



**ELECTIONS 2010:** Rich Gordon – finding support on both sides of the fence. *Page 5*

# The Almanac

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

MARCH 31, 2010 | VOL. 45 NO. 31



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## AGAINST THE RAIL



Why three unlikely enthusiasts from Menlo Park just may be the best hope for opponents of high-speed-rail

[Section 2]

## More than ever, Menlo Park needs Menlo Gateway.

After many months of hard work and negotiation, the City of Menlo Park and the Bohannon Development Company are close to an agreement that will bring the bold, innovative Menlo Gateway project to fruition.

Menlo Gateway will transform an underutilized section of the City into a striking landmark on the Peninsula. Located adjacent to Highway 101, the project will have minimal impact on local traffic and housing—and it presents a significant opportunity for the City to strengthen its revenue base, create much-needed jobs, and set a new standard in environmental sustainability.

As you know, our beautiful City of Menlo Park has not been insulated from the effects of the current economic recession. Declining tax revenues have had a direct impact on the City's fiscal health. It has been widely reported that, in the first quarter of the current fiscal year, tax revenues for the City of Menlo Park were down by 21 percent. This latest blow to an already-beleaguered budget can only result in reduced city services and higher taxes for residents and businesses.

The Menlo Gateway project will help secure the city's financial future—and provide a much-needed influx of money to our local schools.

Secondly, the Menlo Gateway project will create nearly 2,300 jobs in Menlo Park, including approximately 2,100 professional and service office-related jobs, more than 200 hospitality jobs (with preference given to Menlo Park residents), and nearly 2,000 construction jobs. These new jobs will add to the economic vibrancy of the revitalized area, boosting the local economy through increased spending by employees.

Finally, Menlo Gateway will be a model for other cities looking at environmentally sustainable commercial developments. As a LEED-certified, water- and energy-efficient, highly sustainable complex, Menlo Gateway sets the standard for innovative green multi-use development in the Bay Area, placing Menlo Park at the leading edge of the sustainable building movement.

It is not surprising that Menlo Gateway has the strong support of its neighbors in the adjoining Belle Haven neighborhood and from a significant majority of Menlo Park voters.

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Substantiated both by the developer's analysis and an independent study commissioned by the City, the benefits of the Menlo Gateway project to the City of Menlo Park include:

- Increase in City revenue of \$1.42 million
  - Influx of nearly \$1.5 million in revenue for local elementary, high school, and junior college districts
  - Creation of nearly 2,000 short-term and more than 2,300 long-term jobs
  - Construction of one of the most sustainable commercial developments on the Peninsula
- 

We, the residents and business owners of Menlo Park, urge the City Council to move quickly and work constructively with Bohannon Development Company to bring the Menlo Gateway project to fruition.

**Joseph Bentley** | Menlo Park Resident  
**Rose Bickerstaff** | Menlo Park Resident & Belle Haven Neighborhood Association  
**Tom Boeddiker** | Menlo Park Resident  
**Joel Butler** | Menlo Park Property Owner  
**Robert W. Carter** | Chairman of the Board, Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce  
**Rick Ciardella** | Small Business Owner & Menlo Park Resident  
**Howard Dallmar** | Menlo Park Resident  
**Catherine Daniels** | Menlo Park (Belle Haven) Resident  
**Alonzo Emery** | Community Leader  
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**Buff Giurlani** | Business Owner  
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**Scott Hoffman** | Menlo Park Resident  
**Maria Ibarra** | Principal, Belle Haven Elementary School  
**Queen, Shelly & Joseph Isley** | Menlo Park (Belle Haven) Residents  
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**Chuck Kinney** | Former Mayor, Menlo Park

**Dan Kocher** | Menlo Park Environmental Quality Commission  
**Spence Leslie** | Menlo Park Business Executive  
**Bessie Mitchell** | Menlo Park (Belle Haven) Resident  
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**Anne Moser** | Menlo Park Resident  
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**JC Prado** | Bay Area Gardener's Assoc.

**John Preyer** | Menlo Park Resident & Belle Haven Community Leader  
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**Ulrico Rosales** | Menlo Park Resident  
**Steve Schmidt** | Former Mayor, Menlo Park  
**Douglas A Scott** | Menlo Park Environmental Quality Commission  
**Sam Sinnott** | Menlo Park Resident & Past President, Santa Clara Valley AIA  
**Lori Sinnott** | Menlo Park Resident & Former Menlo Park Planning Commissioner  
**Sharon Williams** | Community Leader

# Atherton wrestles with questions over councilman's \$500,000 loan request

■ The councilman requested the loan from a resident who is suing the town over allegations of police misconduct.

By **Renee Batti**  
Almanac News Editor

About 30 Atherton residents showed up for a special City Council meeting Friday afternoon, March 26, to discuss alleged improprieties by Councilman Charles Marsala, who did not attend. The official meeting was canceled due to a lack of a quorum, but Mayor Kathy McKeithen and Councilman Jim Dobbie stayed for an informal meeting to hear a range of criticism from residents weary of the town's ongoing conflicts.

The special meeting was called, with only one day's notice, to discuss "alleged improper official conduct and allegations that council member Marsala is not a resident of the town."

Mr. Marsala was accused at a March 17 public meeting of asking resident Jon Buckheit for a \$500,000 personal loan last September. Mr. Buckheit is currently suing the town in federal court over police conduct during a domestic dispute at his house in 2008, which resulted in his arrest. He was never charged with a crime, and recently won a court declaration of factual innocence in the matter.

Mr. Marsala also faces questions about his residency in town, as he has been renting his house to a Stanford Hospital patient and her family.

Mr. Marsala said he didn't attend the meeting because he had other commitments already in place. But he also said the method in which the 2 p.m. meeting was scheduled was flawed, with very little advance notice and no canvassing of council members beforehand to see if there were scheduling conflicts that prevented their attendance.

Mayor Kathy McKeithen said she had tried to have the notice for the meeting posted sooner, but that her efforts to make that happen were futile. "The agenda was finally given to the Town Clerk on Wednesday, March 24,

with direction to post it on that day. That direction was not followed until Thursday after several telephone calls and e-mails from me," she wrote in The Almanac's online forum, Town Square.

She said she decided to go forward with the meeting anyway, because the issue was urgent, and many residents were insisting that the council address it immediately. "The public has a right to know what's going on, and I want to give them the opportunity to tell us what they think," she said.

**Jon Buckheit stirred up a tempest when he revealed that Councilman Charles Marsala had asked him for a loan.**



Photo by Dave Boyce/The Almanac

In an interview with The Almanac, Mr. Marsala countered: "If there was such an outcry (from the public), why not schedule the meeting at night (rather than) in the afternoon when people have to work? ... I don't think the public demand was there."

It is unknown why council members Elizabeth Lewis and Jerry Carlson didn't attend the meeting.

In a prepared statement, Councilman Dobbie said: "As a result of publicity concerning Charles Marsala, there have been serious questions raised about his ethical behavior. Asking someone who has an adversarial relationship with the town for a large loan, and who is likely to pursue legal action as a plaintiff, in my mind is a serious breach of normally accepted standards for elected officials."

### Lawsuit in the works?

In the interview with The Almanac, Mr. Marsala insisted he believed that Mr. Buckheit didn't intend to sue the city at the time he requested the loan, and provided print-outs of e-mails in support of his claim. Among them is an October 2009

e-mail to City Manager Jerry Gruber from Mr. Buckheit, copied to Mr. Marsala, in which Mr. Buckheit refers to police officers acting "in a harassing manner to me on two occasions now." The harassment, he said, "may be a result of actions I have taken" since his 2008 arrest.

In the e-mail, Mr. Buckheit expresses hope that his complaints could be "resolved informally" if he were allowed to talk directly with the police chief. "I believe this is something that should be resolved without having to have attorneys get involved or file legal actions," he wrote.

Mr. Marsala noted that the e-mail was written after the Sept. 30 note Mr. Buckheit wrote to him saying he couldn't help him out with a loan, and that he believed the conflict between Mr. Buckheit and the town would be worked out without litigation.

Asked about the e-mail expressing hope of an informal resolution, Mr. Buckheit said he was referring only to the harassment incidents he cited in the message, not the ongoing conflict over his 2008 arrest. In fact, Mr. Buckheit said, he had already filed a notice of claim with the town over the arrest matter, which is the legally required step before filing a lawsuit. This happened around April 2009, well before Mr. Marsala asked for the loan, he said.

Mr. Marsala said the claim didn't come before the council until mid-July, and the council voted unanimously to reject it. Because it was on the consent calendar, there was no discussion of it, and "I considered it closed," he said. Although they had established a social relationship by then, joining each others' Facebook networks and attending the same parties and events, Mr. Marsala had "no indication from him that a lawsuit was coming," he said.

Mr. Buckheit filed the lawsuit in October, a week or two after writing the e-mail about the other police matter.

At the Friday meeting in the Atherton council chambers, Mr. Buckheit said that Mr. Marsala's request for a loan had made him "uncomfortable," but after the meeting, he said the councilman



Photo by Dave Boyce/The Almanac

Mayor Kathy McKeithen and Councilman Jim Dobbie stayed around after a special Atherton council meeting was canceled for lack of a quorum. They heard from a number of residents, and added comments of their own.

"is entitled to the opportunity to explain himself" in public. He added that he hopes Mr. Marsala will do so when the council puts the issue on another agenda.

Mayor McKeithen directed city staff to ask council members when they will be able to attend

See **MARSALA**, page 16

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EVENT SCHEDULE	
10:00am	Bunny arrives Bounce House Opens Crafts Begin Jelly Bean Guesstimate
10:30am	Egg Hunt Begins 2 & Under (with parents)
10:45am	3-4 years (parents optional)
11:00am	5-6 years
11:15am	7-8 years
11:45am	Jelly Bean - Winner Announced

We welcome you to also enjoy a ride on Old Tom the firetruck and take a photo with the Bunny.

PLEASE NOTE: Parents are not allowed to participate in the Egg Hunt unless noted. Children are allowed to collect four eggs and should bring their own basket or bag. Children will be given additional candy at the end of the hunt. In the event of rain, eggs and candy will be given out at the Burgess Recreation Center at 10a.m. Bring your camera for photos with the Bunny. Eggs are filled with candy and small toys which may be a choking hazard for small children.

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Time to break out the white wines. Here are a few sale price Chardonnays to get you started.

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Sale prices are net and do not receive any volume discounts

# Local News

MENLO PARK | ATHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

## Water worries: City nudges, rather than pushes, consumers

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

The next time you pour yourself a glass of water, take a moment to ponder where the liquid came from. If your water district is served by the Hetch Hetchy system, like those of most Peninsula residents, 85 percent of it was once snowmelt in the Sierra Nevada.

That simple fact should already have pinged an alarm bell or two, if you're concerned about global climate change. Several studies have projected that a warmer climate will mean less snow pack in the Sierra over the coming years, and thus less snowmelt. That means less water for an expanding population of Californians, who rely primarily on snowmelt for the water they use to take showers, keep their lawns green, irrigate their farms and feed their livestock.

While Peninsula jurisdictions such as Menlo Park are taking small steps to reduce water use, the issue of water conservation remains

mostly theoretical for Bay Area residents, whose water supply is not immediately threatened. Menlo Park's residents consume water at much higher rates than the average Peninsula dweller, but conservation remains a noble goal, rather than an immediate necessity.

"The overall goal is to make the most efficient use of the resource we have available," Lisa Ekers, the city's engineering services manager, said in an interview. Ms. Ekers helps oversee the Menlo Park Municipal Water District, which serves about one-third of the city's residents, in Sharon Heights and areas east of El Camino Real.

The state has mandated a reduction of 20 percent in gross water use by 2020, but the city is more focused on ensuring its water supply starting in 2018, when its current allocation guarantee from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, which controls the supply from Hetch Hetchy, expires.

The city needs to be prepared

to cut back, Ms. Ekers said, but she doubts the allocation will be drastically reduced.

Accordingly, the city is taking baby steps in its efforts to reduce water use, hoping that a combination of education, law, and "tiered" water rates will nudge residents in the right direction, bringing local water users more in line with those in other Peninsula cities.

Residential customers of the city's municipal water system used 149 gallons per capita per day in fiscal year 2007-08, compared with an average of 90 gallons per day by residential users in the regional system represented by the Bay Area Water Supply & Conservation Agency (BAWSCA). (The agency covers parts of 27 San Mateo County jurisdictions, though it does not include Portola Valley, Atherton or Woodside).

The city is in the process of revising its water-efficient landscaping ordinance, modifying a model developed by BAWSCA. But while

### Menlo Park water use

The following table gives water use by single-family residences over the past decade in the Menlo Park Municipal Water District, which serves about one-third of the city. Lisa Ekers, the city's engineering services manager, speculates that the fluctuation in water use is partly related to increased irrigation in years of low rainfall.

Fiscal Year (million gallons)	Water demand
1999-00	475
2000-01	480
2001-02	487
2002-03	468
2003-04	514
2004-05	468
2005-06	419
2006-07	488
2007-08	482
2008-09	466

City Council members have spent hours debating the ordinance, the outcome of those deliberations isn't likely to make much of a dent in the city's annual water consumption.

BAWSCA estimates that its ordinance would reduce water use in the city's district by 4.75 million gallons annually by 2018, only about one-third of one percent of the total water used (1.3 billion in 2007-08).

Some residents have questioned

whether the law can be effectively enforced.

The city is also reviewing its five-year water rate plan, and is considering "different options for rearranging existing tiered rates," with water rates increasing rapidly in relation to water use in order to encourage conservation, Ms. Ekers said.

See **WATER**, page 8

## Woodside council keeps powder dry on proposed Cargill project

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

The Woodside Town Council, in its first formal discussion of a proposal for a residential community on what is now 1,400 acres of salt flats off Redwood City, sounded notes of dismay about the project but chose to wait for an environmental impact report before issuing a resolution.

The proposal includes 800 acres of wetlands and outdoor recreational space, up to 12,000 homes, and 1 million square feet of commercial space, with extensive water and sewage management, according to a report by Woodside Town Manager Susan George and based on Redwood City planning documents.

Homes would be "within the financial reach of a broad range" of family incomes, Ms. George said, quoting a Redwood City report.

But the community would feed vehicle traffic onto Woodside Road, is almost entirely in a flood zone, and would stress Redwood City's Hetch-Hetchy-based potable water supply (which the developer proposes to address using water rights from Kings County), Ms. George said.

The Woodside council's 6-1 vote on Tuesday, March 23, directed staff to keep abreast of developments while waiting for an envi-

ronmental impact report (EIR), which, Ms. George said, is at least two years away.

In dissent, Councilman Ron Romines recommended going on the record now, and in opposition. The project does bring a welcome regional consideration of housing concerns, he said, but is a throwback and would undermine "intelligent" planning by regional stakeholders.

"It's wrongheaded thinking to think about putting it in this location," Mr. Romines added. Building on Bay fill "is a history that I don't think any of us are proud of as we look back on it," he added.

Councilwoman Sue Boynton agreed on the project's potential to supplant other planning efforts, but said she would rather not pre-empt the EIR.

Councilwoman Deborah Gordon agreed on waiting for the EIR. She is instinctively skeptical, particularly about the water management challenges, she said, but "my gut feeling is not what a decision of this magnitude should be made on."

Councilman Peter Mason was pointed. "I think that this project is really bad 1960s planning, and that was bad 50 years ago," he said. Thirty thousand people in

See **CARGILL**, page 8



Rich Gordon is one of three candidates running in the June 8 Democratic primary for the state Assembly's 21st District seat.

Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

## Finding support on both sides of the fence

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

Ask Rich Gordon, a candidate for the state Assembly's 21st District seat, what makes him think he can bring people together and help end the divisiveness in Sacramento, and he's likely to point to his endorsements.

The endorsement list includes well over 100 elected officials — from U.S. congresswomen Anna Eshoo and Jackie Speier down to local special district board members. But more to his point is the representation of

**ELECTION**  
2010

This is one of a series of stories on candidates in the 2010 elections.  
■ Josh Becker extends fundraising lead in Assembly race. **Page 7.**

both sides of the political fence that the list reflects, said Mr. Gordon, a three-term member of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors.

Perhaps his proudest example is the people Mr. Gordon worked with several years ago when he chaired a group of "very disparate" individu-

als charged with working out controversial elements of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District's plan to annex the Coastside.

The group included members of the MROSD board, pushing for annexation, and opponents of the plan, including San Mateo County Farm Bureau representatives and very vocal "property rights" activists, Mr. Gordon said. They met every other week for six months, he said, and at the end, "we were able to hammer out the agreement without opposition

See **GORDON**, page 7

# Bohannon agrees to revenue guarantee, emission reductions

By Sean Howell  
Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park and the Bohannon Development Co. have concluded preliminary negotiations over a proposal for a nearly 1 million-square-foot office/hotel project near Marsh Road and Bayfront Expressway, giving residents their first look at what the city might receive in exchange for major zoning concessions.

Now, the question to City Council members is: Is it enough?

The terms of the agreement, released March 25, fall into two broad categories: monetary benefits to the city, and pledges to reduce car trips and greenhouse gas emissions.

The negotiated items come in exchange for major zoning concessions to allow for a 230-room hotel, and three office towers of up to 140 feet. A city-hired consultant valued these land-use entitlements at up to \$23.8 million.

A financial analysis commissioned by the city concluded that the project would involve considerable risk to the developer, and might not be financially feasible.

It estimated the annual rate of return on the office buildings at 12.7 percent, and concluded that the developer would just about break even, at best, in building the hotel.

Taxes from the project are expected to generate an estimated \$1.67 million per year for the city of Menlo Park, a figure that represents over 4 percent of the city's annual operating budget. It would also raise nearly \$14 million for the city in various set fees, including money for traffic mitigation and below-market-rate housing.

Under the terms of the development agreement, however, construction might not begin for up to eight years. The hotel, the main income generator for the city, would have to be built first. But it would not be fully operational until three years after construction finishes — 2016 at the earliest, Councilwoman Kelly Fergusson estimates.

Construction on the first office tower would not have to begin until 15 years after the city awards

the zoning concessions, according to the terms of the agreement.

The Bohannon company has offered to guarantee annual revenue to the city if the taxes generated fall below a certain threshold, at a rate of up to \$225,000 per year, beginning three years after the hotel opens. The company has also agreed to impose a 1 percent tax on guests at the new hotel,

company has agreed to completely offset the carbon emissions generated by the operation of the buildings, and to reduce vehicle trips to and from the site by 17 percent.

The Bohannon company spent about \$1 million in working with traffic and environmental consultants to cut projected trips and emissions, after council members said they were particularly concerned about those impacts.

The city delayed releasing a final environmental review of the project as it worked with the Bohannon company to come up

with a more precise estimate of how many tons of greenhouse gases would be emitted.

The company has agreed to build the offices to meet U.S. Green Building Council LEED Gold standards, and the hotel to meet LEED Silver standards.

## Is it enough?

At the City Council meeting Tuesday, April 6, council members will be asked to decide whether to proceed with the approval process, or to go back to the drawing board and renegotiate the terms of the agreement. The latter option bears some risk, Mayor Rich Cline acknowledged.

"You have to be sensitive to the fact that the applicant has invested a lot of time and money in bringing this through" the public process, Mr. Cline said, adding that a delay might mean "lost dollars, in terms of his having to continue to work on it. ... At some point, (developer David Bohannon) has to respond to his board of directors."

Councilwoman Kelly Fergusson said she was sensitive to the time constraints as well, but that "no matter what, the council has to make sure it's getting good terms for the residents, and protecting the residents' interest. ... It looks like a reasonable schedule to me, but the council has to be ready to walk away from this if it's not right."

At a meeting several months ago, Ms. Fergusson had pressed for more extensive emission reductions, but said in an interview that her decision will be

guided in large part by feedback from residents. She added that the development agreement is a "fairly narrow" part of the whole picture, and that the basic question of whether this is what the city wants to do with its waterfront land is still up for debate.

The Bohannon company has already solicited and received endorsements related to two crucial areas: greenhouse gas emissions, and benefits to the nearby Belle Haven neighborhood. In a guest opinion in this week's Almanac, Mitch Słomiak, the city's most prominent climate-change advocate, said that the project will "(raise) the bar for other communities in addressing such gas impacts for commercial developments."

And while Belle Haven residents may have expected more in the way of public benefits, community leader H.L. Bostic, claiming to represent the entire neighborhood, urges the council in a letter to the editor to "be cautious of those who would burden this project with unrealistic requirements that are meant solely to stop the project."

Still, a cadre of skeptics and outright opponents remains. Vince Bressler, a former council candidate from the "residentialist" camp and a current member of the Planning Commission, said he thinks the city made a mistake in failing to negotiate to share revenue with the Bohannon company.

"I think this is a joke, frankly," he said. "This is a horrible deal for the city, unless I'm not understanding something. ... There's an ongoing, large benefit to the zoning change that accrues to the developer. All I'm trying to do is to make sure that a fraction of that accrues to the city. This contract doesn't do that, except with the hotel."

The Menlo Park Fire Protection District isn't likely to be pleased by the outcome of the negotiations either, given that the agreement does not include money for offsetting the cost of a new ladder truck and the staff to operate it. Through the formal environmental review process, the city replied that the district has no legal justification for claiming that it needs a new truck. ■

**Taxes from the project are expected to generate an estimated \$1.67 million per year for the city of Menlo Park, a figure that represents over 4 percent of the city's annual operating budget.**

raising an additional \$100,000 to \$150,000 annually for city coffers.

A total of \$1 million would go to fund city projects in the nearby Belle Haven neighborhood, in Bedwell Bayfront Park, or in other city recreation facilities. Through an agreement with JobTrain, Belle Haven residents would get the first crack at construction and other jobs at the site.

Several terms relate to traffic, conservation, and greenhouse gas emissions. The Bohannon com-

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## Assembly: Becker extends fundraising lead

By Gennady Sheyner

**S**purred by hefty contributions from entrepreneurs, venture capitalists and technologists, Josh Becker has taken a commanding fundraising lead over fellow Democrats Yoriko Kishimoto and Rich Gordon in the race for Ira Ruskin's seat in the 21st Assembly District.

Mr. Becker, a venture capitalist who focuses on green technology, raised \$110,211 between Jan. 1 and March 17, the second of three campaign finance filing periods. Ms. Kishimoto and Mr. Gordon raised \$32,897 and \$28,629 over the same period, respectively.

That brought Mr. Becker's total haul since July 1, 2009, to \$329,854 as of March 17, according to state filing documents. Mr. Gordon had raised a total of \$228,257. Ms. Kishimoto had raised \$105,093, and loaned her campaign an additional \$85,000.

As of March 17, Mr. Becker had \$224,099 left in his campaign fund, compared to Ms. Kishimoto's



\$92,457 and Mr. Gordon's \$82,516.

The three will face off in the Democratic primary elections in June. The winner will be heavily favored to replace Mr. Ruskin, whose term expires at the end of this year.

Mr. Becker was the only candidate to receive quadruple-digit contributions from local residents during the filing period. Atherton residents Sam Bronfman and Peter Week each gave him \$1,000, and Portola Valley attorney Marc Gottschalk gave \$1,000.

Menlo Park Councilman Heyward Robinson gave \$250 each to Mr. Becker and Mr. Gordon. Former Portola Valley Councilman Robert Nielsen gave Mr. Gordon \$100.

Mr. Becker's campaign chest was greatly bolstered by sizeable contributions from high-tech executives, including officials from Google,

Cisco, Facebook and HP. The Menlo Park resident also received a flurry of large donations from dozens of venture capitalists, lawyers and technologists, including ones his venture-capital firm, New Cycle Capital, has invested in.

Mr. Kishimoto, who served on the Palo Alto City Council for eight years before reaching her term limit last year, earned the bulk of her support from past and present Palo Alto officials, neighborhood leaders, environmentalists, and family members. She also loaned \$20,000 to her campaign just before the reporting deadline.

Mr. Gordon, a San Mateo County supervisor, garnered much of his support from Silicon Valley attorneys, construction companies, and labor unions. He also received \$3,900 in contributions from Assemblywoman Fiona Ma's campaign, and from the Bay Area Municipal Elections Committee. ■

—Sean Howell contributed to this report.

## Rich Gordon: Finding support on both sides of fence

GORDON

continued from page 5

from the Farm Bureau."

When he announced his candidacy for the Assembly seat, he said, the first individual who endorsed him was Mary Davey of the MROSD board, and the first organization, the Farm Bureau. "So the folks who sat at the table with me were the first to endorse me," he said.

He also points to endorsements he's received from county supervisors from across the state, most if not all of whom he worked with when he served as president of the California State Association of Counties. Singling out the board of Yolo County, Mr. Gordon said that he received the endorsements of the most liberal member and the most conservative member.

Mr. Gordon highlights his work with the association, and the support of many of its members, because he believes it speaks to his viability as a state legislator. The supervisors were from "disparate groups—reflective of what you see in the state Legislature," he said. "I worked to bring them to common ground."

### Three-way contest

Mr. Gordon is running in the June 8 Democratic primary against fellow Menlo Park resident Josh Becker, an entrepreneur, and former Palo Alto City Council member Yoriko Kishimoto. Although the winner of that race will face a Republican contender

on the November ballot, he or she will almost certainly replace the termed-out Ira Ruskin, given the heavily Democratic voting record of the district.

The district includes The Almanac's entire circulation area: Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley, Woodside, and nearby unincorporated areas.

Mr. Becker has had no elective office experience, and Ms. Kishimoto's city council service was eight years in duration. Mr. Gordon contrasts that with his own history. Before his 12-year stint as a supervisor, he served for six years on the San Mateo County Board of Education.

"My background, experience and knowledge are broader and deeper" than that of his opponents, he said. "The key is that I can be judged on my track record. I have demonstrated fiscal responsibility in government (and the) ability to build bridges and coalitions."

As examples of fiscal responsibility, he cites his role about 10 years ago in helping to put an outcome-based budgeting process in place for the county, whereby results and benefits of programs could be measured for their efficiency and effectiveness. Also, he was a strong supporter of "a very good reserve policy" now in place.

If elected, Mr. Gordon said, he would work toward both revenue generation and spending cuts in the state, but stressed that cuts must be "surgical and strategic." For example, lawmakers shouldn't cut programs that help keep people out of prison, because

prison is far more expensive than the axed programs would be.

He would support a look at reinstating the vehicle license fee, and reviewing "the long-term fairness of Proposition 13," he said, noting that there are ways of protecting senior citizens to allow them to stay in their homes—a stated goal of Proposition 13.

Another source of revenue could be an oil extraction tax, he said, noting that California is the only oil-producing state in the country that doesn't charge oil companies a fee for extracting oil. That tax is as high as 25 percent in at least one state—Alaska.

Mr. Gordon returns often to the need to fix Sacramento. As a legislator, he would "engage the public in a conversation" about the need to eliminate the two-thirds majority vote to pass a budget, a requirement that has caused gridlock in the Capitol for many years running.

But how can one person fix a badly broken system? "Obviously, one person cannot change the system," he said. "One person can be a voice, and one person can join others. ... It only takes a handful to move toward change."

A native of San Mateo County, Mr. Gordon entered the ministry in the United Methodist Church after receiving a degree from the University of Southern California. Before running for public office in 1992, he worked in the nonprofit sector in San Mateo County, first with the YMCA, then with Youth and Family Assistance, where he served as executive director. ■

## REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



### A Word to Buyers

**Q: It seems as though many properties are not staying on the market very long. What should buyers do to be successful in this market?**

**A:** It is true that there is new energy in the real estate market these past few weeks. Properties that are good value are selling within a short time and often with multiple offers. This is not a return to the high overbids that happened in previous years but there are properties selling above list price. Appraisers are conservative though and buyers and sellers are aware of this when reaching agreement on price.

There are a few reasons for the current market momentum. A major factor is that buyers know that interest

rates are probably not going to be this low for much longer and they are locking in long term fixed rates. Lenders also are lending more jumbo loans at rates well below six percent. Prices are still below what they were at the peak in 2008, although they have risen some in the past six months. This combination of lower prices and low interest rates makes this a great time to buy if you are in the market for a home.

Spring is traditionally the best market of the year, so some of the increase in activity may be due to the time of year. Sellers should take advantage of this market because interest rates may rise later this year, and fewer buyers may be encouraged to purchase a home.

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



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# Menlo Park: Like it or not, costs for services are rising

By Sean Howell

Almanac Staff Writer

As Menlo Park residents struggle to cope with the effects of the economic recession, fees for basic and not-so-basic city services are on the rise, due in part to cost increases and budget shortfalls.

Beginning July 1, single-family homeowners will pay an additional \$5 per month for each garbage can they own, thanks to increased pass-through costs from Republic Services (formerly Allied Waste), the company that handles the city's garbage collection services. Owners of multi-family and commercial buildings would see a 28 percent spike in collection fees.

Some homeowners have seen nearly a 70 percent increase since 2008.

And water rates are expected to more than double between now and 2015, as the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission completes a major project to install new pipes bringing water to the Bay Area from the Hetch Hetchy water system. They have already increased 57 percent since 2006.

The City Council grappled with these and other service-related topics at its March 23 meeting, signing off on the garbage rate increases. A public hearing on water rates is scheduled for late April, with the council expected to approve a five-year water rate plan in May.

Residents aren't likely to be pleased by the rate increases, and council members didn't particularly like being forced to approve the higher garbage rates. Republic Services cited several reasons for the hike, including higher labor and fuel costs, and the cost of complying with state air-quality law. While rates have risen, so have



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Workers with Republic Services pick up garbage in Menlo Park. Waste collection is one of several city services where residents are seeing steep rate increases.

Republic's profits, which are fixed as a percentage of operating costs.

Recology (formerly Norcal Waste), the company that handles waste collection in San Francisco, will take over the city's waste collection contract at the end of the year.

Councilman Andy Cohen dissented in the garbage vote, arguing for a rate structure that would be slightly more lenient.

"I would only ask my fellow council members to keep in mind just how much of tonight's agenda has been spent on jacking up the costs to our residents," he said.

The water and garbage rate increases may also encourage

people to conserve and recycle, though they're not designed for that purpose. Council members discussed the possibility of making the city's tiered water rates even more extreme, a tactic they hope would encourage heavy water users to cut back.

## Other services

Fees for other city services are also on the rise, especially for child care and the use of sports fields. The city is increasing the rates in order to recover a greater percentage of its costs to provide such services, as it tries to claw its way out of a structural budget deficit.

In general, the new rates are in line with what other jurisdictions charge, according to city management.

After Little League and youth soccer representatives argued against the steep hikes at the meeting, the council unanimously voted for slightly smaller increases for the use of soccer and baseball/softball fields than city staff had recommended.

The council also approved new fee increases at a lower rate than planned to people enrolled in the Belle Haven child care program, which receives a significant subsidy from the state.

The council rejected a recommendation by the planning department to make a resident pay the full cost of a second appeal of a city decision. The recommendation was aimed at preventing cases like a recent one when a woman twice appealed a decision to award a permit to Safeway, so that she could air mostly unrelated grievances to the City Council.

A majority of council members said they didn't want to restrict residents' ability to have a hearing before them, while Councilman John Boyle argued that the city should try to discourage frivolous appeals. ■

## WATER

continued from page 5

Thus far, education has been the city's primary tool of choice in persuading residents to conserve water. It has fashioned advertisements aimed primarily at businesses, given away water-saving devices, implemented rebate programs, and sponsored classes on water-efficient landscaping, attended largely by professionals in the field, according to Ms. Ekers. Under a 1993 ordinance, the city also notifies property owners or businesses whose irrigation systems appear to have a leak.

Total water use within the city-run district has ranged from 1.22 billion to 1.45 billion gallons per year over the past decade, sometimes varying widely year to year.

While a trend in total water use is not readily apparent, Ms. Ekers suggested a statistical analy-

sis would reveal consumption heading slightly downward since 2003-04. She attributes that trend to conscious efforts by residents and businesses to conserve, rather than formal action by the city.

The biggest recent change has come in industrial water use, which fell by 25 percent from 2007-08 to 2008-09, likely due to the recession.

While more draconian conservation measures such as water rationing aren't under consideration, the regional water agency has been investigating ways to expand the water supply, Ms. Ekers said. These include examining possible new sources and seeking water recycling opportunities.

Some jurisdictions have even batted around the idea of employing the expensive process of desalination, converting salt water to fresh water — a procedure that

## CARGILL

continued from page 5

the community and three vehicle exits? "There's no way that works," he added.

And don't count on blunt analysis in the EIR, he said. "It doesn't really say, 'No, it's a dumb project and shouldn't be built.' It never says that."

Twelve members of the public spoke up, most against. Janet Larson, who chairs the Woodside-Atherton Garden Club, captured the mood. "We are strongly, strongly opposed to this project," she said. "The Bay belongs to all of us, not just Redwood City." ■

might gain traction in coming decades if snowmelt continues to decrease, and if conservation efforts fall short. ■

## Atherton hikes trash rates 17 percent

By Andrea Gemmet

Almanac Staff Writer

Atherton residents are going to be facing the first increase in garbage rates that they've seen for years. The Atherton City Council, on 5-0 vote at the March 17 meeting, approved a nearly 17 percent increase to garbage and recycling rates.

For the majority of Atherton residents, the rate will go up by \$4 per month. The rate for one 32-gallon can will be \$27.69.

Atherton residents who don't want to drag their cans to the curb will face a new \$20 monthly surcharge for backyard service. The surcharge will be waived for disabled residents.

"The fact is, we haven't had an increase in a number of years," said Councilwoman Elizabeth

Lewis. "The reserves have been eaten away and now here we are, and we've got to take our lumps."

Garbage rates in Atherton were last increased in 2002. That 14 percent bump, meant to cover unlimited green waste service, exceeded Atherton's garbage hauling expenses and prevented the town from having to approve any further rate increases until now. In 2009, the balance shifted, and the reserves were eaten up.

Under the agreement between the town and Republic Services (formerly Allied Waste), trash and recycling fees cover the cost of service plus a 9 percent profit.

Several residents wrote to the town to protest either the increases or the backyard-service surcharge. ■

# Menlo Park police chief to retire June 1

By Dave Boyce  
Almanac Staff Writer

After 28 years in blue and having worked his way up to the top job in the Menlo Park Police Department, Chief Bruce Goitia has announced in a March 29 statement that he will retire, effective June 1.

In retirement, Mr. Goitia will be paid at least \$125,000 a year — 75 percent of \$166,650, his highest and current salary, said city Personnel Director Glen Kramer.

His retirement pay is calculated by multiplying his total years of service as a sworn officer (about 25 years, Mr. Kramer said) times 3, and using the result (75) as the percentage to determine

the annual payout. To be eligible, the officer must be at least 50 years old. Mr. Goitia is 54.

Mr. Goitia can increase his retirement pay by buying credit for up to five additional years, an option available to all sworn officers, Mr. Kramer said. The price for a year of credit varies, he said, and is determined for each individual by CalPERS, the state's pension fund authority.

Mr. Goitia was not available for an interview.

Mr. Goitia began his career in 1982 as a part-time records clerk



Photo courtesy of MPPD  
Bruce Goitia

and, in 1986, became a full-time police officer, followed by promotions to traffic officer, traffic sergeant, detective sergeant and, in 2002, commander, according to a department chronology.

Mr. Goitia has a master's degree in public administration from the Notre Dame de Namur University in Belmont, the department statement said.

His term as chief began in May 2006 after several months of sharing the top job with Commander Terri Molakides while the city manager conducted a candidate search for a new chief. He was chosen from a field of 40 candidates, including 20 from places other than California, according to an earlier Almanac story. ■

# Menlo Park council OKs new infrastructure projects

By Sean Howell  
Almanac Staff Writer

New sidewalks on Santa Cruz Avenue, signs at the Onetta Harris Community Center, native landscaping in the downtown area, and better access to schools for pedestrians and bicyclists are among several new capital improvement projects Menlo Park's City Council approved at its meeting Tuesday, March 23.

The council voted unanimously to fund 23 new projects with an estimated cost of \$3.9 million in the 2010-11 fiscal year, which begins July 1. The city presented the projects in a five-year capital improvement plan, a change from its custom of listing projects year-by-year. The funding comes from a grab bag of city purses, and from federal grants.

Among the projects:

■ The **downtown area** is in line for a revamped irrigation system, and for new landscaping that will include drought-tolerant plants. Those projects will cost \$175,000, and will be carried out over the next two years.

■ The city will install **new sidewalks on a stretch of Santa Cruz Avenue** between Fremont Park

and Hillview Middle School, at an estimated cost of \$500,000. It has budgeted \$1.5 million over the next five years to repair sidewalks across the city.

■ It plans to install lighted crosswalks at three Santa Cruz Avenue intersections near **Hillview School**. The crosswalks will be lit with wireless solar LEDs, a technology the city has embraced in recent years. That project, with an estimated cost of \$140,000, will be funded through the federal "Safe Routes to School" program.

■ A number of changes are in store for the area around **Laurel School**, thanks to a \$400,000 "Safe Routes" grant. They include lighted crosswalks, signs that display drivers' speeds, an extended sidewalk, and more streetlights.

■ The parking plaza in front of **Trader Joe's** will see nearly \$1 million worth of improvements over the next two years, including new trees, additional lighting, and a repaved parking lot in some sections.

■ Visitors to the **Onetta Harris Community Center** in Belle Haven will be greeted with several new signs designed to steer people around the large campus, which

is currently sign-free. That project will cost \$35,000. The **pool** at the center will also get a \$200,000 face-lift, though it will still only remain open in the summer months.

■ Nearly \$600,000 will go to **park maintenance programs** over the next five years, such as repairing fences and backstops, replacing benches and trash cans, and re-sodding portions of fields.

■ **Storm drain improvements** and devices to remove trash from the city's storm water system will cost the city nearly \$1 million over the next five years.

■ The city plans to spend \$425,000 from its redevelopment fund over the next three years for streetscape improvements on **O'Brien Drive**, intended mostly to benefit business and property owners in the area.

The list is not set in stone. The council will be able to modify it when it approves a budget for upcoming fiscal year. The plan lists 108 total projects that are scheduled to commence over the next five years.

Go to [is.gd/bl6qj](http://is.gd/bl6qj) (case-sensitive) to view the full list of projects. Pages 54 through 65 contain detailed descriptions of new projects. ■

# City to hire high-speed-rail lobbyist

By Sean Howell  
Almanac Staff Writer

The city of Menlo Park has hired a lobbyist to make the city's case to Sacramento when it comes to the California high-speed-rail project, and has devoted \$200,000 for the upcoming fiscal year to rail issues.

The expenditures highlight the importance of the issue to city officials, as Menlo Park strains to balance its budget following the economic recession. The upcoming year will be a particularly

crucial one for the rail system, with a decision pending on how high-speed trains would make their way through the city.

Ravi Mehta, the lobbyist in the city's employ, also advocates for Palo Alto on the issue. He works on a retainer of \$5,000 per month, plus expenses. Mr. Mehta will represent the city to the rail agency board and to legislators, and will report to city officials on new developments, according to Mayor Rich Cline.

"It's not really equitable," Mr.

Cline said. "The High-Speed Rail Authority has the ability to call a public hearing pretty much whenever they want. ... We have to schedule who's going to Sacramento, and most of the time it ends up being a resident. It's a great disadvantage for the city."

City officials spend a lot of time drafting and revising letters to the rail agency that end up going "straight into a file" once they reach Sacramento, Councilwoman Kelly Fergusson said, adding that the city needs an advocate who's

See RAIL, page 10

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## Dribbling a basketball: for 26 miles

By **Dave Boyce**

Almanac Staff Writer

The 2010 Napa Valley marathon had begun. Hundreds of running shoes hitting pavement did their rubbery shuffle as the athletes moved out. Breathing, too soon to be labored, was probably still audible as hundreds of chests inhaled, then exhaled. A basketball made its presence known in the usual way.

Come again?

Pablo Aguilera, a 24-year-old history teacher at Woodside High School and a practiced long-distance runner, ran the marathon on March 7, but unlike everyone else, he did it with a personal companion: a basketball that he dribbled, mostly from hand to hand, for the entire 26.2 miles.

The current Guinness world record for a marathoner dribbling a basketball is 3 hours, 48 minutes and 23 seconds, set by Jerry Knox at the 2009 LA Marathon, according to a Guinness spokeswoman.

Mr. Aguilera, who wants to beat that, completed the race in 4 hours and 11 minutes, which included some walking and hobbling.

Around mile 14, he slipped at a water station and his knee buckled with a popping sound, apparently from a bruised ligament, he said. He jogged and dribbled for four miles, walked and dribbled for a mile, and at mile 22, his knee went numb again "so I was able to deal with the pain and jog the rest of the way," he said in an e-mail.

He will be back. "It all started off as a joke until I figured out that I could actually break (the record),"



Photo by David Martinez  
**Pablo Aguilera**, a long-distance runner and history teacher at Woodside High School, tried to break a world record recently by running a marathon while dribbling a basketball.

he said. "I'm confident that if I'm healthy, I'll be able to do it. I don't like quitting."

He also ran for a cause: to raise money for Stanford College Prep, a program that guides first-generation college-bound students into college, including students at Menlo-Atherton and Woodside high schools. He raised more than \$7,000 from 30 to 40 donors, he said.

### A practiced dribbler

A runner bouncing a basketball uses twice the energy of someone who is simply running, Mr. Aguilera said a trainer told him.

To prepare, he said his coach tried to get him as tired as possible, to push through that barrier and continue training. Cross-training, done to reduce the likelihood of injury, included swimming and

cycling. He ran with a basketball twice a week, he said.

For the race, the ball had to be a regulation size and inflated to a specific pressure, he said. He could retrieve a wayward ball provided he restart his running from the spot where he lost control.

To minimize such incidents, the ambidextrous Mr. Aguilera said he aimed the ball in front of himself and used alternate hands, called a cross-over dribble. "It's a big challenge," he said.

He acquired no calluses or blisters, though by the end of the race, he said he "pretty much had no fingerprints." During the race, he and a friend estimated his rate at 500 dribbles per mile for a grand total of about 15,000.

What was that like? "It became kind of like a natural rhythm and it took my mind off everything else," he said. "It's almost like a song. It's a beat and it's a constant. As long as I kept the beat, I was relaxed and I had a constant pace."

One racer complained that he was giving her a headache, he said. "She dealt with it," he said.

Mr. Aguilera knows basketball, having played his whole life, usually as a point guard, and he is something of an artist. "I love basketball and I used to love dribbling all the time," he said. "I found different fancy ways to dribble just to entertain myself. I can dribble with my knees." ■

Go to [is.gd/afi3g](http://is.gd/afi3g) for more information and a video on Pablo Aguilera and Stanford College Prep.

## St. Raymond School excels at academic decathlon

This story was submitted by **Kim McNair**, a St. Raymond School parent.

### ■ SCHOOLS

leen Hamilton, Lucas Lonergan, Cecilia Marshall, Molly Quinton, Yasmine El-Hage, Fiona Jackson, Celia Kelly, Caoimhe MacRunnels, Sarah Scannell, Katherine Yancey and Marifer McCavitt.

Mr. Patrick Sullivan and his academic coaches, teachers, and parents from St. Raymond, worked for five months to prepare this team.

The competition encompassed logic, science, math, history, fine arts, literature, social studies, religion, and current events.

St. Raymond eighth-grade captains, Mollie Quinton and Colleen Hamilton, brought home the gold and bronze medals in social studies and science, respectively.

The finale of the day was unquestionably the "Super Quiz." After nearly an hour and a half of head-to-head questions in a raucous game show-like atmosphere, St. Raymond and St. Gabriel, the winner 10 years in a row, emerged ahead of all their rivals.

That led to the overtime tie-breaker between St. Raymond and St. Gabriel with St. Raymond securing the victory and taking first place.

regional advocacy group made up of representatives from five Peninsula cities. Mr. Cline estimates that he spends 15 to 20 hours per month in his role on the committee, as much time as he devotes to other city business issues.

Part of the city's rail-related budget will go to hire experts who will help to interpret technical documents released by the rail agency. It's scheduled to publish an analysis in April of how the Caltrain corridor would accommodate high-speed trains. ■

### RAIL

continued from page 9

present at the meetings if it wants to be heard.

Ms. Fergusson sits on the city's high-speed rail subcommittee with Mr. Cline, who chairs a

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# Cracking down on unauthorized solicitors

By Dave Boyce  
Almanac Staff Writer

■ PORTOLA VALLEY

Salespeople and solicitors going door-to-door in Portola Valley without first getting a permit will have an increasingly tough time of it now that the Town Council has asked law enforcement to crack down.

In an effort to encompass the competing priorities of a town that shows a warm welcome to cookie-selling Girl Scouts and a cold shoulder to magazine salespeople, the council at its March 24 meeting directed staff to work up a plan to educate residents about solicitation laws and inform them of renewed vigor on the part of sheriff's deputies to deal with un-permitted peddling, particularly when residents have their names on the "do not contact" list.

That list and its limitations led to the council's decision to take up the matter. The list does not apply to doorbell ringing by

people advocating a religious or political point of view — the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects that behavior — but the town will now step up enforcement when salespeople lack permits or visit listed homes.

*'We are not a gated community like Atherton. We're friendly.'*

COUNCILWOMAN MARYANN DERWIN

"We want to be able to actually demonstrate that Portola Valley is a bad place to solicit if you solicit somebody who doesn't want to be contacted," Ed Davis, the town's police commissioner, told the council.

Salespeople are attuned to "no

solicitors" signs, and Mr. Davis spoke up for the idea of encouraging tasteful signs that include an ordinance number, but the council didn't buy it.

Such signs are, in the opinion of Mayor Steve Toben, unsightly, unfriendly and inappropriate. "I think there are a lot of residents who might agree with me," he added.

Councilwoman Maryann Derwin did. "I would not put a sign on my house and when I see one of those little signs, I feel hostile to those persons," she said. "We are not a gated community like Atherton. We're friendly."

Legitimate solicitors can be serious about their missions, including "trying to feed their families," Councilman John Richards reminded the council. "We don't want to be unfriendly to that."

And political and religious advocacy is "allowable actually anywhere in the country, including Portola Valley," Councilwoman Ann Wengert noted. ■

Anyone who may have knowledge about allegations that a member or members of **Stanford Law School** may have communicated negative information about former **Stanford Law School** students between 2001 and the present, is urged to call 415-205-8925. All responses will be kept confidential. Information may be pertinent to a pending lawsuit, case #CIV489678, filed in San Mateo County Superior Court.

## There's a new flavor in town



**The Mix is Open Daily**

11:00am - 9:00pm  
11:00am - 10:00pm Fri & Sat  
Serving Frozen Yogurt, Toppings, Smoothies & Other Treats

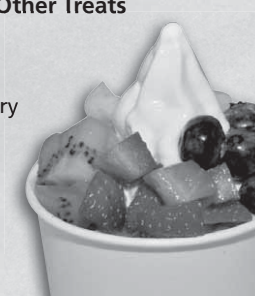


Proudly serving Blue Bottle Coffee and baked goods by Butterscotch Bakery  
Free Wi-Fi

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3536 ALAMEDA DE LAS PULGAS #3  
Next to Avanti Pizza, Menlo Park, CA 94025



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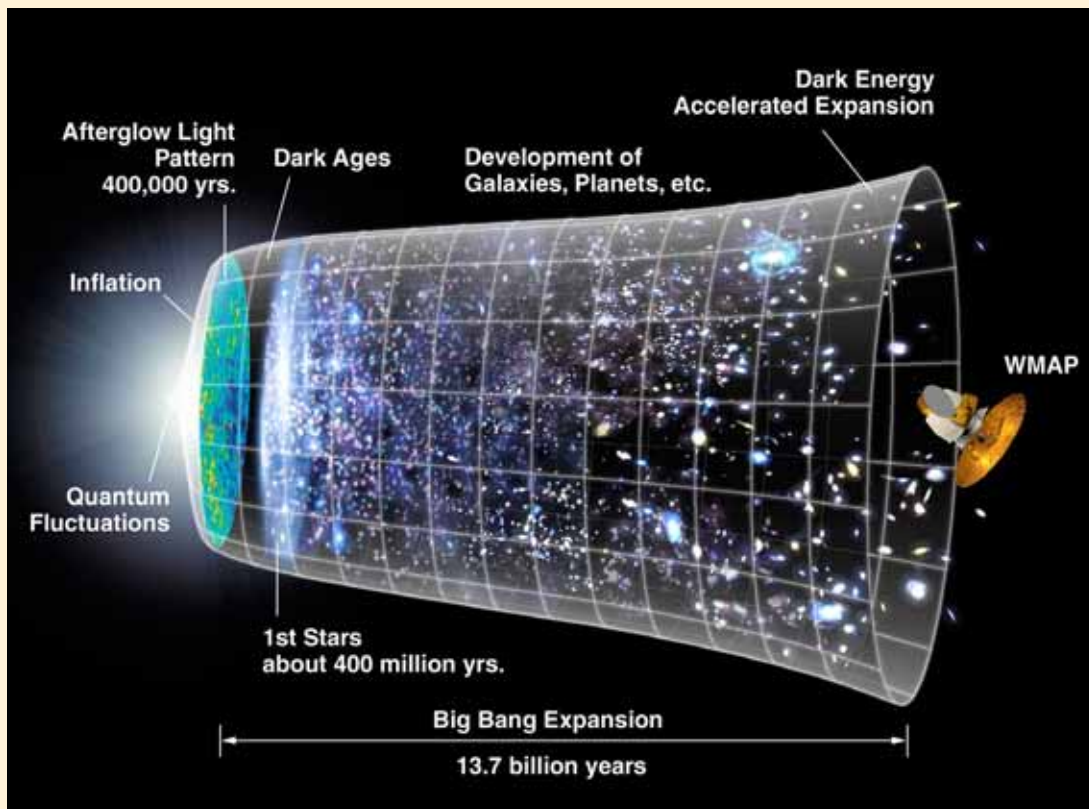
Seale Harris, M.D.  
**LITE FOR LIFE**  
WEIGHT LOSS

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- Look & Feel Better
- Increase Your Energy
- FREE Consultation

**Menlo Park**  
713 Oak Grove • (650) 323-5483  
(across from the Fire Station)

\*10 week minimum. Limited time offer. Call for details.

www.liteforlife.com



NASA/WMAP Science Team

A timeline of the universe, starting with the Big Bang at the left, made possible by the satellite known as the Wilkinson Microwave Anisotropy Probe (WMAP), shown at the right.

## Talk: 'Where do Stars and Galaxies Come From?'

For those of us whose inner children are still asking profound questions about the universe, an astrophysicist will be available to provide answers from 6 to 7:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 13, at SRI International in Menlo Park.

Stanford University physics professor Tom Abel will give a free talk on "Where do Stars and Galaxies Come From?" at Cafe Scientifique, a monthly meeting at which the public

can explore and debate scientific and technological issues in a non-academic setting.

Mr. Abel, a cosmologist and astrophysicist and a member of the Kavli Institute for Astroparticle Physics and Cosmology at the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory in Menlo Park, will discuss the Big Bang, the explosion that scientists believe gave birth to the universe some 13.7 billion years ago, and issues such as

the role of stars in forming the atoms of our bodies, and the fate of the Milky Way.

Doors open at 5:15 p.m. at the headquarters of SRI Menlo Park in the International Building at Middlefield Road and Ringwood Ave.

Go to cafescisv.org for directions, information on parking, and other details. Doors open at 5:15 p.m. and close when the room reaches capacity. Bring your own coffee cup!

## Get Involved!

Volunteer Your Time & Talents

- ◆ Help a child read
- ◆ Give a senior a ride
- ◆ Provide office support
- ◆ Assist with activities
- ◆ Teach a class

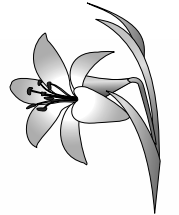
To find the best volunteer opportunity for you, call (650) 289-5412 or visit [www.avenidas.org](http://www.avenidas.org).



**Avenidas**  
Where age is just a number



# Peninsula Easter Services



## ST. MARK'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH PALO ALTO

**Maundy Thursday— April 1**

❖ 6:15pm *Monastic Supper & Liturgy of the Word followed by Holy Eucharist & Stripping of the Altar*

**Good Friday — April 2**

❖ Noon to 2:00pm *Seven Last Words Reflections*  
❖ 2:00 to 3:00pm *Labyrinth Stations: A Walking Meditation*  
❖ 7:30 to 8:30pm *Good Friday Prayer and Meditation*

**Easter — April 4**

❖ 5:30am *Easter Vigil, Eucharist & Baptism*  
❖ 8:00am *Festive Breakfast & Family Easter Activities*  
❖ 10:00am *Festive Holy Eucharist*

600 Colorado Ave, P.A. (650) 326-3800  
www.saint-marks.com

## ST. LUKE'S CHAPEL IN THE HILLS

Anglican Church • The 1928 Book of Common Prayer

MAUNDY  
THURSDAY  
APRIL 1  
7:00 pm

GOOD FRIDAY  
APRIL 2

Noon - 3:00 pm:  
Solemn Liturgy of The Passion  
7:00 p.m.: Holy Communion  
Service

EASTER SUNDAY,  
APRIL 4

10 am: Holy Communion  
Family Service  
12 pm: Holy Communion

26140 DUVAL WAY • LOS ALTOS HILLS • (650) 941-6524  
Where 1-280 Passes over Roble da www.stlukeschapel.org

# Alleluia!

## Holy Week Services

April 1 6:00 pm Seder Dinner  
April 2 Noon & 7:00 pm Good Friday Services  
April 4 9:30 am Easter Festival Service  
Children's Easter Egg Hunt after the service!



Bethany

**Bethany Lutheran Church**  
1095 Cloud Avenue, Menlo Park  
650.854.5897

Experience the full life-giving grace of

# Easter

Make the journey from darkness to light, captivity to freedom, death to life  
- the complete pilgrimage of Holy Week and Easter.

**Palm Sunday** (3/28 | 8:30 am, 10:45 am)

**Maundy Thursday** (4/1 | 7:30 pm)

**Good Friday** (4/2 | 12 pm & 7:30 pm)

**Easter Vigil** (4/3 | 7:30 pm)

**Easter Sunday** (4/4 | 8:30 am, 10:45 am)



**Grace Lutheran Church** ELCA

living in God's amazing grace  
3149 Waverley Street | Palo Alto, CA 94306 | 650.494.1212 | www.gracepa.org



## Celebrate Easter with Us This Year

### Holy Trinity Episcopal Church

For us, Jesus represents the place of intersection between our lives and God's Life. At that intersection, we discover what new life really means. We invite you to join us for Holy Week and Easter services, as we are all invited to share new life in Christ.

**Palm Sunday, March 28 – 8:30\* & 10:30\* AM**

**Maundy Thursday (The Last Supper)**  
April 1, 6:00\* PM (with simple meal)

**Good Friday, April 2**  
7:00 AM & Noon

**The Great Vigil of Easter**  
Saturday, April 3, 7:00\* PM

**Easter Sunday, April 4**  
6:30 AM, 8:30\* AM, 10:30\* AM

\*Indicates child care available

330 Ravenswood Ave., Menlo Park (650) 326-2083  
www.trinitymenlopark.org



# Experience Easter with Us

6:30 and 9:30 a.m.



**Come celebrate with us this Easter Season. We are a community with diverse beliefs, united in spiritual discovery and renewal.**

**Ladera Community Church**  
3300 Alpine Rd., Portola Valley  
(650) 854-5481 www.ladera.org  
Sunday Services at 9:30 a.m.

**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**  God  
is still  
speaking.

# Teen girls learn about 'leadership' at Menlo gathering

By **Samantha Bergeson**  
Freshman, Menlo School

On the surface, it looked like a group of typical teenage girls talking about the struggles of adolescence. Yet, the 73 girls who attended the one-day Girls Lead Now conference, held recently in Menlo Park, were far from average, taking advantage of leadership opportunities and attending crucial, yet fun, courses.

By attending the Saturday conference, held Feb. 20 at Mid-Peninsula High School, the young women demonstrated an interest in learning various life skills. Throughout the day, they partook of courses taught by other teenagers on such heavy-weight topics as preparing for college ("Ready to Set to College!") and taking control of their finances ("Power over Plastic").

Participants in the conference shared accounts of personal

struggles, from problems in relationships to various addictions — whether to substances or even technology. By doing so, they began to build a sense of community.

The Girls Lead Now organization was started in 2004 by 15-year-old Sarah Hedayati, then a student at Archbishop Mitty High School in San Jose. It began as a small group, teaching girls about economics. It has expanded to large conferences, held annually in the Bay Area for the past five years.

The nonprofit organization's mission is to inspire young women to strive for independence and to achieve their potential as leaders, while learning business strategies and healthy ways to survive the pressures of teenage life.

This year's conference focused on the theme, "Be Yourself, Everyone Else is Already Taken." The primary sponsor was Spiral Muse, an online forum for bud-

ding female writers.

Keynote speaker was Helen Grieco, founder of the San Francisco-based SHE Academy, established for training women to be community activists and strong leaders.

Among "skillshop" courses taught by teenage teachers were public speaking, anti-anxiety methods, health, budgeting, and how to gain an internship or job.

Sruthi Ramaswami, a 15-year-old student at Archbishop Mitty who will be co-chair of the 2011 conference, taught the "Fearless Speaking: Taming the Butterflies" course after attending the event last year.

"I [too] had a challenge speaking publicly, and it motivated me to do this workshop," she said.

Katherine Edgecumbe, a senior at Archbishop Mitty and a co-chair this year, also incorporated personal experiences, such as her struggle with anorexia, into her class. As the

health and body image instructor, she led discussions about confidence and traps of insecurity as well as healthy dietary and fitness habits.

She also taught how to identify emotional and behavioral signs of people suffering from eating disorders, and how to supply support and help.

Portola Valley resident Taryn Lewis, a first-time participant and junior at Mid-Peninsula High School, said after attend-

ing the budgeting course: "I love the [overall] experience. I know it sounds cheesy, but it is really an empowering experience as it helps us deal with the reality that is actually out there."

The day concluded with a clothing exchange. Leftover items were donated to a girls shelter in East Palo Alto.

Visit [girlsleadnow.org](http://girlsleadnow.org) for more information.

*The author of this story, Samantha Bergeson, is a resident of Portola Valley and a freshman at Menlo School in Atherton.*

## Business: Menlo Park agents among top in state

Nine Menlo Park real estate agents ranked in the top 1 percent of Coldwell Banker's 3,300 agents in Northern California, based on sales in 2009, according to a company spokesman.

The top agents were Keri Nicholas, Tom LeMieux and Hossein Djalali of the Menlo Park/Santa Cruz Avenue office, and Hugh Cornish, Hanna Shacham, Elaine White, Janet Dore, Steve Bellumori and Pat Hammer of the Menlo Park/El Camino Real office.

Among the highest producing agents in Northern California, Ms. Nicholas was ranked seventh; Mr. Cornish, ninth; and Mr. LeMieux, 11th. Ms. Nicholas was also named No. 1 agent in San Mateo County for last year.

The nine agents have all been named to the Coldwell Banker International President's Premier group.

Coldwell Banker's Menlo Park/El Camino Real office is located at 800 El Camino Real, Suite 300. The Santa Cruz office is located at 930 Santa Cruz Ave.

### Top producing Woodside agents

Erika Demma, Ginny Kavanaugh and Celeste Henzel of the Woodside office of Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage were ranked in the top 1 percent of the company's agents in Northern California, based on sales in 2009.

Out of the 3,300 sales associates in Northern California, Ms. Demma was ranked 17th; Ms. Kavanaugh, 25th; and Ms. Henzel, 38th. Ms. Demma and Ms. Kavanaugh were given the

Coldwell Banker International President's Premier honor. Ms. Henzel was given the President's Elite honor.

The Coldwell Banker office in Woodside is located at 2969 Woodside Road. The manager is Wendy McPherson.



### TOWN OF ATHERTON CITY MANAGERS DEPARTMENT

91 Ashfield Road • Atherton, CA 94027  
(650) 752-0529 Fax (650) 688-6528

March 24, 2010

**TO: ALL INTERESTED PARTIES**  
**RE: REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS**  
**PROJECT: DESIGN OF A NEW TOWN CENTER**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that Request for Statement of Qualifications for the design of a new town center will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, California 94027, until 2:00 p.m. on April 16, 2010, at which time they will be publicly opened.

The invitation to submit statements of qualifications and additional information is available for review on our website at [www.ci.atherton.ca.us](http://www.ci.atherton.ca.us) under Announcements.

Copies of the REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS may also be obtained at the Town of Atherton, City Clerks Department, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton CA 94027, or by calling (650) 752-0529.

Any questions regarding the project should be directed to the Jerry Gruber, City Manager at (650) 752-0504 or [jgruber@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:jgruber@ci.atherton.ca.us).

Sincerely,

Jerry Gruber  
City Manager

## Peninsula Easter Services

### Journey to Easter

Sunday Worship 11:00 AM  
Childcare/youth

**WESLEY UNITED METHODIST**  
470 Cambridge Ave (one block off California)  
Rev. Karen Paulsen



## WOODSIDE PRIORY CHAPEL HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Holy Thursday Eucharist – 5:00 PM

Good Friday Service – 3:00 PM

Holy Saturday Easter Vigil – 8:00 PM

Easter Sunday Eucharist – 9:30 AM

Good Friday Ecumenical Taize Service – 8:00 PM

e e e e e

302 PORTOLA ROAD, PORTOLA VALLEY

## CELEBRATE EASTER

### 950 Santa Cruz Ave. Menlo Park

Menlo Park Presbyterian Church  
Saturday, April 3: 5 p.m.  
Sunday, April 4: 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11 a.m.

### 700B Santa Cruz Ave. Menlo Park

The Cafe (behind Ace Hardware)  
Sunday, April 4: 9:32 a.m., 11:05 a.m.

[www.mppc.org/easter](http://www.mppc.org/easter)

OBITUARIES

Ann Marie Wilkinson

Psychiatric nurse

Ann Marie Wilkinson, a longtime resident of Atherton, died peacefully on March 18 at her home in Redwood City. She was 62.



Ann Wilkinson

Ms. Wilkinson was born in New York City. She grew up in a household, where her father was an obstetrician and her mother a registered nurse. Ms. Wilkinson also devoted much of her life to medicine.

After receiving a bachelor of science degree in nursing in New York, Ms. Wilkinson moved to the Bay Area in 1969. She married George Wilkinson in 1974. She and her husband, a forensic psychiatrist, shared an office in Redwood City.

In 2006-2007, Ms. Wilkinson served as president of the American Psychiatric Nurses Association, California chapter, and in 2009 received the Award for Excellence in Advanced Practice in Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing. For nearly 40 years, she maintained a psychotherapy private practice, in addition to

teaching and supervising psychiatric physicians and advance practice nurses.

Committed to serving the community, Ms. Wilkinson served on the Child Care Coordinating Council of San Mateo County and, more recently, on the Grants Committee of the Sequoia Healthcare District. She was a Girl Scout leader and active with the Menlo Park City School District's PTA. An avid reader, she was a member of a women's book club for more than 20 years.

Ms. Wilkinson enjoyed neighborhood walks with her family and dogs, spring wildflower walks in Edgewood Park, strolls through Filoli's gardens, vacations and getaways with her husband, including frequent visits to a Hindu temple in Kauai, say family members. She was a role model for all who knew her, they say.

She is survived by her husband, Dr. George Wilkinson; three daughters, Lauren, Ashley, and Meredith; and her brother, Michael DeGiorgio.

The family welcomes donations in Ms. Wilkinson's name to Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties ([www.shfb.org](http://www.shfb.org)), Save the Bay ([www.savesfbay.org](http://www.savesfbay.org)), and Pathways Hospice Foundation ([www.pathwayshealth.org](http://www.pathwayshealth.org)). This summer the family is planning a Save the Bay workday to honor Ms. Wilkinson by taking part in a local outdoor volunteer activity.

Martha Brown

Hairdresser

Martha Brown, a 30-year resident of Menlo Park, died March 23 after a brief but valiant battle with cancer. She was 74.

Ms. Brown was a hairdresser and worked in the family business, the William Brown Salon, in San Mateo.

She is survived by her husband, William, and two children, Maria and Ryan Brown.

Family friend Sam Yelland called Ms. Brown "a punk rocker. She rocked and we all loved her very much," he said.

Howard F. Fletcher

Investment manager

Howard F. Fletcher Jr. of Atherton died peacefully at home March 23 following a long illness. He was 85.



Howard Fletcher

Mr. Fletcher grew up in Berkeley, where he attended Berkeley public schools and was an Eagle Scout in Troop 7. He graduated from Tamalpais School for Boys in 1942.

After induction into the U.S. Army, he was sent to Pomona College to study meteorology, then to officer candidate school at Fort Benning, Georgia, receiving a commission as a second lieutenant.

Eventually stationed in Japan after World War II as a first lieutenant, he was special counsel for the Eighth Army special court martial board.

After the war, he graduated cum laude from UC Berkeley in 1948. He then spent two years at Harvard Business School, earning an MBA.

Mr. Fletcher worked for the Container Corporation of America for seven years, first as assistant to the president, then as a sales manager.

After spending the next seven years at Bank of America in San Francisco, he worked in investment management, eventually becoming West Coast partner for Tiedermann, Karlen, and Boltres, until the last few years of his life.

Mr. Fletcher loved horses and horseback riding, was a beautiful skier and had a passionate fondness for dogs, say family members. He was a member of the ski team at Berkeley.

A member of the Bohemian Club of San Francisco and the Menlo Circus Club, he served as western chairman for the U.S. Equestrian Team and was a member of the President's Council on Physical Fitness.

His family remembers his wry sense of humor, which was present to the end of his life, they say.

He is survived by his wife, Phyllis Olmsted Fletcher of Atherton; daughters Mallory Fletcher Price and Brooke Leigh Fletcher; sister Joan Fletcher Lane; caregiver Joaquin Jacome; and two grandchildren.

A family service will be held in April.

Submitting obituary information

Send obituary information and any photo (200 dpi jpg) to: [editor@AlmanacNews.com](mailto:editor@AlmanacNews.com). Include the name of the person submitting the information, that person's connection to the deceased, and a day and night phone number for that person.

CALENDAR

Talks/Authors

**Marcia Gagliardi.** Cuisine concierge Marcia Gagliardi discusses "The Tabletopper's Guide to Dining and Drinking in San Francisco" Thurs., April 1, 7:30 p.m. Free. Kepler's, 1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. Call 650-324-4321. [www.keplers.com](http://www.keplers.com)

Art

**"Japan: Nature in Winter."** Menlo Park photographer Susan Carnahan is exhibiting 22 images of landscapes, cranes, swans and snow monkeys from Hokkaido and Nagano, Japan, through April 29. A reception and artist talk are set for Sat., April 10, 3-4:30 p.m. Free. Woodside Library, 3140 Woodside Road, Woodside. [www.susancarnahan.com](http://www.susancarnahan.com)

**"Everything Has A Story."** From March 24 through April 25, painters Ellen Chong and Diana Herring explore their different approaches to art in the exhibition "Everything Has A Story." A reception is planned for Sat., April 10, 7-9 p.m. Free. The Main Gallery, 1018 Main St., Redwood City. Call 650-701-1018. [www.themaingallery.org](http://www.themaingallery.org)

**Art Classes at Little House.** Two Lapidary Workshops are starting on April 1 at Little House, both running to June 3: Thursdays 9 a.m. to noon and 6-9 p.m. \$40 members, \$45 non-members. PV Inc Little House, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. Call 650-326-2025. [www.penvol.org](http://www.penvol.org)

Clubs/Meetings

**Little House Book Club.** The Little House Book Club will discuss "Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Society" by Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrow. April 7, 12:30-2:30 p.m. Free. PV Inc Little House, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. Call 650-326-2025. [www.penvol.org](http://www.penvol.org)

**Woodside Library Book Club.** Anna Quindlen's "Black and Blue" novel depicts a mother, her 10-year-old son, and their flight from the abusive husband. April 6, 11 a.m.-noon. Free. Woodside Library, 3140 Woodside Road, Woodside. Call 650-851-0147. [www.smcl.org](http://www.smcl.org)

Community Events

**2010 South Bay Opening Day.** 2010 South Bay Opening Day is a boating festival and decorated-boat parade, featuring a decorated-boat parade and blessing of the fleet at 10:30 a.m. Saturday. The whole event runs April 9-11, 10:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Free. Sequoia Yacht Club, 441 Seaport Court, Redwood City. Call 650-361-9472. [southbayopeningday.org/2010/](http://southbayopeningday.org/2010/)

Concerts

**Good Friday Concert.** "I Am the Resurrection and the Life," celebrating the music of the Easter season. Choral selections by the Valparaiso Singers include works by Rutter, Faure, Bach and Stanford, with the addition of soloists and instrumentalists. Judith Stewart, director, and James Welch, organist. April 2, 7:30-9 p.m. free. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1105 Valparaiso Ave., Menlo Park. Call 650-856-9700, 650-854-6203.

Dance

**Thursday Evening Dance.** Fox Trot, Waltz, Polka and more every Thursday evening. Light refreshments will be served. Come alone or bring a partner. Thursdays, 7-10 p.m. \$7 per person. PV Inc Little House, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. Call 650-326-2025. [www.penvol.org](http://www.penvol.org)

Kids & Families

**Annual Atherton Easter Egg Hunt.** The morning starts off with an Easter egg hunt, followed by a magic performance by Gerald, photos with the Easter bunny and a breakfast buffet of foods and drinks. Members of the Atherton Police & Menlo Park Fire Depts will greet children. Reservations required. Sat., April 3, 10 a.m.-noon. \$5/person. Holbrook-Palmer Park, 150 Watkins Ave., Atherton.

**Easter Story Time.** This story time will feature Jan Brett's "The Easter Egg" and Olivier Dunrea's "Ollie's Easter Eggs." Sun., April 4, 11:30 a.m. Free. Kepler's, 1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. Call 650-324-4321. [www.keplers.com](http://www.keplers.com)

At Kepler's

Steve Poizner, a gubernatorial candidate, discusses and signs his book, "Mount Pleasant: What Happened When I Traded a Silicon Valley Board Room for an Inner City Classroom," at 7:30 p.m. Friday, April 2, at Kepler's bookstore, 1010 El Camino Real in Menlo Park. For more information, call 324-4321.



Photo by David Kennerly

On Stage

**"Sunsets and Margaritas."** TheatreWorks presents Jose Cruz Gonzalez's play "Sunsets and Margaritas," a family comedy. Through April 4, Tuesday through Sunday. Lucie Stern Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. [theatreworks.org](http://theatreworks.org)

**Live opera at The Sequoias.** Verismo Opera gives a full performance of Puccini's "Tosca." Accompanied by orchestra, with soloists bass baritone John Minagro as Scarpia and soprano Michele-Bridget Ragsdale as Tosca. Sat., April 10, 2-5 p.m. Free. The Sequoias, 501 Portola Road, Portola Valley.

Classes/Workshops

**"Internet & Teens: Parenting in the Age of Technology."** Psychiatrist Katherine DeVaul of the Children's Health Council and psychologist Sam Sweet give a talk on teens' online life and the dangers of "sexting" and Internet porn. Pre-registration is requested. Thurs., April 1, 7-9 p.m. Free. Children's Health Council, 650 Clark Way, Palo Alto. Call 650.688.3675. [www.chconline.org](http://www.chconline.org)

**El Camino Youth Symphony** is accepting audition applications for current and new members for the 2010-2011 season. Go to [www.ecys.org/auditions.html](http://www.ecys.org/auditions.html) to apply for an appointment. Auditions will take place in March and April. Highlights of the 2010-2011 season include an International Tour for the Senior Symphony. Call 650-213-7111. [www.ecys.org](http://www.ecys.org)

**Skype: Online Video Conferencing.** Learn how to open a free account, set up your equipments & software, make simple conference calls over the Internet, create & maintain a contact list, and use other provided features. April 6, 9:30 a.m. free. Woodside Library, 3140 Woodside Road, Woodside. Call 650-851-0147.

**Free Income Tax Assistance.** Between Feb. 2 and April 13, Free Income Tax Assistance will be available at Little House in the Computer Classroom every Tuesday, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. PV Inc Little House, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. Call 650-326-2025. [www.penvol.org](http://www.penvol.org)

Outdoors

**Birds of Bedwell Bayfront Park.** This nature walk will offer close-up views of different birds, including lingering winter visitors, migrating birds stopping to rest and refuel, and year-round residents. Binoculars will be provided. Sat., April 10, 9-11 a.m. Free. Bedwell Bayfront Park, End of Marsh Road, Menlo Park. [www.friendsofbedwellbayfrontpark.org](http://www.friendsofbedwellbayfrontpark.org)

**'Patterns and Abstractions of Nature.'** A show of original fine art drawings, paintings, photographs and other two-dimensional works of art that illuminate the structures of nature in creative ways. Through April 11, 10 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Filoli Center, 86 Canada Road, Woodside.

**Support Group for Teenage Girls.** Offered by the After-School Counseling Program at Adolescent Counseling Services, this group will cover a range of topics facing teenage girls today, including: self esteem and body image issues, sexuality and sexual health, dating and peer relationships, substance use and academic pressure. Thursdays, 6-7:15 p.m. Please contact Vicki Petropoulos for more information. Adolescent Counseling Services Main Office, 4000 Middlefield Road, Suite FH, Palo Alto. Call 650-424-0852, ext.115. [www.acs-teens.org](http://www.acs-teens.org)

**BARRAGAN GLASS WORKS**  
Custom stained glass designs  
Contemporary & classic styles  
Entryways, skylights, transoms, cabinet doors, privacy windows  
Visit our website, then call for a consultation  
Genaro Barragan  
650-222-7864  
[www.barranglassworks.com](http://www.barranglassworks.com)

**EYE CARE NEWS**  
Presented by Mark Schmidt Licensed Optician  
PLAYING FAVORITES  
If the brain happens to favor one eye over the other, usually due to poor vision in the less-favored eye, the image from the weaker eye will tend to be suppressed. As a result of this condition, called "amblyopia" or, more popularly, "lazy eye," the weaker eye will tend to wander inward or outward. According to the National Eye Institute, amblyopia is the leading cause of reduced vision among children, affecting two to three children in one hundred. Because "lazy eye" can lead to permanent vision impairment if left untreated, it deserves immediate attention. Conservative treatment involves covering the stronger eye with an eye patch, which forces the weaker eye to work harder.  
At MENLO OPTICAL, we understand the special needs of children to have eyewear that is flexible and durable and also fits properly on the face. We feature a wide selection of frames in a variety of shapes, sizes, and materials. The policy of our office is to provide only the very best of service and quality of materials to each client. Call us at 322-3900, or bring your child's prescription to 1166 University Drive, on the corner of Oak Grove Avenue and University Drive.  
P.S. Sometimes, corrective eyewear is all that is needed to treat amblyopia, such as when near-sightedness, farsightedness, or astigmatism is contributing to "lazy eye" and corrective glasses or contact lenses can correct the refractive error.  
Mark Schmidt is an American Board of Opticianry and National Contact Lens Examiners Certified Optician licensed by the Medical Board of California. He can be easily reached at Menlo Optical, 1166 University Drive, Menlo Park. 650-322-3900.

# Unparalleled Views



180 GOLDEN OAK DRIVE ■ PORTOLA VALLEY

Welcome to this multi-level, Contemporary house perched on approx. 3.82 acres overlooking sweeping views of the South Bay hills. A flexible floor plan includes living room, formal dining room, family kitchen, and large family room with sliding doors opening to multiple decks. Each of two master suites features a wood-burning fireplace, private bath with tub and stall shower, walk-in closets and balcony or deck. Two additional bedrooms with newly refurbished, en-suite baths occupy the lower level. Attached two-car garage. Award-winning Portola Valley schools.

- Four bedrooms, four and one-half-baths
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## LETTERS

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citizen exemption. I won't, but no one would judge a senior who needed that relief.

All those folks who are concerned about losing local control of schools or complaining about government takeover of our rights should be out pounding the streets in favor of Measure C. This is local control at its best.

One of the beautiful things about this country is that we band together to support each other. When we established a public school system for everyone, our country flourished.

**Margo McAuliffe**  
East Creek Drive, Menlo Park

### Most parking plazas in need of repair

Editor:

Menlo Park may have ample

off-street downtown parking space in its set of parking plazas.

However, except for the three westernmost plazas south of Santa Cruz, the plazas are in abysmal condition and way past needing renovation.

**James Madison**  
Holly Avenue, Menlo Park

### Time to think about 'people' conservation

Editor:

We hear a lot about the need for water conservation, land conservation, and energy conservation, but we seldom — if ever — hear or read, about **people conservation.**

After all, what uses up our natural resources? It doesn't matter how much each one of us tightens our belts in consuming natural resources, as long as people continue to over produce, we will never make

ends meet.

**Jackie Leonard-Dimmick**  
Walnut Avenue, Atherton

### Cargill water could bring golf to Bayfront Park

Editor:

I have listened to the ranting and raving of the radical element of environmentalists. I have listened to the proponents of the project. I have walked my Pomeranian hundreds of times around Pacific Shores. I have contributed hundreds of yards of waste to the Marsh Road dumpsite, now known as Bedwell Bayfront Park. It is ironic that Save the Bay chose this site for their press conference.

From what I know now, I am 100 percent behind the Cargill project.

Water is not an issue. There are copious amounts of recycled water available to the north and south of the project. Enough, in fact, to turn Bayfront Park into a year-round Emerald Isle with an environmentally friendly golf course. Some of the economic "green" that would produce wouldn't hurt our local economy. With a scarcity of golf courses, golfers now travel out of the area. And, using the trapped methane for on-site power genera-

tion is another positive.

Cargill, do you hear me?

**Jack Hickey**  
Ferndale Way, Emerald Hill

### With Cargill, Redwood City changed direction

Editor:

Thank you to the 92 current and former Bay Area elected officials who signed the letter expressing their disagreement with the massive salt pond development project Redwood City is reviewing.

When I moved to Redwood City 10 years ago, I was impressed with the city's fleet of hybrid vehicles, restoration of the historic City Hall building, and infill housing projects at Franklin and Maple streets. Now I'm furious and baffled.

The city's own planners recently recommended that when Cargill retired the salt ponds, some of the property be used for badly needed playing fields and the rest incorporated into the Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge.

But rather than attract business and residents to the existing downtown and restore our precious Baylands, Redwood City

is considering filling in the salt ponds to build a competing city — at sea level, with no potable water on site, and adding traffic to already congested freeways and roads. What made Redwood City go so far off the environmentally sustainable track?

**Mimi Campbell**  
Redwood City

### Redwood City officials have Cargill conflict

Editor:

I was surprised to read that Redwood City council member Rosanne Foust and city attorney Roy Abrams both say there's no conflict of interest with Ms. Foust being CEO of the San Mateo County Economic Development Association (SAMCEDA) — even though that group formally endorses Cargill's massive Bay fill development. Cargill even sits on the SAMCEDA Board.

In addition, Ms. Foust is a board officer of the Redwood City Chamber of Commerce, which has voted to support the Cargill plan.

Sounds like a major conflict of interest to me.

**Pat Marriott**  
Los Altos

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## MARILYN DOWNS CARYOTAKIS

Marilyn Downs Caryotakis of Ladera, California died Tuesday, March 16, 2010, the day before her 80th birthday on St. Patrick's Day.

Marilyn was born in Aurora, Illinois on March 17, 1930 to Lois Christine and William Benham Downs. A talented pianist and singer, she earned her BA in music from Oberlin University, followed by a masters degree in teaching from Stanford University. She taught grade school in Palo Alto before committing her time to raising three children.

She was an active member of her church, PEO, and the Sunday Singers, where she enjoyed singing and accompanying on the piano. She was very involved in music education in the local school districts, assisting in musical productions, choral instruction and band activities as well as teaching private piano lessons in her home with a select group of lucky students.

Marilyn married George Caryotakis in 1953, and they had three children, Christine, Paul, and Peter. She was a devoted grandmother to her eight grandchildren, Katina, Carissa, Benjamin, Samantha, Sofia, Griffin, Nikolas, and Christopher. She is also survived by a brother, William Downs, of Austin, Minnesota.

The family suggests that memorial gifts be given to your favorite school district. Arrangements by Crippen & Flynn Woodside Chapel

PAID OBITUARY

### MARSALA

continued from page 3

another special meeting on the issue, promising that one would be scheduled soon.

### Residency question

The issue of Mr. Marsala's residency in town also was discussed, with several people, including Mayor McKeithen, saying that they have tried to get a specific address of residency from the town, to no avail.

Ms. McKeithen suggested that the town might hire an investigator to determine once and for all where Mr. Marsala is living — an

important matter given that a person must live in town in order to legally serve on the council.

Mr. Marsala explained that he rented out his house on Emilie Avenue in early December, with the expectation that the family would be out by sometime in January. But medical complications for the Stanford Hospital patient led to his extending the lease for the family.

Since then, he said, he has been living in Atherton in the homes of out-of-town friends, with the exception of a few weeks around Christmas. He also has made a few extended trips to see his mother in New Orleans, and to help her move after the death last

fall of his father, he said.

Resident Frank Merrill, who attended the special meeting, said afterward that hiring an investigator to determine where Mr. Marsala lives would be a waste of money. "I take him at his word, and cannot see spending money to (prove where) this person lives," he said.

He also criticized the mayor for holding the meeting even though it was unlikely that a council quorum would show up. "There's a cost to having these meetings," he said. Given the town's dire financial situation, paying the town staff and attorney to show up for a meeting that was likely to be canceled "just doesn't make sense." ■

### ■ POLICE CALLS

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

#### ATHERTON

**Grand theft report:** Leaf blower stolen from truck, Las Lomitas Elementary School, 299 Alameda de las Pulgas, March 22.

**Residential burglary report:** Jewelry stolen, Lowery Drive, March 23.

**Stolen vehicle report:** Green golf cart, Menlo College, 1000 El Camino Real, March 22.

#### MENLO PARK

##### Grand theft reports:

■ Bike valued at \$800 stolen, 1100 block of Merrill St., March 22.

■ Jewelry of unknown value stolen from residence, 1200 block of Willow Road, March 25.

##### Stolen vehicle reports:

■ Maroon 1993 Honda Accord, 700 block of Santa Cruz Ave., March 19.

■ Blue 1989 Toyota Camry, 1100 block of Willow Road, March 24.

■ Gray Hyundai Tiburon, 1100 block of Trinity Drive, March 25.

##### Auto burglary reports:

■ Apple iPod valued at \$50 stolen, 800 block of Fremont St., March 20.

■ Stereo, subwoofers and amplifier with total value of \$212 stolen, 700 block of Pierce Road, March 22.

**Theft report:** Unauthorized use of credit card to pay for \$47 cell phone bill, 1000 block of Cascade Drive, March 23.

##### Fraud reports:

■ Identity theft with no reported loss, 1300 block of Hoover St., March 19.

■ False identity used to open bank accounts, 600 block of Hamilton Ave., March 23.

■ Unauthorized use of credit card, 1300 block of O'Brien Drive, March 24.

**Spousal abuse report:** first block of Middlefield Road, March 25.

**Child Protective Services report:** 1500 block of San Antonio St., March 25.

#### WOODSIDE

**Fraud report:** Victim discovered unauthorized charges to account of \$5,000 for unauthorized cell phone service over two years, 3000 block of Tripp Road, March 18.

#### PORTOLA VALLEY

##### Theft reports:

■ Unauthorized credit cards in victim's name with total charges of \$5,000, 200 block of Echo Lane, March 19.

■ Unauthorized charge accounts at several Southern California department stores opened in victim's name, Alpine and Los Trancos roads, March 21.

■ Wallet either lost or stolen, 100 block of Mapache Drive, March 18.

#### WEST MENLO PARK

**Commercial burglary report:** Business opened with key, cash stolen from register and cash box, and business relocked, 3000 block of Alameda de las Pulgas, March 21.

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## Atherton challenges

### Budget forecast predicts major deficits for next four years

There is good reason for Atherton residents to shake their heads and wonder how their cash-strapped town will pay its bills in the next few years.

The distressing news came at the council's March 17 budget discussion, where finance director Louise Ho's worse-case scenario shows that unless there are dramatic changes soon, the town's \$7.2 million in reserves could virtually evaporate in the next five years.

The problem: expenses outstrip revenues every year through 2013-14 by an average of \$1.3 million a year. The biggest bump up comes from a nearly \$2 million increase in salary and benefits over the period. And the current year shows a \$284,000 expense related to settlement of a lawsuit filed by a police officer.

Another dark cloud hanging over the budget is an internal council disagreement over the matter of refunding \$1.6 million in road-impact fees, which the council has decided were collected improperly and should be given back.

At the March 17 meeting, Mayor Kathy McKeithen, referring to the five-year negative budget forecast, said she could not approve taking \$1.1 million from reserves (projected to drop below \$500,000 in the fifth budget year) to pay back the fees under such conditions. City staff had characterized the payback as correcting an accounting error that improperly put the road-impact fees into the general fund. She was joined by council member Jim Dobbie in opposing the transfer, which requires a super-majority of four votes to pass.

Mr. Dobbie said the council should not have rescinded the

road-impact fee at all, while member Jerry Carlson countered: "It's a simple issue. We're taking ill-gotten gains that ended up in our general reserves. I don't see why we need to keep bickering about it."

In April, the council will see a proposal to change the policy requiring a four-fifths vote to a simple majority. It will only require a simple majority vote to make the change.

### A bad decision to table police oversight proposal

On another matter at the March 17 meeting, the council missed a golden opportunity to tone down the current negative rhetoric about the police department when it summarily tabled a proposal to consider forming a police oversight committee.

With Mayor McKeithen dissenting, the council voted 4-1 to shelve a proposal promoted heavily by residents Jon Buckheit (see guest opinion, opposite page) and Peter Carpenter to establish an oversight committee for the department.

The two men had high hopes, as did we, that the council would at least hear their proposal to form a committee to help ease tensions that have risen lately with the disclosure of how police treated Mr. Buckheit during a domestic disturbance several years ago. After a county judge declared him factually innocent in the case, Mr. Buckheit filed a lawsuit against the town in federal court in San Francisco.

Mr. Carpenter, president of the Atherton Civic Interest League, has long been a crusader for open government and had hoped the council would hear testimony from proponents of the plan. Now that opportunity is apparently lost, although Mr. Carpenter said he will continue to work on the issue of police review. If it does come up again, we believe the council should give police review serious consideration.

**EDITORIAL**

*The opinion of The Almanac*

**LETTERS**

*Our readers write*

### Fourth-grader says vote yes on Measure C

*Editor:*

I am a fourth-grade student at Oak Knoll Elementary School. My teacher has received a pink slip (layoff notice) and I think he is a great teacher. This was his first year at Oak Knoll and a lot of people have come to like him a lot.

I think everyone should vote yes on Measure C. It would be very sad if so many of our school's great teachers left Oak Knoll. It is a very small cost to pay to get to keep all our schools' great teachers and specialists. I think our school district has some great schools in it and I want to keep it that way.

**Samantha Jeffrey**  
Douglass Way, Atherton

### Belle Haven pastor supports Gateway project

*Editor:*

Communities throughout the Peninsula are looking to our elected officials for leadership and action to lift us out of this current economic slump. Low-income



Woodside Library Collection

## Our Regional Heritage

In the early 1900s, the Williamson Brothers general merchandise store near the intersection of Woodside and Whiskey Hill roads became the central gathering place of what came to be known as Woodside.

families and communities of color have been especially hard hit by the slowdown in our economy.

We believe that hope is on the horizon for those of us who

live, work and raise families in the Belle Haven neighborhood of Menlo Park. Menlo Park resident and businessman David Bohannon, and his family, have

proposed a stimulus package for Menlo Park — the Menlo Gateway project. This project makes

See **LETTERS**, next page

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

sense for our community.

We in Belle Haven support this project and urge the City Council to vote positively and move the project forward when you meet on April 6.

We support Menlo Gateway because it brings jobs to our families and our community. We support it because it will generate revenue for Menlo Park for city services. And we support it because it makes better and more productive use of land already developed back in the 1950s.

Our community understands that Menlo Gateway will not be built for several years. But approval is hope, and hope is what many of our struggling families need.

We also urge the City Council to be cautious of those who would burden this project with unrealistic requirements that are meant solely to stop the project. Menlo Gateway is a benefit to our city and community, that's what we all need to remember.

The November City Council elections are fast approaching. We in the Belle Haven will be watching and listening to the actions and words of the Menlo Park City Council. We hope you hear us now and approve the Menlo Gateway proposal.

**Dr. H.L. Bostic**  
Apostolic Original Holy Church of God

## Gateway project wins key supporter

By Mitch Slomiak



The Menlo Gateway project affords our community an opportunity to support a major commercial real estate development that raises the bar in addressing the challenges of climate change.

I could not have imagined writing the preceding sentence last September when I examined the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the originally proposed project. Then, although the buildings and grounds already included some impressive sustainability features, my attention was riveted on the greenhouse gas emissions expected to result from the overall project.

Specifically, the draft report said the new buildings and associated transportation were projected to result in a net increase of about 24,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>, over and above the roughly 5,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the vehicle trips as well as natural gas and electricity use related to the current old office buildings that the project would be replacing. The report noted that this 24,000 metric ton net increase could be reduced to 15,000 metric tons through some vague voluntary measures then being "considered" by the developer.

For several years, the Green Ribbon Citizens' Committee has closely studied the challenges of climate change and the scientific mandate to reduce greenhouse gases by 80 percent by 2050 to avert the worst consequences of climate change. This is a responsibility shared by every individual, business, community, and political unit, as noted in the

Climate Action Plan unanimously adopted by the Menlo Park City Council last spring. The greenhouse gas analysis for the action plan showed our overall Menlo Park community emitted nearly 500,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> annually in the baseline year of 2005.

Against this background, the Gateway impact report was shocking to me, as it appeared that this project alone would result in a 3 percent to 5 percent increase for our community above existing levels. My comments on the report called on the developer to eliminate this CO<sub>2</sub> increase with mitigations and offsets.

David Bohannon, the developer and a 2007 Green Ribbon Citizens Committee participant, immediately contacted me. He expressed a desire to reduce the CO<sub>2</sub> footprint of Gateway to as low a level as was technically and financially feasible and invited me into a dialogue with him and his environmental consultants over several meetings to seriously explore solutions.

These efforts have resulted in significant changes to the project that I find commendable. The buildings' CO<sub>2</sub>e (equivalent carbon dioxide) emissions came down to roughly 3,100 tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e and the developer has agreed to buy offsets from a stringently monitored program to zero out the buildings' remaining impact. If every existing commercial structure in Menlo Park could be somehow remodeled to the standards of Gateway, with a similar approach to offsets, nearly 30 percent of our community's CO<sub>2</sub> impact would be eliminated.

Transportation-related emissions are a trickier issue, as car-trips are more complex to assign to a specific development. The developer has agreed to implement robust transportation demand management strate-

gies likely to reduce the greenhouse gas impact from car trips by 17 percent to about 8,200 metric tons per year in 2020.

Thus, the revised Gateway project — though very large — is estimated to result in a net greenhouse gas footprint increase of about 3,200 metric tons per year over the development it will replace, which increases our community's total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 0.6 percent.

However, the actual increase is likely to be lower, because these emissions estimates conservatively assume that every single car trip to these buildings is a "new" trip. Because many of the tenants would likely be relocating here from other locations in our area, this emissions increase is likely well under half this 3,200-metric ton estimate.

And during the life of the project I expect that large-scale shifts in transportation patterns and improved vehicle fuel efficiency will further mitigate the remaining emissions conservatively estimated for 2020.

If our City Council and the developer agree to **require** the sustainability features, mitigations and offsets that are now in the project, as well as ensure that any payments to the city for shortfalls in transportation demand results are used for greenhouse gas reductions, then I believe Menlo Park will be raising the bar for other communities in addressing such gas impacts for commercial developments.

Better yet, the innovative approaches embodied in this project can be used as a starting point for evaluating future commercial real estate development in our city when our council is ready to adopt land-use guidelines related to climate change.

**Mitch Slomiak is a Menlo Park Environmental Quality Commissioner and Co-Chair, Menlo Park Green Ribbon Citizens' Committee.**

## Senior citizen supports Measure C

Editor:

I am writing as a senior citizen, a 40-year Menlo Park homeowner, a parent of two children who received excellent educations in the Menlo Park public schools, and a retired teacher from Menlo-Atherton High School.

All of these hats lead me to support Measure C, to provide funds that will help to maintain the quality of education that so benefited my children. Having a well-educated populace is in my best interest and a benefit to everyone.

Even though I no longer have children attending our schools, I care about the children who are there now. When my children were in school, others paid property taxes to support their education and I was very grateful. The way I say "thank you" is to continue to pay my fair share.

My fair share is less than 50 cents per day! Even though my property taxes are high, it's not as if I can't manage 50 cents a day! It's a bargain, and if I couldn't manage it, I could take advantage of the senior

See **LETTERS**, page 16

## Wrong questions and wrong answers

By Jonathan Buckheit



The purpose of a citizen police review board is precisely what its name implies: allowing citizens of a community to review matters relating to its police department. It is not a sanction against the police chief, police officers, or existing policies in the department.

Atherton is struggling with large budget deficits and the rising cost of the police department, which takes more than half the existing budget. As pension costs continue to grow, residents will need to struggle with the issue of keeping the department as an independent agency (surely involving increased taxes) versus outsourcing police services to either the county sheriff or larger neighboring cities.

At the March 17 council meeting, what was supposed to be the beginning of a process to deliberate citizen review rapidly devolved into a determination that review isn't necessary in Atherton. The correct questions should have involved how citizen involvement and review could enhance police services, resident satisfaction and involvement, and thereby resident buy-in. Instead, rhetorical questions were presented that amounted to a quick trial about

whether or not the police department had committed infractions that justified resident review processes.

Council Member Elizabeth Lewis noted the small size of the department, and that the number of citizen complaints had not been large enough to justify resident review. However, citizens reviewing police complaints is actually more applicable to small police agencies than large ones, as small agencies lack independent internal affairs units. The number of citizen complaints in Atherton must be measured in relation to the size of the police force itself, and the realization that any police organization will always have a minority of individuals who have had problems simply because almost all residents just experience routine contact with it.

Council member Jerry Carlson indicated that he had not heard any compelling arguments made for the existence of citizen review. Despite also not being willing to listen to any, he missed the point that citizen review does not require a special argument to be made. It is the default for all aspects of our governmental functions, so in my view actually requires a special argument against it.

Council Member Jim Dobbie said that he could not support a citizen review board until Chief Guerra had been on the job for one year. This comment is disharmonious with other citizen review practices in

Atherton, such as the audit committee's relationship with the finance director.

There was no opportunity to consider what positive effects might come about through the implementation of citizen review. These include: discussion of police policies and practices between police leadership and residents, helping to justify the special police parcel tax that must grow if the department is to continue within Atherton, and community awareness.

Citizen adjudication of police conduct complaints should have been viewed as the community having a much more direct link into expectations of police behavior instead of what is now quite indirect (election of city council members who appoint a city manager, who appoints a police chief).

Some members of the police department may view the vote as a victory and endorsement. They, too, have associated the wrong questions with the existence of citizen review and come up with the wrong answers.

The opportunity for an organization to get closer to its customers is a practice that, in the business world, is considered extraordinarily valuable. Could any of the functions I have outlined be considered a rebuke? Only in a pessimistic view of the process. Eastern philosophy emphasizes considering weaknesses as strengths, and vice versa, and more than anything, this opportunity was squandered on March 17.

**Jonathan Buckheit is an Atherton resident.**

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