



WOODSIDE director screens 'Tapestries of Hope' in 100 theaters. Section 2

The Almanac

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

SEPTEMBER 29, 2010 | VOL. 46 NO. 5



WWW.THEALMANACONLINE.COM



11-year-old raises \$25,000 for mom

Katie raises the money to help her mom, Stanford oncologist Dr. Ellie Guardino, fight breast cancer

See Section 2

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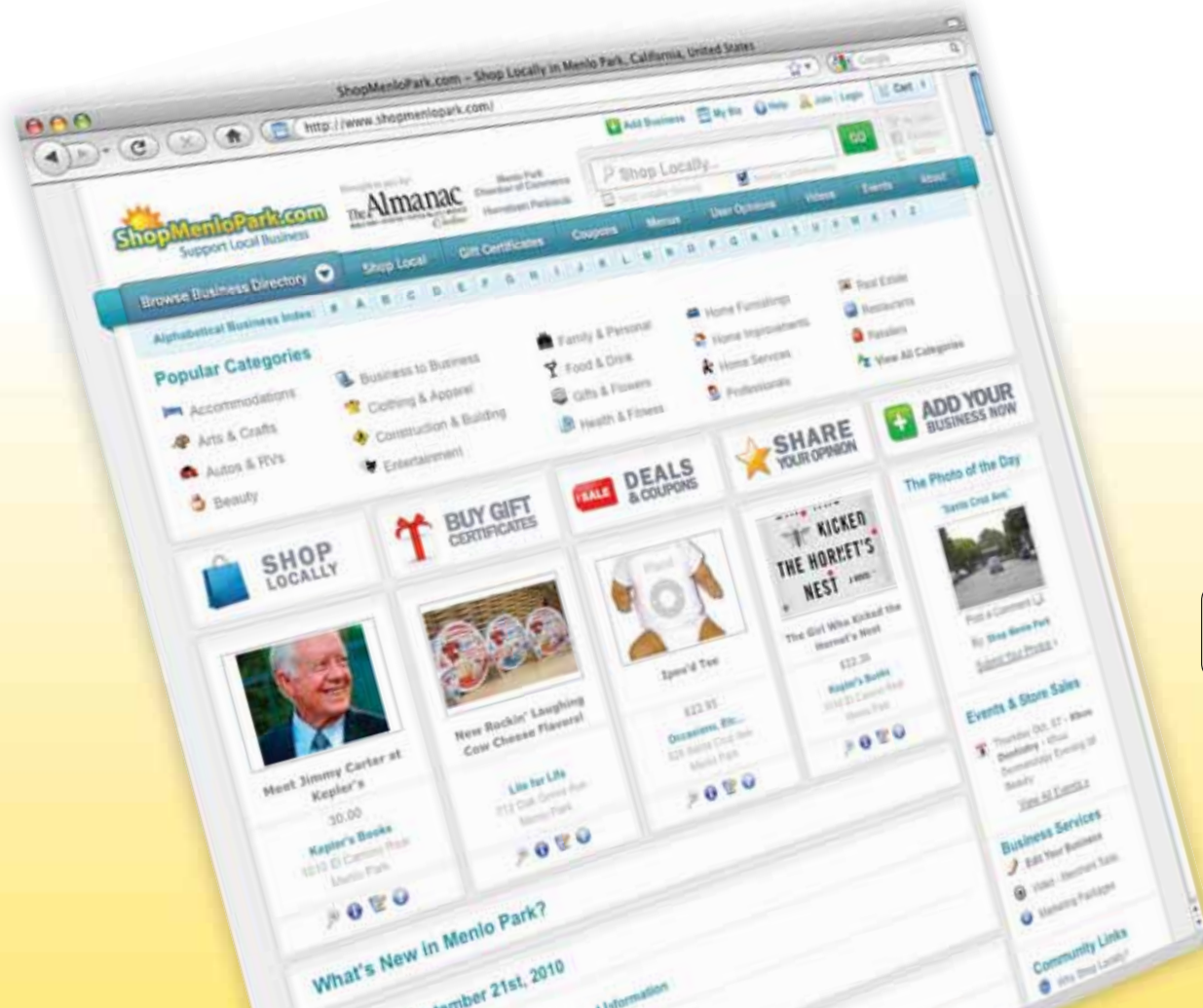
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Photos by Veronica Weber/Embarcadero Media

John Arrillaga, center, and his wife, left, speak with Menlo Park City Manager Glen Rojas before the beginning of the 2010 Golden Acorn Awards banquet on Sept. 23 at the Stanford Park Hotel in Menlo Park.

Arrillaga scores points in Menlo Park

By **Chris Kenrick**
Embarcadero Media

In a rare public appearance, businessman and philanthropist John Arrillaga on Sept. 23 thanked the Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce for honoring him with its annual Golden Acorn Award.

"Menlo's been a great spot in my heart because I played (basketball) at the Burgess gym starting in 1960," Mr. Arrillaga told an assembled audience at the Stanford Park Hotel. "I probably scored more points in that gym than any player in its history because I retired at almost age 60."

Mr. Arrillaga is the major private donor to the city's new Arrillaga Family Gymnasium, which will hold its grand opening Oct. 16, as well as to the planned Menlo Park Gymnastics Center.

A basketball player at Stanford University in the 1950s, Mr. Arrillaga has been an active player and coach in Bur-



John Arrillaga: "Menlo's been a great spot in my heart because I played (basketball) at the Burgess gym starting in 1960."

gess Gym basketball programs for 30 years.

He is a major donor to Stanford University and was listed by Forbes in March as among the "World's Billionaires 2010."

He and his partner Richard Peery are major landowners and landlords in Silicon Valley.

Mr. Arrillaga headlined the awards list in the Chamber's 38th annual awards banquet.

Other honorees were:

■ **JobTrain** (formerly OICW), a 45-year-old nonprofit that last year assisted 6,900 people through job-skills training and placement.

■ **Music@Menlo**, an eight-year-old summer chamber music festival at Menlo School, which is preparing to launch its first winter program.

■ **The Rotary Club of Menlo Park Foundation**, which this year awarded \$114,000 in college scholarships to graduates from Menlo-Atherton, Sacred Heart, Menlo School, Eastside Prep and the East Palo Alto Academy.

■ **Tarlton Properties Inc.**, which converted what was described as "swampland" east of U.S. 101 into a successful business park.



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— **Robert Carter**, Chairman, Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce

For more info, visit the website
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Paid for by the 2010 Citizens Coalition for Menlo Gateway, Yes on T, major funding by the David D. Bohannon Organization, 100 Independence Drive, Menlo Park, CA 94025

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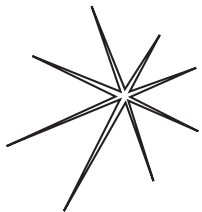
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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Breaking ground for huge tunnel under Bay

■ The \$347 million water tunnel project is part of a massive rebuild of the Hetch Hetchy water distribution system.

By Sally Schilling

Embarcadero Media

A \$347 million water tunnel — the first to be built underneath the San Francisco Bay — broke ground early Friday afternoon in Menlo Park and was celebrated by more than 100 people.

Officials lauded the project as a major improvement for the South Bay's water supply and a significant job creator.

The Bay tunnel groundbreaking event was held at the bayside site at 5000 University Ave. in Menlo Park, near the approach to the Dumbarton Bridge, where the project will begin with the digging of a shaft 141-feet deep and 58 feet in diameter.

Dozens of hard-hat-wearing project managers, agency leaders and city officials attended the groundbreaking to express their support.

The Bay tunnel is part of a \$4.6 billion rebuilding of the Hetch Hetchy water distribution system for the Peninsula, South Bay and San Francisco, designed to make water delivery more secure in the event of a major disaster, such as an earthquake. The system is run by the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission.

The tunnel will have 3-foot-thick watertight walls and a 12-foot-thick concrete floor slab.

"It means life and death on the Peninsula," Menlo Park City Council Member Kelly Ferguson said of the water project.

The 5-mile-long, 15-foot diameter tunnel will secure water delivery to the Peninsula by replacing the current water pipelines that cross the Bay. The old pipelines were built as early as the 1920s and 1930s and have been identified as seismically vulnerable by the Public Utilities



Photo by Veronica Weber/Embarcadero Media

During a ceremony in Menlo Park on Friday launching the construction of a 5-mile long, 15-foot diameter tunnel that will cross under San Francisco Bay, crane operator Steve Cutter pulls up the "clam bucket" while starting the dig of the guide walls for the 141-foot-deep tunnel shaft.

Commission.

Art Jensen, CEO and general manager of Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency, said the project is "replacing an aging but vital lifeline."

Ed Harrington, general manager of the SFPUC, said, "We are

very proud that this project is creating jobs."

Other speakers at the event were Julie Labonte, director of the commission's Hetch Hetchy Water System Improvement Program; Bill Nack, business manager of San Mateo Build-

ing Trades and Construction Council; and Sharon Williams, executive director of JobTrain in Menlo Park.

Mr. Nack said the event was a celebration of the employment of

See HETCH HETCHY, page 8

Mayor: Manager's departure is opportunity for 'fresh start'

■ City Manager Jerry Gruber to take post in Cambria.

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

The resignation of Atherton City Manager Jerry Gruber, effective Oct. 22, was not a result of City Council pressure, but will allow the town to bring in someone with fresh eyes to focus on the town's troubles, Mayor Kathy McKeithen said last week.

"I'm sad to see Jerry go," Ms. McKeithen told The Almanac after Mr. Gruber announced on Sept. 23 that he would be taking a job with the Cambria Community Services District. "But at the same time, it may be a good opportunity to bring someone in for a short period to evaluate" how the town is being run and what improvements might be made, she said.

Mr. Gruber, who came on

board as city manager in early 2008, could not be reached for comment to say what his new position will be.

A written announcement from Town Hall said Mr. Gruber has owned a home in the Cambria area, just south of San Simeon, since 2005.

In the two days after the announcement was made, Mayor McKeithen received offers from two well-known figures in town to serve as interim manager: former finance director John Johns and resident Jon Buckheit. Both men have sued the town — Mr. Johns, successfully, for wrongful termination.

Mr. Buckheit's lawsuit in federal court is still pending; the suit was filed in the wake of his arrest after he called the police to report a domestic violence incident in his home. Charges were never filed,

See GRUBER, page 8



Jerry Gruber

Daytime burglars ransack Willows

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

Describing the crime spree as "unprecedented," Menlo Park police met with Willows residents on Wednesday, Sept. 22, to discuss a recent string of break-ins.

Ten burglaries and two attempts have occurred in September — nine in the past two weeks — during the hours of 8 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., when most homes sit empty while residents work.

The burglars crossed yards, leaped fences, crept in through doors unlocked and locked, and even squeezed through a doggy door to snatch electronics, jewelry, and money.

At the request of Councilwoman Kelly Fergusson, about 60 residents sat down at Cafe Zoe on Wednesday night to talk about the break-ins with Police Chief Bryan Roberts and Sgt. Jaime Romero.

Who's there?

The thieves might knock on

doors first to scout a home, claiming to look for a lost pet or a friend, Sgt. Jaime Romero said. He asked residents to call the police if that happens.

He also promised response times would improve, after one woman said a dispatcher told her no one could respond to her call about a possible break-in for five to 10 minutes.

Calling 911 from a landline might help, Sgt. Romero explained, because cellphone calls near U.S. 101 may be routed through the California Highway Patrol dispatch first before reaching the Menlo Park police department.

Police spokesperson Nicole Acker told The Almanac the average response time for in-progress crimes is a couple of minutes, if that, but it could be longer if other high-priority situations are going on at the same time.

Details about the suspects remains elusive. Police believe the burglars might be teenagers and young adults skipping school, so they're checking truancy reports.

They don't know yet if the crimes are linked. But based on stolen check activity, investigators think some of the thieves hail from Redwood City and East Palo Alto, and are coordinating with other jurisdictions.

On Sept. 16, residents reported seeing a suspicious green sedan and a blue van with a gray stripe in the neighborhood, and police encouraged everyone to keep calling whenever something looks out of place.

Police have stepped up both regular and undercover patrols throughout the neighborhood.

Safety tips

Police urge people to work together to make the neighborhood safer. Individuals should also stash valuables out of sight, while making the exterior of the house less welcoming to thieves by keeping a clear line of view to the street and removing anything like bricks that could be used to smash a window. Locking doors, of course, is also a good place to start. ■

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Lots of holes need filling, mayor says

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

Drawing a larger crowd than attends most City Council meetings, Menlo Park Mayor Rich Cline delivered his state of the city address to about 70 people on Thursday, Sept. 23, at the Stanford Park Hotel. The speech was given as part of the 38th annual Golden Acorn Awards, which may have explained the crowd.

"Hello, I'm Rich Cline, and I have potholes on my street," the mayor said, who is running for re-election after serving on the council since 2006. "My street expected more of me for these four years."

The theme of holes that need filling wove throughout the speech. Some of those holes could be labeled "city finances," "downtown planning," and "emergency preparedness."

He also introduced several ideas for filling those holes, among them a team of business owners working with city staff to streamline the permitting process, and an energetic recruitment drive to bring more businesses to Menlo Park. "It's a big, big strategic plan," the mayor said.

Mr. Cline reminded the audience of the downtown specific plan, which should be coming before the council later this year, a plan which he hopes will stop "planning by politics," where litigation can shut down prospective business, and allow more consistent development.

Later referencing the Sept. 9



Photo by Veronica Weber/Embarcadero Media

"It's not if, it's when we have a disaster in Menlo Park," says Mayor Rich Cline. "I don't feel the community is as ready as it should be."

San Bruno gas pipe explosion, he said: "It's not if, it's when, we have a disaster in Menlo Park. I don't feel the community is as ready as it should be."

Mr. Cline asked city staff to prepare an updated emergency plan in coordination with other local agencies and neighborhood volunteers, and release it to the public by the end of 2011.

Belle Haven also needs greater attention, according to the mayor, who said he was frustrated with the neighborhood's distance from city services. He suggested getting a police substation up and running there, and asked why Belle Haven Elementary School is not part

of the larger Menlo Park City School District.

He described the city as being in transition as it tries to stop expenses from outstripping revenue, and spoke up in support of the Bohannon Gateway project as a potential source of \$1.5 million in hotel revenue per year. New revenue won't be enough to balance the budget, however, and the mayor said difficult cuts are coming.

The speech ended where it began. "I've been talking long enough here for those potholes to be filled, but they'll still be there when I get home," Mr. Cline said, and then yielded the floor to the awards banquet. ■

Simitian to hold town hall meetings

State Sen. Joe Simitian will discuss state government issues that affect our local communities in several town hall meetings in the next two weeks. Community members are encouraged to bring their questions and concerns.

Meetings are scheduled for:

■ Thursday, Sept. 30, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Los Altos City Council Chambers, 1 N. San Antonio Road, Los Altos.

■ Saturday, Oct. 2, from 10:30 a.m. to noon at the Palo Alto City Hall, 250 Hamilton Ave. in Palo Alto.

■ Wednesday, Oct. 6, from 6 to 7:30 p.m. at the Redwood City Council Chambers, 1017 Middlefield Road in Redwood City.

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REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Renting Versus Selling

Dear Monica: I have had my house on the market for many weeks priced below what I paid for it in 2000 but no one has made an offer. I am considering renting the property instead. Do you think this is a good idea? Richard D.

During this time you will have to pay to live somewhere else unless you own another property to move to. There will be wear and tear on your home which may require you to redo things such as refinishing floors, painting and replacing carpets, etc. before you try and sell it again. In spite of these negatives, renting may still be an excellent choice for you.

Dear Richard:

You are not the only seller who has decided to rent their property because it is not selling in this market. The rental market in this area has recovered quite a bit from the lows of 2009 and rents have increased. If you don't need to sell your house now, you can rent it for a year or two and the housing market may be stronger by then and you can try and sell it then.

This is a financial decision and you need to consult your accountant to be sure that it is a good option. There are tax consequences if you convert the property to a rental and you should understand how these rules may affect you in the future.

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

Jennifer Acheson, Etta Mae Bauer, Dr. David Bliss, Karen Bliss, Inna Beardsley, Todd Beardsley, Mary Burnham, Kevin Brown, Kay Clark, Herb Lechner, Kristy Carlson, Greg Conlon, Rachael Croft, Tom Croft, Doug DeVivo, Irene DeVivo, Steve Dostart, Earl Douglass, Barbara Douglass, Malcolm Dudley, Cosette Dudley, Fran Eastman, Alain Enthoven, Rosemary Enthoven, Erv Ericksen, Janet Ericksen, Sandy Ferrando, Didi Fisher, John Fisher, Bob Franceschini, Valerie Gardner, Bob Gee, Jean Gee, Edward Goldstein, John Griffin, Linda Griffin, Susan Grindley, William Grindley, Pat Haines, Ralph Haines, Elizabeth Hammack, Paul Hammack, Rose Hau, Jim Heslin, Matt James, Jim Janz, Kathryn Janz, Jennifer Jeffries, Steven Jeffries, Paul Jones, Dr. Paul Jemeljan, Phillip Larson, Suzanne Legallet, Dr. David Lewis, Linda Lewis

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HETCH HETCHY

continued from page 5

hundreds of men and women who are out of work. The project will require 575,000 building hours.

"When a community is given a chance to let local residents benefit, it's wonderful," Ms. Williams said.

Bob Mues, the project's construction manager, said the SFPUC is trying to organize a local job-training program for union members, so they can work on the project. He said there will be some surface jobs for job trainees but that most of the underground work requires skilled workers.

After the remarks, attendees were bused 300 yards to the ground-breaking site, where three muddy workers were waiting with an 80-foot tall digging crane.

They lowered a large "clam bucket" on the end of the crane into a water-filled crevice. It took minutes to reach the bottom and be brought back to the surface. But then the

clam bucket surfaced, spewed muddy water and dumped its contents.

"One bucket at a time," East Palo Alto City Councilman Rubin Abrica said, laughing.

A 300-foot-long tunnel boring machine, to be manned by 12 to 15 workers, is being custom-made in Japan for this project. The \$15 million machine will arrive on the site in summer of 2011.

Mr. Mues said while there will be a shaft on the other end of the tunnel in Newark, the shaft in Menlo Park will be the entrance for the boring machine, workers and all supplies.

When the tunnel is near completion, workers will still be entering through the shaft in Menlo Park. Workers will then have to make a 4-mile underground commute to the other side of the tunnel on small trains called "locis."

The project is expected to be completed in 2015.

Go to sfwater.org/baytunnel for more information on the project. ■



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Closing doors

Home & Garden and ... Kids too! at 714 Santa Cruz Ave. in downtown Menlo Park is closing shop after 16 years of selling kids clothing, toys, and home and garden merchandise. The store plans to close Thursday, Sept. 30, and is holding a storewide sale, cutting prices by 30 percent to 50 percent, according to store owner Lynn Porter.

Atherton sets special meeting on staffing

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

Some key staff positions, among them the city manager's job, will be the subject of a special meeting of the Atherton City Council at 10 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 30.

The meeting had been scheduled before the Sept. 23 announcement that City Manager Jerry Gruber was leaving his post on Oct. 22, but a discussion on how to find his replacement was quickly added to the

agenda.

Mayor Kathy McKeithen said the council will discuss options for a replacement process that could include a short-term manager chosen for his or her ability to evaluate the current Town Hall staffing and policies and make recommendations to the council on possible improvements.

The council will also discuss going out to bid for contract services to fill the positions of town attorney, building official,

and code-enforcement officer, according to Mayor McKeithen.

The attorney and code-enforcement positions are already contracted out, while the town has traditionally filled the building official position in-house. But as town officials have looked for ways to cut employee costs, they have also considered outsourcing services, whenever possible, to save on the cost of

See MEETING, page 13



SHE EARNED HER B.A. IN STUDIO ART FROM U.C. DAVIS, AN M.F.A. IN PAINTING FROM SAN FRANCISCO ART INSTITUTE, AND HER TEACHING CREDENTIAL IN ART FROM SACRAMENTO STATE UNIVERSITY.

She loves unlocking a student's hidden creativity and potential through art and believes that art helps students discover beauty within and without.

When she's not teaching, drawing or painting, she can often be found at playing ice hockey at a local ice-rink.

Her paintings have won acclaim in group, solo and juried exhibitions including the Pacific Art League, Herbst Pavilion, and in numerous local and domestic galleries. She considers her art and art in general "artifacts of a continuing story of creating, living, and connecting." To see her work, visit www.teridillonscott.com.

She hopes her students take with them a love for art, creativity and learning.

Her favorite quote is: "Be the change you want to see in the world" by Gandhi.

TERI DILLON SCOTT

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GRUBER

continued from page 5

and he won a judgment of factual innocence in court during a hearing at which an Atherton police officer involved in the arrest testified that the police report had been altered without his permission.

Mr. Buckheit said he offered his services for one year only, for a salary of \$1. But, he acknowledged, the council was likely to cite his lawsuit against the town in not considering him.

Mr. Johns said he offered to work for \$1 a month "for a reasonable amount of time pending the selection of a new city manager."

Headaches

Mr. Gruber will be leaving behind several headaches for whoever takes his place.

■ The town has been making deep cuts to its expenses to get them in line with income.

■ The town is dealing with one

lawsuit after another, recently settling two, with former employees, for hundreds of thousands of dollars.

■ Employee morale is extremely low, according to a number of people close to Town Hall.

■ Internecine feuding nettles the City Council.

■ The building official recently retired after coming under intense criticism by some residents, including a couple likely to sue the town for "gross negligence" on the part of the building department.

■ The city attorney is under fire for what the mayor says are issues with the attorney's transparency and attitude.

What's next?

The City Council will discuss how to proceed with filling Mr. Gruber's office at a special meeting at 10 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 30, in the Town Council Chambers at 94 Ashfield Road.

Mayor McKeithen said the council will also address the question of naming an interim manager. As for Mr. Johns' and Mr. Buckheit's proposals, she wasn't enthused.

"People have even said that I should be city manager," she said, "and I say absolutely not."

The town, she said, needs a manager "who has no baggage. ... All of us have too much baggage. And the propensity is always to bring even a little piece of that baggage forward."

"We need a fresh start," she said. Someone with no history with the town "will make all the difference in the world to the people of Atherton, and to the staff."

Regarding Mr. Gruber, the mayor said: "When we hired Jerry, I was delighted ... and he's been a delightful person. He helped us through a tough period, and it was tough on him, too. I wish him well." ■

Dave Boyce contributed to this report.

Menlo Park joins high-speed rail lawsuit

Sandy Brundage
Almanac Staff Writer

Like an endless loop, Menlo Park City Council voted 4-0 on Tuesday, Sept. 21, to join neighboring cities in a lawsuit against the state high-speed rail authority.

Councilman Andy Cohen recused himself due to a conflict of interest — his home may be impacted by the project's construction.

Palo Alto and Atherton decided last week to file the suit, which challenges the project's environmental impact report (EIR) certification.

An earlier lawsuit filed two years ago also attacked the project's environmental impact report. A judge ruled in August 2009 that the rail authority did need to revise the portions evaluating land use, right-of-way impacts, and vibration effects.

The California High-Speed Rail Authority revised the report to address those areas and released a new version Aug. 20, which is now facing another legal battle.

Rail authority chalks up legal win

By Sandy Brundage
Almanac Staff Writer

Even as news spread of a fresh lawsuit against high-speed rail, the beleaguered rail authority announced the dismissal of a different suit.

Filed in April by Menlo Park residents Morris Brown and attorney Mike Brady, the lawsuit asked the court to rule on how the California High-Speed Rail Authority can legally use \$9.95 billion in bond funds.

The suit alleged that construction could not legally begin until the rail authority had enough money to finish what it started. According to court filings, the plaintiffs stated that since the project is "severely under-funded," starting construction would only waste the money.

The rail authority asked the court to dismiss the lawsuit in June, according to spokeswoman Rachel Wall, believing that it did not actually allege illegal conduct.

Sacramento Superior Court Judge Kevin Culhane sided with the rail authority on Sept. 21, calling the plaintiffs' claim "speculative" in his ruling.

"Although plaintiffs contend waste is imminent, the manner in which they have framed the requested relief reveals that plaintiffs are seeking an advisory opinion rather than an order that imminent waste be halted," the ruling stated.

Ms. Wall said that lawsuits

Attorney Stuart Flashman, who represents the cities, said this lawsuit examines different aspects of the project from the previous one, such as widening its right-of-way and eliminating tunnels as an option for the Peninsula segment.

"Most important of these is the discovery that the published ridership model was not the model used in the prior EIR, and the flaws subsequently found in that ridership model that make its validity very questionable," Mr. Flashman said. "All of this should have changed the impact analysis, but the authority chose to ignore the information."

He will file the suit in Sacramento Superior Court by Oct. 4, he said.

Mayor Rich Cline and Councilman John Boyle agreed the ridership model's flaws demand correction.

"It's critical that we have a realistic estimate of ridership levels," Mr. Boyle said in a press release. "If the Program Level EIR says the system MUST support an unrealistically high number of riders on the Pen-

insula, then we'll be precluded from considering Design Alternatives (i.e. grade separation options) that might be far less impactful on our community than what is really necessary."

Not everyone believes another lawsuit is the right way to go. Former Menlo Park mayor Steve Schmidt suggested forming a high-speed rail commission, describing the city's latest legal action as "little more than harassment of the high-speed rail authority."

At the council meeting, Mr. Schmidt thanked the project's critics for highlighting problems that the planning process needs to address, but also discussed the benefits of high-speed rail.

Those benefits include reduced pollution and traffic, and increased pedestrian safety, he said.

"How it travels through our city needs to be dealt with now. I encourage the council to use a rational and realistic approach," he said.

"Being litigants and part of a negative chorus is not good enough. We need also to be positive, creative and eventually prepared for a likely outcome that can benefit the region and Menlo Park." ■



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Presented by Mark Schmidt Licensed Optician

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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.

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Memorial for Bill Lane on Friday

A memorial service for Bill Lane begins promptly at noon Friday, Oct. 1, at Stanford Memorial Church on the uni-

versity campus. All balconies will be open.

Parking is available at Galvez Field on Galvez Street; a shuttle service to the memorial begins at 10:30 a.m.

Mr. Lane was a member of Portola Valley's first Town Council, the town's first mayor and, with his wife Jean Lane, a major benefactor to the town. He was a former ambassador to Australia and Nauru, a philanthropist, a horseman, and a renowned advocate for and supporter of environmental causes.

The family asks that in lieu of flowers, gifts in Mr. Lane's name can be made to the Peninsula Open Space Trust, the California Parks Foundation, the Yosemite Conservancy, or the Portola Valley Open Space Acquisition Fund.

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Trails committee: Not just for equestrians

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

The Portola Valley Trails Committee has a new charter, one intended to realize the Town Council's vision of a group that represents the interests of equestrians, but also of other trail users who the council says have lacked representation.

These include hikers, families with children, dog walkers, wildflower and bird enthusiasts, cyclists and fans of geo-caching—a planet-spanning game of caching containers of small objects in secluded places so that others can enjoy searching for them and leaving their signatures there.

By a 5-0 vote, the council on Sept. 22 approved a revised process for appointing committee members and a revised charter. The new charter has the committee reviewing its annual budget rather than preparing it, setting up programs for trail safety and maintenance, and encouraging the safe enjoyment of the trails by diverse users.

The discussion included a critique by equestrians, but one less strident than the complaints aired at the council's Sept. 8 meeting. Portola Valley resident Carlin Hansen, for example, suggested that the council lacks diversity in that it has no equestrians on it.

(Ann Wengert is an equestrian, but not currently riding. Woodside's Town Council includes

three equestrians, Town Manager Susan George said. That council is invited on occasional rides organized by the town's Trails Committee.)

Re-interviews

The matter of diversifying voices on the committee will not be left to members exclusively.

The committee will be asked to interview candidates and come to a consensus on a proposed roster, but the new candidates and current members will be interviewed privately by the current mayor, incoming mayor and town manager.

If the Trails Committee cannot reach a consensus, they will be asked to submit notes outlining the different viewpoints expressed.

As with all volunteer committees, the mayor appoints members with the consensual approval of the council.

"We recognize that it's not necessarily an easy task," Mr. Toben said. "We intend to be very thorough and transparent about putting a new team together."

"Our overall goal," Mr. Toben said in a recent memo, "is to find the right mix of individuals who will work constructively together to maximize the benefits of the town's trails to all users ... always taking into account the cherished qualities that distinguish Portola Valley's trails system." ■

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I'm 70 now and I've been a Funeral Director for 50 years and as you can imagine, I have had many interesting experiences trying to fulfill the wishes of the families. In 1999 I thought I had retired from John O'Connor's Menlo Park Funerals and decided to set sail for parts unknown on board WINDSONG, a 60' sailboat. About six months later, off the coast of Nicaragua, I received an e-mail via the single side band high seas radio to call my old office. A few days later in a small dusty coastal village I called Menlo Park Funerals and was asked to contact Bob P. an old friend from the Menlo Town Club. Bob was in his 80s and I hadn't seen him in a year or so because he was in ill health. "Bob, how you doing?" I ask. "Not well, John. I called because I don't have long to go and I would like you to scatter my ashes under the Golden Gate when you have a chance." "Bob, I'm sorry but I retired and I'm sailing Windsong down the coast of Central America now and then over to Europe." "Oh" he said and was silent for a moment. "Do you think you will be sailing off the coast of France some time?" "Maybe, why Bob?" "John, I don't

D. Day + 64 years



think I ever told you but in 1944 I was aboard my Navy ship and took part in the Normandy invasion on D day. So if you would, take my urn with you and scatter my ashes with my buddies off Omaha Beach in the sea, not off the shore. Navy, you know." I thought about it and said. "Bob, I may not be there for years!" In a second his old wit shown through. "John, I plan on being dead a long time, it won't mater how long it takes." "OK, Bob you have my word on it."

Months later I made my yearly visit to Menlo Park to see my grand daughters at Christmas. Of course I stopped by Menlo Park Funerals and picked up a years worth of messages from old friends. One was from Bob's family. I called and talked to his wife Betty. Bob had passed away and she had his urn for me. She was living in an accessed living home in Redwood City. We met and she gave me the urn. Then she patted my hand and said "You

two be safe out there" It was the beginning of an eight year odyssey. 3,000 nights at sea.

Last spring Windsong was in the marina in Barcelona after an exploration of the Western Med. from Istanbul to Egypt. After five years in the Med I was ready to head to England and then back to the Caribbean VIA Cape Verdi. I noticed a man walking along the dock, passing my boat a few times. He called up to me. "May I speak to you, Captain?" "Hi, what can I do for you?" "I want to buy your boat" he said. "It's not for sale" I said. We talked for a while and off he went.

The next day he was back. "May I speak to you, Captain" he said. "Would you sell her for \$\$\$\$?" After a moments hesitation, "Let me show you your new boat!" I said. And that's how my twenty five year love affair with Windsong came to an end. That night I sat alone at the Helm in my Captains chair with a tall Scotch and thought of the thousands of Menlo Park area friends that sailed aboard Windsong. A sad and bitter sweet

night. The next morning I passed on the keys and felt a new sense of purpose. It's just you and me now Bob. Having a flight from Paris to SFO in seven days, it gave me a free week ahead. I took nothing from Windsong but some clothes, Bob's urn and his American Flag that had covered his casket. It all fit into my back pack. 40 years ago, I backpacked through Europe for two years and now I felt 28 years old again. No reservations just a destination. I caught a stand-by on Ryan Air to Orley and then found my way through the subway to the north of Paris train station for the express to Caen. Then by bus to Bayeur by evening. Walking along the beautiful old city which was completely untouched by the war although only 14 miles from the invasion of Europe by the Allied forces. I found a small room over a bar on a side street along the canal and had a great nights sleep. (To be continued)

For more photos or comments go to www.MenloParkFunerals.com.

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Steve Lewis is President of Lewis & Mathews Investment Management in Menlo Park. He is a college professor, investment counselor, Value Line award winner, financial author and has appeared on national radio and television. He is a past officer of the S.C. International Association of Financial planners and served on the National Academy Advisory Board. He has written for Money magazine and Dow Jones's Barron's.



Jim Curran is a veteran of over 25 Years on Wall Street. He is President of Curran & Lewis Investment Management, Inc., in Menlo Park, a Wealth Manager Magazine top Wealth Management firm. He is Chief Portfolio Manager, and specializes in investment advice for individual investors, companies, and their officers. He is an accomplished and dynamic college and business lecturer.

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‘Lifelong con man’ arrested in Menlo Park stock scam

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

Describing Roger Steven Miller, 67, as a “lifelong con man,” police arrested him Sept. 21 for allegedly selling thousands of dollars in non-existent Apple stock.

Mr. Miller, a resident of Menlo Park, and his 59-year-old Menlo Park victim met at a mutual friend’s party, said Det. Ed Soares, and he later allegedly brokered the purchase of discounted Apple stock.

The victim caught on after trying to cash a \$2,500 check from Mr. Miller, and discovering the bank account was closed, according to the detective. All told, the alleged fraud netted about \$30,000.

“This is basically his lifelong career,” Det. Soares said. “But there’s not much retirement in it.”

Mr. Miller was on probation for a 2007 conviction on fraud and grand theft when Menlo Park police arrested him Tuesday, Sept. 21, in a Safeway parking lot.

He’s now charged with three counts of felony grand theft, two of passing fake documents, and one count of felony theft with a prior

theft conviction, Deputy District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe said. A charge for violating probation should soon join the list.

Mr. Miller’s criminal record in San Mateo County spans nearly two decades, and extends to a federal fraud conviction for trying to sell the Golden State Warriors, according to court records.

Mr. Miller, who remains in jail on \$150,000 bail, pleaded not guilty in Superior Court on Sept. 22. He’s looking at four to five years in prison if convicted, according to Mr. Wagstaffe.

The district attorney’s office, which heard about the alleged fraud first, coordinated the month-long investigation with Menlo Park police.

“When you have this big of a scheme, where there’s a lot of paper trail, and bank accounts, and documents, you have to cross all the t’s and dot all the i’s,” Det. Soares noted.

Mr. Miller’s preliminary hearing is scheduled for Oct. 6 at 2 p.m.

Police ask anyone with information about Mr. Miller to call 650-330-6360. ■

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Tim Hanretty
Superintendent
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Candidates will be interviewed by the Board on the evening of Thursday, October 21, 2010, beginning at 6:00 P.M. Final selection will be made by a majority vote of the Board Members at the regular Board meeting on October 27, 2010.

For additional information, contact Tim Hanretty at 851-1777, ext. 3000.

Public invited to candidate forums

The League of Women Voters is inviting the public to several candidate forums over the next week in connection with the Nov. 2 election. Among them:

■ Candidates for the Menlo Park City Council will answer questions at a forum from 7 to 9:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 29, at the council chambers in the Menlo Park Civic Center. The forum is sponsored by the Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce and the South San Mateo County League of Women Voters.

■ Candidates for the Atherton City Council will participate in a forum at 7 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 30, in the Pavilion at Holbrook-Palmer Park, off Watkins Avenue just east of El Camino Real in Atherton. Candidates will make opening statements, then respond to questions submitted by attendees during the forum, sponsored by the Atherton Civic Interest League and the League of Women Voters.

■ Candidates for the District 3 San Mateo County supervisor's seat will participate in a forum from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Tuesday, Sept. 28, at the Redwood Shores Branch Library, 399 Marine Parkway, Redwood City.

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- Laurie and Trevor Hall, a son, Sept. 8, Sequoia Hospital.
- Peau Fetuu and Liuapeatau Tameifuna, a daughter, Sept. 9, Sequoia Hospital.

MEETING

continued from page 8

benefits and other employee-related costs.

Current City Attorney Wynne Furth has indicated her firm will bid to retain the contract, and the town is also likely to continue filling the code-enforcement post through outsourcing.

Several council members, however, have questioned the wisdom of outsourcing the building department's top position, arguing that the department pays for itself through building permit fees, and the revenue can be spent only in that department. Also, they say, the position is a critical one, and it may be smarter and more efficient to have the services performed in-house.

Also on the agenda is consideration of a request for design proposals for a possible new Town Center.

The meeting will be held in the Atherton Council Chambers at 94 Ashfield Road. ■

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17288 Skyline Boulevard Planner: Sage Schaan

Review and recommendation of approval/denial of a proposal to install 10 equipment cabinets, small support equipment, and new six-foot tall solid screen fencing, to connect to a nearby installed Distributed Antenna System. The property is located in a Community Commercial (CC) zoning district.

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

TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY



NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING ON AN APPEAL OF PLANNING COMMISSION DECISION

THIS IS TO NOTIFY YOU that on October 13, 2010, the Town Council of the Town of Portola Valley will conduct a review of an appeal of the July 7, 2010 Planning Commission denial of Conditional Use Permit (File #X7D-170). The Conditional Use Permit request is to allow the installation of new wireless communication equipment for T-Mobile Wireless at the Cal Water tank site located at the corner of Peak Lane and Golden Oak Drive. T-Mobile Wireless has made the application for appeal.

The Town Council Public Hearing on the appeal has been scheduled for **Wednesday, October 13, 2010 at 7:30 p.m.**, in the Community Hall at the Town Center, 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, California.

Public Hearings provide the general public and interested parties an opportunity to provide testimony on these items. If you challenge a proposed action(s) in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at a Public Hearing(s) described above, or in written correspondence delivered to the Town Council at, or prior to, the Public Hearing(s).

Information pertaining to the proposal and appeal may be viewed at Town Hall Building & Planning Department, Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. All interested persons are invited to appear before the Town Council to be heard at the time and place herein above mentioned.

Dated: September 21, 2010

Leslie A. Lambert
Planning Manager

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Newsroom Fax: (650) 854-0677

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Advertising Fax: (650) 854-3650

e-mail news and photos with
captions to:

Editor@AlmanacNews.com

e-mail letters to:

letters@AlmanacNews.com

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

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



WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

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

TOWN SQUARE FORUM

POST your views on the Town Square forum at www.TheAlmanacOnline.com

EMAIL your views to:

letters@almanacnews.com and note this it is a letter to the editor in the subject line.

MAIL or deliver to:

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

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

Putting pressure on the rail project

It may look like David versus Goliath, but the three Peninsula communities that are suing the High-Speed Rail Authority over its incomplete environmental impact report are becoming far more than a minor irritant.

The city councils from Atherton, Menlo Park and Palo Alto all voted last week to file a legal challenge to the authority's EIR, which had recently been slightly modified and then approved after an earlier suit by Menlo Park and Atherton. Not satisfied, the communities, joined by Palo Alto, voted to sue again, and for good reason.

From the cities' point of view, the biggest problem is the authority's use of a model found to contain greatly inflated ridership estimates that make the EIR's validity "very questionable," according to Stuart Flashman, the attorney for the cities. And there is also a continuing dispute over the authority's business plan, which critics have called inadequate ever since it was released.

All three cities believe the authority has treated their well-documented concerns with disdain, despite repeated efforts to find common ground in the routing and design of the tracks that would carry the Los Angeles-to-San Francisco trains through each city. As the high-speed rail discussion unfolded, the cities were led to believe that they would have some say in the final design of the tracks, but as time went on they learned that was not the case.

Now, after more than a year of debate, it appears that the rail authority is no closer to resolving disputes over the project than it was in the beginning. Comments from authority board members show that most would just like to see the Peninsula critics just go away.

But that is not going to happen. There is a package of deadlines fast approaching for the project to qualify for up to \$4.3 billion in federal funds. The draft EIR must be completed by this December; the state Legislature, with the support of local Sen. Joe Simitian, has ordered the authority to produce a "viable business plan" by next February or face possible loss of support from the Legislature.

The final environmental review must be completed by September 2011 for the project to qualify for additional federal funds, and construction must start by September 2012. The entire project must be completed by September 2017.

These are not insignificant deadlines. If the rail authority has any hope of meeting them, it needs to respond to the Peninsula cities' concerns so it can get on with its work.

However you may feel about high-speed rail, it is hard to argue against those who say the project needs a viable business plan based on reasonable ridership estimates. And Menlo Park, Atherton and Palo Alto, which will see trains run through heavily settled or developed areas, must be accommodated or at least met halfway in their effort to reduce the project's impact.

We hope this lawsuit will get someone's attention at the rail authority. It is time for these questions to be answered.

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

LETTERS

Our readers write

Bummed out by Menlo parking tickets

Editor:

I attended a reunion luncheon with five friends at Carpaccio in Menlo Park recently. We all received parking tickets and we all were outraged that this would happen.

We will avoid downtown Menlo Park now — it is too bad as there are already many empty storefronts.

Mrs. Eugene Baciocco
Selby Lane, Atherton

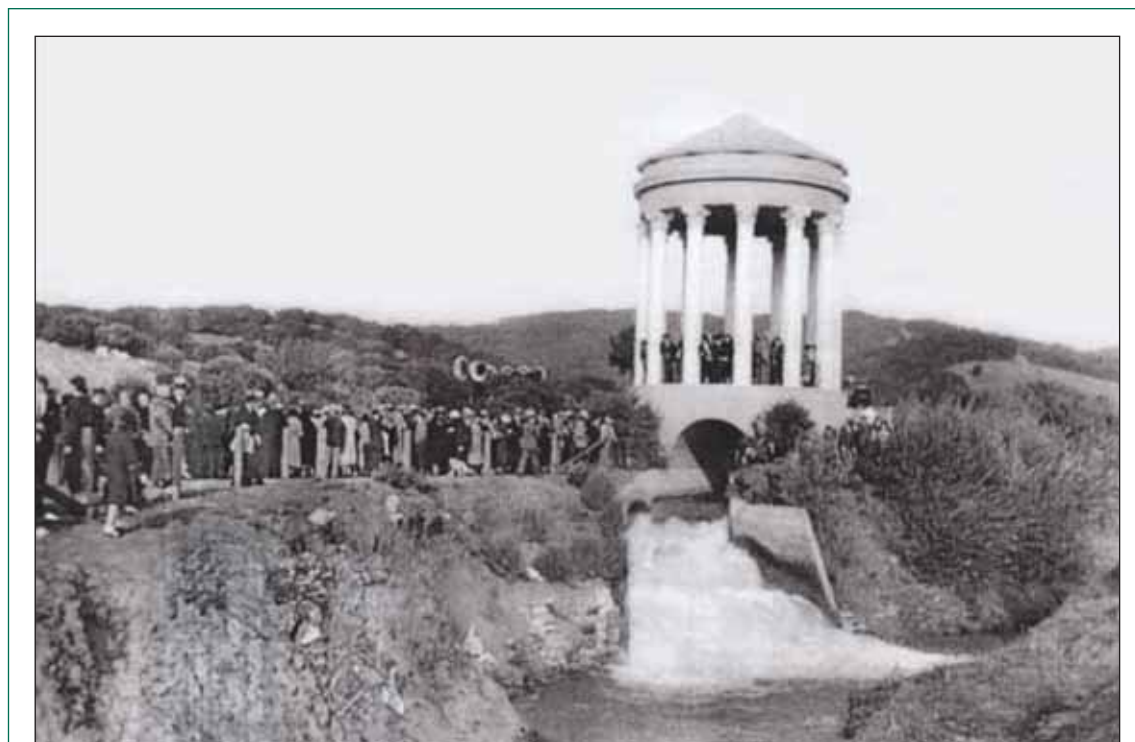
Be careful: More kids are biking to school

Editor:

Back to school means back to traffic as we see the ebbs and flows of our roadways become swollen and congested.

But, not so much this year. Many youngsters have talked their parents into bicycling to school and in doing so have set a precedent for healthier bodies and thinner traffic.

However, with construction at local public elementary schools nearly complete, this shift in trans-



Woodside Library Collection

Our Regional Heritage

A large crowd gathered at the Pulgas Water Temple on Canada Road for a dedication ceremony in 1934.

portation has meant new trials for school staff in figuring out what to do with all the bikes.

This is quite a lovely problem to have. As the town of Atherton prepares a new lighted intersection on

Middlefield, cyclists will continue to shift around as will their designated parking locations.

As these traffic patterns change, keep your eyes open and remember to share the road with our youngest

cyclists. And remember — keeping these kids on bikes translates to less vehicular traffic for you, too. Maybe you'd like to try cruising our city on

See **LETTERS**, next page

Time for new approach to rail project

By Steve Schmidt

It's been just over two years since City Council members Rich Cline and Kelly Fergusson voted to make Menlo Park a party in a lawsuit against the San Francisco to Los Angeles high-speed rail project. The vote was 2-1.

On that night, Aug. 5, 2008, council member John Boyle asked that the resolution by Mr. Cline and Ms. Fergusson regarding high-speed rail's impacts in Menlo Park be set aside until the council could hear a presentation from the High-Speed Rail Authority.

Unfortunately, legal action prevailed over a decision to set aside the Cline/Fergusson resolution, which might have been the first step in crafting a city policy on high-speed rail. Does our joining a lawsuit define our official position on this issue?

The city voted in favor of high-speed rail in November 2008 by 57 percent. I concede that many who voted yes have changed their minds. However, there are probably many Menlo Park residents who still believe that there are benefits to this project, benefits that override the inevitable negatives.

While the city has joined lawsuits, I suggest another approach, one more positive and more realistic. The council should follow through on a suggestion from Martin Engel to set up a city high-speed rail commission or officially constituted advisory committee composed of residents willing to realistically follow the Peninsula Cities Consortium's position statement: "Final design should minimize the impacts, improve the quality of life in local communities and incorporate the best urban design ideas."

I believe that legal action is now little more

than tilting at windmills and that the consortium should be spending its time developing a sustainable operating plan for Caltrain. If the city feels it must, it can both pursue lawsuits and join PCC's opposition while a new deliberative body does its work.

Nearly two years have passed since Prop 1A passed in California. Thanks to our home-grown critics we know much more today about the project. They have told us much more than just of their frustration of living next to an active railroad.

Major problems with assumptions, projections and expectations have been revealed, analyzed, and written about in every newspaper and on every blog. We have learned that the rail authority is made up of flawed human beings; their ridership and project costs are flawed; the state is in financial trouble; the impacts to Menlo Park are significant.

Hats off to Martin Engel and his allies for their diligence and determination in exposing all the unpleasant reality of the project planning.

However, none of this wisdom will make the project go away. Rather than only spending our resources fighting high-speed rail, the city should prepare for the probable scenario that this 21st Century system is going to use the Caltrain tracks and yes, travel through our city. How it does that needs to be dealt with now.

The benefits to Caltrain are many: electrification, reduced noise and pollution, and grade separations that mean less traffic congestion and increased safety for pedestrians and cyclists.

I encourage the council to use a rational and realistic approach. Being litigants and part of a negative chorus is not good enough. We need also to be positive, creative and eventually prepared for a likely outcome that can benefit the region and Menlo Park.

Steve Schmidt is a former mayor of Menlo Park.



GUEST OPINION

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

your bike now that the roadways are less congested.

We would love to have more traffic in the bike lanes. Join us.

Michelle Daher
O'Connor Street, Menlo Park

Why the cheap shot at the GOP?

Editor:

This letter is in response to "GOP a disappointment" in a recent Almanac.

Clearly The Almanac has chosen to publish a cheap shot at Republicans and, of course, show its political bias. Here we have a majority of voters fed up with our Democratic administration that has no clue about creating jobs unless government jobs. They do know how to print money with most of it going to their union and other friends who in turn help them get re-elected.

I wish the Almanac would stick

to local news and stop this obvious propaganda. We already have a SF Chronicle for that.

Roger Passal
Patrol Road, Woodside

Freedoms are slipping away in Menlo Park

Editor:

If the Menlo Park City Council gets its way, you won't be able to smoke in your own home and you won't be able to park in your city of residence.

In a land that promotes freedom, is that right and just? Our council says no all too often, to you, me and the public good. I don't smoke, but I believe people in their own homes have the right to.

How are our local merchants going to survive with the proposed new parking regulations? How about if the City Council only got 15-20 minutes for their weekly meetings and we charged them for every minute of time they spent over that?

Pat White
Fremont Street, Menlo Park

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CSMA Merit Scholarship student Kyle Liu, Bassoon

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