 Alameda de las Pulgas in Atherton.

A committee of district staff, teachers, parents and other community members has met for

about nine months to address the issue, meeting with a demographer, analyzing costs of various options, studying the condition of the district's two leased-out sites, and reviewing the capacity of the two school campuses. The meeting is intended to share the committee's work with the public.

Superintendent Eric Hartwig said the district's enrollment has been growing at a rate of 4 percent annually for the last three years. Before that period, the growth rate

had been between 1 percent and 2 percent, he said.

The district's demographer predicts that enrollment will continue to grow at 4 percent annually until 2015, at which time it could level off, then decline, Mr. Hartwig said.

Current enrollment is about 1,200 students in the two schools, Las Lomas (K-3) in Atherton and La Entrada (4-8) in Menlo Park.

For more information, call the district office at 854-2880.

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### ■ POLICE CALLS

#### ATHERTON

##### Auto burglary reports:

- Window smashed, Palmer Lane, Jan. 22.
- Window smashed and stereo system and speakers stolen, 1000 block of El Camino Real, Jan. 22.
- Unlocked vehicle rifled through but nothing taken, Greenoaks Drive, Jan. 23.
- Window smashed and purse stolen, Irving Ave., Jan. 23.
- Window smashed and Apple iPod stolen, James Ave., Jan. 23.
- Residential burglary report: Side door found open and home burglarized, first block of James Ave., Jan. 29.

#### MENLO PARK

##### Residential burglary reports:

- Wedding rings, four necklaces and rosary stolen with total value of \$4,800, 1200 block of Chilco St., Jan. 22.
- Clothing valued at \$2,500 stolen, 1200 block of Windermere Ave., Feb. 4.

##### Commercial burglary reports:

- Bike and lock stolen for estimated loss of \$190, Menlo Velo Bicycles at 433 El Camino Real, Jan. 22.
- Break-in and theft of laptop computer valued at \$1,000, East Palo Alto Academy High School at 475 Pope St., Jan. 29.

##### Auto burglary reports:

- Construction tools valued at \$2,600 stolen from vehicle, 100 block of Jefferson Drive, Feb. 4.
- Window smashed and Apple iPod Nano stolen with value of \$1,000, 1000 block of Oakland Ave., Jan. 23.
- Window smashed and briefcase, student documents and checks stolen with value estimated at \$691, in the 1000 block of Almanor Ave., Jan. 23.
- Window smashed but nothing taken, 1000 block of Berkeley Ave., Jan. 25.
- Window smashed and Apple iPod, iPod stereo connector, registration and pink slip stolen with total loss valued at \$413, first block of Iris Lane, Jan. 25.
- \$25 in cash stolen, Lorelei Lane, Jan. 26.
- Apple iPod stolen with loss estimated at \$150, Lorelei Lane, Jan. 26.
- Window smashed and laptop computer stolen, 900 block of Peggy Lane, Jan. 26.
- Windows in two vehicles smashed and flatware valued at \$75 stolen, Lorelei Lane, Jan. 26.

- Navigation device valued at \$650 stolen, 900 block of Timothy Lane, Jan. 26.
- Window smashed but nothing taken, 100 block of Bay Road, Jan. 22.

##### Grand theft reports:

- Accordion valued at \$2,500 stolen, 1600 block of El Camino Real, Feb. 3.
- Jewelry and money of unknown total value stolen, 700 block of Valparaiso Ave., Jan. 26.
- Bicycle and bike lock with total value of \$450 stolen from front porch, 300 block of Arbor Drive, Jan. 31.
- Apple iPhone believed stolen from kitchen during house party, 400 block of Encinal Ave., Jan. 31.

**Stolen vehicle report:** White four-door 1997 Mazda 626, 500 block of El Camino Real, Jan. 27.

##### Fraud reports:

- Unauthorized use of Social Security card, first block of Willow Road, Jan. 27.
- Unauthorized withdrawal from bank account of \$2,076, in the 800 block of Hamilton Ave., Jan. 27.
- Unauthorized use of debit card for loss estimated at \$1,009, in the 1400 block of Modoc Ave., Jan. 25.
- Unauthorized use of credit card for loss estimated at \$400, in the 1200 block of Willow Road, Jan. 29.

##### Spousal abuse reports:

- 700 block of Ivy Drive, Jan. 28.
- 1300 block of Willow Road, Jan. 24.

**Child Protective Services report:** first block of Campbell Lane, Feb. 3.

#### WOODSIDE

**Battery report:** Student arrested after pulling female victim to ground, punching her repeatedly in head and face, sitting on her and continuing punching, victim taken to Stanford Hospital, Woodside High School at 199 Churchill Ave., Jan. 25.

#### PORTOLA VALLEY

**Theft report:** Trumpet left under locker and possibly stolen, Corte Madera School at 4575 Alpine Road, Jan. 26.

#### LADERA

**Residential burglary report:** Jewelry valued at \$2,047 stolen from resident's bedroom closet with no sign of forced entry, 800 block of La Mesa Drive, Jan. 20.

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## Review board needed to restore trust in Atherton cops, ACIL president says

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

**I**s a citizen oversight committee needed to restore confidence in the Atherton Police Department?

Peter Carpenter, the president of the Atherton Civic Interest League, has approached Atherton City Council members with a proposal to create a committee to address

“concern and distrust” surrounding the town’s police.

“I take this position not because I feel that there (are) serious problems, but because I believe there is a growing level of concern and distrust regarding the police department,” Mr. Carpenter said in the e-mail he sent to town officials on Feb. 2. “Rather than waiting until we have a crisis on our hands I urge

you to be proactive on this matter.”

Atherton Mayor Kathy McK-eithen did not return phone calls seeking comment on the proposal.

Mr. Carpenter told The Almanac that he hasn’t had any negative experiences with Atherton police himself, but that he’s had a number of residents tell him about incidents in which either they or their acquaintances feel they were treated inappropriately.

“I’ve not discussed them with other people, because I put them in the category as rumors, and it would be irresponsible of me to pass on rumors,” Mr. Carpenter said. “I’ve had a lot of interactions with the police department because of my strong interest in disaster preparedness, and I think the current chief and the sergeant assigned to disaster preparedness are superb. Every single one of my interactions has been positive.”

According to Mr. Carpenter, the police oversight committee should be made up of five residents and should hold public meetings in accordance with the state’s open meeting law, the Brown Act, he said. The police chief and city manager would be non-voting members of the committee, under his proposal.

The oversight committee, as envisioned by Mr. Carpenter, would advise on police policies and procedures, as well as act as the review board for citizen complaints.

“Most (review boards) are designed to review actions that are called into question. I’d much prefer to deal proactively,” he said. “(The committee’s) first responsibility is to work with the town manager and police chief to look at policies and procedures to make sure that they are the ones that are most likely to improve the safety and security of the citizens, and the least likely to be abusive or cause problems.”

Police Chief Mike Guerra declined to give his opinion of the proposal, saying that policy decisions are up to the City Council. His job is to provide accurate information so that council members can make decisions, he said.

In San Mateo County, only Hillsborough has a review board and it is composed of City Council members who also serve as police commissioners, he said. In Atherton, the City Council and the city manager have oversight over the police department, Chief Guerra said. The police department’s policies and procedures are also reviewed by attorneys, he said.

“It’s not like the chief can just go



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See **OVERSIGHT**, page 12

# At last, Menlo council takes up Cargill resolution

By Sean Howell  
Almanac Staff Writer

Since it was first presented to Menlo Park City Council members nearly four months ago, a two-page resolution opposing a plan for a mini-city on the Bay has sparked a public records request, as well as indignation from both officials in the city with jurisdiction over the land, and from the project developer.

On Tuesday, Feb. 9, Menlo Park council members will blow off the dust and consider approving the resolution, calling for "full restoration" of salt ponds owned by agribusiness giant Cargill.

The resolution formally opposes Cargill's plan to build a virtual city accommodating up to 25,000 people within Redwood City's borders, on property that stretches along disused salt flats by the Bay between Woodside Road and Marsh Road. The resolution

takes up calls by environmental advocates for the area to be restored as wetlands, and included with surrounding territory in the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge.

Councilman John Boyle, several Redwood City council members, and a Cargill spokesperson have argued that it's inappropriate for Menlo Park to take such a stand, especially in light of the fact that Redwood City is still awaiting completion of an environmental impact report.

"We're gonna have plenty of opportunities to comment, appeal, even sue if we need to," Mr. Boyle said at the October 2009 meeting when a draft of the resolution was first presented, noting that he has "grave concerns" about the project. "So for us to take a position on this before we have even been briefed on it, it's just shocking to me. I don't think we have to have a resolution for Redwood City, or Cargill, for that matter, to know that there are issues and concerns here."

Council members Kelly Fergusson and Andy Cohen, who are urging the council to adopt the resolution, argue that it's appropriate for the city to take a stand early on because the resolution categorically opposes developing the land, rather than quibbling with the specifics of Cargill's proposal. The city should make its position clear early on, they said, instead of waiting to respond through the formal environmental process guided by state law.

"I have come to the conclusion in my own mind that the Cargill project would do irreparable harm to Menlo Park," Ms. Fergusson said. "I think it takes us kind of back to the dark ages."

Mayor Rich Cline said in an interview that environmental research and a half-century of regional policy argue against developing the land. Councilman Heyward Robinson agreed: "The sea level is rising, and I don't

think (wetlands) are in general something that we as a society should be building on."

Mr. Cohen was more blunt. "I'm not waiting for Redwood City to come here and make a presentation to let it be known how this community feels about the kind of burden their project will have on the region," he said, responding to a suggestion by Mr. Boyle.

While Menlo Park's staff has been communicating with Redwood City about the project for over two years, Redwood City council members have been quoted in local newspapers as saying they think it would be inappropriate for Menlo Park to take a categorical stand on the project.

Cargill, meanwhile, accused Mr. Cohen of trying to concoct a "backroom deal" surrounding the project, based on an idea Mr. Cohen had floated in an e-mail to Save the Bay Political Director Stephen Knight, obtained through a public records act request. Mr. Knight called that

accusation "desperate."

Cargill spokesman Pete Hillan also derided claims by Ms. Fergusson and Mr. Cohen that

there had been a groundswell of opposition to the Cargill project by Menlo Park residents.

The meeting will begin at 7

p.m. in the council chambers, between Laurel and Alma streets in the Civic Center complex. The item on the Cargill resolution will follow a study session on another topic. ■

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## H1N1 flu clinic at Woodside fire station

The San Mateo County Health System will offer free H1N1 flu vaccine from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 13, at Woodside Fire Station No. 7, located at 3111 Woodside Road in Woodside.

All residents older than 6 months are encouraged to receive the flu vaccine, especially those who are at high risk of infection and complications from the flu.

# Appeal of routine permit reveals bitterness over Safeway

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

A public hearing over a routine administrative permit at the Safeway complex on El Camino Real turned into a debate over state law, quality of life, the online shopping habits of senior citizens, the aesthetic merits of palm trees, the safety of mothers with young children, and how long it takes to load a truck — among several other issues — at Menlo Park's City Council meeting Tuesday, Feb. 2.

None of those topics were related to the subject at hand: whether or not Peet's and Rubio's, two of the businesses in the complex, should be allowed to provide outdoor seating, and whether Rubio's should be awarded a license to sell beer and wine on-site. There was little discussion or disagreement over

those issues, as the council voted unanimously to award the permit.

Instead, the hearing turned into an airing of grievances over what some view as the deteriorating relationship between Safeway representatives and at least one member of a neighborhood group that has been working with the company over the past decade on plans to remodel the grocery store.

While both sides were pleased with the conditions they had agreed to when the City Council approved plans for the remodel in 2005, Elizabeth Houck of Middle Avenue said things have not gone the way she expected since construction was completed in 2007. She appealed the permit partly to voice her dismay over several unrelated issues, including Safeway van parking, traffic congestion, landscaping, and the habits of smokers in front of the complex.

"There seems to be a lack of accountability, and there seems to be a degrading of the original intent of this project," Ms. Houck told the council, noting that she doesn't oppose outdoor seating. "What we're really concerned about is upholding the quality of life in Menlo Park."

Council members assured Ms. Houck that they were sensitive to her concerns, and added a few more of their own.

Councilwoman Kelly Ferguson said she didn't realize she had signed off on allowing the developer to plant feeble-looking palm trees in the parking lot, rather than redwoods, which she prefers. Councilman Heyward Robinson questioned Safeway's assertion that the vans Ms. Houck complained

about serve elderly residents and shut-ins, brainstorming on how Safeway could make the service more available to senior citizens.

Councilman John Boyle briefly investigated the logistics of loading those vans. And some council members took up Ms. Houck's concern about the safety of mothers with small children crossing the parking lot.

But they also said they felt Safeway was working in good faith, and that some amount of disagreement is inevitable in situations like this one.

"So far I've seen nothing but effort on the part of Safeway to work with the city," said Councilman Andy Cohen. "I think there has been a little bit of slippage here, but the intentions are still noble."

"It's clear there have been some compromises, it's clear that not everybody's happy, but I think that to some extent that's the nature of these things," Councilman John Boyle said.

Council members encouraged Ms. Houck and others to continue working with Safeway. Mayor Rich Cline said the experience could serve as a reminder that, while people may be happy when the council takes its vote, that doesn't mean there won't be conflict later.

"We put 10 years of our lives into this project, and one of the reasons we (agreed to) conditions of development was that we didn't have to put in 20," Ms. Houck told the council, responding to suggestions that she continue to work with Safeway. ■

## Riggs, Theile-Sardina will lead initiative to reduce city pensions

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

Henry Riggs of Menlo Park's Planning Commission and Roy Theile-Sardina will lead the ballot initiative drive aimed at cutting pension payments to future Menlo Park city employees, excluding police officers.

Mr. Riggs said a group of residents have been kicking around the idea of launching an initiative for about two years, but that it wasn't until a recent apparent increase in interest among local people that they felt they would be able to gather the support necessary to lead a successful campaign.

He said that he and other organizers were impressed by the level of interest from people willing to donate money or volunteer time to collect signatures, in response

to e-mails from former council member Lee Duboc.

In a press release, Mr. Theile-Sardina countered the notion that the initiative to cut pension payments would put the city at a hiring disadvantage.

"Currently, the supply of qualified people in the California labor market far exceeds the demand," he said. "Furthermore, we are seeing other cities in the Bay Area and throughout California taking steps toward pension reform."

The group says it will need to collect 1,882 signatures, or 10 percent of the city's registered voters as of the last election. Assuming the city approves the filing, the group could start working this spring toward gathering the signatures necessary to place the initiative on the Nov. 2 ballot.

For more information, call Mr. Riggs at 327-6168 or Mr. Theile-Sardina at 322-1151. ■

## Judo champ pleads no contest in assault

A judo champion has pleaded no contest to assault with a deadly weapon and inflicting great bodily injury, following an incident in which two men were severely beaten at the Menlo Park Caltrain station Oct. 1.

Matthew Walker, 25, will be released after spending six months in county jail, according to Chief Deputy District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe in a Feb. 4 report. He will receive three years' supervised probation, instead of the two years in state prison prosecutors had sought.

Robert Davis, 22, who was also arrested following the incident, is scheduled for a Feb. 16 jury trial.

According to the district attorney's office, Mr.

Walker struck up a conversation with another man about judo as they waited for rides after getting off the train. Things escalated after Mr. Walker started demonstrating some moves, with Mr. Walker breaking the man's leg.

When the man's friend started to record the assault with a cell phone camera, Mr. Davis allegedly snatched the phone and demanded \$20. The man Mr. Walker had beaten took out his own phone to call police, and Mr. Walker and Mr. Davis attacked both men, knocking the second man unconscious, according to the district attorney's office.

Mr. Walker won in his category in the 2009 USA Judo President's Cup tournament.

### OVERSIGHT

continued from page 10

in and change things — not even the color of the police cars," he said.

Chief Guerra said he has formalized reporting procedures for complaints against the department, so that the city manager gets regular updates. There was one citizen complaint in 2009, he said. Since 2005, there've been a total of nine complaints lodged against officers, he said. Depending on

the type of complaint, it might be handled internally or referred to an outside agency such as the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office, he said.

Mr. Carpenter said he looked nationally, not locally for models for the police oversight committee. Palo Alto's review board is "strange," he said.

"It has meetings in secret and is not subject to the Brown Act," Mr. Carpenter said. "I can't see how it can function at building

trust when you have it operating in secret."

And for Mr. Carpenter, it's all about restoring trust in government.

"I'm concerned any time citizens start to lose trust in their government, because I don't think that government can work very well without trust," he said. "I think if citizens have expressed distrust, it needs to be addressed. If you don't trust your government, we've got a problem." ■

### CEDRO

continued from page 7

from school "really distraught" and wanting to do something for the Haitians suffering from the effects of the earthquake.

"We came up with this idea for an event, Pancakes for Haiti," Elizabeth says. On that morning, the restaurant will serve only Maria's signature buttermilk and whole wheat pancakes, with all the proceeds going to relief efforts in Haiti, she says.

Next month, the restaurant will begin a series of "opera nights" with professional singers. It will also host other live music, but details are still being developed, Elizabeth says. ■

*Cedro Ristorante Italiano is at 1010 El Camino Real, No. 140, in Menlo Park. Phone: 322-3376; cedroristorante.com.*

### ■ INFORMATION

Cookbook author Valentina Cirasola will present a program based on her book, "Come Mia Nonna — A Return to Simplicity," on Wednesday, Feb. 24, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m., at the restaurant. The event includes a five-course meal showcasing recipes from the book. The cost is \$72.95, which includes a copy of the book. Seating is limited and reservations are advised. Tickets may be purchased at the restaurant, or around the corner at Kepler's bookstore.

## VIRGINIA (GINNY) CLOUGH



Virginia (Ginny) Clough passed away in her Santa Rosa home on February 3, 2010, comforted by family, friends and her Christian faith.

Born and raised a Bostonian, Ginny grew to love her life in two special California communities.

Raising kids in Menlo Park, Ginny brought her passion to numerous school groups, sports and music programs. Her "retirement" to Santa Rosa allowed her to expand her engagement with programs for the elderly. In both communities, her core efforts focused on her churches -- Menlo Park Presbyterian Church and First Presbyterian Church, Santa Rosa where she was a

Sunday School teacher. Ginny will also be remembered for her leadership role in Presbyterian Women at the local, regional and national levels.

Ginny is survived by Donald, her husband of 59 years, children Judy Britts (Folsom, CA), Steven Clough (Palm Beach Gardens, FL), Robert Clough (Woodinville, WA) and five grandchildren.

A service to celebrate Ginny's life will be held Monday, February 15th at 1pm at the First Presbyterian Church in Santa Rosa, 1550 Pacific Avenue.

Ginny would hope that you will join her in contributing to the Children's Memorial Grove at Spring Lake, a favorite spot of hers to walk and enjoy God's creation. Call 707-565-2041 or go to [www.sonoma-county.org/foundation](http://www.sonoma-county.org/foundation).

PAID OBITUARY

**Anita Ventura Mozley***Photography curator at Stanford art museum*

Anita Ventura Mozley, founding curator of photography at the Stanford University Museum of Art, died Jan. 23 at her home in Menlo Park. She was 81.

Soon after joining the museum as registrar, Ms. Mozley recognized the significance of its collection of Eadweard Muybridge's stop-motion photographs of a horse in motion, commissioned a century earlier by Governor Leland Stanford.

She was named curator of photography in 1971, and the following year organized her most significant exhibition, "Eadweard Muybridge: The Stanford Years, 1872-1882." It traveled nationally and internationally.

Active in the New York art scene of the 1950s as a writer, critic and painter, Ms. Mozley designed posters for the Leo Castelli Gallery and came to know Jasper Johns. Years later, she donated to what is now known as Stanford's Cantor Arts Center two lithographs Mr. Johns had inscribed to her.

She served as managing editor and West Coast correspondent for Arts Magazine from 1955 to 1964. With sculptor Sidney Geist, she produced an alternative arts newsletter, "Scrap," from 1960 to 1962.

Moving to San Francisco in 1962, she married Robert Mozley and worked at the Maritime Museum before joining the Stanford art museum

**Anita Mozley**

## ■ OBITUARIES

in 1970. She immediately began expanding its photography collection, according to family friend Karen Bartholomew. In addition to Muybridge, her research included

Julia Margaret Cameron, Thomas Annan, Imogen Cunningham, Ansel Adams, Peter Stackpole and Laurie Novak.

After her retirement in 1986, she again took up drawing and painting, and exhibited in California and at shows near her summer home in Southport, Maine.

Born Anita Ventura in Washington, D.C., Ms. Mozley grew up in Rochester, New York. She earned a bachelor of arts degree in art, with honors, from Northwestern University, and was elected to Phi Beta Kappa. She studied with Morris Kantor in 1950 and 1951 at the Arts Students League in New York City.

Ms. Mozley is survived by her stepson, Peter Mozley of Socorro, New Mexico, and three nieces. Her husband of 32 years, Robert Mozley, died in 1999.

Services will be private. The family prefers contributions be made to Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST), 222 High St., Palo Alto, CA 94301; or The Smile Train, 41 Madison Ave., 28th Floor, New York, N.Y. 10010.

**William Settle***Southern Pacific executive*

William "Bill" Settle, who was involved in many committee and activities while living at The Sequoias in Portola Valley, died Jan 29.

Born in Long Beach in 1922, he served in the U.S. Army Armored Forces in Europe during World War II.

In 1946, he and his wife Eleanor moved to Palo Alto, where he finished his bachelor of science degree from Stanford University. He later received an MBA from Stanford's Graduate School of Business.

Mr. Settle had a long career with the Southern Pacific Transportation Co., from 1947 to 1982. He began as a ticket agent and worked his way up to special assistant in the executive department.

**Bill Settle**

He was a member of many organizations: The Stanford University Alumni Association, Theta Xi fraternity, Palo Alto Masonic Lodge F&AM No. 346, Scottish Rite-San Jose Bodies, SIRS Branch 51, Palo Alto, Menlo Country Club, and the Barbershop Peninsulaires.

He served as a director of the Southern Pacific Retired Executives Club, San Jose Society of Model Engineers, Santa Fe Modelers Association and Union Pacific Historical Society.

Survivors include his wife of 63 years, Eleanor of The Sequoias; daughter Lynne Gums, son Norman Settle; two grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

There will be no public service. Memorial gifts may be made to a favorite charity.

## WILLIAM (BILL) SETTLE PORTOLA VALLEY, CA 1922-2010



Bill passed away 01/29/2010. He was born in Long Beach, California. He served in the US Army Armored Forces in Europe, 1942-1946, World War Two as a Private First Class. He married Eleanor, his wife of 63 years, and moved

to Palo Alto, CA in 1946, where he finished his BS degree from Stanford University also in 1946. He completed his MBA from Stanford University Graduate School of Business in 1956.

He had a long career with Southern Pacific Transportation Company from 1947 to 1982. He began as a ticket agent and worked his way up to a special assistant in the executive department in San Francisco. Bill enjoyed memberships in the Stanford University Alumni Association, Stanford Business

School, Theta Xi Fraternity, Palo Alto Masonic Lodge F & AM # 346, Scottish Rite-San Jose Bodies, SIRS-Branch 51 Palo Alto, Menlo Country Club and Barbershop Peninsulaires. He served as director of Southern Pacific Retired Executives Club, San Jose Society of Model Engineers, Santa Fe Modelers Association and Union Pacific Historical Society. Bill was involved in many committees and activities with The Sequoias Retirement Community in Portola Valley, his last residence.

He is survived by his wife Eleanor, daughter Lynne Gums (husband Jerry), son Norman Settle (wife Nancy), grandson Tom Hamilton (wife Meghan) and great grandchildren Jack and Emma Hamilton, granddaughter Katie Shaffer (husband Ethan). He is preceded in death by his parents Dr. and Mrs. Francis B. Settle of Long Beach, CA.

The family has chosen not to have a public service. In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts can be made to any charity of your choice.

PAID OBITUARY

**GERTRUDE MARY DOWDEN**

Gertrude Mary Dowden passed away at Channing House, Palo Alto on January 16, 2010. Born in 1914 in Harwich, England, Mary moved with her family to her beloved Isle of Wight where she married Percy "Bunny" Dowden in 1940. Evacuated with their employer to North Wales, the young couple served the war effort in aircraft production. Making a new start, they left England in 1952 for Montreal, Canada, prior to making their way to Menlo Park and Hiller Air Industries in 1956. Accepting employment with Stanford University later that year, Mary retired from the Geophysics Department in 1979. Avid golfers, both Mary, as a member of the Roth Auxiliary for Children, and Bunny were long-term supporters of the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital. Predeceased by Bunny in 1993, Mary is survived by loving nieces, nephews, great nieces and nephews and fond friends. All will miss her wise counsel and zest for life. No services at Mary's request. Contributions may be made to the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford.

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PAID OBITUARY

**NANCY McLAUGHLIN**

Nancy McLaughlin, a 41 year resident of Portola Valley died Jan. 31 after a long illness. She was 83 and lived the last nine years at the Sequoias SF, a retirement residence in San Francisco.

Nancy Lee Bennet was born Aug. 30, 1926 in Klamath Falls, Ore. While in high school she wrote a weekly column in the town newspaper which shaped her future. After graduation as valedictorian from high school in 1944 she obtained a degree in history from

Mills College in 1948. She went on to receive a Masters in Journalism from Stanford in 1950. While there she met a Navy veteran, Chuck McLaughlin, who with the help of the G.I. Bill received his degree of Master of Business from Stanford. They were married soon after graduation and moved to San Francisco where she worked for the S.F. Examiner and later for an advertising agency.

They moved to the Peninsula in the 1950's and settled in Portola Valley before it was even a town. They were early active members of Christ Church Episcopal in the community. Nancy enjoyed her many duties there including the church newsletter, Sunday School tasks and particularly the clever skits she wrote for the rummage sale crew. In addition to raising three children, Nancy became a docent at the Cantor Art Center at Stanford. This led to kudos from the school that she was one of the stars of the docent group.

She also excelled at Crewel Embroidery and made many works of art that are her family's treasures.

Her book clubs raved about her book reviews. Her family and many friends enjoyed her dinner parties. After the 1970's there were many trips abroad which also added to her interest in art.

Survivors include her husband Charles McLaughlin of San Francisco, daughter Amy Cotton of Stockton, sons Michael of San Luis Obispo and Peter of San Anselmo, six grandchildren, three stepgrandchildren and sister Jody Veroff of Brooklyn, Michigan. Services are on Saturday, Feb 20 2PM at Christ Church Episcopal 815 Portola Road, Portola Valley. In lieu of flowers donations may be made to Christ Church Episcopal phone 650-851-0224

PAID OBITUARY

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**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](http://www.TheAlmanacOnline.com), and occasionally on the Town Square forum.

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Menlo Park, CA 94025.

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

## Initiative not real pension reform

The well-intentioned local residents who are launching a drive to reduce pensions of yet-to-be hired city workers are on the right track, but their effort will not make much of a dent in the city's pension obligations for years, and it very likely will put the city at a disadvantage when competing for top-quality employees with other Peninsula cities that have not reduced pension benefits.

The initiative drive sponsored by Citizens for Fair and Responsible Pension Reform carefully avoids two key components of runaway pension costs:

- Public safety benefits would not be covered by the initiative;
- There would not be a change in the defined-benefit design of current pension payouts, which means the city would continue to help fund lifetime pensions at a specific amount no matter what economic hardships come along.

Until CalPERS and all the agencies it serves adopt a defined-contribution plan, there is little hope of reducing the rapidly escalating cost of pension benefits in Menlo Park or in any other public agency that buys into the CalPERS plan. In today's world, few private employers offer costly defined-benefit pensions. Instead, they often match an employee's contribution to a 401(k) plan, and may or may not play a role

in managing the funds.

The proposed initiative would reduce pension benefits for new rank and file employees by:

- Raising the retirement age from 55 to 60;
- Returning to the 2007 formula that calculates retirement pay at 2 percent of pay times years of service; that means that after 30 years, a 60-year-old worker could retire at 60 percent of his or her pay averaged over the last three years;
- Prohibiting the city from retroactively applying an increase in pension benefits for any current or new employee receiving benefits.

How much the city would save using the new 2 percent at 60 versus the current 2.7 percent at 55 is not clear. Public safety pensions, now 3 percent at 50 after 30 years — and a major factor in the city's pension costs — would not be affected.

Given the minimal impact of this initiative, it is difficult to say if the council will simply enact the proposal itself or force it to a November vote, where it would almost certainly win, unless the city's unions mount a full-scale attack.

But regardless of what is said during what we expect will be a contentious campaign, the only real way to solve the state's pension crisis is to put pressure on the governor and legislators to get the job done in Sacramento. This is not an issue that can be solved piecemeal, one city at a time.

**EDITORIAL**

*The opinion of The Almanac*

**LETTERS**

*Our readers write*

### Seats open on obscure redistricting panel

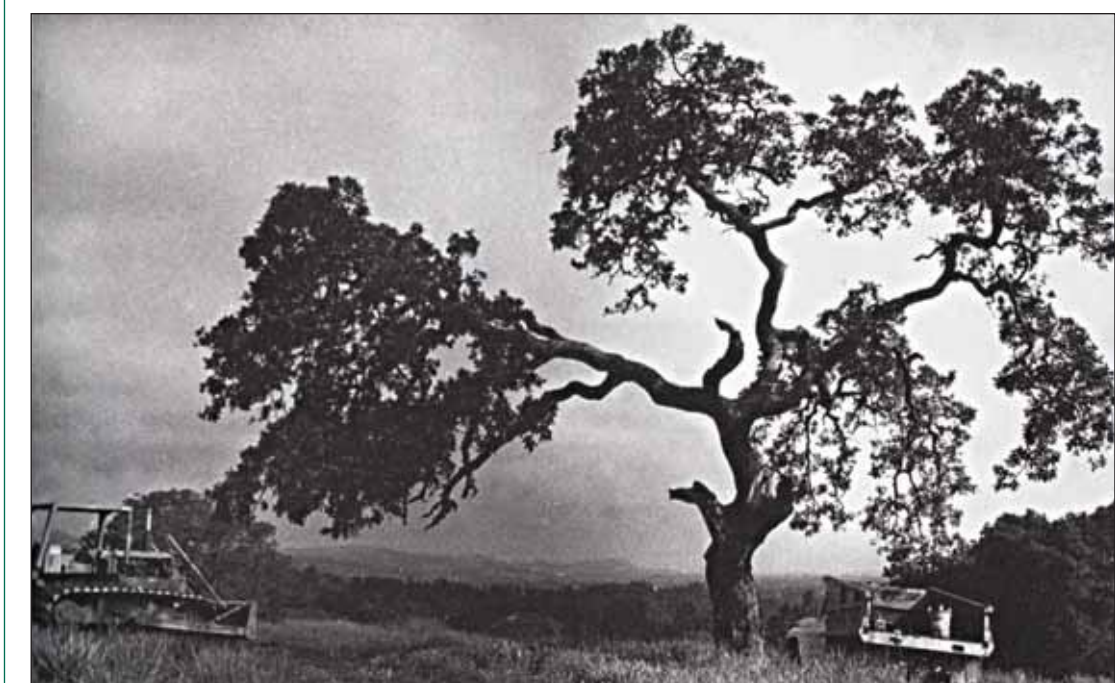
*Editor:*

We have an extraordinary opportunity for Californians, just like you, to literally map the future of our state.

Here's how: California, like every other state in the nation, will use the new U.S. Census data to redraw our political districts in 2011 to make sure that every district contains the same number of people. This process is called redistricting, and it happens every 10 years. But the 2011 redistricting process will be very different in California. And the rest of the nation will be watching us.

Back in 2008, we, the voters of California, made history by passing Proposition 11, taking the redistricting power from the legislature and putting it in the hands of ordinary citizens. Now the responsibility for drawing new district maps for the state Senate, Assembly, and Board of Equalization will be entrusted to a new Citizens Redistricting Commission made up of 14 voters — five Democrats, five Republicans, and four people from neither of those parties.

Here's why it's so important that ordinary citizens — people like you — apply to serve on the commission. For decades, the state



Menlo Park Historical Association

### Our Regional Heritage

In 1957, the 574-acre estate once owned by Frederick Sharon in the hills west of Menlo Park was sold for a subdivision. Along with single-family homes, condominiums, churches and schools there was a shopping center, country club and an 11-acre park set around an artificial lake. The original homes on half-acre lots, which originally sold for \$50,000, command prices in the multiple millions of dollars today.

legislature designed these electoral districts. The system was rife with self-interest and backroom deals. The result? Strangely-shaped districts that practically guaranteed re-election for incumbents — protecting the interests of politicians, their campaign funders and their political parties while ignoring

community interests.

With a state as large and diverse as California, who draws the lines and how those lines are drawn will truly shape the future of our state. Under Proposition 11, the new Citizens Redistricting Commission, using a fair and open process, will draw the district lines. But for the process

to work, we need as many qualified, public-spirited Californians as possible to apply to be commission members.

If you have an open mind and you appreciate the importance of California's diversity, you'd prob-

See **LETTERS**, next page

# Tyco sees benefits from Gateway project

By Spence Leslie

As anyone who works in Silicon Valley knows, businesses that compete globally for customers and talent need to work in world-class, state-of-the-art environments.

And for those with high brand visibility — like many technology firms — having facilities in a convenient, attractive location with leading-edge amenities is absolutely essential to staying competitive. For these exact reasons, we at Tyco Thermal Controls recently upgraded our building in order to compete in the global economy.

In this same vein, however, an extensive revitalization of our surrounding area would have a large, positive impact on all of the businesses here. Consequently, as neighbors of the proposed Menlo Gateway project, we would be delighted to participate in the benefits and amenities that such a project would deliver.

Attractive, modern business properties are a rare commodity in Menlo Park. Menlo Gateway would significantly upgrade the M-2 area's appearance, thereby attracting new businesses, such as biotech and other technology firms. This influx would energize the area by making it more desirable for employers and employees. We welcome any and every advantage as we compete in today's global market.

Not only would the Menlo Gateway project inspire a rejuvenation of the whole M-2 area, but it would provide great convenience for the hundreds of visitors a year we host from all over the world. That is, instead of having to stay in Redwood City, San Carlos, or San Mateo, our guests could save time and money by easily walking or shuttling to our offices. Menlo Gateway restaurants would also be convenient for employees and guests by reducing the need for people to leave the area during the day. Finally, with easy access from existing major traffic arteries, I believe that the proposed site would have far less impact than a



project would have if proposed for any other area of Menlo Park.

I know from talking with other neighboring M-2 businesses that my sentiments are widely shared. I encourage the city to continue working constructively with the Bohannon organization to approve the Menlo Gateway project so that we could all reap the benefits as soon as possible.

**Spence Leslie is director of international trade compliance at Tyco Thermal Controls.**

Continued from previous page

ably make a good commissioner. For important information about specific qualifications for being a commissioner, please take a close look at the Redistricting Commission's Web site [www.WeDrawTheLines.ca.gov](http://www.WeDrawTheLines.ca.gov) as well as the California League of Women Voters website, [www.lwvc.org](http://www.lwvc.org)

We need your help to make the new redistricting process a success. Our future may depend on it.

**Jamie Shepard, president  
League of Women Voters of  
S. San Mateo County, Menlo Park**

## Time to change rules on conforming mortgages

Editor:

Recently I wrote Congresswoman Anna Eshoo to request that the federal government change the upper limit of what is designated as a "conforming mortgage."

This would allow lower interest rates and would greatly aid both the sales of Menlo Park homes and their refinancing. Our community has been severely hurt by the real estate collapse and this small change would totally revitalize this sector of our economy.

Currently a "conforming" mortgage is anything under about \$750,000. Since almost no homes in Menlo Park qualify for such a small mortgage we are forced to use "jumbo" mortgages, which are much more expensive and are harder to qualify for.

My simple request to up the ceiling from \$750,000 to \$2 million could have a great positive impact on our lives and cost the federal government very little. I am looking for support from my neighbors to

## LETTERS

prod Ms. Eshoo on this issue.

Furthermore, this is just the tip of the iceberg. Many federal rules discriminate against people who live in expensive locations. We have to pay a higher income tax rate as just one example.

**Kingsley Roberts  
Gilbert Avenue, Menlo Park**

## Alternate route proposed for high-speed rail

Editor:

I love trains. As a youth, the sight of steam engines crossing the San Francisquito Creek bridge stirred my heart. I made special trips on my bike to the South Palo Alto station to see the Sunshine Daily go by in its orange, red and black splendor, up from L.A. in the summer evening.

I can't envision the same romance for the bullet train. At least not as presently planned. And, unless the California High-Speed Rail Authority is thinking outside the box, I don't expect to get much joy from the forthcoming alternatives analysis, to be released on March 4. "Well, you can't have it underground, guess it'll have to be elevated."

So I started daydreaming. First I ruled out a run up the existing right-of-way. East of 101? No, leave the Bay alone. Then I got it! Run the two tracks for the high-speed rail up the middle of 280! How about running up Highway 85, transition to 280 at Cupertino, then come down 380 and rejoin the Caltrain line at San Bruno?

Imagine riding that route. What a great introduction to the area. Arguments against a freeway center bullet train? Sure, but the trick is to visualize the utilitarian beauty of any plan; choose, and then solve those problems. From the get-go, I see no grace, no enhancement for the public good in the Peninsula plan.

I voted for high-speed rail, but it feels like "bait and switch." We need a more elegant solution.

**Don Baraka  
Amherst Avenue, Menlo Park**

## Gateway project doesn't need extra hurdles

Editor:

Vince Bressler (see last week's guest opinion on the Bohannon project) has forgotten that he is a member of the Menlo Park Planning Commission, not a member of the Menlo Park Non-Planning Commission.

This article is obviously from the mind of someone who is contemplating running for the Menlo Park City Council. Well, I for one, will vote against him.

Mr. Bohannon is far from my favorite person, but he has the right to build on his property without being hamstrung by a number of taxes designed to keep his project from being profitable.

I don't know how long Mr. Bressler has lived here but I have lived in and around Menlo all of my life and I would welcome Mr. Bohannon's project and the fair and legal revenues it would bring to the city.

**Pat White  
Santa Cruz Avenue, Menlo Park**

## REGISTRATION IS OPEN ALPINE/WEST MENLO LITTLE LEAGUE

T-BALL, COACH PITCH, PITCHING MACHINE, MINORS (AA & AAA), & JUNIORS

Please visit the League website for online baseball registration and information:  
<http://www.eteamz.com/alpine/index.cf>



Registration closes **February 22**  
for T-Ball, Coach Pitch and Pitching Machine

**Late registration closes February 8 for Minors (AA & AAA)**

Alpine Little League also offers recreational girls softball for 5-14 year olds who live in Menlo Park, Portola Valley, Woodside and Atherton.

<http://www.eteamz.com/amasoftball/index.cfm>

Send your inquiries to: [alpinelittleleague@gmail.com](mailto:alpinelittleleague@gmail.com)

Although registration is closed, it may not be too late if you hurry!

**Opening Day is March 20th!**

Registration questions? Contact the Alpine Little League

Registrar at: [alpinelittleleague@gmail.com](mailto:alpinelittleleague@gmail.com)

(Please contact division commissioners with all non-registration related questions.)



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ALEXI ZUBIRÍA, Artistic Director

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## TOWN OF WOODSIDE

2955 Woodside Road

Woodside, CA 94062

### INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR PLANNING COMMISSION

#### Districts 4

The Planning Commission participates in the administration of the planning laws and policies of the Town. It is responsible for recommending to the Town Council ordinances and resolutions necessary to implement the General Plan and adopted development policy. The Commission also conducts necessary public hearings to administer the planning laws and policies of the Town and acts upon applications for zoning amendments, conditional use permits, variances, subdivisions and other related functions as may be assigned by the Council.

The Planning Commission meets on the first and third Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.; Commissioners are appointed for a four-year term.

District 4 encompasses the Emerald Lakes area, the Cañada Road area north of Arbor Court/Olive Hill Lane, including the Runnymede Road and Raymundo Drive areas.

Interested residents may check residency requirements and request information and applications Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m.-12 noon and 1-5:00 p.m. at the Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, 2955 Woodside Road, on the Town's web site at [www.woodsideside.org](http://www.woodsideside.org) or by telephoning (650) 851-6790. Deadline for applications is Friday, February 12, 2010, 5:00 p.m.

# Estate land in Woodside, Space and luxury in Atherton.

Woodside – 9.7 acres



**WOODSIDE** – These 9.7 (approx) level acres are ideal for a grand estate or an equestrian country property. Just minutes from I-280 but with the quiet and privacy of the countryside, the sun-swept land is bordered on two sides by Stanford lands, has views of the Western Hills, and features mature oaks & redwoods and, at the front of the property, a stylishly updated 3-BR home. Potential to build up to 23,000 sf of improvements. Excellent Portola Valley schools. exclusively listed at \$6,000,000



**Atherton at its best ...** Serenity surrounds remodeled 6,300 sf home on a private acre. Built around an inner courtyard and pool, 5-BR home is filled with light and features vaulted ceilings w/ exposed beams, huge windows, spacious rooms, 3 fireplaces, sumptuous master suite. Privacy gates, circular drive, gardens and koi pond add to the delightful surroundings.

exclusively listed at **\$3,900,000**



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