



KENYAN SCHOOL PROJECT
flourishes with community support | PAGE 11

Margo McAuliffe

The Almanac

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

MARCH 10, 2010 | VOL. 45 NO. 28



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Photos by Andrea Gemmet/The Almanac

Firefighters attack the fire from the roof of the Sharon Heights home.

House fire: Passerby alerts resident, helps fight the fire; resident escapes

By Andrea Gemmet and Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writers

A one-alarm fire caused about \$350,000 in structural damage and \$50,000 in damage to contents of a single-story home in Menlo Park's Sharon Heights neighborhood Saturday afternoon, March 6, Chief Harold Schapelhouman of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District said.

One firefighter was injured when he "rolled his ankle," Chief Schapelhouman said.

The fire was reported at 4:35 p.m. in the 900 block of Continental Drive. Firefighters arrived within minutes, and the fire was under control by 4:45 p.m., he said.

Scott Johnson, a Trinity Drive resident who saw the smoke, told The Almanac that he stopped

Scott Johnson alerted the resident and helped fight the fire.



his car and knocked on the door of the Continental Drive home. The occupant had no idea her roof was on fire, he said.

She and her dog got out in plenty of time.

Mr. Johnson said he climbed up on the roof with a ladder and a garden hose. Smoke and flames were coming from an attic vent, the chief said.

The fireplace was in use at the time, Mr. Johnson said.

A big cloud of smoke was visible from Santa Cruz Avenue.

Fighting the fire were some 16 firefighters from four engines and one truck plus two battalion chiefs to manage the effort, the chief said. The Menlo Park firefighters were assisted by firefighters from the Woodside Fire Protection District.

Firefighters drilled holes in the roof, but its triple layer construction of wood shingle, composition and wood shake made the operation "difficult," Chief Schapelhouman said, adding that the fire consumed most of the attic.

Firefighters also worked from inside the house, pulling down the ceiling after removing the furniture and valuables, the chief said.

The fire may have started in the attic of the 2,200-square-foot, ranch-style house, Chief Schapelhouman said. The cause is under investigation. ■

Also Inside

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On the cover

Amanda Wiggins and Tyler Moragne traverse the campus garden at Sacred Heart Preparatory High School with a wheelbarrow full of Jerusalem artichokes (or sunchokes) that will find their way to the school cafeteria. The school is the first in San Mateo County to win health department permission to prepare and eat campus-grown food. Photo by Michelle Le. See Section 2.

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THE ALMANAC (ISSN 1097-3095 and USPS 459370) is published every Wednesday by Embarcadero Media, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558. Periodicals Postage Paid at Menlo Park, CA and at additional mailing offices. Adjudicated a newspaper of general circulation for San Mateo County, The Almanac is delivered free to homes in Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside. Subscriptions for \$60 per year or \$100 per 2 years are welcome. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Almanac, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558. Copyright ©2010 by Embarcadero Media, All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited.

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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Puff in public, you could get busted

■ Menlo council agrees on smoking law, though not all smoke has cleared.

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park's City Council has signaled its consent to a bold set of laws that would effectively make it illegal to smoke within city limits when it affects a non-consenting person. Now, all the city has to do is explain those laws to people.

The council at its March 2 meeting agreed on revisions to the city's smoking ordinance that would

prohibit smoking in places open to the public, including city parks, some privately owned parking lots, and places of congregation such as ATM machines and bus stops. Smoking would be banned within "a reasonable distance" of openings to buildings, and in common areas of multi-family residences, with landlords allowed to cordon off specific smoking areas.

The ordinance also declares second-hand smoke a nuisance, enabling people to take legal action

against others who light up in their vicinity — in an adjoining apartment unit, for instance.

Informing the city's residents of the new restrictions and explaining those restrictions, however, might take some doing. Prior to the council meeting, the city had focused on communicating the proposed ordinance to residents of multi-family dwellings, thinking they would be most affected by it. But after realizing that the ordinance would have more of an impact on commercial properties than they had originally thought, city officials now plan to spend more time explaining the

new law to business people.

There has already been confusion about what the ordinance will cover. Bill Davis, owner of Knickerbockers Cigars near Cafe Borrone, came to the council meeting to ask if the new laws would preclude his customers from enjoying their cigars on a patio outside his business. After ascertaining that the patio was open to the public, City Attorney Bill McClure said that, indeed it would.

Reached at his shop two days after the meeting, Mr. Davis said he was pleased the council had decided to grandfather in his operation.

The council decided to do *what?* "I checked with one of the council members, just to make sure," Mr. Davis said. "He said that was right."

City Clerk Margaret Roberts said she didn't believe any grandfathering took place at the meeting, and that smoking would be prohibited on that patio.

Of course, creating laws is almost invariably a complicated process, often just as frustrating for the people who draft them as the people to whom they apply. The

See **SMOKING**, page 8

PV board looks to cut staff, classroom aides

By Andrea Gemmet
Almanac Staff Writer

■ SCHOOLS

Classroom aides in the K-8 Portola Valley School District could lose their jobs under budget cuts being considered by the school board at its March 10 meeting. Faced with a \$550,000 projected budget shortfall for the 2010-11 school year, district officials are preparing to send out preliminary layoff notices by March 15.

The board will meet to decide on the cuts at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, March 10, at Corte Madera School's Room 1001, 4575 Alpine Road in Portola Valley.

The upcoming parcel tax election could alleviate the need for more than half of the proposed budget cuts. Measure D, the four-year, \$168 parcel tax on the special, mail-in May 4 ballot is expected to raise \$345,000 per year. Another \$208,000 in ongoing structural reductions is being proposed by district staff in order to make up the balance.

On the table is cutting the full-

time special education director job to part-time, eliminating the educational technology coordinator position, and reducing custodial services, for a total annual savings of \$207,832.

Additional cuts are proposed to make up the shortfall if the parcel tax doesn't pass. They include eliminating all general education classroom aides and readers, for a savings of \$196,727, and eliminating librarian jobs at both schools for a savings of \$149,383.

Budget cuts made in the past two years trimmed \$1 million in administration and overhead expenses from the district's budget, according to Assistant Superintendent Tim Hanretty.

The projected shortfall in next year's budget is result of flat property tax revenues, the end of one-time funding from federal stimulus funds, and cuts in funding from the state, according to district staff.



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Tons of aid heads to Haiti

Peace Builders volunteer Frank Klein and Menlo Park firefighter David Dickinson help load a truck with more than 6,000 pounds of donated baby food for Haitian earthquake victims on Friday, March 5. Diane Eskenazi of Peace Builders, the Woodside-based nonprofit, gathered \$1.5 million in corporate and private donations to aid relief efforts in Haiti following the 7.0 magnitude earthquake that struck the country on Jan. 12. Volunteers, including about 100 Woodside Elementary School students, gathered in the school's parking lot to help pack up the donations, which included new Gymboree clothing, tents, bedding and medical supplies.

Superior Court may decide fate of Menlo Park pit bull

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

A Menlo Park woman is invoking the U.S. Constitution and state law in contesting a San Mateo County official's ruling that her pit bull be euthanized.

Marisol Silva, who lives in the Belle Haven neighborhood, appealed the ruling in a writ of mandate filed Feb. 22 in San Mateo County Superior Court.

It's rare that such a decision reaches the bench of a Superior Court judge. But the case serves as a reminder of the extraordinary recourse the county affords owners of animals deemed a threat, and of the high cost and effort involved for dog owners who try to get a death sentence overturned.

Ms. Silva's pit bull, Rocky, finds himself in the middle of that process, having been captured not for a violent act, but for Ms. Silva's alleged

violation of county rules governing animal control. In the four months since Menlo Park police seized Rocky, he has been stuck in a cage in the Peninsula Humane Society facility, without the benefit of exercise, or interactions with humans or other animals.

It took Ms. Silva about three months to file an appeal, after the county's initial decision to euthanize the dog was confirmed in a hearing. Rocky will continue to

wait until a Superior Court judge decides whether to hear the case, which could take several more months.

"It's a worst-case scenario, not only for us, but for the dog," said Humane Society spokesman Scott Delucchi. "It's not up for adoption, it's not being walked by volunteers, it's not receiving one-on-one help."

According to Mr. Delucchi, his agency recommended that Ms. Silva's canine be euthanized

because Ms. Silva had violated several restrictions stemming from an earlier incident in which the dog had allegedly escaped from its yard and bitten a man. When it again escaped from Ms. Silva's yard in October to chase a bicyclist, the dog wasn't wearing tags identifying it as a dangerous animal, and a warning sign was not posted on Ms. Silva's fence, as county law requires, Mr. Delucchi said.

Ms. Silva said in an interview

See **DOG**, page 8



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Musical duo to perform at Ladera church

By Marjorie Mader

Special to The Almanac

Violinist Kay Stern, San Francisco Opera concertmaster, and pianist Joan Nagano will perform in a benefit concert at 4 p.m. Sunday, March 21, at Ladera Community Church.

They will perform works by Francesco Geminiani, Georges Enesco, Maurice Ravel, Vaughan Williams, John Williams and others.

Proceeds from the concert will fund a new youth music program at Ladera Church, which has a long tradition of offering enriching musical experiences to the community.

Ms. Stern and Ms. Nagano have performed together for more than 10 years — since a musical “blind date” brought them together. They share an artistic vision that inspires their ensemble playing and their audiences, said musician Betty Spamer of Ladera.

During their program, they speak with the audience about the music, noting interesting historical content, intriguing connections, and the composer’s state of mind, Ms. Spamer said.

It was Ms. Spamer’s bid at a recent auction that led to the Stern-Nagano performance in Ladera. She won the bid on a one-hour performance of the duo at the memorial benefit concert for Mildred Owen, founder of Pacifica Performances and a creative musical force in the area for decades.

Ms. Spamer decided to honor Ms. Owen, her former voice teacher, and share the duo’s performance with the community.

“This is a rare occasion to hear musicians of this caliber in our neighborhood,” said Ms. Spamer. “As a performer and former youth choir director at Ladera Church, I share the duo’s philanthropic commitment to serve community, and especially youth, through music.

“Their playing for the benefit concert to support a new youth music program was a natural



Kay Stern

fit,” she said.

The artists have national and international reputations, having performed at music festivals, on television and radio, and with chamber ensembles, in addition to their work as teachers and coaches.

Besides concerto and chamber music recordings, Ms. Stern can be heard on movie sound tracks and video games, recorded at George Lucas’ Skywalker Ranch.

Concert-goers will have the opportunity to meet the artists during a reception in Peabody Hall after the concert.

The suggested donation is \$10 to \$20. Reservations are not required.

Ladera Church is at 3300 Alpine Road in Portola Valley.

Go to ladera.org or call 854-5481 for more information about the concert and music activities at the church. ■



Joan Nagano

Everest and Sequoia district dance to a familiar tune

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

Everest Public High School representatives have rejected a new offer of facilities from Sequoia Union High School District administrators.

The offer includes eight classrooms and an office for one year on the campus of Woodside High School. Everest expects to enroll 190 students for the 2010-11 school year, yielding a ratio of about 24 students per classroom.

Everest is echoing its 2009 response, when the district offered modular buildings on a residential lot in East Palo Alto. Everest claimed that offer was illegal and has sued. The case is ongoing.

This latest offer would move Everest, now in its first year, from an office building in Redwood City, where it has a two-year lease and an option to expand. After one year, the district would move the school to an interim site for two to three years pending construction of a permanent location.

The offer is “non-compliant” with the law in “a number of areas,” said Diane Tavenner, chief executive of The Summit Institute, Everest’s parent corporation, in a March 1 letter and

■ SCHOOLS

33-page highly technical legal analysis.

“It is our sincere hope that (the district) will once again consider all of this extensive feedback

Among many complaints, Everest asserts that the district would move Everest away from a central location and transit hub, involve too many moves, and treat Everest students unequally.

and incorporate it into a revised final offer on April 1, 2010, that will fully comply with the law,” Ms. Tavenner said.

Among many complaints, Everest asserts that the district would move Everest away from a central location and transit hub, involve too many moves, treat Everest students unequally, and use improper space-allocation formulas — all charges that, if true, violate state law.

The district “respectfully disagree(s)” with Everest’s analysis, Superintendent Pat-

rick Gemma said in an e-mail. The district’s offer is “legally compliant,” he said. “In the weeks ahead, we will continue our efforts to engage Summit Institute and Everest leadership in dialogue as we help to plan for a successful year for Everest students in 2010-11.”

Unequal treatment?

An examination of the offer and Everest attorney Paul Minney’s analysis seems to show that Everest students could not use Woodside’s art, music, shop and computer lab classrooms.

Physical education facilities might be shared, but under a formula other than the one required, Mr. Minney said. Everest would have to supply its own recreational equipment, as it would computers for its computer lab and books for its library.

While Woodside teachers can work in periodically empty classrooms, Everest teachers would probably not have that privilege, Mr. Minney noted.

The district’s offer would allow Everest teachers use of the staff room.

The Almanac asked Sequoia district officials for further clarification and comment ahead of the April 1 deadline, but did not receive responses by press time. ■

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Gloria Darke



LOCATION

Dear Gloria,

We are new to the area and have just begun our house hunting. We have heard many times location, location but there are so many variables it's hard for us to know what that really means. What should we be on the look-out for?

Margie D.

Dear Margie,

You are so right in your observation, especially through the eyes of someone new to the area. It doesn't necessarily mean for example, San Carlos vs. Menlo Park but rather the subtleties within the different communities. As an example, there is definitely value added to buy in an area within a good school district but you perhaps wouldn't

want to either back up to the school or live across the street from the school. Obviously, noise makes a location less desirable. The same would hold true for proximity to transportation and shops. It is advantageous to have the convenience of being within walking distance but not so close that your neighborhood would be subject to constant traffic noise. You would also want to determine if the neighborhood is one where the value is rising or stable. Are the houses and gardens well-maintained? Is there a homogeneity about the streets? Are there rentals or foreclosures in the area? These are all factors to consider prior to deciding on a location and most certainly, prior to making an offer on a particular home.

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Court may decide fate of Menlo Park pit bull

DOG

continued from page 5

that the warning sign wasn't up because her father was painting the fence, and that the dog doesn't wear the tags when it's on their property — a violation of the ordinance, according to Mr. Delucchi. She also disputed the bicyclist's assertion that the dog had escaped from the yard.

The idea of a Superior Court judge adjudicating the fate of a dog may seem strange, but it does happen — most recently in 2009, when Judge Quentin Kopp reviewed a case in which two dogs had attacked another animal. Between the time the dogs were seized and the time Judge Kopp made his ruling, the owner shelled out about \$5,000 in

sheltering fees alone, according to Mr. Delucchi.

The county's roll of dangerous animals — there are 130 to 140 of them — isn't just made up of pit bulls, he said. There are plenty of labs and shepherds on it, and Chihuahuas and terriers, too.

Only about a dozen animals are euthanized each year, he said. Five or six dogs slated for execution are currently being held at the Humane Society, awaiting a hearing.

Mr. Delucchi estimated that such cases generally make their way to the Superior Court only once every five years or so.

"Not many reach that level," he said. "People generally understand the decision, if the animal meets both (the Humane Society's) and the county's designa-

tion" for execution.

In the writ of mandate, Ms. Silva argues that the seizure of her dog constituted an unreasonable search, violating the Fourth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and that the county's decision to hold the dog represents cruel and unusual punishment, violating the Eighth Amendment. Furthermore, the relevant county ordinance violates state law, she argues, because it doesn't allow for a full trial before a judge.

After consulting with two attorneys and deciding it would be too expensive, Ms. Silva wrote and filed the appeal herself.

"This is costing us a lot of money for something we think is unfair," she said. ■

■ 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

Auto burglary reports:

- Chrome parts stolen, 700 block of Coleman Ave., Feb. 26.
- Window smashed and empty wallet stolen, 500 block of Cotton St., Feb. 27.
- Window smashed and Apple iPod, cell phone, backpack and camera stolen for loss valued at \$341, 100 block of O'Keefe St., March 2.
- Window smashed and cell phone, coat and GPS device stolen for loss valued at \$669, 100 block of Florence Lane, March 3.
- Window smashed and digital radio receiver stolen for loss valued at \$200, 300 block of Sharon Park Drive, March 3.

- Vehicle broken into and laptop computer, GPS device and video game player stolen for loss valued at \$2,170, 4500 block of Bohannon Drive, March 4.

Fraud reports:

- Person claiming to be a doctor called victim asking for \$300 money transfer in return for \$2 million award from lawsuit, 200 block of Newbridge St., March 1.
- Unauthorized use of gasoline credit card for loss of \$985, 1100 block of Chestnut St., March 4.

Stolen vehicle report: 1999 gray Nissan Frontier, 1300 block of Carlton Ave., March 1.

WEST MENLO PARK

- Vehicle broken into and Apple iPod stolen, 1000 block of Cloud Ave., Feb. 28.

Two kidnap man in stolen U-Haul, police say

Two men kidnapped another man and drove him around Menlo Park and East Palo Alto in a stolen U-Haul van Thursday night, making stops at various stores and markets, forcing the man to withdraw cash and make other purchases, according to Menlo Park police.

After the victim asked someone at the Marsh Road Chevron

station to call police, officers tracked down the van and conducted a "high-risk stop" on U.S. 101, police said.

The man told police he had been picked up by the two men in East Palo Alto earlier in the night, and had not been physically harmed, according to police.

The two arrested men are Vincent Hunter, 48, of Menlo

Park, and Richard Williams, 59, of San Mateo. They were booked into San Mateo County Jail on suspicion of kidnapping with intent to extort, conspiracy, and possession of narcotics paraphernalia. Mr. Hunter, who had a felony warrant out for his arrest, received the additional charges of vehicle theft and destruction of evidence, police said.

SMOKING

continued from page 5

March 2 meeting featured a rare appearance by the mayor's gavel, with Rich Cline using it to cut off a brief squabble between Councilman Andy Cohen and Councilman John Boyle, who was the lone dissenter in the vote.

Mr. Cohen accused Mr. Boyle of delay and obfuscation, while Mr. Boyle said the city hadn't thought through the ordinance. The ordinance goes too far, he said, noting that people wouldn't be allowed to smoke in the parking lot in front of the Safeway complex on El

Camino Real, and that smokers wouldn't have anywhere to put their cigarettes, with ash cans prohibited in non-smoking areas.

But even the council members who supported the ordinance acknowledged it could entail a major adjustment in behavior for smokers. Councilman Heyward Robinson asked Mr. McClure whether someone attending a city-sponsored block party — where smoking would be prohibited — could leave the crowd to smoke in one of the city's unoccupied parking lots.

"That's actually illegal?" Mr. Robinson asked.

"Correct," was Mr. McClure's reply.

"Where should they go smoke?"

"In a designated smoking area."

But the law is one thing, and enforcement quite another. If smokers keep a safe distance from other humans and agree to extinguish their tobacco delivery systems when asked, they shouldn't have much of a problem, Mr. McClure said.

The council is expected to approve the ordinance in a final vote, tentatively scheduled for the March 23 meeting. ■



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Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Applying the finishing touches

Enkhbaatar Nyamjar varnishes a wooden seat in the newly renovated children's area of the Menlo Park Library, which has been closed for months during the privately funded construction project sponsored by the Menlo Park Library Foundation. Mr. Nyamjar works for Homeline Inc., a subcontracting firm. Children's Librarian Michelle Barrese said the goal is to open the section as early as this week. There will be a grand opening party on Saturday, March 27, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. that will include appearances by Boswick the Clown and Raul the Balloon Artist, and activities including a scavenger hunt, according to Jane Wyman of the library foundation.

Superintendent search limited to insiders

■ Peter Carpenter, open-government attorney say school board acted illegally.

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

The field of candidates for the next superintendent of the Sequoia Union High School District has significantly narrowed less than a month after Superintendent Patrick Gemma announced plans to retire at the end of June.

The district governing board, in a Feb. 24 closed session, voted 4-1 to "limit the search for a superintendent to internal candidates," board President Olivia Martinez told The Almanac. The board's action, said Atherton resident Peter Carpenter in a March 5 post at The Almanac's online forum, is in violation of the state's open-meeting law, the Brown Act. Mr. Carpenter, who is not a lawyer, is threatening a lawsuit if the board does not rescind its decision.

The law, Mr. Carpenter said, allows closed-session discussions about particular individuals, but not process-oriented matters.

"If the School District truly wants to err on the side of more public access then they should reverse this closed-session decision immediately," Mr. Carpenter said. "If they do not, they are 1) wrong, 2) insulting the public

whom they serve and 3) going to be sued." Mr. Carpenter was unavailable for further comment.

Asked about the board's decision, Jim Ewert, an attorney with the California Newspaper Publishers Association, said that the most recent court case on the books permits such conversations in closed session, but that a recent change in the law makes that case vulnerable.

The Court of Appeals in the 2001 case *Duval v. Board of Trustees of the Coalinga-Huron Unified School District*, ruled that closed sessions can include discussion of criteria for conducting a candidate search, Mr. Ewert said.

Not so, said Terry Franke, general counsel for the nonprofit open-government advocacy group California Aware.

In an e-mail, Mr. Franke said that Duval "concerned an incumbent superintendent and the board's process of setting new performance goals for him. The case was not about a search, and I agree (with Mr. Carpenter) that a discussion of whether or how to conduct a search is not a matter for closed session."

Mr. Carpenter posted an e-mail exchange between him

and John Beiers, the Sequoia district's attorney and the chief deputy in the County Counsel's Office. Mr. Beiers called Mr. Carpenter's analysis "flawed," and added that if he was requesting that the board's Feb. 24 closed-session decision be rescinded, his request was denied.

Thomsen dissents

Sequoia board member Chris Thomsen voted against the search limits. Given the importance of the post, "I think it's good for a district to do a national search in every case," he told The Almanac.

As a new board member, he said he would also benefit from a larger candidate pool.

Asked if the leading candidate is Assistant Superintendent James Lianides, Mr. Gemma's apparent right-hand man, Ms. Martinez replied: "We've got a lot of talented people in the district, and he's one of them."

District spokeswoman Bettylu Smith said in a Feb. 22 statement — two days before the board decided to limit the search — that the board had agreed at an earlier meeting to "start initially with consideration of internal candidates."

Three of the last four superintendents have come from outside the district, former board member Sally Stewart said. ■



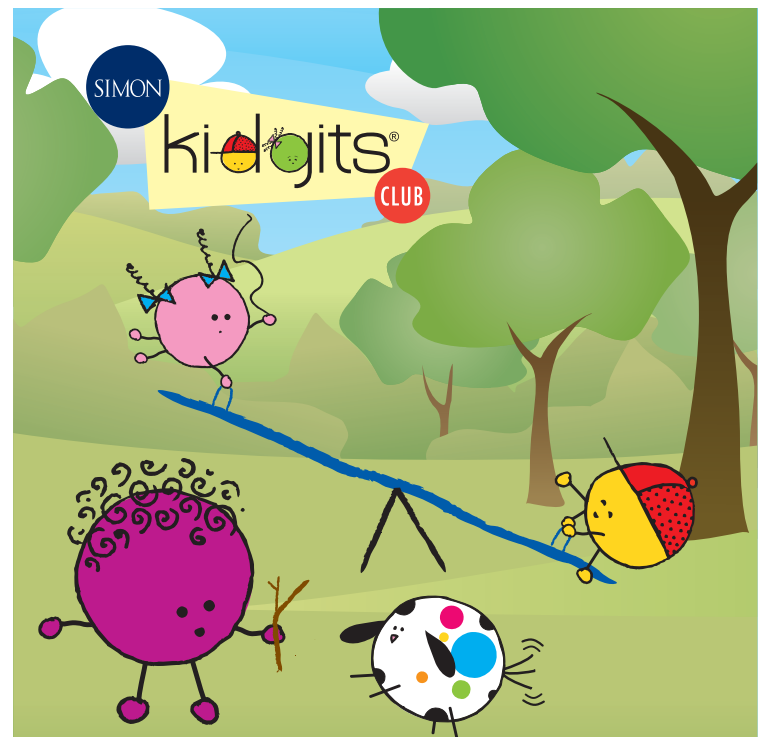
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Portola Valley may adopt green-building mandates

Building greener homes voluntarily has proven popular in Portola Valley, planning officials say, and now the Town Council is considering requiring residents to choose from a weighted list of “build it green” elements to incorporate into additions and new construction.

Points would be awarded for each element, and homeowners would be required to meet a minimum threshold of points.

The council, appropriately, plans to discuss the topic in the very green community hall at 765 Portola Road at 7:30 p.m. Wednesday, March 10, after celebrating the green-building honor awarded to the new Town Center complex.

An example of how the green point system would work: A high-efficiency irrigation system would be worth three points; adding a rainwater harvesting system would add one point to the total.

The minimum threshold of points would vary with the size of the project, and larger projects would require the use of professionals to certify that the project’s point count reflects actual efficiency.

Institutional and non-residential projects would have to meet standards developed by the U.S. Green Building Council for its Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program, with the LEED level varying by project size.

The Town Center received a LEED platinum, the highest rating.

Go to is.gd/9YqVH for more information about the green point system. The staff report to the council starts on page 51. The Build it Green checklist begins on page 62.

Correction

In a story in the March 3 Almanac, “Show of opposition to Cargill development plan,” we reported that all five Menlo Park City Council members had signed a letter opposing the development proposal. In fact, Menlo Park Councilman John Boyle did not sign the letter, and has not taken a public stance on the project. The Almanac regrets the error.

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Kenyan school project flourishes with community support

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor

It all started as a fairly modest plan: Raise about \$300,000 to pay for construction of a boarding high school in a Kenyan city to help the Catholic community there educate girls in the region — an idea that caught fire with Margo McAuliffe of Menlo Park.

Some five years later, that bud of an idea has blossomed into “much more of a project than I had imagined,” Ms. McAuliffe said in a recent interview.

When Anita Dippery hosts a fundraiser in her Menlo Park home on Sunday, March 14, she and other supporters of Ms. McAuliffe’s nonprofit, Kenya Help, hope to nudge the sum of money raised for the school and related projects beyond

the \$900,000 mark.

The money is needed not only to put the finishing touches on the girls’ high school in Naivasha, located about 65 miles north of Nairobi, but to provide scholarships to poor children, both girls and boys, to attend school and to offer support to a nearby orphanage whose children are educated in the town’s high schools.

Ms. McAuliffe, a retired Menlo-Atherton High School math teacher, launched her project after discussing her desire to teach math to girls in Africa with Father Daniel Kiriti, a Kenyan priest she had met when



Margo McAuliffe

he visited the area. From him, she learned that the parish high school in Naivasha was going to become a boys-only school, that land was available to build a high school for girls, and that there was no money to build the girls’ school.

Soon afterward, still considering teaching in Africa, Ms. McAuliffe traveled to Naivasha; but once seeing the situation first-hand, she changed course. Her new goal was to return home and raise money to build the girls’ school. Although the earliest cost estimate was \$300,000, “some of the building materials, such as metal sheets for roofs ... have doubled in price,” Ms. McAuliffe said.

“Also,” she said, “we realized we had to offer financial assistance” to children who other-

wise couldn’t afford to attend — a situation that essentially eliminated the hope for a life free from the chains of poverty and, particularly for girls, bleak subservience.

Ms. McAuliffe launched the fundraising effort in mid-2005, a year after her retirement. The Menlo Park and Palo Alto communities have been a hub for raising money through a number of special events. The Kenya Help board includes Menlo

Park residents Henry Organ and Anita Dippery, who has hosted several fundraisers in the Dippery home, raising thousands of dollars, according to Anita’s husband, Dan.

The March 14 Kenya Help presentation and fundraiser is set for 2 to 4 p.m. at the Dippery home, 455 Santa Rita Ave. in Menlo Park. Those interested in attending are asked to contact Ms. Dippery at 325-9936 or at adippery@yahoo.com. ■

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE



NOTICE OF INTENT TO INCREASE SOLID WASTE / RECYCLING RATES IN THE CITY OF MENLO PARK

The City Council of the City of Menlo Park hereby gives public notice of its intent to increase the existing solid waste / recycling rates for commercial and multi-family residential customers within the City of Menlo Park for the collection of solid waste and recyclable materials. The increase, if approved, would be retroactively effective as of **January 1, 2010**. The City Council plans to consider these rate increases at a public hearing on **March 23, 2010** at 7:00 p.m. in the City of Menlo Park Council Chambers Building at 701 Laurel Street - Civic Center.

What are the new rates: Several rate increase levels will be considered at the public hearing. The *maximum* rate increase under consideration is 28% higher than current rates. A detailed listing of the proposed rates can be obtained from the Finance Department located on the second floor at City Hall, 701 Laurel Street, on-line at http://www.menlopark.org/departments/dep_finance.html, or by calling 650-330-6644.

In addition to the rate increase mentioned above the City Council will also consider expanding the services provided to include Door-to-Door collection of Household Hazardous Waste, Universal Waste, Electronic Waste, and Sharps and Medicine at a cost of \$0.20 per month per customer through a City-wide contract for the Recycling and Disposal Services provided by Curbside Inc. The additional services and fee, if approved, would be effective as of **July 1, 2010**.

Necessity for new rates: The intended new rates are necessary due to the terms of the City’s existing contract with Allied Waste Company which provide for fees to be set at a level which gives the Contractor a rate of return based on approved costs. The Contractor’s costs have increased in the current year primarily due to increased labor and disposal costs. The City’s costs of providing billing services and environmental programs that support reductions in solid waste have also increased in recent years. Prior year rate increases have not kept pace with this combination of rising costs, resulting in a significant amount due to Allied at the end of the contract on December 31, 2010.

If you wish to file a written protest to these fee increases, please send a letter addressed to Solid Waste Rates, City Clerk, City of Menlo Park, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025. Your letter must identify the real property you own by street address and the assessor’s parcel number. Your letter must be legibly signed by any one of the current property owners. Your name should be set forth as it appears on your tax bill. The City of Menlo Park must receive your letter at City Hall by 5:00 p.m. on **March 19, 2010**, or it must be presented at the City Council meeting on **March 23, 2010**, prior to the close of the public hearing on the matter.

Any person interested, including all solid waste / recycling collection customers of the City of Menlo Park, may appear at the public hearing and be heard on any matter related to the proposed increase in rates.

Dated: March 2, 2010

/s/
MARGARET S. ROBERTS, MMC, City Clerk

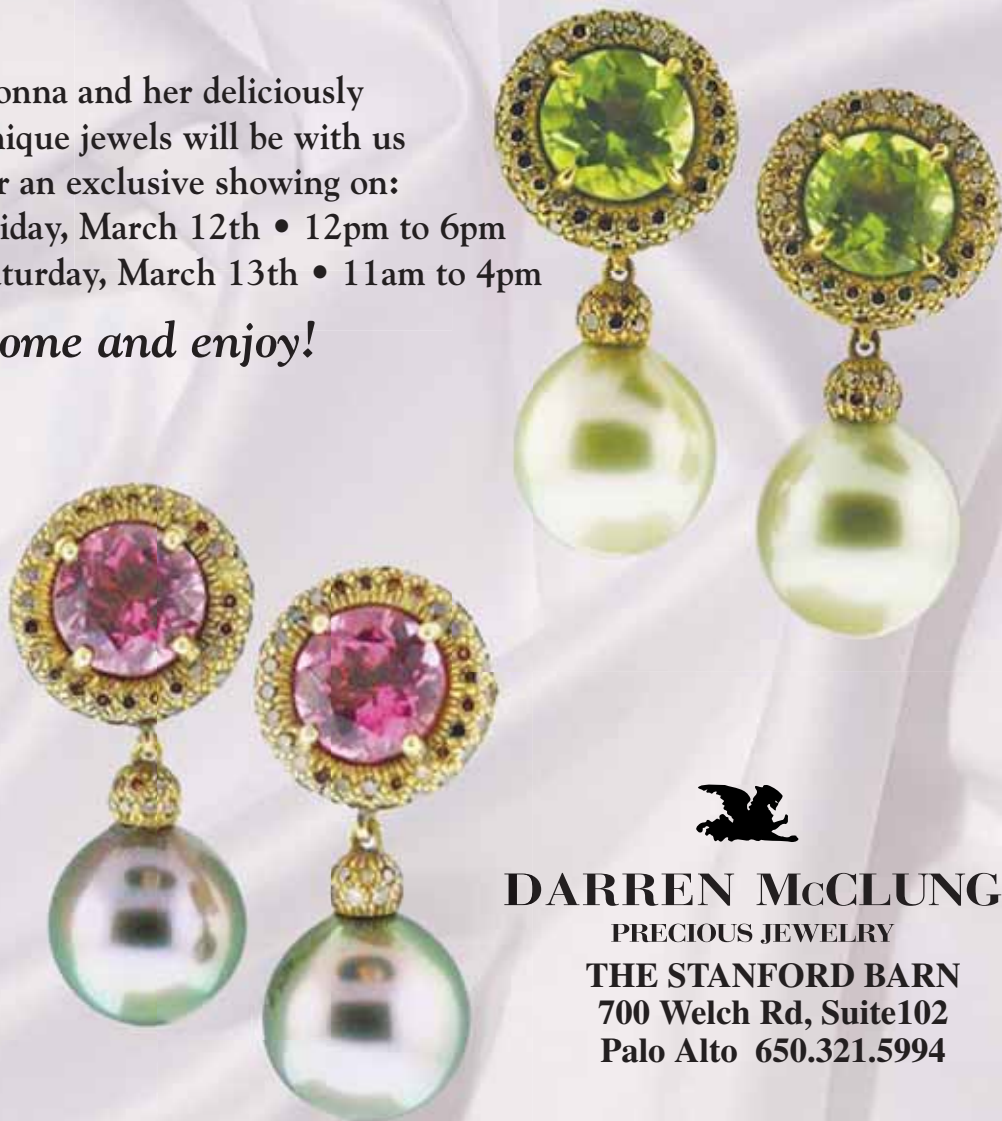
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Sixty show up for outreach meeting

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

About 60 people came to the Atherton community outreach meeting on Monday night, Feb. 22, and while most wanted to know about the recent spate of home burglaries or to complain about traffic problems, a few had more serious grievances to air to City Manager Jerry Gruber and Police Chief Mike Guerra.

Atherton resident Jon Buckheit is suing the town for allegedly violating his civil rights in a 2008 domestic dispute that resulted in his arrest. Mr. Buckheit subsequently won a declaration of factual innocence and had his record wiped clean. He said that the police report from his arrest included a trumped-up child abuse charge.

"One of your officers said he never wrote any child abuse

allegations (in the report)," Mr. Buckheit said to Chief Guerra at the meeting, held in the Jennings Pavilion at Holbrook-Palmer Park. "I think you should investigate and you should fire whoever's responsible."

Chief Guerra said that the police records were sealed by the San Mateo Superior Court judge who granted the factual innocence declaration, and that he was working to get access in order to do an investigation.

Lifelong Atherton resident Melinda Tevis said that Chief Guerra himself had been rude and intimidating to her when he was an officer. She said she had stopped calling the police because she knew that the police department had put her on a "do not respond list," a charge Chief Guerra denied.

"We do not have a do not respond list," he said.

Ms. Tevis said she'd always been a supporter of the Atherton police department, but in the past five years she's seen troubling behavior.

"I'm looking for serious evidence of meaningful change," she said.

And resident Colleen Anderson said an Atherton officer once approached her for a \$10,000 loan.

Other complaints involved train noise, speeding problems and lack of traffic enforcement. Several

people at the meeting said their homes had been burglarized in a recent string of break-ins that apparently ended with the arrest of a Polish citizen on Feb. 19. The suspect, Beata Wyszynska, 59, was described by Chief Guerra as "a real Gypsy" who apparently traveled to Atherton from Chicago.

The police department did have some supporters in the crowd, including former police chief Dick Moore.

"I love my community and the police department. I think we all do," he said, urging support for Chief Guerra.

Peter Carpenter, president of the Atherton Civic Interest League, summed up the state of things in his comments at the end of the meeting by urging cooperation between town officials and residents.

"We are a community. It's not we and them," he said. "We have a lot of work to do."

At the start of the meeting, Chief Guerra made a PowerPoint presentation with crime statistics, comparisons with other small local police departments, and a synopsis of all nine citizen complaints made against the department since 2005. None of the citizen complaints, which are separate from criminal investigations or internal personnel complaints, were sustained after being investigated, Chief Guerra said. ■

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Priory presents musical 'Urinetown'

Woodside Priory students, from left, Monica Weber, Sam Wolfe, Veronique Filoux, Anna Gillis, Kate Finlay and Will Alvarez will perform in the school's upcoming production of "Urinetown: The Musical" The Priory promises a "fall-off-your-seat" funny production. Show times are 7 p.m. Thursday through Saturday, March 11-13, with a 1 p.m. matinee Saturday. John Sugden, head of the performing arts department, says the play has a social justice theme without being preachy. Tickets are \$5 for students and \$12 for adults, and are available at the door. Go to prioryca.org and click on the "Arts" link to buy tickets in advance. Performances will be staged in the Priory's Rothrock Performance Hall, 302 Portola Road in Portola Valley.

Shots fired into home with children inside

Police are searching for two men suspected of firing shots into a Menlo Park apartment that was occupied by four children on Sunday, Feb. 28.

One adult was home with the children when, at about 2 p.m., bullets were fired into the apart-

ment in the 1300 block of Willow Road, said police spokeswoman Nicole Acker. "No one was injured during the incident," she said.

Neighbors reported hearing three or four shots, and investigating officers found bullet fragments and two holes in a

window screen and one hole about three feet below the window, Ms. Acker said.

The suspects are described as Hispanic men in their late teens or early 20s, wearing black hooded sweatshirts. A witness saw suspects matching that description

jump into a parked black Jeep Cherokee on Ivy Drive, near where the shooting occurred, Ms. Acker said. Police are investigating why the family was targeted, she said.

"We don't believe it was a random act. There is some kind

of relation there, but we don't know exactly what it is," Ms. Acker said.

Menlo Park police ask that anyone with information about the incident call the police department at 330-6300. ■

Bank forecloses on property

A bank has foreclosed on the vacant El Camino Real property that formerly housed Gaylord

MP WATCH

India Restaurant, a Menlo Park official has

confirmed. The owner of the property had recently obtained permission from the city to redevelop the site.

Menlo Park's City Council approved a plan in October 2009 for a new, two-story office building at the site, replacing a vacant one-story building. The project developer had spent years in drafting the proposal, including an extensive redesign based on input from residents in late 2007.

The future of the development project is up in the air as long as the property doesn't have an owner. The use permit the council

approved expires Oct. 20, 2010.

No one answered the phone at a number listed for Infiniti Partners, the real estate company that owned the property.

City news and notes

Capital improvement projects, fees for city services, and the budgeting process are the regular business items on the City Council's agenda for its meeting Tuesday, March 9.

■ City staff is recommending the city spend \$200,000 in the fiscal year beginning July 1 to "provide resources and/or consultants for High Speed Rail." Palo Alto has already hired a lobbyist to represent the city's interests in Sacramento when it comes to the high-speed rail project.

■ The city's Environmental

Quality Commission has recommended that the city study the possibility of capturing methane gas at the Marsh Road landfill, which accounts for 8.5 percent of the city's greenhouse gas emissions.

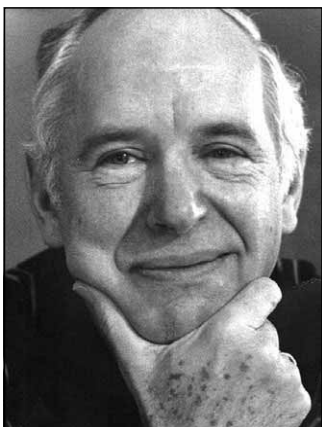
■ The council at its March 2 meeting unanimously agreed to provide \$625,000 from the city's below-market-rate fund to help Habitat for Humanity purchase and renovate five additional foreclosed homes in the Belle Haven neighborhood.

■ When it comes to setting fees, city staff has prepared a comprehensive spreadsheet lumping city services into one of three categories, based on how much of its cost the city aims to recover.

Go to is.gd/9Y0tm to see where the services fall.

Tuesday's council meeting begins at 7 p.m. in the council chambers, located in the Civic Center complex.

THORMUND A. MILLER JULY 14, 1919-FEBRUARY 19, 2010



Thor passed away peacefully at the age of 90. He was born in Pocatello, ID to Roy E. Miller and Lillian Thordarson, and raised in Milwaukee, OR. In 1941 he graduated from Reed College and entered into Officer's Candidate School. From 1942-

1946 he served in the Navy; first on a mine sweeper in the Atlantic and then on a destroyer in the Pacific. While stationed in New York, he met Hannah Alma Flansburg and married upon his return from the Pacific. After the war he graduated from Columbia Law School (1948). He worked for Southern Pacific Railroad from 1950-1979 finishing his career there as the Vice President and General Counsel. He was instrumental in starting SP's Sprint Communication. One highlight in his career was arguing a case for the railroads in front of the Supreme Court in 1967. In 2003 he met and then married Barbara Cornell Singelyn. They moved from Atherton to Los Altos in 2008.

Thor was devoted to his community. He was President of the Atherton Civic Interest League and the Holbrook Palmer Park Board. He participated on the Grand Jury of San Mateo, CA, The Kiwanis Club, and The University of California Press. He maintained a close tie

with Reed College, serving as a Trustee from 1987 to 2010 and endowing the Thormund Miller & Walter Mintz Chair for Economics in 1996.

His family and friends drew inspiration from his dignity, genuine kindness, compelling smile and ethical approach to life. He will be remembered as a gentleman who listened patiently and helped wherever he could. His real talent was guiding friends and associates to find a workable compromise to their disagreements.

He is survived by his daughters; Christine Westall and Karen Van Gerpen (Gary); grandchildren Austin & Becky Westall and Katrina Van Gerpen. He will be missed by his sister, Dorothy (Miller) Buck and her children, and his adopted family, Rodman Cornell (Karen Drury), Lynn Terzian (Fred), and David Cornell (Barbara), as well as his wife's 10 grandchildren and 16 great-grandchildren.

Hannah & Thor's marriage of 56 years created many fond memories like family vacations, and entertaining in their beautiful home.

His last 6 years were enriched by his marriage with Barbara. The love they shared was a continual joy to both of them. They attended many functions with Barbara's extended family where Thor loved playing with all the great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held on Friday March 12, 2010 at 1 PM at the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, 950 Santa Cruz Avenue, Menlo Park. For details contact Spangler Mortuaries (650) 948-6619 www.spanglermortuary.com. Memorial donations may be made to the Boys & Girls Club of the Peninsula.

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MARY BUXTON BROWN LAWRENCE

Mary Lawrence, 86, a resident of the Sequoias in Portola Valley passed away Saturday, Feb. 27, 2010 following a brief struggle with lung cancer.

She was born July 30, 1923 in Bristol, Rhode Island, the youngest of four children of Aylsworth Brown and Blanch Buxton Brown. Her father, a lawyer, was the son of a Federal Judge, Arthur Lewis Brown, from Providence. Her mother was the daughter of the founders of the Buxton Billfold company, known for the "keytainer" key case.

Mary graduated from Mount Holyoke College in 1935 with a degree in Zoology and went on to a career as a research scientist. After several research positions in the east coast, Mary was hired from Yale Medical School by Dr. Henry S. Kaplan to assist him in creating a new Department of Radiology for Stanford University Medical School, first in San Francisco and later on the campus in Palo Alto. The department made important discoveries in the treatment of various cancers using radiation. Among other duties, Mary was responsible for the care of a unique strain of mice from Yale that were used to develop treatments for Hodgkin's disease and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

In June of 1965 she married Douglas H. Lawrence, a Stanford Psychology Professor (deceased in 1999).

Besides Doug, one of Mary's greatest loves was Prudence Island, located in the middle of Narragansett Bay, Rhode Island. It is only accessible by ferry. She spent most summers on the Island when she was growing up. In 1970 Doug and Mary took over the Brown summer house. Since then they spent every summer on the island entertaining friends and family and participating in island life. She has been a board member of the Prudence Conservancy since 1988, playing a pivotal role in helping the Conservancy communicate with donors contemplating land donations. She also served on the Prudence Historical Society.

All her life, Mary was well known for hosting parties, particularly an annual Christmas party at their Stanford CA home and a July 4th party for Island residents. One of her final requests was to be remembered at such a gathering for July 4, 2010.

One of Mary's many interests was photography. She operated her own darkroom in the days of film, and transitioned to digital photography when that technology replaced film. She found and restored a collection of early photographs of Prudence Island. One of her longtime volunteer jobs was serving as a Photo Specialist for the Stanford University Library Archives.

She also had a great love of sailing, swimming, golf and computers. She enjoyed excellent health until very recently, swimming daily in the ocean in front of her Prudence house each summer. She is remembered by her many friends and family for her delightful wit and her profound wisdom and down-to-earth ways. She could be quite outspoken, as well as genuinely caring.

She is survived by her two sisters, Julia B. Morrow and Hope B. Brown.

Memorial service will be held at Christ Church in Portola Valley on Wednesday, March 10 at 2:00 pm. Memorial contributions may be made to the Prudence Conservancy, PO Box 115, Prudence Island, RI 02872.

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Editor & Publisher

Tom Gibboney

Editorial

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News Editor Renee Batti

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Senior Correspondents

Marion Softky, Marjorie Mader

Staff Writers Andrea Gemmet,

David Boyce, Sean Howell

Contributors Barbara Wood,

Kate Daly, Katie Blankenberg

Special Sections Editors

Carol Blitzer, Sue Dremann

Photographer Michelle Le

Design & Production

Design Director Raul Perez

Designers Linda Atilano,

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Advertising

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Published every Wednesday at

3525 Alameda De Las Pulgas,
Menlo Park, Ca 94025

Newsroom: (650) 854-2690

Newsroom Fax: (650) 854-0677

Advertising: (650) 854-2626

Advertising Fax: (650) 854-3650

e-mail news and photos with

captions to:

Editor@AlmanacNews.com

e-mail letters to:

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

School cuts or school taxes?

In just a few weeks, voters in the Menlo Park City and Portola Valley school districts will decide whether to approve a modest parcel tax to help their schools get through a spurt in enrollment and financial meltdown that were not of their making.

In these troubled economic times, it was not easy for the districts to approve the effort to add even a slight tax burden to property tax bills. The Menlo Park district found some voter resistance in the \$300 range, so lowered its request to \$178. Portola Valley is asking for \$168. We expect voters in both districts to support these reasonable levies in order to keep their schools operating at the current high level.

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

Loss of state funds, growing enrollment hit Menlo Park

Here is why Menlo Park has decided to seek help from voters:

■ The district will lose about \$1.4 million in state funding for the 2010-11 school year.

■ Kindergarten enrollment, a precursor to all other grades, continues to run at about 350 students, which will include 34 Tinsley transfers students next year. In comparison, the district's third grade class is 279 students, and fourth is 326, significantly under the kindergarten enrollees.

■ There is little room to reduce overhead expenses after the district cut more than \$500,000 last year, including a requirement that bus drivers perform janitorial duties during their down time.

Just in case district residents and school parents did not understand what would be lost if the proposed parcel tax does not pass, Menlo Park Superintendent Ken Ranella laid out, in a Feb. 25 presentation, a painful list of program cuts and staff reductions that would be necessary to balance the district's budget. The district's schools boast some of the highest test scores in the state.

The possible cuts, including elimination of more than 17 teaching positions, were not good news to many of the parents attending. Class size, the closely watched barometer of a school's well-being, would go up under Mr. Ranella's worst-case scenario.

But as everyone present at the meeting knew, the superintendent's dire predictions will come to pass only if voters turn down the parcel tax, something they have not done in recent memory. In fact, if polling done by the district is accurate, the tax will pass easily among voters

who support quality elementary and middle school education.

On March 10, the school board is expected to support Mr. Ranella's suggestion to issue preliminary pink slips to at least eight teachers by March 15, although it is highly unlikely that anyone will be fired, unless the tax fails. With May 4 the day that ballots must be turned in for the Measure C mail-in election, the district should be able to celebrate a parcel tax victory before the May 15 deadline to make the teacher layoffs permanent.

Right now, district residents pay the district \$565 a year for a bond issue and previously approved taxes, which would jump to \$743 if the proposed seven-year tax passes in Menlo Park.

Class size, core programs are Portola Valley issues

Portola Valley voters will receive a mail-in ballot the week of April 5, and be asked to approve a four-year, \$168 parcel tax that would help replace a \$550,000 budget shortfall for the coming school year. Income from the tax will make up only \$345,000, but school officials say further structural reductions can cover the difference. The district says the parcel tax funds will help keep core programs intact and class sizes low.

If the tax does not pass, the district would lay off all classroom aides and eliminate all library positions at both of its schools.

The tax would be added to the \$290 annual tax passed in 2004 that is due to expire in 10 years.

The Menlo Park and Portola Valley school districts — whose students consistently score at the highest level on state standardized tests — have made their cases for these relatively small parcel taxes that will help them get through the current economic downturn. Both districts have made substantial cuts in administrative costs and undoubtedly will have to cut more, even if voters approve the parcel taxes.

Certainly, approval of these taxes is a no-brainer for parents whose children attend the districts' award-winning schools. But homeowners without children also benefit from living in one of the best school districts in the state. It is no secret that parents with young children want to live in top-performing school districts.

We urge Menlo Park and Portola Valley school district voters to support their district's parcel tax on the ballot that will be mailed out in early April. Vote "yes" and return the ballots to the San Mateo County Elections Office by May 4. Even in tough economic times, education is one of the best investments we can make.

LETTERS

Our readers write

Use caution, even in lighted crosswalks

Editor:

Last week, my husband and I were driving home from dinner and stopped at the Menlo Park downtown post office on Oak Grove Avenue.

I hopped out of the car, went to the crosswalk and pushed the crossing button. I was surprised and delighted to see the crosswalk light up, in addition to the signs on both sides of the street. Cars stopped and I crossed the street.

After depositing my mail, I went back to the crosswalk and pushed the button again and everything lit up. I checked the street; nobody coming from El Camino, and one car beyond the fire station. I stepped off the curb and something made me stop.

See **LETTERS**, next page



Menlo Park Historical Association

Our Regional Heritage

Students change classes in the main corridor at Menlo-Atherton High School in the early 1950s, shortly after the school was opened at a cost of \$1.5 million. The school was built on Middlefield Road in Atherton on the site of Holm Grove, the former estate of Joseph A. Donohoe.

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

The car approaching the crosswalk had all its inside lights on and wasn't slowing down, even though the street was bright with all the yellow lights flashing.

As I stood there, the black sedan flew through the crosswalk. The driver was looking down, there were no hands on the steering wheel, and as she went by, she never looked up. All I could think was, I hope she looks up before she comes to El Camino.

It is hard to believe that what she was doing, texting, checking her messages or whatever, was more important than someone's life. She could have easily injured or killed me. We have seen it happen in Menlo Park before. So everyone, be careful when you are crossing a street, even at a crosswalk. There are drivers out there who are not paying any attention to what is in front of them.

Marianne Stoner
Maybrown Avenue, Menlo Park

Ridership estimates for rail project off the charts

Editor:

Much has been made of the service that California's high-speed rail system may provide its customers — fast, safe and reliable trains. But we need to ask how many people will benefit from those services. A grounding in reality may help.

In 2009, combined Acela Express ridership on all segments of the Boston-NYC-PHL-WDC route was just over three million. This was a generation after inception. Acela draws riders from a combined metropolitan population of 28.3 million, about one in every nine residents of its market area.

A decade after service on the proposed California high-speed rail system is expected to begin in mid-2030, our state-wide population is expected to be 46.4 million. If California high-speed rail were to be as successful in a decade as Acela has achieved in a generation, it would draw 11 percent of all of California's residents — about five million riders.

The rail authority's 2009 Business Plan projects that 39.3 million riders will use the system in 2030 — nearly eight times the ridership indicated by what a 46.4-million-person market that all of California would represent in 2030 using the Acela yardstick.

Can the high-speed train be profitable, as its underlying legislation demands, and serve so few riders?

William Grindley
Laurel Street, Atherton

Tax-free ride online costs everyone

By Clark Kepler

While economists nationwide argue over whether we have begun to recover from the Great Recession, one financial reality is beyond dispute. Our state is facing the biggest budget challenge in decades. Even in a slowly rebounding economy, California is faced with a projected mid-year budget shortfall of \$6.3 billion, which means that local governments — even if they raise school and property taxes — are going to be cutting support for such essential services as policing, firefighting, and schools.

The enormous irony in this troubling story is that California is allowing hundreds of millions of dollars in sales tax to go uncollected by allowing remote online retailers with a significant business presence in our state to ignore their obligation to collect sales tax.

Given the sums involved, you would think there would be many in the state calling for this situation to be remedied. There are not. Perhaps it's because opponents of sales tax equity have, so far, managed to obfuscate the issue through a combination of misinformation and scapegoating.

Under current sales tax law, any out-of-state retailer is required to collect and remit sales tax for purchases made by residents in California if the

retailer has a physical presence in our state. Current sales tax laws dictate that an out-of-state retailer has a physical presence in a state if they have a store, warehouse, office, or sales agent in the state.

Amazon.com and other online giants have thousands of affiliates in California, and they are actively promoting products sold by these out-of-state businesses. When this promotion results in a sale of said product, they earn a commission. That, by any definition, is a sales agent, and that means that these online mega-retailers have the legal presence in our state

that requires them to collect sales tax.

The Amazons of the world and online affiliates are naturally opposed to any steps that states might take to enforce sales tax laws. Strategically, their stance makes a lot of sense because it gives them a significant competitive advantage over our in-state businesses that must add additional cost of sales tax.

Furthermore, there is no doubt that consumers enjoy this so-called advantage. I hear it often: They will shop at out-of-state e-tailers just to avoid paying sales tax.

That sounds fine, but we need to ask ourselves, in the long run, who really is footing the bill for these duty-free purchases?

Well, I can tell you who is not paying the bill: Neither online

affiliates nor remote retailers.

We are not talking about just a few dollars here and there flowing out-of-state. The reality is that hundreds of millions of dollars are lost each year, and the figure is growing. This is money that should be going to first-responders, to local communities, and to lessen our tax burden. Instead, this money is flying out-of-state to remote retailers and the affiliates that pocket the cash while taxpayers subsidize their use of our in-state services, our roads, and their very business.

Taking advantage of our state's unwillingness to enforce sales tax laws during the best of times is egregious enough. However, during a recession that has hit our state so hard, it's an affront to every business and citizen in the state.

And what's worse, on an economic level, it makes no sense.

Legislators who oppose sales tax equity tout their belief in fiscal responsibility. But, in truth, how fiscally responsible is it to maintain a public policy that subsidizes out-of-state retailers while punishing in-state, tax-paying businesses and residents? Does fiscal responsibility

demand that our state government burden residents and businesses with higher taxes and fewer services to placate out-of-state retailers that only take from our state and provide nothing in return?

Finally, as for those who worry that sales tax equity would somehow harm online business in the state, let me stress that most online retailers, including Wal-Mart, Barnes & Noble, and Sears, already collect and remit sales tax for online purchases. Technological advances have greatly simplified and automated this task. Huge corporate retailers like Amazon.com and Overstock.com are the few remaining holdouts. That said, the money they siphon from our local community and residents is significant and growing exponentially each year.

So please, when you go to the Internet for some tax-free shopping, I would only urge you to remember that your purchase isn't really free at all. In fact, that tax-free purchase costs all of us and our communities a lot more than you might think.

Clark Kepler is president/CEO of Kepler's Books and Magazines in Menlo Park.



GUEST
OPINION

TOWN OF WOODSIDE

2955 WOODSIDE ROAD
WOODSIDE, CA 94062

PLANNING COMMISSION
MARCH 17, 2010
7:30 PM

PUBLIC HEARING

3. Jack and Terry Sculley ASRB#2010-0004
3373 Woodside Road

Review of modifications to project approval ASRB#2008-011 for approval/denial. The project was originally approved in April 2008 for a 1,773 square foot addition and extensive remodel to an existing 2,225 square foot main residence, and the redesign and reconstruction of an existing barn to include an accessory living unit. The applicant proposes changes to the design of the main residence, including floor plan and window location changes. The proposed residence would be 3,897 square feet (a 101 square foot decrease).

All application materials are available for public review at the Woodside Planning and Building Counter, Woodside Town Hall, weekdays from 8:00 – 10:00 AM and 1:00 – 3:00 PM, or by appointment. For more information, contact the Woodside Planning and Building Department at (650) 851-6790.

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Property Showcase by HUGH CORNISH



311 STOCKBRIDGE AVENUE ATHERTON

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- Rear terrace with outdoor kitchen, garden pavilion, fireplace, and spa
- "Kasbah" entertainment center with full kitchen, 3 baths, gym, and night club
- Award-winning Las Lomas School District

Offered at \$7,495,000



HUGH CORNISH

DRE #00912143

*#1 Agent in the #1 Office,
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*Atherton
Menlo Park
Portola Valley
Woodside*



Information deemed reliable, but not guaranteed.

1990 PORTOLA ROAD WOODSIDE

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- Approximately 4.5 creek-side acres
- Guest cottage and swimming pool
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Offered at \$7,495,000



425 SEALE AVENUE PALO ALTO

- 4 bedrooms and 3.5 baths
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2 MANSION COURT MENLO PARK

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