

READERS' CHOICE 2010
Vote for your favorite – Page 27

The Almanac

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

JUNE 2, 2010 | VOL. 45 NO. 40



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Frozen yogurt face-off

**Is this town
big enough for
four yogurt
stores?**

See Section 2



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Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Martha J. Kanter, under secretary for the U.S. Department of Education, converses in Menlo Park with her former protege, Anthony Lin, now a field representative for Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Menlo Park.

Posing a challenge to Silicon Valley

By **Chris Kenrick**

Palo Alto Weekly

A top federal education official laid down a challenge to Silicon Valley Thursday: Use cutting-edge cognitive science to reinvent testing for students.

Calling for top-to-bottom reforms in America's lagging K-12 system, U.S. Undersecretary of Education Martha Kanter challenged scientists to figure out how to cut in half the time students spend taking tests while improving test content to yield instant, high-quality data.

"We should be able to know where students are in real time, just like we use text messaging," Ms. Kanter told an audience assembled May 27 for a breakfast fundraiser in Menlo Park for the nonprofit Aim High. The group works with low-income youth in middle schools and high schools to inspire a "life-long love of learning and sense of community."

Aim High operates 12 Bay Area sites, including two at charter schools on the Peninsula: the Stanford University-sponsored East Palo Alto Academy High School and Summit Preparatory Charter High School in Redwood City.

Citing a familiar litany of failures in the U.S. education system, Ms. Kanter said the Obama administration's \$4.3 billion "Race to the Top" program employs "Silicon Valley-style competition" to incite fundamental reforms.

High on the reform list is creating some linkage between teacher compensation and student achievement, a concept historically opposed by teachers' unions.

But "unions are coming to the table," Ms. Kanter said.

"They are a very important partner in this. Contracts are being redefined, and you see lots of innovation. We want to capitalize on those centers of change around the country."

Unions and managers have found common ground in some districts through a mutual interest in student achievement and the need of teachers to "feel inspired," Ms. Kanter said.

Other administration goals are raising academic standards, improving teaching quality, and increasing graduation rates in both high school and college, she said.

"We need to double the rates of achievement. The president said he wants us to have the highest proportion of college graduates in the

world."

Currently, she said, more than half the nation's college students do not earn a degree in six years and, in community colleges, only 25 percent finish in two years.

Ms. Kanter said she met this week with leaders of education schools — the source of 85 percent of the nation's teachers — to discuss the administration's reform agenda.

Another Obama initiative — to require teachers in the federal Head Start preschool program for low-income children to have bachelor's degrees — has proven controversial within the program's ranks.

"We have some of them who don't have much schooling, but we believe 0 to 6 is a critically important time in the life of people in the country and we need well-trained people," she said.

The winners in "Race to the Top" so far, Delaware and Tennessee, are models for the kind of reform the administration wants to see.

Because Delaware and Tennessee are such small states and required comparatively less money, most of the Race to the Top money will be allocated this fall in a second round, for which 38 states have

See **KANTER**, page 7

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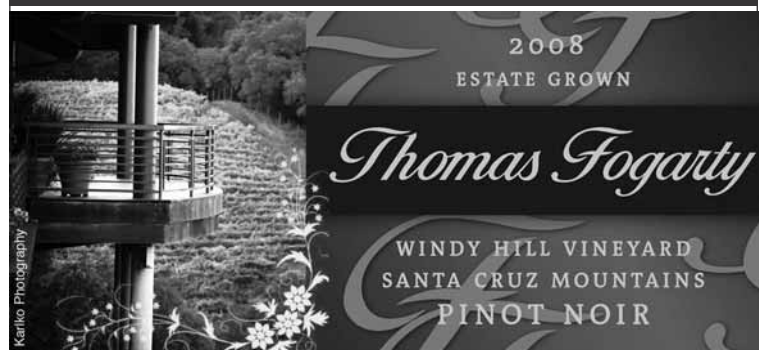
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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Was councilwoman's house built lawfully?

■ Atherton investigates the question, but Mayor Kathy McKeithen says any probe should be conducted by an independent party.

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor

The question has been raised, publicly and emotionally, for at least two years: Did Atherton City Councilwoman Elizabeth Lewis and her husband, Joe, violate town building law when they constructed a new house and accessory unit on their half-acre lot on Emilie and Alejandra avenues some five years ago?

In response to a request by Mayor Kathy McKeithen for enough information to determine whether the town should hire an independent investigator to resolve the issue once and for all, the town recently embarked on an in-house review of the matter.

That, however, is the wrong response, according to the mayor.

"I do not believe it is appropriate for ANYONE in our town adminis-

tration to be investigating this matter," Ms. McKeithen said in a letter to Town Attorney Wynne Furth, who is handling the review. If an investigation is to be done, it should be by an independent outside party, she insisted.

The Lewis house, which had an Emilie Avenue address before it was demolished and rebuilt in 2005-06, now fronts Alejandra. Ms. Lewis, who co-owns a property management company, was elected to the council in 2008.

Complaints about the size of her house, and possible code violations in its construction, were growing in volume even during Ms. Lewis' campaign for office. A key critic was former finance director John Johns, who was suing the town for wrongful termination, asserting that his firing was in retaliation for his building department audit that



Elizabeth Lewis



Kathy McKeithen

revealed a range of irregularities.

The issue seemed to drop beneath the radar for a time. But when Mr. Johns won a hefty lawsuit settlement from the town earlier this year, he renewed his public campaign to have the town investigate whether the Lewis home construction project violated the town's building laws. At the April 21 council meeting, packets of town documents and analysis by Mr. Johns pertaining to the project were handed out.

The documentation, he wrote in the packet's cover letter, included evidence of "falsification of permit records and violations of Atherton's zoning ordinance" by Ms. Lewis

■ AHERTON

— accusations Ms. Lewis hotly denies.

"Who are the people accusing me here — and why?" she said in frustration last week when asked to comment about the review. "We followed every rule, every regulation ... followed every approval process," she said, adding that the project was signed off by the building department in March 2006.

Mike Wasmann, the current building official, told The Almanac in 2008, when the issue was first raised publicly, that he was unaware of any problems or questions regarding the building project. He noted that calculating fees and checking for zoning issues would have been handled by Mike Hood, who was the building official at the time.

Ms. Lewis said she and her husband bought the property in 1997, when "it was a run-down shack" with an abandoned car overgrown

with weeds on the parcel. The couple's improvement to the property cleaned up "an eyesore" while following all direction given by the town.

"I was not an elected official at the time," she said. "I was simply an Atherton resident ... and did not receive any special treatment.

"This should not happen to residents — this kind of after-the-fact dredging up of something."

Looking at the record

Mayor McKeithen said that soon after the April council meeting, she and Councilman Jim Dobbie met with City Manager Jerry Gruber about a possible way to put the matter to rest — with the help of an outside review, if necessary. But she was dismayed when she learned that an in-depth review by staff was being launched, she said.

In her letter to Ms. Furth, the town attorney, Mayor McKeithen said she believed that "the only

See **HOUSE**, page 8

Menlo Park council split on Bohannon project

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park Councilman Heyward Robinson supplied a cliffhanger at the City Council meeting Tuesday, May 25, for people who are closely following the city's negotiations over the Menlo Gateway office/hotel complex.

Mr. Robinson said at the meeting that, while he's inclined to support the prodigious development project near Marsh Road and Bayfront Expressway, he feels uncomfortable with the fact that two of his council colleagues, Kelly Fergusson and Andy Cohen, appear to be leaning toward rejecting the project under the current terms of negotiations.

In a vote taken for the council's internal purposes, Ms. Fergusson and Mr. Cohen signaled that they wouldn't support the project unless the Bohannon Development Co. agrees to allow the city to share in some of the profit, if that profit far exceeds expectations. The Bohannon company has already said it would not agree to such an arrangement.

John Boyle and Rich Cline signaled that a profit-sharing deal would not be a make-or-break item for them. Mr. Robinson abstained

in the vote.

The council is expected to decide whether to approve the project at its June 15 meeting.

"I want to support this project, I want to vote for it on (June) 15th," Mr. Robinson said. "It's gonna be a lot easier for me to vote for it on the 15th if it's a 4-1 or 5-0 vote."

Mr. Robinson's position might have been an honest appraisal of his stance. It might also have been a canny negotiating maneuver, with negotiations over the project ongoing.

Mr. Cohen and Ms. Fergusson constitute the council's subcommittee on the project, and have been more closely involved in the city's negotiations with the developer than the rest of the council. They are also the only two council members not up for re-election in November.

Mr. Cohen said at the meeting that he was "at least a little uncomfortable with the way the negotiations have gone," adding that he is "working my hardest to find something I can live with."

Ms. Fergusson said there are "pieces of the project that don't sit well with me," especially with regard to site layout.

See **BOHANNON**, page 8



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Steve Cousins, CEO of Willow Garage in Menlo Park, speaks to reporters and bloggers while being flanked by robots controlled by humans from a remote location. The faces of the humans — Rachel Kremen, left, and Erico Guizzo — show in the monitors.

Reporter struggles to relate to a robot-human

By Sean Howell
Almanac Staff Writer

Robots! That was the subject of a May 26 press gathering at the Menlo Park headquarters of Willow Garage, a company that

designs ... well, robots.

The company was celebrating the "launch" of a program through which it's sending 11 of its mechanical, two-armed, radar-equipped beasts, worth \$400,000 each, to universities and other institutions around

the world.

In allowing the universities to tinker with and design software for the robots, the company hopes the program will speed the industry's development. It envisions

See **ROBOT**, page 8



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La Lomas School District Notice of Public Hearing

The Las Lomas Elementary School District will hold a public hearing to present the recommendations of the District Advisory Committee on Surplus Property. The property being reviewed is the Ladera School site located at 360 La Cuesta Drive, Portola Valley. The meeting will be held Monday, June 7, 2010 at 7 p.m. at the Ladera Recreation District, 150 Andeta Way, Portola Valley.

Making it safer to walk, bike to school

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

A serious effort is under way to get Portola Valley students to walk or bike to and from Ormondale and Corte Madera schools, and to get their parents out of their roles as chauffeurs.

The Town Council, at its May 26 meeting, discussed a recent report on what it would take to create so-called safe routes so that kids could conveniently bike or walk to school.

Enticements will be necessary. The report included results from a December 2009 household survey in which parents cited distance, traffic safety and convenience as the top reasons for driving their kids to school.

"It's going to take some doing to get people out of their cars

is the bottom line," said Anne Campbell, the superintendent of the Portola Valley School District and a member of the group that prepared the report.

The town has a network of trails, but some may need fences or new surfaces, council members noted. Kids from Corte Madera, for example, tend to walk on the surface of Alpine Road, perhaps because the trail is unfriendly to the small wheels on student book carriers, Councilman Ted Driscoll said.

The likely next step is the formation of an ad hoc committee representing a cross-section of the community, a common solution in this town. The initial report was the product of a group that included representatives from the school, town government and residential communities, and the Trails and

Traffic committees.

Go to is.gd/crVNF (case sensitive) and turn to page 67 to view the survey results.

Go to is.gd/crVG8 (case sensitive) for an overview of the project.

On the traffic safety issue, Mr. Driscoll suggested pressuring drivers to slow down by equipping the town's radar-gun trailer with a camera and posting photos of speeders on the town's website.

"We have found the enemy and it is us," he said.

That may not be the only enemy. The equestrian community, as represented by the Trails Committee, "does not believe that these trails should be for bicycles. They're for equestrians," Councilwoman Maryann Derwin said. "They are not going to budge on sharing the trails."

Calls to Trails Committee officials were not returned by press time. ■

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Atherton housekeeper gets 16 months for theft of jewelry valued at \$180,000

An Atherton housekeeper at a Selby Lane residence was sentenced May 25 to 16 months in state prison on charges of grand theft and possession of stolen property in connection with the theft of jewelry valued at \$180,000, prosecutors said.

Renee Cuela, 44, who pleaded "no contest" to the charges in February, must pay restitution to victim of \$64,000, plus \$560 in fines. She was sentenced by Judge Susan Etezadi of the San Mateo County Superior Court.

The theft occurred in August 2008.

Her prison time will be reduced by the nine days she spent in county jail, said Chief Deputy District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe in a report.

Ms. Cuela, who is now in custody, will serve 50 percent of her sentence since this conviction does not involve registering as a sex offender, nor does it qualify as a strike under the three-strikes law, Assistant District Attorney Karen Guidotti said.

The missing jewelry came to light when the residents of the Selby Lane home returned from

a trip to discover what initially seemed like a burglary, but there were no signs of forced entry and the house was unlocked, prosecutors said.

The stolen jewelry included a pair of diamond earrings valued at \$60,000, two wedding rings and a diamond necklace.

The nanny employed at the residence told authorities that Ms. Cuela had taken her shopping one afternoon and "constantly acted like she wanted to keep (the) nanny away from the house," prosecutors said.

Ms. Cuela also stole about \$10,000 over several months through the use of the nanny's debit card, prosecutors added.

Saying she could not face either the family or the nanny, Ms. Cuela left them letters in May 2009 admitting that she had stolen from them, prosecutors said.

Ms. Cuela later admitted in an interview with police that she had acted in concert with her boyfriend and had pawned much of the stolen jewelry, prosecutors said. She also apologized for the thefts.

■ BIRTHS

Menlo Park

■ Leilani and Paul Parquer, a daughter, May 20, Sequoia Hospital.

Portola Valley

■ Julie and Erin Whalen, a daughter, May 9, Sequoia Hospital.

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MENLO PARK,
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WOODSIDE

Menlo Park native takes over at Fox Theatre

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

Dreams and the process of fulfilling them has become the business of Menlo Park native Eric Lochtefeld, the co-founder of a for-profit global clearinghouse for internships called University of Dreams, and the new operator of the Fox Theatre, the Little Fox nightclub and the offices upstairs in the 2200 block of Broadway in Redwood City.



Eric Lochtefeld

Redwood City.

"We literally just got the keys last week," Mr. Lochtefeld said in an interview. "Now maybe my dream can be realized here."

The lights in the buildings have been off for months, but getting new light and sound systems — and attracting compelling musical acts and paying customers into the 1,500-seat theater and 250-seat nightclub — won't be entirely foreign to Mr. Lochtefeld, who said he's been in the music industry as a producer for seven years.

"This is second nature to me," he said. "It's like riding a bike. It's not like I forgot how to do it."

He will have experienced help. Mr. Lochtefeld said he has hired a production manager associated with rock-music extravaganzas that typically draw 750,000 fans, and the venue manager for



Photo courtesy of Eric Lochtefeld

A Menlo Park native son, Eric Lochtefeld, has taken over operations at the Fox Theatre and Little Fox nightclub on Broadway in Redwood City. When he reopens the theater in the fall, he will be bringing in R&B, jazz and alternative rock bands.

the Houston Astrodome.

Decisions on which talent to invite to the stages will be made in the summer, Mr. Lochtefeld said. When asked for examples, he read from a list of Fox Theatre acts from the past decade, including musicians Joan Baez, Lyle Lovett, BB King and Kenny Loggins, and comedians Bill Cosby, Dana Carvey and Lily Tomlin.

Mr. Lochtefeld said he would not rule out any music genre, but said he is likely to focus on rhythm & blues, jazz and alternative rock.

Space for dancing, in the theater anyway, will be a simple matter of removing the 500 to 600 movable seats down in front, he said. Liquor licenses have been applied for.

Go to www.foxdream.com for more information.

Mr. Lochtefeld's other venture, the University of Dreams, will be relocated to office spaces above the theater.

The company is essentially a logistics partner for students seeking internships, including in hard-to-survive places such as Manhattan and Washington D.C., and hard-to-get positions such as with publisher Houghton Mifflin or the U.S. House of Representatives, according to the Web site.

A one-fee service sets up housing, meals, seminars and weekend excursions, Mr. Lochtefeld said.

Mr. Lochtefeld said he attended grades 1-8 at Sacred Heart Schools, then known as St. Joseph's School of the Sacred Heart, in Atherton. His parents still live in Menlo Park. ■

Tuesday: High-speed rail meeting in Menlo Park

There isn't any shortage of opinions in Menlo Park about the proposed California high-speed rail system. The city's residents are invited to share those opinions with city officials at a meeting Tuesday, June 1, starting at 6 p.m. in the Burgess Recreation Center.

The city is writing a letter to the California High-Speed Rail Authority, and is seeking input on which "alignments" the city should ask the rail agency to consider in building the high-speed rail line, planned to pass along the Caltrain corridor. Should the

trains run in a tunnel, in a trench, at ground level, or on an elevated structure?

The meeting will be held in Room 105 in the recreation center, located between Laurel and Alma streets in the Civic Center complex.

KANTER

continued from page 3

applied, Ms. Kanter said.

Before her appointment by President Obama last year, Ms. Kanter lived in Cupertino and was chancellor of the Foothill De Anza Community College District from 2003 to 2009. Prior to that she taught at De Anza College.

She will be the commencement

speaker June 5 at Palo Alto University, which recently changed its name from the Pacific Graduate School of Psychology.

To the crowd assembled at the Menlo Park office of the law firm Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe, Ms. Kanter reiterated commonly cited statistics from researchers at the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development: U.S. 15-year-olds rank 24th out of 29 developed nations in math literacy, and 21st

out of 30 in science.

"We're losing ground. We're not as competitive as we were 10, 20, 30 or 40 years ago.

"When we look at high school graduation rates, we're 18th out of 24 industrialized nations."

Ms. Kanter said America's national high-school dropout rate is 27 percent and more than 50 percent in some cities, including Detroit.

"It's a tremendous challenge for our country," she said. ■

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Gloria Darke



Improvements

Dear Gloria, I am doing improvements to my house to prepare it for sale in the near future. I feel like I've missed the market for this year but will put it on in the spring. My question is in two parts; first, do you in the business anticipate a better market next year? Secondly, in redoing my master bathroom, I am putting in marble floors. I would like to put in heated floors for us while we are here. Will I get my money back? Joe and Lisa

Dear Joe and Lisa, Your first question is the one we would all like the answer to. It would seem with so much uncertainty in the mar-

kets- the situation in California with high unemployment and huge deficits and the world economic turmoil- it is impossible to predict. The local market has been strong although prices remain down from the high. You cannot time the real estate market; there are just too many extraneous factors. The one thing we know is that this is a desirable area and always will be. To answer your second question; it's nice to have heated floors but I dare say it won't bring you much of a return on investment. Buyers mostly pay for what they can see. You might rethink that if you are definitely selling your house.

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



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Was house built lawfully?

HOUSE

continued from page 5

question which should be raised by Atherton administration is: 'Is there any indication, based on the facts, that the Atherton Building Code was not adhered to in the building of Ms. Lewis' home?'"

If the answer is yes, she said, an independent review by "an impartial person having no relationship with the town or any of its staff or council and recommended by an independent outside source should proceed."

Ms. Furth told The Almanac that she and Mr. Gruber decided to do an internal review after she consulted other city attorneys. "The consensus was that this is the kind of work that is typically done in-house," she said. "In a case like this, we think this is the appropriate procedure."

She noted that the council could call for an outside investigation, but if it doesn't, she will "provide accurate legal analysis" of the matter.

Ms. Furth also noted that neither she nor Mr. Gruber was employed by the town at the time the building project was in progress, so there shouldn't be a perception of a conflict of interest.

She said she hopes to complete the review by this week, but that will depend on whether more documentation is needed.

Complicating the matter is an apparent lack of access to pertinent documents in the building and planning departments. Ms. McKeithen's original request for a review was converted into an official Public Records Act request at the direction of Mr. Gruber, although the mayor said she didn't intend for the matter to be handled that way because she wasn't interested in reviewing the documents herself.

City Clerk Theresa DellaSanta then took charge of Ms. McKeithen's request for "any and all documents which a qualified outside planner would need to determine that the property ... either complies

with or exceeds the town's established (floor space requirements), set-backs or any other Atherton/statutory/state building requirements applicable at the time the home was built."

Within the 10-day response period legally required for PRA requests, Mayor McKeithen received a copy of a building permit issued in January 2003, but no other documents. Ms. DellaSanta also sent a form that Ms. McKeithen could fill out if she wanted copies of the home construction plans, but noted that the law requires consent of the current property owner and the professional who prepared the plans before copies could be provided to anyone.

Where are the documents?

Ms. McKeithen said she was surprised when she received only one document. She expected to be provided town staff and Planning Commission reports and calculations, building department approvals, and other documents. "It looks like I'm being led around by the nose," she said last week.

The home construction plans are available to the public on microfiche, but cannot be copied or removed from the building department. An incomplete survey by The Almanac of some of the items on microfiche revealed public documents mixed in among the construction plans, including a permit issued in September 2003, and a town-approved demolition permit dated May 2004.

There was no file pertaining to the project in the Planning Department, according to a staff member there, although Mr. Johns had provided a document dated July 10, 2000, signed by former building official Mike Hood, indicating that the project had gone before the town's Planning Commission the month before.

On May 27, The Almanac submitted a Public Records Act request for planning and building department documents pertaining to the project. ■

successful referendum drive, the issue might not appear on the ballot until late 2011, according to City Attorney Bill McClure.

The results of two polls on the project commissioned by the Bohannon company indicated that the project would pass by a wide margin in a popular vote.

As the council was weighing the idea of putting the project on the ballot, Mr. Robinson joked that the city should let participants in The Almanac's online forum decide. After the meeting, Mr. Robinson was promptly subjected to a written lashing by several of those participants, who accused him and other council members of being indecisive. ■

BOHANNON

continued from page 5

The council debated a host of other issues related to the project at the meeting, including whether the city should place it on the November ballot. Developer David Bohannon asked the city to consider doing so at the beginning of the meeting.

Under that scenario, the council could approve the project subject to a vote of the people, according to City Attorney Bill McClure.

Sending the project to voters would pre-empt a referendum, allowing the Bohannon company to have a final answer on whether it could proceed by the end of this year. If residents were to launch a



Eric Berger shows the arm manageability of the Willow Garage PR2 robot prior to the launch party for the PR2 beta program at the Menlo Park company.

Michelle Le/The Almanac

Struggling to relate to a robot-human

ROBOT

continued from page 5

the "PR2" robots eventually going to work as sort of helpers for the homebound — more "Small Wonder" than "Iron Man." While the software the robots run on is "open-source," the company is specifically discouraging military applications.

"We're trying to bring robots out of the factory, and into the real world," President and CEO Steve Cousins said to a room full of about 40 journalists, many of them obviously dispatched from specialized technology magazines and blogs.

Some of the journalists themselves showed up as robots, controlling the contraptions from remote locations. Their faces were visible on monitors affixed to dollies they could wheel around the room. The company initially designed these more rudimentary machines to allow Dallas Goecker, an employee who lives in Indiana, to telecommute.

These robots were spin-offs, not the main event, but were at least as interesting as their more intricate counterparts.

"I had never actually met him, and suddenly here he is, driving around and working on (other robots) with the technician," Mr. Cousins said of Mr. Goecker. "It changed the way he interacted with the company."

Having Mr. Goecker there in robot form is almost like having him there in the flesh, Mr.

Cousins said, though he noted that, of course, Mr. Goecker's robot isn't able to partake in some activities around the office, like eating lunch.

As Mr. Cousins spoke, the journalists who were there in robot form maneuvered themselves closer to hear him speak. But it took some effort to remind yourself to heed them; they kept getting edged out of the circle.

I tried to start a conversation with one of the robot people, a woman sitting at a desk in what appeared to be a bedroom (I didn't get her name, or her geographical location). It took her a moment to realize I was trying to talk to her. Because the camera through which she saw the room was attached above the monitor where her face appeared, it looked (to her) as if I was staring at her chest.

I stooped to the level of her monitor, as you would to a child, and did my best to ask good journalistic questions, but it was difficult to hear her voice through the speakers over the din in the room, and her face on the monitor kept freezing, then getting swept up in a digital swirl before reforming in a different position on the screen.

She said she was having trouble hearing Mr. Cousins over the ambient noise in the room, which might help to explain the look of vague consternation on her face during the reporter huddle. She could see the room pretty well, because the robot

had cameras both in the front and in the back, but she was worried about running into people.

As her answers to my questions got longer, the speaker kept cutting out, and I was only able to make out a word here and there. I was also becoming aware that I was standing directly in front of another robot-journalist to my left who was trapped in the crowd, but it didn't seem possible to include him/it in the conversation.

The whole experience was anxiety-inducing, and weirdly intimate: in a room full of people, I was looking into someone's bedroom. Yet the robot also seemed distant. I found myself basically less interested in her/it than I am in your average flesh-and-blood, present-in-the-room human, and felt a little guilty about this, and as a result had to try extra hard to make the necessary non-verbal sympathetic and reassuring signals to communicate that she had my full attention.

I was also trying harder than you might expect to resist an urge to simply walk away, mid-conversation: something it's never occurred to me to do before. It seemed like I could get away with it. But I stuck it out, waited for what seemed like a natural stopping point, and offered some accepted end-of-conversation pleasantries. I snuggled back into the huddle of reporters, my shoulders grazing theirs, happy to be back among my own species. ■

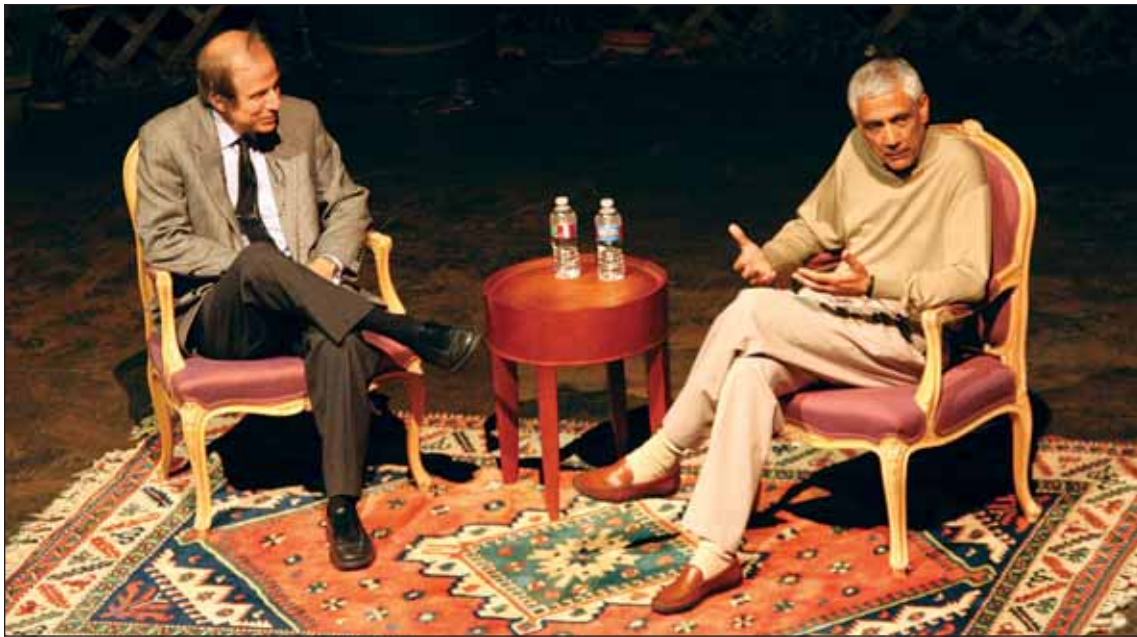


Photo by Dave Boyce/The Almanac

Portola Valley resident and green-oriented venture capitalist Vinod Khosla, right, on stage with KQED-radio's Michael Krasny, who interviewed Mr. Khosla and fielded climate-crisis-related questions from an audience of about 600 at the Mountain View Performing Arts Center on April 26.

Green entrepreneur Vinod Khosla is bullish on internal combustion, nuclear power

By **Dave Boyce**
Almanac Staff Writer

Vinod Khosla, a Portola Valley resident and a venture capitalist noted for his interest in cutting-edge green enterprises, is a native of India so you'd think he'd have some respect for sacred cows.

He doesn't. In addressing an audience of about 600 at the Mountain View Performing Arts Center on April 26, Mr. Khosla dismissed as not useful on any meaningful scale several grass-roots answers to the planet's climate crisis, including solar panels, hybrid vehicles and vehicles powered by lithium-ion batteries (at least not as we know these batteries today).

From a comfortable chair on a stage he shared with KQED-radio talk show host Michael Krasny, Mr. Khosla said he is bullish on the futures of the internal combustion engine, agriculture dedicated to producing bio-fuel, and nuclear power, but again, not as we know them today.

He used the expanding economy of India as an example. Which vehicle will the now-impooverished millions be likely to choose when they can afford a car, he asked. A \$2,500 Nano ultra-compact powered by a traditional gasoline engine, or a greener but more expensive hybrid?

The Nano, he predicted, will be the vehicle in which "99.5 percent" of the miles are driven. Therefore, he said, the best target for reducing India's greenhouse gas emissions should be the efficiency of the engine in the Nano.

A 50 percent improvement in efficiency is possible and would cut the car's emissions by 50 percent, he said. Add in

bio-fuel made from plant material grown on land not used for food production and you can cut emissions by another 50 percent. Problem solved.

Planting crops for bio-fuel would, in turn, raise standards of living in rural communities everywhere, he added, including farmland in the United States as winter cover crops. Such a change could simultaneously improve soil vitality, cut petroleum use, and eliminate fertilizer-based nitrogen runoff that pollutes streams, rivers and deltas, he said.

Specificity is Mr. Khosla's metier. Amorphous goals of cutting greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent by 2020 are the wrong focus, he said. Better to develop technologies that actually and significantly reduce emissions of vital processes, then deploy those systems everywhere.

Politics, of course, complicates things, he added.

An audience member asked Mr. Khosla about proposals for planetary engineering, such as adding tons of iron filings to the ocean to increase the uptake of atmospheric CO₂, or adding tons of sun-reflecting particles to the upper atmosphere.

"I think that's too dangerous," Mr. Khosla said. We should

study such ideas, but not deploy them without a "95 percent" certainty that they would work as planned.

"The planet is such a complex system that I don't think we can correctly assess the risk," he said. The hidden complexity behind the recent financial meltdown is a case in point, he added.

Mr. Khosla recommended reading "The Black Swan" by Nassim Nicholas Taleb, and "Cradle to Cradle" by William McDonough and Michael Braungart.

Technology is the answer

Today's nuclear power plants are bit of a headache to operate, Mr. Khosla noted. They must be refueled every 18 months, their radioactive waste is dangerous and must be transported and stored safely for a very long time, and they increase the supply of potential bomb material.

An idea for a new type of power plant is under development at TerraPower in Washington state, Mr. Khosla said. If the idea bears fruit, such plants would run on existing stockpiles of nuclear waste, would refuel on a 60-year interval and, with fissionable waste material not a problem, they would greatly reduce proliferation risks.

"Are there other ideas like that? I'm sure there are," Mr. Khosla said. "When we get the brightest minds to focus on these problems, we'll come up with solutions."

Technologists in India, he noted, are busy developing breeder reactors, which would dramatically increase supplies of fissionable material. "If you could replace (that technology) with something

■ INFORMATION

■ The program was part of the annual Wallace Stegner Lecture Series, presented by the Peninsula Open Space Trust (POST) and sponsored by Bill and Jean Lane of Portola Valley.

■ Go to openspacetrust.org for more information on POST and the lecture series.

See **KHOSLA**, page 14

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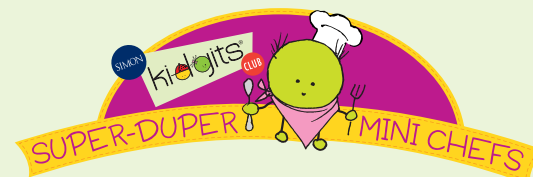
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From Heel Pain to Hammertoes: Common Foot Problems

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PAMF Podiatry
Tuesday, June 8, 7 – 8:30 p.m.

Your Baby's Doctor

Thursday, June 17, 7 – 9 p.m.



Living Well Classes 650-853-2960

Managing Your High Blood Pressure

Friday, June 25, 10 a.m. – noon

Functional Spine Training

First Monday of each month,
5 – 6:30 p.m.

What You Need to Know

About Warfarin (Coumadin)

Call for dates and times.

Nutrition and Diabetes Classes 650-853-2961

Adult Weight Management Group

Thursdays, 5:30 – 7 p.m.

Bariatric Pre-Op Class

Tuesday, June 8, 4 – 6:30 p.m.

Bariatric Nutrition SMA

First Tuesday of each month,
10:30 a.m. – noon

Prediabetes

First Monday of the month, 9 – 11:30 a.m., and third Wednesday of every other month, 4:30 – 7 p.m. Also in Redwood Shores, fourth Wednesday of every other month, 5:30 – 8 p.m.

Living Well with Diabetes

Tuesdays, 4:30 – 7 p.m., or Fridays,
9:30 a.m. – noon

Heart Smart Class

Third and fourth Tuesday of every other month, 5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Healthy Eating

Type 2 Diabetes

Third Wednesday of every other month,
5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Gestational Diabetes

Wednesdays, 2 – 4 p.m.



Pregnancy, Breastfeeding & Child Care Classes

Preparing for Birth

Saturdays, June 5, 12 & 19, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.; Thursdays, July 1 – Aug. 5, 7 – 9:15 p.m., 650-853-2960

Moving Through Pregnancy

Mondays, June 7, 14 & 21, 7 – 9 p.m., 650-853-2960

Preparing for Birth – A Refresher

Sunday, June 13, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m., 650-853-2960

Breastfeeding: Secrets for Success

Thursdays, June 24, 7 – 9 p.m., 650-853-2960

Raising Healthy & Happy Eaters! (for parents of children aged 0 – 6)

650-853-2961

Introduction to Solids (ages 0 – 1)

Feeding Your Toddler (ages 1 – 3)

Feeding Your Preschooler (ages 3 – 6)

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Cancer

650-342-3749

CPAP

650-853-4729

Diabetes

650-224-7872

Drug and Alcohol

650-853-2904

Healing Imagery for

Cancer Patients

650-799-5512

Kidney

650-323-2225

Multiple Sclerosis

650-328-0179

Mountain View Center 701 E. El Camino Real

Lecture and Workshops 650-934-7373

The Aging Eye

Presented by Tanya Ghosh, M.D.
PAMF Ophthalmology
Tuesday, June 8, 7 – 8 p.m.



HMR Weight Management Program 650-404-8260

Free orientation session. Tuesdays, noon – 1 p.m., and Thursdays, 5 – 6:30 p.m. Call for dates and times.

Nutrition and Diabetes Classes 650-934-7177

Heart Smart Class

Second Tuesday of each month,
3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

Diabetes Class (two-part class)

Tuesdays, 9:30 a.m. – noon and
Wednesdays, 2 – 4:30 p.m.

Prediabetes

Third Thursday of each month,
2 – 4 p.m. Fourth Tuesday of each month, 3 – 5 p.m.

Sweet Success

Gestational Diabetes Class

Wednesdays, 9 a.m. – noon



Pregnancy, Breastfeeding and Child Care Classes

Feeding Your Preschooler

Tuesday, June 1, 7 – 9 p.m.

Infant Emergencies and CPR

Wednesdays, June 2 & 16,
6 – 8:30 p.m.

Childbirth Preparation

Thursdays, Fridays & Saturdays,
June 3, 4 & 5, 6 – 9 p.m.

OB Orientation

Thursdays, June 3, 17 and July 1,
6:30 – 8 p.m.

Breastfeeding Your Newborn

Monday/Tuesday, June 7, 8 & 14,
6:30 – 9 p.m.

Preparing for Baby

Tuesday, June 8, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Introduction to Solids

Monday, June 14, 10:30 a.m. – noon

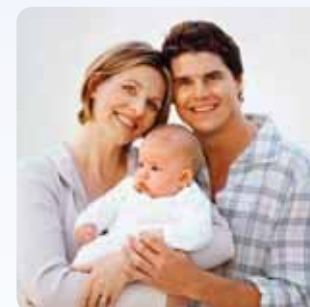
What to Expect with Your Newborn

Tuesday, June 15, 7 – 8 p.m.

Baby Care

Wednesday, June 23, 6:30 – 9:30 p.m., and Saturday, June 26, 10:30 a.m. – noon.

For all, register online or call
650-934-7373.



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- *The Almanac*, May 19, 2010



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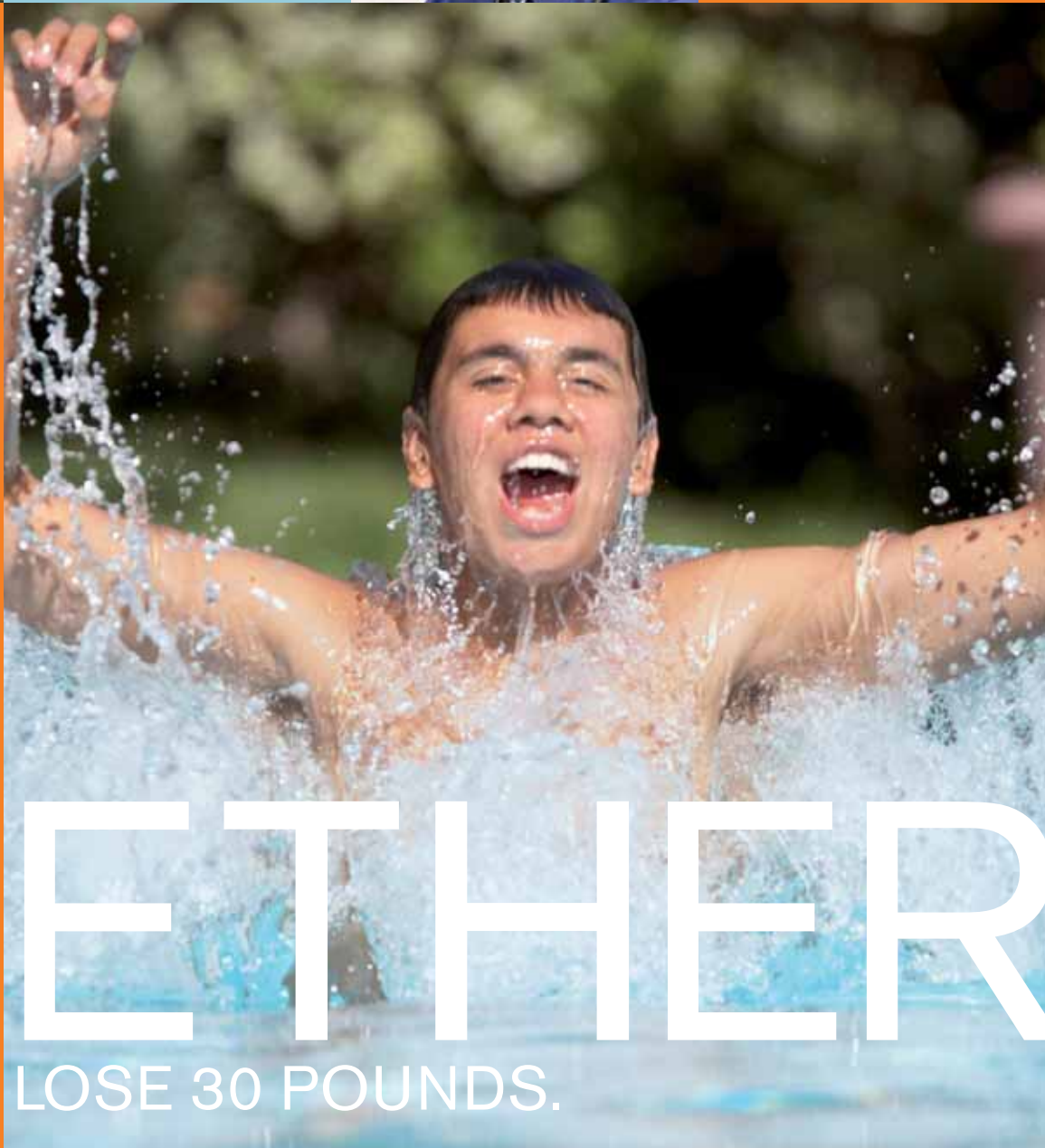
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To learn more about the Packard Pediatric Weight Control Program, visit pediatricweightcontrol.lpch.org or call 650-725-4424.

Otter Run set for June 6

The Oak Knoll School community is inviting the public to participate in its 16th annual 5K Otter Run and Family Fun Run on Sunday, June 6. The event begins with an 8 a.m. warm-up, and officially launches at 8:30 a.m. at 1895 Oak Knoll Lane in Menlo Park.

Participants will run or walk a 2.5K single loop (non-timed) or a 5K (professionally timed) double loop on flat residential streets. Walkers, strollers, teachers and families are invited to participate. Bikes, skates and dogs have to stay home, though, organizers say.

The event is a fundraiser for the Oak Knoll PTO, and is organized by a team of parent volunteers.

Participants receive an official Otter Run race T-shirt, and there will be medals for winners by age category.

People may register in person at Oak Knoll School on Friday, June 4, from 7:30 to 8:30 a.m., or 2:30 to 3:30 p.m.; or on race day, starting at 7 a.m. Registration fees are \$25 for adults and \$15 for kids 18 and under. Food and drinks are provided after the race.

For more information, call the race hotline at 207-7472.

On to high school

Eighth-graders will graduate from Las Lomitas, Menlo Park, Portola Valley, and Woodside school districts during commencement ceremonies at their schools June 10 and 11.

Here's the graduation schedule:

■ La Entrada Middle School in the Las Lomitas School District: 6 p.m. Thursday, June 10, La Entrada gym, 2200 Sharon Road, Menlo Park.

■ Hillview Middle School in the Menlo Park City School District: 5 p.m. Friday, June 11, Hillview, on the blacktop, 1100 Elder Ave., Menlo Park.

■ Corte Madera School in the Portola Valley School District: 5 p.m. Friday, June 11, Corte Madera multi-use room, 4575 Alpine Road, Portola Valley.

■ Woodside Elementary School: 5:30 p.m. Friday, June 11, school amphitheater, 3195 Woodside Road, Woodside.



ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

TOWN OF ATHERTON
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

MIDDLEFIELD ROAD AT ENCINAL AVENUE IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT NO. 56009

On May 25, 2010, Town of Atherton's council has rejected and requested that the project be re-bid. The plans and special provision will still apply. A new bid schedule and new Time of Completion will apply.

Notice is hereby given that SEALED BIDS will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, California 94027, until 3:00 p.m. JUNE 16, 2010, at which time they will be publicly opened and read, for performing the following work:

ROADWAY WIDENING ON MIDDLEFIELD ROAD AND ENCINAL AVENUE; REMOVAL AND RELOCATION OF EXISTING FEATURES; INSTALLATION OF STORM DRAIN FACILITIES; CONSTRUCTION OF CONCRETE CURB, GUTTER, SIDEWALK AND CURB RAMPS; CONSTRUCTION OF A DRAINAGE SWALE; MODIFICATIONS TO PERMANENT ROADWAY STRIPING; REMOVAL OF AN EXISTING PEDESTRIAN CROSSWALK TRAFFIC SIGNAL; AND INSTALLATION OF A NEW TRAFFIC SIGNAL AT THE INTERSECTION OF MIDDLEFIELD ROAD AND ENCINAL AVENUE.

The Engineer's Estimate for the project is: \$408,000

Per Section 6.01 of the Town of Atherton's Standard Specifications, the General Contractor shall perform, with his own organization, work of a value amounting to not less than 50% of the total contract, excluding specialty items as indicated on the bid schedule.

Bids must be for the entire work, and shall be submitted in sealed envelopes clearly marked: "Bid of (Contractor) for MIDDLEFIELD ROAD AT ENCINAL AVENUE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS, Project No. 56009", along with date and time of bid opening.

Plans and specifications may be obtained at the Town of Atherton Public Works Department, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton CA 94027, for a non-refundable fee of \$40.00. Additional important information is contained in Town of Atherton Standard Specifications, which are available online at www.ci.atherton.ca.us. If shipping is requested, there will be an additional charge of \$25.00.

Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the form of cash, a cashier's or certified check or bid bond for not less than ten percent (10%) of the amount of the bid, as a guarantee that the bidder, if awarded the Contract, will fulfill the terms of the bid. The Town of Atherton reserves the right to reject any and all proposals and/or to waive any irregularities therein.

Bidders are hereby notified that, pursuant to California Civil Code Sections 3247 and 3248 and Standard Specifications Section 3.02, the successful bidder will be required to provide payment and performance bonds in the amounts stated in Section 3.02 of the Standard Specifications.

Bidders are hereby notified that provisions of California Labor Code regarding prevailing wages are applicable to the work to be performed under this contract. Pursuant to Section 1773 et seq. the general prevailing wage rates have been determined by the Director of the California Department of Industrial Relations and appear in the California Prevailing Wage Rates. Copies are on file at the office of the City Engineer and are available to interested parties upon request. The successful bidder shall post a copy of the wage rates at the job site.

The Contractor may elect to receive 100 percent of payments due under the contract, without retention of any portion of the payment by the Town of Atherton, by depositing securities of equivalent value to the retention amount in accordance with the provisions of Section 22300 of the California Public Contracts Code.

The successful bidder must be licensed under the provisions of Chapter 9, Division 3, of the California Business and Professions Code to do the type of work contemplated in the project at the time the contract is awarded and shall be skilled and regularly engaged in the general class or type of work called for under the Contract. Failure of the bidder to obtain proper and adequate licensing for an award of the contract shall constitute a failure to execute the contract and result in the forfeiture of the bidder's bid security.

Each bidder shall submit with this bid a statement setting forth his/her/its experience and qualifications. The statement shall be made on the forms provided by the Town and must accompany each bid. The three lowest bidders will be required to submit subcontractor's experience and qualifications statements within 48 hours of the bid opening, on forms provided by the Town.

By submitting a bid in response to this advertisement for bids, the bidder shall be conclusively deemed to have read, understood and agreed with all of the information and materials contained in the bid documents, including but not limited to the construction contract, the standard specifications, the special provisions, the required nature and amount of insurance and the documentation evidencing said insurance.

Any questions regarding the project should be directed to David Huynh, Project Engineer, telephone: (650) 752-0555 or by written Requests for Information (RFI) to: Public Works Department, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, CA 94027, preferably no later than five days before bid opening. RFIs may be emailed to dhuynh@ci.atherton.ca.us or faxed to (650) 688-6539.

For information on obtaining Plans and Specifications, Standard Specifications or obtaining a Plan Holders list, please call Judy Belmont at (650) 752-0570.

By: _____
Duncan L. Jones, P.E., City Engineer

Date: _____

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At SRI: Before opening wallet, check emotions

Human emotion and its possible role in financial decisions will be the topic for June's Cafe Scientifique, the monthly presentation and discussion at SRI International in Menlo Park and set for 6 p.m. Tuesday, June 8.

In a talk called "This is Your Brain on Money," Stanford University psychology professor Brian Knutson will review recent findings in neuroscience that suggest that the region of the brain associated with pleasure, addiction, fear, aggression and laughter is also closely associated with investing and purchasing decisions.

The findings may help explain gyrations in financial markets, according to a statement from Cafe Scientifique. Another possible useful outcome: predicting an individual's behavior when confronted

with a financial decision.

The research is an outgrowth of experiments from the 1950s in which a rat pressed a lever that stimulated its pleasure circuit — the region of its brain associated with emotions — and demonstrated that it would rather press that lever than eat, drink, sleep or have sex, the statement said.

Professor Knutson's research into the neurological underpinnings of human choice includes brain scans of people in the act of making investment and shopping decisions.

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 www.cafescisv.org for more information.

Speaker revisits Kerouac's 'On the Road'

BRIEFS

Beat generation expert Richard Marcel will interview Al Hinkle, real-life counterpart of the character Ed Dunkel in Jack Kerouac's novel, "On the Road," at 11 a.m. Saturday, June 5, at the Menlo Park Library.

"On the Road" is largely autobiographical, based on road trips of Mr. Kerouac and his friends, who are thinly-disguised as characters in the book. Published in 1957, the novel is often considered a defining work of the post-war Beat Generation.

The free library event will include music and poetry by Gary Horsman and artwork by Uma Rani Iyil and Leah Lubin. For more information, call 330-2512.

Want to run for the school board?

District residents interested in running for the Menlo Park City School District Board of Education in the Nov. 2 election are invited to a Candidate Information Night at 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 2.

The informational meeting will be held in the district office at 181

Encinal Ave. in Atherton.

Current board members Maria Hilton and Mark Box will talk about the roles and responsibilities of board members, discuss district initiatives and challenges, provide details on filing as candidates with San Mateo County, and answer questions.

There will be three seats on the five-member board up for election. The filing period to become a candidate is July 12 through Aug. 6.

Project Read

Hobee's California restaurant in Town & Country Village shopping center in Palo Alto will hold a fundraiser to benefit Menlo Park Library's Project Read from 7 to 9 a.m. Thursday, June 10.

Customers who bring in a flier announcing the fundraiser (available at the library) will have 20 percent of their bill donated to the library's adult literacy program. For more information, call 327-4111.

KHOSLA

continued from page 9

better, it'd be so nice," he said.

"The power of capitalism and the power of technology and ideas is what solves the world's problems," he said. As a venture capitalist, he is not exactly unbiased when it comes to technological solutions, he noted.

Among his many ventures: locking carbon dioxide emissions inside building materials as calcium carbonate, the stuff sea shells are made of. California imports roadbed material from

British Columbia, but with calcium-carbonate-infused aggregate, "suddenly, your city streets would be as green as a prairie," he said. Unsuccessful efforts to address the climate crisis are not "a failure of technology. This is a failure of imagination."

For the foreseeable future, electricity production in major national economies will rely on coal, Mr. Khosla said. Electric cars will thus be expensive in terms of carbon emissions, reason enough to improve the internal combustion engine and, if done properly, switch to bio-fuel, he said. ■

Atherton hears opposing views on Cargill

By Barbara Wood

Special to The Almanac

Cargill's proposal to build a new community for up to 25,000 people in Redwood City, where there are now only salt ponds and a salt-processing operation, will either solve many of the Bay Area's environmental woes, or will multiply them.

Those who attended the May 27 annual meeting of the Atherton Civic Interest League at Holbrook-Palmer Park heard from two speakers with these opposing views on the merits of the plan.

Redwood City recently ordered an environmental impact study on the bayside project, called Saltworks by its developers, as one of the first steps in a review process that will take years to complete.

In addition to the homes, Cargill and developer DMB have proposed retail space, parks, schools, public transit and the restoration of some of the wetlands on the property. It is in Redwood City east of U.S.101 and immediately south of Seaport Boulevard. The project is on land the developers say has been used for salt production for more than 100 years, and which opponents say was originally part of the San Francisco Bay.

Opponents and proponents of the project cite many of the same existing problems as they argue for or against it. The developers say the project will fight urban sprawl by attracting residents who now live in distant suburbs; the opponents say it is urban sprawl, sprawling right into the Bay.

The developers say a levee planned as part of the project will protect it and neighboring properties against predicted sea level rise; the opponents say rising sea levels will threaten the new homes and taxpayers will have to pay to save them from rising waters.

The developers say locating housing near existing jobs will help offset the Bay Area's traffic nightmare; the opponents say the new residents will add massive numbers of cars to already overcrowded streets.

Tim Frank, an environmental consultant who is active in the Sierra Club and who has been helping the developers design the project, spoke in its favor at the meeting. He said the site is an infill parcel located right in the heart of the job center, and the new housing could go to some of the more than 40,000 people who commute to work in Redwood City each day.

The project is sustainably designed, he said, "so that people don't actually have to get in their cars for every errand," he said. Getting people out of their cars is necessary to fight global warming and "the most important way to do that is to build housing where the jobs are," he said.

Stephen Knight, political director for Save the Bay, spoke against the proposal, saying it will harm the Bay. "Urban sprawl is one of the greatest threats to the San Francisco Bay," he said. "They're on the wrong side of 101. They're building in an undeveloped salt pond."

Mr. Knight insisted that the development would prove to

be a traffic nightmare. "No one in their right mind thinks that 30,000 new people ... could possibly reduce traffic," he said.

He and many opponents of the project argue that if it does not continue to be used for salt production, the entire site should be restored as wetlands. "This site can and should be restorable," he said. "We need to protect our existing open spaces."

But Mr. Frank argued that the cost of restoration is more than the public would be willing to bear. Instead, the developers will restore some of the wetland at no cost to taxpayers, he said, with half the site ending up as "green space" parks or wetlands.

Where the water the development requires will come from is another subject of controversy. Mr. Frank said the developers have purchased the rights to water from Kern County that will not only serve the needs of the development but of other nearby areas as well.

Mr. Knight said that proposal will not work. "It's a very complicated plan — it's not going to survive the extensive regulatory review," he said.

Developer DMB is no newcomer to controversy about proposals to build on ecologically fragile land, or to approval processes that take many years to complete. They are behind the Tejon Ranch project north of Los Angeles, and Martis Camp between Truckee and Lake Tahoe. Both projects received approval after years of negotiations.

The event was co-sponsored by the League of Women Voters of South San Mateo County. ■

Community colleges seek \$34 annual parcel tax

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

Local community colleges are asking voters on June 8 to approve Measure G, which would authorize the San Mateo County Community College District to collect a \$34 annual parcel tax.

The tax would generate about \$6.5 million over four years, helping to restore classes, rehire teachers, and reduce the waiting list of students, which numbers around 14,000, district officials said.

The money would help counter state cuts to the district of \$20 million over the current and coming budget years, Barbara Christensen, spokeswoman for the district, said in an interview.

The restored classes would include subjects such as firefighting, police work, and medical-



record technology.

"There is unprecedented demand. People are out of work or are fearful of losing their jobs," she said. "Our faculty really stepped up and are taking as many students as they can possibly fit in the classrooms. That's why you see enrollment going up even though our budgets are going down."

This tax-increase measure requires the approval of two-thirds of voters. In a survey, more than 70 percent of district voters responded favorably to a larger tax, but the district decided on a more conservative \$34, Ms. Christensen said.

If voters approve this tax, it would set a precedent for the state's 72 community college districts, and

Measure G's opponents know it.

"If this is successful, all the community colleges will be saying, 'Me, too. Me, too,'" Kris Vosburgh, a Los Angeles-based spokesman for the Howard Jarvis Taxpayers Association, said in an interview.

"What they've got to do is what everybody else is doing: tighten their belts," Mr. Vosburgh continued. "This is a horrible time to be raising anybody's taxes."

"We have tightened our belt," Ms. Christensen said when asked to comment. "Nobody's gotten a salary increase here for years. ... We believe we should put the choice to the voters and let them decide."

"We're having to turn students away," said Sarah Perkins, vice-president of Canada College in Woodside. "We keep the graduation path open, but we have to make it narrower." ■

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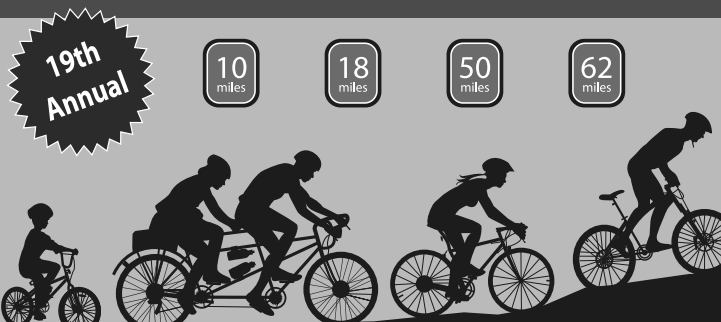
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Becker, Gordon neck-and-neck in fundraising

Candidates Rich Gordon and Josh Becker have kept pace with each other in fundraising over the past two months as they compete

for the Democratic nomination in the state's 21st Assembly District, while candidate Yoriko Kishimoto has fallen behind.

Mr. Becker and Mr. Gordon each raised about \$192,000 between March 18 and May 22, according to the most recent campaign finance

BRIEFS

report. Ms. Kishimoto raised about \$11,600 in the same period.

Over the course of the campaign, Mr. Becker has raised \$521,900; Mr. Gordon, \$420,300; and Ms. Kishimoto, \$116,700, according to finance reports. Ms. Kishimoto has also loaned her campaign \$85,000.

Mr. Gordon was left with the most cash on hand heading into the June 8 election, with \$145,200 as of May 22. Mr. Becker had \$72,300 remaining, after spending \$329,900 during the two-month reporting period. Ms. Kishimoto had \$54,800 remaining.

Ms. Kishimoto and Mr. Gordon have accepted limits on campaign spending, while Mr. Becker has not, according to the California secretary of state's website.

Wednesday: Meeting on downtown parking

Consultants and the city of Menlo Park plan to present a recommendation on possible changes to the downtown parking system at a meeting Wednesday, June 2. The presentation will begin at 7 p.m. in the social hall of the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, behind the ACE Hardware store on Santa Cruz Avenue.

The meeting is the final one in a series of three, as the city weighs instituting some paid parking, and changing the time limits in downtown parking plazas, among other things. The City Council approved the \$90,000 study, and will have the final say on what gets implemented.

For more information, call transportation engineer Rene Baile at 330-6670.

Thursday: Willows traffic meeting

Willows residents may be interested in attending a meeting Thursday, June 3, on a traffic study of the neighborhood sponsored by the city. The meeting starts at 7 p.m. in the ballroom of the Burgess Recreation Center, in the Civic Center complex between Laurel and Alma streets.

This is the second of three community meetings. City staff expects to make a recommendation to the City Council on possible measures to change traffic patterns in the neighborhood.

A similar study in the early 1990s resulted in the implementation and subsequent removal of a variety of traffic furniture, with the city drawing up plans to block off some streets leading into East Palo Alto, at the request of a group of residents.



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POLICE CALLS

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

MENLO PARK

Grand theft reports:

■ Bicycle valued at \$1,200 stolen, 2300 block of Eastridge Ave., May 26.

■ Bicycle valued at \$300 stolen, 1000 block of Oakland Ave., May 22.

Auto burglary reports:

■ Total loss of \$650 in theft of Apple iPod, gym bag, stereo system, and two

shopping bags with goods in them, 600 block of Sharon Park Drive, May 26.

■ Window smashed and amplifier valued at \$300 stolen, 1200 block of Willow Road, May 21.

■ Locks on victim's vehicle damaged in attempted burglary, Casey Court, May 24.

■ Window smashed and sunglasses and cell phone stolen, 900 block of Peggy Lane, May 27.

■ Coins and hands-free cell phone device stolen, first block of Lorelei Lane, May 27.

■ Window smashed in possible bur-

glaries, William Court and first block of Lorelei Lane, May 21 and 27.

■ Window smashed and various items stolen, 1200 block of Willow Road, May 21.

Fraud report: Check fraud with \$2,450 estimated loss, 900 block of Santa Cruz Ave., May 25.

Stolen vehicle reports: ■ Gray 2005 Chevrolet Silverado, 100 block of Newbridge St., May 24.

■ Flatbed trailer, 100 block of Jefferson Drive, May 24.

Child Protective Services report: 1100 block of Berkeley Ave., May 21.

LETTERS

continued from page 19

Tawdry tactics by labor council

Editor:

On May 14, I received a flier from the South Bay AFL-CIO Labor Council in San Jose that slams Yoriko Kishimoto, candidate for the 21st Assembly District seat, based on her alleged obstruction of high-speed rail.

As a former Palo Alto mayor who has worked on regional transit policy, Ms. Kishimoto realized early the complicated issues regarding high-speed rail and its impact on the Midpeninsula. She took the lead to create the Peninsula Cities Con-

sortium that consists of representatives of cities in our area most likely to be affected by the rail project.

Ms. Kishimoto is not an anti-high-speed rail activist, nor a knee jerk proponent. As an experienced elected official, she has become an advocate for greater transparency and more public involvement in the planning process.

It is puzzling why the Labor Council has gotten involved in the Democratic Party primary between two well-known and respected elected officials. The flier is the kind of hostile hyperbole that voters have seen before: photos of cars sitting in traffic, text filled with buzz words such as "gridlock, pollution and fewer jobs."

The candidate who received this union's endorsement, Rich

Gordon, claims to have known nothing about this hit piece. While there's no reason not to believe Mr. Gordon, I do wonder why the AFL-CIO prefers Mr. Gordon to Ms. Kishimoto?

There are many issues involving high-speed rail that we are learning more about every week. I am thankful for the time Yoriko Kishimoto has donated to her constant scrutiny of this state-wide project.

Voters should think long and hard about this union's involvement in our regional politics. Yoriko Kishimoto is dedicated to viable regional transit and she is looking out for the interests of all Peninsula residents.

**Brielle Johnck
Central Avenue, Menlo Park**

JOHN "JACK" HART PICKART



John "Jack" Hart Pickart, a resident of Atherton for 40 years, died at his home on May 14th surrounded by his loving wife, children and grandchildren. He was 79.

Jack Pickart was born on July 25th, 1930, in Sacramento, California where he attended Christian Brothers high school and lettered in baseball and basketball. A gifted athlete, Jack also played baseball and basketball for St. Mary's College in Moraga, CA. In 1952, he was drafted into the army during the Korean War. Jack credits baseball with saving his life; he was detained in the States to play baseball for the Army while the remainder of the 6th Infantry Division went to Korea. Most did not return.


From 1951 to 1956, Jack played professional baseball, pitching for the Sacramento Solons and then, briefly, for the Chicago White Sox. He hung up his mitt to work for IBM in Sacramento where he ultimately became the regional sales manager for the western United States. After sixteen years, Jack retired from IBM and went to work for Intel followed by Formost McKesson. His love of the real estate industry led him to join Cornish & Carey in Palo Alto before co-founding Bayside Capital in Foster City, California.

While in the service, Jack married E. Lynn Barry in 1953. They moved to Atherton in 1970 and raised three children. Jack loved to play tennis with his friends and grandchildren at the Menlo Circus Club. An avid golfer, he frequented local and international golf courses to play the game he loved so dearly. He and Lynn loved to travel the world and entertain friends. After retirement, Jack enjoyed bridge, brisk walks, and attending the sporting events of his grandchildren. He also enjoyed volunteering at the Palo Alto Medical Clinic and for eight years he was the first person one would see upon entering the clinic on Monday mornings. His signature booming voice, infectious laugh and ruddy cheeks will be missed by all those lucky enough to have known him.

Jack Pickart is survived by his wife of 56 years, Lynn; his children Kristin Spindt and son-in-law Chris Spindt of Menlo Park, Rebecca Pickart of Menlo Park, and John Adam Pickart and daughter-in-law Elizabeth Eaton Pickart of Gonzalez; his sister Mary Louise Sekul and her husband Tom; and four grandchildren: Alison, Ben and Emma Spindt and Corinne Pickart.

A small, private family memorial was held on May 22, 2010. The family suggests that memorial donations be made in Jack's name to The Palo Alto Medical Foundation, 795 El Camino Real, Palo Alto, CA 94301. There will be a bench dedicated to Jack in the outdoor courtyard behind the reception area.

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IN MEMORIAM ----JEANNE D. WOHLERS
April 3, 1945-May 17, 2010

Jeanne, a long-time resident of Woodside, succumbed to ovarian cancer after battling the disease with extraordinary bravery for three and a half years. She gave joy to her husband and to her family and many friends until the very end.

Born in Maplewood, New Jersey to Karl and Doris Wohlers, Jeanne graduated from Skidmore College in 1967 and from Columbia University School of Business in 1968.

Following early jobs in consulting, finance and venture capital in New York City and Chicago, Jeanne moved to the Bay Area in 1978 to join Tandem Computers as V.P. and Treasurer and later as Controller. Thereafter, she served as C.F.O. of Sybase from 1988 until 1992. Jeanne has been an Independent Director/Trustee of a family of mutual funds managed by American Century Investments since 1982, as well as a Director of various public and private technology companies. She left a lasting mark on each of these organizations and maintained friendships with many of her colleagues for years after her service.

Jeanne's activities and contributions extended into the non-profit world as well. She served as a Board member and Board Chair of Avenidas, a community agency serving seniors and care-givers in the Palo Alto area. Jeanne also served on the Board of Montalvo Arts Center.

Beyond all of these engagements and accomplishments, Jeanne was a wonderful and inspiring human being. Understated and modest in all that she did, she left an indelible impression on everyone with whom she interacted. Jeanne was a loving and fully-engaged step-mother and a role-model to her step-daughters Amy and Jill Herzig, both of Brooklyn, NY. She was loved and admired by her nephews, Peter and Michael Herzig, both of New York City, by her grandchildren, Julia, Eve and Tirha, and by her sister and brother-in-law, Anne and David Toombs of Southport, CT. To her husband of 30 years, Alan Herzig, Jeanne was the perfect wife, partner and friend in every aspect of an extraordinarily happy and fulfilling life. We will all miss her terribly.

Contributions in memory of Jeanne may be made to Avenidas, 450 Bryant Street, Palo Alto, CA 94301

PAID OBITUARY

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



WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

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

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

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

Can Menlo Park live with hospital project?

We are disappointed that the designers of Stanford's \$3.5-billion expansion of its medical facilities on Sand Hill Road did not include more "out-of-the-box" ideas to reduce the impact that 2,200 new employees will have on the areas surrounding the projects, particularly Menlo Park.

When built out, the 1.3 million-square-foot project will exacerbate already choked rush-hour traffic along the access corridors to Interstate 280 and add hundreds of trips by workers threading their way through Menlo Park surface streets, which

do not provide a direct route to the hospital. When completed, the expansion will add 10,000 new vehicle trips a day to local areas that already are heavily congested during peak travel times.

The environmental impact report released May 19 breaks no new ground in its suggested mitigations for this massive project:

- Encourage workers to take public transportation;
- Contribute to building bike and pedestrian tunnels, including one at Middle Avenue in Menlo Park;
- Adjust signal timing, widen intersections and add turn lanes.

All of these are good ideas, and if modestly successful could provide some relief from the traffic deluge already omnipresent at Menlo Park's major intersections.

Over the many years of coping with Stanford's ever-expanding campus, and with virtually no leverage in the Palo Alto-controlled process, Menlo Park often is left with few options. For example, past complaints about the Sand Hill/El Camino Real intersection have been ignored, although in 2006 the university did pay to install two left turn lanes in each direction at Sand Hill and Santa Cruz Avenue and to widen Menlo Park's portion of the road to four lanes.

But we are thinking of more exotic ideas. For example Stanford could:

- Build dedicated ramps from Interstate 280 that would take commuters directly to the campus, which would take hundreds of motorists off major access roads like Sand Hill and Page Mill.
- Widen Sand Hill from Quarry Road to El Camino Real, and

pressure Palo Alto to open access to the Alma intersection. Also, traffic leaving North Palo Alto via Alma should be permitted to turn left on El Camino, instead of being forced into Menlo Park, where motorists now make a u-turn at Cambridge Avenue to return to Palo Alto or Stanford Shopping Center.

■ Establish parking areas along U.S. 101 in Menlo Park for Stanford employees, who could then reach their jobs by shuttle bus or by a lightweight and easy-to-install tram system, such as Sky Tran, which recently was demonstrated at NASA-Ames in Mountain View and could be built for \$15 million a mile or less.

Given the size of the hospital projects, plus Menlo Gateway and the possibility that Cargill's plan to convert Redwood City salt ponds to a community of up to 30,000 people will become a reality, it is clear that traffic pressure on Menlo Park's streets and roadways will be stretched beyond capacity in the next 10 years.

City Council member Heyward Robinson spoke up for Menlo Park during a public hearing on the hospital's impact report at the Palo Alto City Council last week. And the city is now preparing its official response to the projects.

In order to receive approval, Stanford already is prepared

to pay hefty impact fees to Palo Alto, which is asking for millions of dollars. Unfortunately, despite the expected impacts cited in the environmental report, Menlo Park must go it alone on this development, without any support from Stanford or Palo Alto.

EDITORIAL
The opinion of The Almanac

THE ALMANAC RECOMMENDS

Rich Gordon for State Assembly
Don Horsley for District 3 Supervisor
Carole Groom for District 2 Supervisor
Dave Mandelkern for County Treasurer

Vote yes on Measure G
Vote yes on Proposition 13
Vote no on Proposition 14
Vote yes on Proposition 15
Vote no on Proposition 16
Vote no on Proposition 17

LETTERS
Our readers write

Jailed reporter elaborates on story

Editor's Note: The following letter, written from the San Mateo County Jail, was delivered to The Almanac by Mr. Bothun's attorney.

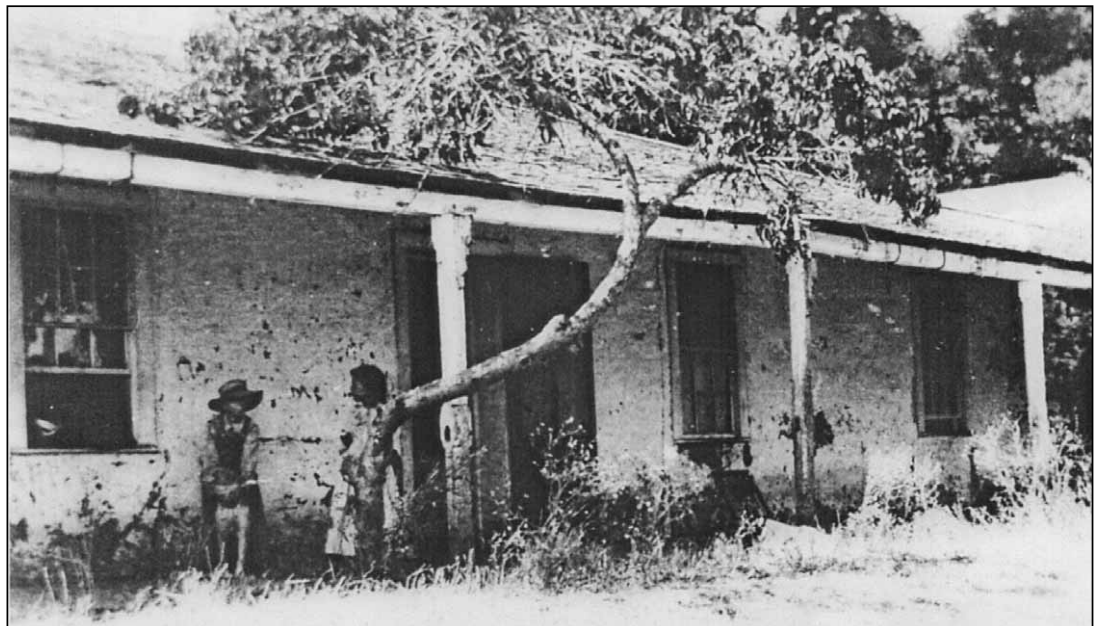
Editor:

I would like to expand on a statement in the recent story about my decision to choose jail over probation. (Former editor chooses jail over probation, Almanac, May 11.)

The story states I "once wrote a story that cast a former chief in a negative light."

In fact, I wrote a series of articles over several years that exposed problems at the Atherton Police Department and highlighted wrongdoing on the part of then-

See **LETTERS**, next page



Woodside Library Collection

Our Regional Heritage

The Copinger-Greer Adobe, built in the early 1840s in Woodside, was located near the corner of what is now the corner of Kings Mountain and Woodside roads. Early resident Joe Greer married John Copinger's widow, Maria Louisa Soto after Mr. Copinger's death in 1847, and continued to live on the property.

How does the church fit into parking garage plan?

By Roxie Rorapaugh

I am a resident of Menlo Park and agree with the many businesses and other residents who are opposed to the downtown proposal to eliminate parking plazas and replace them with a big garage.

Several years ago there was a plan to build a parking garage, and some members of the City Council at that time claimed the business community wanted additional parking. I went to one of the meetings regarding the garage, however, and there were no business persons present.

The head of the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church was the main speaker and he said they wanted the parking garage so they could expand their church. He stated the church would share in the costs of building the garage (although these details were not discussed) in exchange for the church getting some parking spots.

Personally, I don't think the city should be working with a religious organization to build a parking garage, at

least not in the current instance. The downtown parking should be mainly for the business patrons. On Sundays when the church is meeting there is plenty of parking.

I'm not so much against the Presbyterian Church. I can see why they want to get a garage and from their point of view they are being helpful, but I think the city staff and maybe some in the city leadership are allowing this church/city garage idea to have too much influence in the process.

For example, in the context section of the draft proposal (Section B), I was surprised by the following quote on page 3:

"Menlo Center and the Caltrain Station are notable buildings and function as local landmarks, with the Presbyterian Church, Draeger's Market, Trader Joe's, Safeway, Burgess Park and the public library serving as "activity nodes" or places attracting significant numbers of people and creating activity within the plan area."

Listing the Presbyterian Church as a main activity node is ridiculous. It is only an activity spot for church members, or

those interested in joining. It does not contribute tax dollars to the city (as the businesses such as Draeger's and others do), nor is it a public facility. It is also a bit unfair to the other churches — there are more just a few hundred feet up the street, which aren't given local landmark status.

I think the real reason the city planners are so intent on the parking garage is that they foolishly think the Presbyterian Church will pay for it all. This is doubtful, and even if that church did have so much money I think they would want to use the garage during the week as well. Then the city ends up with a huge parking garage, no plazas, and no extra parking because the church has added a daycare center or something so they use the garage during the week.

I do not want to offend the Presbyterian Church — from their point of view they are doing nothing wrong. I think the city staff, or planners, or whoever is running this show is not thinking things through. If the downtown does need a parking garage, the plazas closer to El Camino Real are the ones that should be used first.

Roxie Rorapaugh
Sherman Avenue, Menlo Park



GUEST
OPINION

LETTERS

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Chief Steve Cader.

On two different occasions my stories prompted District Attorney Jim Fox to launch his own investigations of Chief Cader. One of those investigations resulted in the chief being arrested and charged with two counts of voter fraud.

Sadly, it appears Chief Cader was just the tip of the iceberg.

From the Atherton officer convicted of stealing a resident's golf clubs to the department's handling of the Buckheit case, problems continue at the once-proud department.

District Attorney Fox and new Chief Mike Guerra owe the citizens of Atherton an explanation to why officers in the Buckheit case remain on duty and have not been charged with any crime.

I have a great deal of respect for Chief Guerra, but it is time for him to take corrective action to rid the Atherton Police Department of all sub-standard officers.

If Chief Guerra is unable or unwilling to make the tough decisions and clean up the department, then the City Council must dismantle the police department and instead contract with a professional law enforcement agency people can trust.

The citizens of Atherton deserve no less.

Brian Bothun
DeBell Drive, Atherton

Council should keep hands out of Bohannon's pockets

Editor:

The Menlo Park City Council thinks that the Menlo Gateway project by David Bohannon should be put up for vote.

That's perfect, but if they cannot deal with this decision, then the city should not be trying to

put their hands in Bohannon's pockets by asking for a portion of any profits or accessing any extraordinary fees. If the vote is yes, Bohannon should get his permits. If the vote is no, he will lose his development costs.

The council seems to be saying to the voters: "You make the decision that we are afraid to make." I guess the council members are fearful of their no-growth backers.

This project will bring jobs and tax revenues to the city, a benefit as I see it. Our council recently has been more involved in bigger issues, mostly outside of Menlo Park, except for throwing away \$1.2 million on a consultant whose suggested plans involve the destruction of downtown and the creation of "Redwood City South."

Pat White
Fremont Street, Menlo Park

Downtown owners feel left out of project

Editor:

After attending the many meetings about the proposed downtown Menlo Park plan, we strongly feel that all those meetings should have taken place **before** the city hired the consultant.

If the city had talked to downtown business people and property owners in advance, they would have gotten some idea about how we feel about the changes to the surface parking lots.

We are sure that the city's vision was passed on to the consultants before they were under contract, lest why weren't we there to express our concerns?

It doesn't make sense for the city to give a \$1 million consulting contract to come up with huge changes and new garages, hundreds of living spaces and mini parks without the input from those most affected — the downtown businesses and property owners.

Why does this happen time and time again? If a plan is good and

Two opinions on treasurer candidates

Guilbault said to give good advice to South S.F.

Editor:

I was disappointed by your endorsement of Dave Mandelkern for county treasurer/tax collector.

I was surprised that the editorial board would support some ill-conceived idea that I believe could be harmful to the county. For example, the pooling of our funds with another entity could be dangerous. The comingling of our county rules and investment guidelines with another non-compliant entity needlessly puts our county's funds at risk.

Only someone with little experience investing public funds would believe this could lead to cost savings. The reason our state constitution mandates that each county have an independent treasurer's office is to maintain independent accountability and control over the excess funds placed under the treasurer's oversight. Investment rules and guidelines are intended to insure compliance with good management practices, not to be used as steadfast investment triggers.

According to a presentation to the City Council, the South San Francisco treasurer credited Richard Guilbault's advice and guidance for saving

the city as much as \$40 million during fiscal year 2009/2010 by avoiding the consequences of the Lehman Brothers bankruptcy.

I can't imagine there is a better endorsement than proven results and time-tested experience. That's why I am voting for Richard Guilbault for treasurer/tax collector, and I urge others to do the same.

Katherine Strehl
Laurel Avenue, Menlo Park

Mandelkern has experience on college board

Editor:

Dave Mandelkern is a superb choice for county treasurer-tax collector.

I've served with Dave on the San Mateo County Community College Board for six years. He has integrity and he takes his responsibility as a board member very seriously. He works as part of our team, but when necessary he will stand up and speak his mind for what he believes is right.

Dave and the other trustees oversee a \$100 million annual college district budget that we balance every year. We are accountable for over \$500 million in capital improvement funds.

Dave serves the entire county as a twice-elected community college trustee, and that makes him uniquely qualified to serve in the countywide office of county treasurer-tax collector. Please join me in supporting Dave Mandelkern.

Richard Holober, trustee
San Mateo County Community College District



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thought out by both sides, why is a consultant necessary?

If the council would have let us express our concerns in advance, we wouldn't need a consultant and the city would have \$1 million more in the bank.

John Chiappe
San Mateo

Redwood City clipped comments on Saltworks

Editor:

Having attended thousands of public meetings over three decades of environmental advocacy, I was shocked at the Redwood City Council's behavior in limiting

public comment regarding Cargill's plan to build a city of 30,000 people on restorable Baylands.

By restricting speakers to just one minute each, cutting off a resident who brought in a short video, and intimidating into silence numerous others who would have spoken up, the mayor stifled public participation on a key step in the city's review of this controversial project.

It's bad enough that the council has rejected the region's opinion, which has been expressed most recently in a powerful editorial by the Mercury News. But I can't believe they would so restrict their

own constituents when there was clearly plenty of time. Their entire meeting was over in less than two hours.

It's clearly uncomfortable for the council to hear from people who oppose moving in lockstep with the developer, step by step, towards approval of a project that should never be built. But this is their job. Hard as it is, they should at least give the appearance of listening.

Lennie Roberts,
legislative advocate
Committee for Green Foothills

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NEW PRICE



885 La Mesa Drive, Portola Valley

Extensively rebuilt home and guest house masterfully designed with passive solar principles, extraordinary finishes, and disappearing walls of glass; award-winning Las Lomitas schools

OFFERED AT \$2,995,000

NEW LISTING



1077 Tehama Avenue, Menlo Park

Located in Flood Park, this beautifully updated home has hardwood floors, designer colors with white millwork, and a wonderful kitchen and family room ensemble; the master suite is privately located on the upper level; access to excellent Menlo Park schools

OFFERED AT \$1,195,000

NEW PRICE



440 San Mateo Drive, Menlo Park

Spacious, two-level modern Craftsman-style 5-bedroom, 3.5-bath home beautifully updated with oak floors, skylights, and abundant built-ins; spacious deck and private yard behind a gated entrance; excellent Menlo Park schools

OFFERED AT \$2,595,000



271 Stockbridge Avenue, Atherton

Gorgeous home built in 2001 with traditional appeal and beautiful finishes; main-level master suite, second family room, and separate studio guest house with 1 bath, plus pool and beautiful grounds of approximately .96 acres; Las Lomitas schools

OFFERED AT \$5,395,000



1775 Oak Avenue, Menlo Park

Ideally located in west Menlo, this picture-perfect home is lined with floor-to-ceiling windows and features a marble fireplace, hardwood flooring, crown molding, a vast brick terrace, swimming pool, a heritage oak tree, and white picket fencing

OFFERED AT \$1,850,000



600 Hobart Street, Menlo Park

Just moments from downtown Menlo Park, this beautiful and spacious 6-bedroom, 4.5-bath home features cathedral ceilings with skylights, hardwood floors, and a wonderfully private yard with fruit trees; top-rated Menlo Park schools

OFFERED AT 2,650,000

To view these properties and others, please visit my website at www.tomlemieux.com

