



Woodside High
teachers re-bond in
wake of 'Superman' Page 3

The Almanac

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

OCTOBER 27, 2010 | VOL. 46 NO. 9



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On camera, and off

A high fashion model and a pioneer
in TV entertainment, Fran Kearton
has stories to tell Section 2

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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



Photo by Veronica Weber/The Almanac

Woodside High Principal David Reilly greets students early in the school year in 2008.

Teachers re-bond in wake of ‘Superman’

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

WOODSIDE HIGH

As military veterans know, the feelings that develop after a group has been attacked often create strong bonds of loyalty and mutual support, knitting the individuals together into a tighter and more spirited pursuit of their mission.

Just such an aftereffect is galvanizing teachers and staff at Woodside High School following the simply drawn negative portrayal of the school in the controversial and compelling recent film “Waiting for Superman.”

The documentary uses charter schools as a foil to accuse the U.S. educational establishment of widespread failure in preparing students for the fierce global competition that is awaiting them — if they are accepted to college, and if they’ve been prepared to succeed there.

Woodside High, shot from the outside, is on the screen for maybe a minute. The focus is on Emily Jones, a Redwood City student who would normally go to Woodside but has applied to Summit Preparatory Charter

High School and is chosen in the annual lottery. Emily and her family are concerned that her needs may be better met at Summit, which has less than one-fourth the students enrolled at Woodside.

Woodside Principal David Reilly has told The Almanac that he appreciates the diversity of options in the Sequoia Union

‘This film has really drawn (the staff) closer together.’

PRINCIPAL DAVID REILLY

High School District, particularly with a growing family of his own. His kids, depending on what their needs are, may be applying to Summit Prep or its sister school, Everest Public High School, he said.

But this film did not look in detail at the pros and cons of charters and traditional schools. A sketch of Woodside together with schools in the Bronx, Harlem, Washington, D.C., and East

Los Angeles appears to show in common a profusion of students from poor socio-economic circumstances and presumably poor prospects for escaping them.

“I don’t think anybody enjoys being mischaracterized or characterized in an incomplete manner,” Mr. Reilly said. “This film has really drawn (the staff) closer together. There has been a great deal of dialogue on how do we get the truth out there.”

The truth, in part, is parental involvement: In the film, the parents are engaged in their children’s education. With engagement comes awareness of options, and they join the crowd of engaged families in lotteries that govern admission to high-performing charter schools, but with punishing odds of success.

If Woodside is any guide, however, the majority of at-risk students come from families that may be unaware of such options and the importance of education in determining a child’s future, Mr. Reilly said.

For parents of this mindset, whether they’re juggling mul-

See **SUPERMAN**, page 14



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Families endorse candidates in Council race

We are a group of concerned Menlo Park families that represent a number of neighborhoods across Menlo Park and we are taxpayers, homeowners, and parents of children in the local schools. We want our future Menlo Park City Council to (1) improve our community (2) demonstrate fiscal responsibility and (3) achieve reasonable development in our downtown corridor.

More specifically, we support:

- Timely, reasoned development to address the blight on El Camino, increase business, and eliminate retail vacancies by adopting and implementing a specific plan for the Downtown and the El Camino corridors. Much work has been done in this area— it's now time to finalize discussions and make a decision on the future of our city's downtown.
- Measure T to boost tax revenues and improve the neighboring Belle Haven and surrounding communities.
- Responsible management of our city budget, looking for ways to increase revenues and reduce expenditures to address our structural budget deficits.
- Measure L as a reasonable starting point to address the escalating cost of our pensions, which threatens to impact the city's ability to deliver services in the future.
- A common sense approach to high speed rail that is financially sound and supports the interests of our residents.
- Our local police and fire departments' high level of service, while ensuring it is based on a sustainable financial model.

We recently invited the six Menlo Park City Council candidates to two informal forums at a local Menlo Park home. The candidates did not fill out any surveys nor make a pledge to a position on any of the issues. The forums were open to all candidates, and allowed the candidates to interact directly with us to discuss their civic experience, why they were running and their views on various issues facing Menlo Park. This setting gave both the participants and each candidate an opportunity to engage in a constructive dialogue in a relaxed setting. Members of each of our families spent a full hour with each of the six candidates and we appreciate the time they all took to participate.

After careful consideration, we believe there are three candidates who are best equipped to take action towards addressing Menlo Park's critical challenges. We strongly support the following three candidates in November's election:

- Peter Ohtaki
- Rich Cline
- Kirsten Keith

We do not endorse them as a "slate" but as three individual candidates we believe will bring decisiveness, relevant and varied experience, and a sense of urgency to the Menlo Park City Council.

Respectfully yours,

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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Homeowners file \$10 million suit against Atherton

■ Couple alleges that the town's building department was negligent in ensuring that their new house is safe and built to code.

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

The town of Atherton has been hit with another lawsuit, this one by homeowners charging that the town and its building department's "gross negligence, fraud and breach of duties" have cost them millions of dollars and severe emotional distress.

Kimberly Sweidy and her husband, Raymie Stata, filed the law-

suit on Oct. 20 in San Mateo County Superior Court, seeking at least \$10 million in damages.

In addition to the town, the lawsuit names two former building officials — Mike Hood and Mike Wasmann — as well as consultant Michael Cully.

The lawsuit charges the defendants with breach of duty, fraud, conspiracy to breach duty, and a "taking" of property, which the couple says has substantially

decreased in value "due to the unfinished or improper design and construction."

In addition to asking for damages "in excess of \$10 million," the couple is asking for punitive damages against Mr. Wasmann, charging that he "acted with malice, fraud, oppression, evil motive or intent, or with reckless/callous disregard of and indifference to" their rights, interests and well-being.

Mr. Wasmann, communicating through a building department staff person, declined to comment for this story.

Contacted by The Almanac late



Photo by Dave Boyce/The Almanac

Kimberly Sweidy, one of the plaintiffs, addressing the Atherton City Council in August.

last week, City Attorney Wynne Furth said the town had yet to be

served with the lawsuit.

Ms. Furth noted that when Ms. Sweidy and Mr. Stata filed a claim with the town earlier this year, the matter was forwarded to the town's insurer. Atherton has insurance coverage through the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), and that carrier would be expected to pay most damages against the town.

Behind the lawsuit

Ms. Sweidy, Mr. Stata, and their two daughters moved into their

See **LAWUIT**, page 8

Pension reform initiative: Finance report is found

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

The "No on Measure L" committee battling the pension initiative on the Nov. 2 ballot planned to file its eagerly anticipated financial disclosure report by the Oct. 21 deadline, according to Jerry Jimenez, spokesman for the Service Employees International Union Local 521 (SEIU).

But the report never reached the Menlo Park City Clerk on Thursday.

Mr. Jimenez told The Almanac on Oct. 22 that the report had been sent via overnight mail to the city, and should have arrived Friday.

However, city offices were closed on Friday, as they are every other week.

He did provide The Almanac with an electronic copy of the report. It shows \$22,000 total in monetary contributions, donated from the two unions who filed an unsuccessful lawsuit to keep Measure L off the ballot.

An estimated \$22,050 in non-monetary contributions came from those same two unions — SEIU and the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) — as well as a third, Californians for Health Care and Retirement Security.

City Clerk Margaret Roberts confirmed that she didn't receive a copy of the report on Oct. 21, but said unless someone files an official complaint with the state's Fair Political Practices Commission, sanctions against the group are unlikely.

She did get a fax earlier this month showing a \$15,000 contribution from SEIU to the "No on

Measure L" committee.

Residents of Menlo Park reported receiving mailers from the committee during the past week. The return address? The San Carlos headquarters for SEIU Local 521.

The financial report indicates the group has spent about \$13,000 so far on mailers.

Yes on Measure L

On the other hand, the "Yes on Measure L" crowd filed on time. Their financial report showed \$200 in donations between Oct. 1 and Oct. 16, split evenly between Menlo Park attorneys Robert Grant and Michael Brandt.

That brings the total monetary contributions to the committee to \$24,194.

"Yes on Measure L" also reported \$1,174 in non-monetary contributions, but didn't provide an itemized description since those occurred during a previous reporting period.

If donations decreased, so did expenses during this round, to \$2,231; the first filing period included the legal costs of defending the measure against a lawsuit filed by SEIU and another union to keep it off the ballot.

The unions may mount a post-election legal challenge. The "Yes on Measure L" committee still has \$4,069 remaining in its bank account.

The ballot measure seeks to raise the minimum retirement age for new public employees, excluding police officers, by five years to 60, and also decrease their maximum pension benefits by 0.7 percentage points to 2 percent of their highest annual salary averaged over three years. ■



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

SOLO Aquatics students practice during a freestyle drill at Burgess pool in Menlo Park.

Fight for Burgess pool contract

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

The rivalry between two Menlo Park swim clubs has splashed beyond the pool, as Team Sheeper and SOLO Aquatics attempt to outbid each other to manage the city's swimming pools.

Team Sheeper, of Menlo Swim and Sport, currently manages the Burgess pool complex as well as the Mavericks swim club. Four years ago the previous council awarded Team Sheeper the contract to operate the \$6.8-million, publicly funded facility without charging rent or asking other vendors for bids.

SOLO Aquatics, another community swim club that

practices at Burgess, initially supported Team Sheeper's management — only to have the relationship turn sour during arguments over pool access.

Troubled waters

SOLO's initial three-year contract with Team Sheeper included 2,184 free lane hours — essentially a year's worth of free swimming — that the city required. After that contract expired, the city had to intercede twice during negotiations to ensure SOLO got a fair deal compared with what other facilities in the region charged community groups, according to club members.

Those initial disagreements

left lingering bad feelings on SOLO's part.

Although some of SOLO's 200-plus members sent verbose e-mails detailing their dissatisfaction to the City Council during the past month, their management is keeping a low profile.

SOLO

SOLO lead coach Tom McRae did not respond to multiple requests for comment from The Almanac. However, volunteer board president Steve Zanolli spoke at the Sept. 28 City Council meeting, during which he commented on favoritism shown toward Team Sheeper's

See **POOL**, page 8

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- *The Almanac*, October 13, 2010



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Theater critic Bryan Wiggin dies at 65

Bryan Wiggin, a 24-year resident of Menlo Park who for several years served as theater critic for the Almanac, died Oct. 18 after a long illness. He was 65.

Under the name of Brian Stuart, he was a well-known radio announcer on KQED-FM for many years before his retirement. He also hosted the nationally syndicated San Francisco Symphony concerts.

Prior to his work on KQED, he was a radio announcer, public affairs director, and program director for KFSD, a classical music radio station in San Diego. He also worked at KUSC-FM in Los Angeles as a classical music radio announcer.

In addition to his passion for classical music, he loved the theater. He wrote theater reviews for the San Diego Union, as well as for the Almanac.

"Bryan was a superb writer, an acute observer, and a pleasure to be around because of his kind spirit and keen wit," said Richard Hine, managing editor of the Almanac. "I and others on the Almanac staff will miss him very much."

Mr. Wiggin, a native of Clarkston, Washington, is survived by his sister, Bonnie, a resident of Pasco, Washington, and his friend of 28 years, Ruth, a local resident.



Bryan Wiggin

Donations in his memory may be made to the San Francisco General Hospital Foundation, 2789 25th St., Suite 2028, San Francisco, CA 94110. Please, specify the donation is to be used to help provide music for patients in the intensive care unit.

In review

■ Visit tinyurl.com/WigginBryan to see several pages of links to theater reviews written by Bryan Wiggin for the Almanac.

■ Visit tinyurl.com/Alan-Dale for an example of Bryan Wiggin's graceful style in a first-person account of a fellow broadcaster, KCEA's Alan Dale, signing off on his longtime Big Band radio program.

Atherton names a 'transitional' interim city manager

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

Nadine Levin, who retired in June as Mountain View's longtime assistant city manager, took on the post of transitional interim town manager of Atherton at noon Friday, Oct. 22 — Jerry Gruber's last day on the job as city manager.

Ms. Levin was appointed Oct. 20 on a 4-0 vote by the City Council, with Councilman Charles Marsala absent. She will oversee operations in Town Hall until the council appoints a longer-term interim town manager early next month.

Ms. Levin's contract is effective for 65 days, unless extended by the council or terminated earlier, with three working days' notice. She will be paid \$3,700 per week for a 32-hour week.

The council had already been seeking applications for a longer-term interim manager, and had counted on Assistant City Manager Eileen Wilkerson's taking the reins from Mr. Gruber until the interim manager was appointed. But on Oct. 15, Ms. Wilkerson unexpectedly announced her retirement, effective Oct. 21, giving the town only one week's notice.

Background

Ms. Levin worked as second in command in Mountain View City Hall for just over 20 years, according to an article in the Mountain View Voice. Hired in December 1989, she came on board during unsteady times: The city manager resigned in January 1990 after serving only seven months in his position. Ms. Levin was then appointed interim city manager after only one month on the job, serving in that position for seven months.

Ms. Levin is an adjunct member in the master's of public administration program at the University of San Francisco, according to information released by the town. She earned a master's degree in public administration from Wayne State University, and a certificate in urban executive management from the Sloan School at MIT.

In a prepared statement, Mayor Kathy McKeithen said: "We feel very fortunate to have such a highly qualified person available to step into this position on short notice. Nadine has a strong background in local government, handling the full range of issues, from human resources



Nadine Levin

to capital improvement projects. She's a hands-on administrator who gets stellar reviews for the work she does with residents, elected officials, and employees."

Search continues

The council hopes to have a longer-term interim city manager in place by Nov. 8 or soon after. That person will oversee Town Hall until a recruitment process finds a permanent manager. The town has set a 5 p.m. Oct. 29 deadline for applications for the interim manager position.

The council decided in late September to appoint an interim manager so that the town could take its time in finding a permanent manager in a process that will include appointing a citizens committee to help interview the council-chosen finalists among candidates.

With the departure of Mr. Gruber and Ms. Wilkerson last week, three of Atherton's top management positions are vacant. Former building official Mike Wasmann left his position as head of the troubled building department in August, and the council is seeking applications for a replacement. ■

Kids, parents invited to Halloween parade

About 300 kids and their parents are expected to participate in a local Halloween parade on Sunday, Oct. 31, says Mara McCain, the parade's sponsor.

This is the ninth year for the parade, and participation has spread by word of mouth, she said.

The parade starts at Idyllwild and

Santa Clara avenues in Redwood City and travels down Himmel Avenue to Selby Lane School in Atherton.

Ms. McCain is a past president and founder of the education foundation associated with Selby Lane School.

At Selby Lane there will be a bake

sale to benefit the Woodside High School music department.

The Woodside High School marching band, as well as vehicles from the Menlo Park Fire Protection District and the Sheriff's Office, join in the parade.

Kids are encouraged to bring musical instruments and boom boxes "to make some noise," Ms. McCain said.

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Good Schools Raise Property Values

There is no single factor that affects the property values in a community more than the quality of its schools. Even if you do not have school aged children, you benefit from living in a good school district. Strong schools attract homebuyers and help to stabilize property values. This is especially important during an economic downturn and can make a substantial difference in the amount of time it takes a community to recover.

Remember this when you vote for your local school board can-

didates on November 2. There are able and dedicated candidates running in each of the local districts and you should take the time to find out who they are and to vote for them. These are tough times for school boards and all of them are having to make very difficult decisions about how to allocate scarce funds and plan for the future. We are fortunate to have good people willing to do this important job and they should be acknowledged for the contribution they make to our communities.

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Sequoia Healthcare board majority could reduce tax

Contrary to the initial opinion from the San Mateo County deputy controller, a majority vote by the board of the Sequoia Healthcare District could result in lowering the special district's property taxes.

The state code gives a local district board the right "on its face" to decline some or all of its property tax revenues, which would then lower the actual tax burden on property owners, Brenda Carlson, a chief deputy with the office of the San Mateo County Counsel, told *The Almanac*.

In an interview, Deputy Con-

troller Kanchan Charan said that since there is no apparent precedent for such an action in this county, a decision to decline the revenues would likely initiate an analysis of the tax code by the county counsel in a search for other relevant provisions.

Incumbent board member Jack Hickey is running for re-election as one of a three-candidate slate who, if elected, promise to eliminate the tax. The code appears to state that such an action would be temporary and that it would have to be renewed on a year-by-year basis.

Con man Simon Gann accused of committing crime behind bars

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

You can't keep a good con man down. Simon Gann, a convicted fraudster who allegedly sweet-talked a Menlo Park woman into a relationship and out of money by pretending to be a millionaire MIT graduate named "Saleem Dutante" who could count cards "like Rainman," has earned four additional felony charges despite being locked up.

The 29-year-old man remains in custody on \$100,000 bail. However, being locked up is no reason to stop committing crime. According to the district attorney's office, Mr. Gann allegedly wrote his Menlo Park victim, trading sweet talk for threats.

Unless she refused to testify, her sexual history would be broadcast far and wide. He also offered to privately pay back the money. The victim was not impressed, and reported the letters to police.

Authorities tripled his initial bail after discovering Mr. Gann's multiple convictions for fraud last year in Canada. His jury trial has now been postponed until Nov. 5.

He's charged with obtaining approximately \$1,900 under false pretenses and grand theft. He also racked up a charge of resisting arrest by attempting to evade Menlo Park police by hiding in his accuser's closet.

And, thanks to the alleged letters, Mr. Gann will have to explain two counts of witness tampering and two counts of attempting to bribe a witness.

If found guilty, Mr. Gann could now serve up to five years in state prison, according to the district attorney's office.

A penchant for ripping people off appears to run in the family. His identical twin brother, Jordan, is serving five years in Florida prison for conning a woman out of thousands of dollars by posing as an Ivy League oncologist and real estate mogul in 2008. ■

Fight for Burgess pool contract

POOL

continued from page 5

programs.

Some examples he gave the council: SOLO team photos get approximately one-quarter of the display space compared to Mavericks in the pool lobby; no coverage of SOLO in pool newsletters, apart from one September article that blamed the program for reduced lap swim times; and negotiations for pool access taking six to 10 weeks, extending past the start of SOLO's swim season.

Finally, he pointed to the city's website, where the section on Burgess pool links only to Team Sheeper's Menlo Swim and Sport website, without mention of SOLO.

Despite those comments, he later told *The Almanac*, "We really want to stay on positive, solution-based conversations."

The board president sounded rueful when asked about the negative e-mails sent to the city. "We did ask our members and parent members to show their support for SOLO. Again, to show their support for SOLO. What they loved about SOLO."

Mr. Zanolli agreed the two clubs struggle over pool availability, saying that happens with any limited community resource, be it soccer fields or swimming pools.

That includes haggling over practice times; at one point Team Sheeper suggested scheduling practices after most kids go to sleep. "That's not what we ended up with, but that's what was initially offered," said Mr. Zanolli.

Team Sheeper

Perception depends on where you're standing. For example, the announcement in the September newsletter Mr. Zanolli pointed out isn't quite a condemnation of SOLO:

"With regard to reduction in Lap Swim lane space, yes, it's true. Menlo Swim and Sport, along with the City of Menlo Park are supporting additional

SOLO practices here at the Burgess Park Pools. Although this reduces Lap Swimming during SOLO practice times, we're undertaking to increase laps availability by extending hours and providing guards and staff later on weekends."

Mr. Sheeper shared his own perspective with *The Almanac*. "SOLO plays their role of a rental user group that attempts to get the most time in the pool, the most space in the pool, for the lowest cost possible. We expect that from SOLO, as we would expect that from all rental groups negotiating a pool rental agreement," he said.

The SOLO team gets six of the pool's 11 lanes from 4 to 5:30 p.m. five days a week, and extended hours three days a week when SOLO can't practice at Menlo-Atherton High School, according to Mr. Sheeper. Currently they have 65 hours a week at Burgess, while the Mavericks get 55.

As for rates — Mr. Sheeper said SOLO pays 75 percent of the going market rate for pool time. That amounts to \$8 per hour per lane for regular practice; the two clubs are still negotiating fees for the extended hours.

The future

It's hard to assess what the going market rate is without examining the data. Even though each club's leader agreed to answer specific questions, neither would provide a copy of their contract.

The city interceded in their negotiations, but didn't do its own research to establish appropriate fees. According to City Attorney Bill McClure, the city relies on Team Sheeper and SOLO to provide data on comparable rates.

The *Almanac* asked the city for the data used in the last two negotiations, but it proved hard to find. Ditto for any notes made by the city during its mediations.

"To my knowledge our mediation consisted only of trying to help the two groups come to an

agreement through some phone calls and encouraging words," said Community Services Director Cherise Brandell.

The lack of documentation, along with using data supplied only by the two competing clubs, raises questions about how much oversight Menlo Park actually exerts over the management of a taxpayer-funded public facility.

If SOLO wins the contract, it will face the same problems of allocating a scarce resource that plague Team Sheeper. How do they plan to solve them? Their plan doesn't sound so different from what Mr. Sheeper's already attempting: community education about the scarcity of pool time; being flexible about schedules; and coordinating lane time with age groups. "Little kids can't swim at 6 in the morning," Mr. Zanolli said.

Only SOLO Aquatics and Team Sheeper submitted bids for the new contract. Those proposals are still being vetted by the city attorney and not yet publicly available, since both clubs asked that portions remain confidential.

The City Council expects to award the new contract in December. ■

LAWSUIT

continued from page 5

8,000-square-foot Atherton home on Broadacres Road in 2007, after a years-long period of construction.

After moving in, they discovered major structural deficiencies, inadequate plumbing and electrical work that doesn't comply with building code requirements, and a long list of other problems. They are now spending millions of dollars to make the house structurally sound and repair other problems.

Plan reviews for the home, as well as regular inspections and the final sign-off on its code-compliance and safety, were performed or overseen by the town's building department. At the beginning of the project, the department was headed by Mr. Hood, who abruptly retired in 2006, then by Mr. Wasmann. Mr. Wasmann retired in August amid charges by the couple and other residents that he didn't have proper credentials and qualifications to head the department.

Defendant Michael Cully was named because, according to the lawsuit, he issued the occupancy certificate as an employee of CGS Consultants. The town contracts with CGS Consultants to perform some of its building department duties.

Go to alturl.com/y4o5k to see an *Almanac* article in August about the couple's complaints against the town. ■

High-speed rail, Proposition 23 on Menlo Park City Council agenda

High-speed rail, never out of the public eye for long in Menlo Park, reappears on the City Council's agenda for its Oct. 26 (Tuesday) meeting. The council will consider hiring Capitol Advocates for \$80,000 to represent the city's interests on legislative, regulatory, and high-speed rail issues.

Council members will also decide whether to formally oppose Proposition 23, a state-wide initiative that would stop enforcing greenhouse

gas emission laws until unemployment drops to 5.5 percent or lower for an entire year.

And just in time for the last council meeting before the Nov. 2 elections, staff will share a quarterly financial review of Menlo Park's General Fund. The audience can expect some rousing discussion of the city's \$1.3 million revenue shortfall.

The meeting begins at 7 p.m. in council chambers at the Civic Center (701 Laurel St.)

Corte Madera holds book fair

The Corte Madera School book fair will be held Monday through Friday, Nov. 1-5, at the school, 4575 Alpine Road in Portola Valley.

The book fair will be run by Kepler's Books, which will donate about 20 percent of total proceeds to the Portola Valley school libraries, said Angela Schillace, co-chair of the book fair.

The hours are 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. each day except Thursday when it's open until 7 p.m. and Friday when it closes at 3 p.m.

"We will have great kids and teens selections and a fantastic adult selection as well," Ms. Schillace said.

BRIEFS

Kavalier, Clay, and the library

Comic book artists moonlighting as musicians? According to Andrew Farago, curator of San Francisco's Cartoon Art Museum, that's just one of many true-life stories that inspired "The Amazing Adventures of Kavalier & Clay."

On Tuesday, Oct. 26, Mr. Farago will present the facts behind the fiction, starting at 7 p.m. in the downstairs meeting room at the Menlo Park Library at 800 Alma St. in the Civic Center.



A protestor holds an upside-down American flag as cars are stopped along Alameda de las Pulgas by police to secure the area for President Barack Obama's departure from Steve Westly's home in Atherton on Thursday, Oct. 21.

Photo by Michelle Le /The Almanac

Protestors, fans greet Obama in Atherton

President Barack Obama attended a fundraising event Thursday night, Oct. 21, at the Atherton home of former state controller Steve Westly, a venture capitalist who ran for governor on the Democratic ticket in 2006 and co-chaired Mr. Obama's California campaign in 2008.

The event was a fundraiser for the Democratic National Committee as well as San Francisco District Attorney Kamala Harris, a candidate for California attorney gen-

eral.

Along Alameda de las Pulgas, the presidential motorcade encountered onlookers and dozens of protestors, holding signs such as "GET EQUAL: Repeal Don't Ask, Don't Tell" and "The Obamanator kills Jobs, kills prosperity, kills hopes."

The Atherton event followed a meeting of the president with Apple CEO Steve Jobs at the Westin hotel near San Francisco International Airport, and preceded a fundrais-

ing dinner in Palo Alto that night at the home of Google executive Marissa Mayer.

About 50 people attended each event, with the price of admission at up to \$30,400 per person. The events were expected to raise about \$1.8 million for the Democratic National Committee.

Go to AlmanacNews.com/news for more information. Pool reporter Carol Lee of Politico magazine contributed to this report.

New leader in Menlo council campaign financing

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

The six Menlo Park City Council candidates again disclosed the state of their campaign finances, reporting donations and expenditures from Oct. 1 through Oct. 16.

Three seats are open, with incumbents Rich Cline and Heyward Robinson fighting for reelection. Two newcomers are still winning the money race, but the frontrunners swapped places.

At the time of the last filing, educator and businessman Chuck Bernstein slightly trailed Peter Ohtaki, board president of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District. Now, despite a blistering series of attack ads against him that were funded by David Bohannon, Mr. Bernstein is in the lead, with \$15,445 in donations.

The single largest contribution, \$2,500, came from local accountant James Brenzel, who earlier made an identical donation to Mr. Ohtaki. Menlo Park Downtown Alliance founder Nancy Couperus returned to give another \$250, as did Robert Ekedahl, who, like Mr. Bernstein, opposes the Menlo Gateway project. Business owner

D.J. Brawner also came back, this time to add \$500.

Mr. Ohtaki enriched his campaign by \$3,075, giving him a total \$14,865 in donations. The Lincoln Club of Northern California Political Action Committee, a Republican organization, contributed \$500; Menlo Park Vice Mayor John Boyle chipped in \$100.

Mr. Ohtaki's list of expenditures suggests a more diverse strategy than that of the other candidates, who limited spending to promotional materials. Mr. Ohtaki spent \$595 on a campaign consultant out of San Francisco, Philip Fabian, a college student at San Francisco State University; \$156 on robocalls and \$143 on phone service to make those calls; and he made a \$500 donation to the public affairs fellowship program run by the Coro Center for Civic Leadership.

Incumbents

The Almanac's last look at Mr. Robinson's war chest found \$9,215. That rose to \$11,934. Large donors include Menlo Business Park (\$1,000); Palo Alto real estate agent Tod Spieker (\$500); and the California Apartment Association Political

Action Committee (\$250).

Next comes Mayor Cline, in fourth place even though he collected \$3,705, more than his council colleague during the past two weeks. That brings his total to \$10,344. The California Real Estate Political Action Committee provided \$1,000. Another housing association, the CAA Tri-County, donated \$250. Realtor Michael Stoner gave \$350.

Keith, Peterson

Attorney and planning commissioner Kirsten Keith watched her campaign fund grow by \$2,600, bringing total donations to \$6,799. Intel's chief marketing officer, Deborah Conrad, gave \$2,000. Vice Mayor Boyle also contributed \$100 to her campaign.

"If you don't have it, don't spend it," candidate Russell Peterson often says, and he continues to run a barebones campaign. Raising \$325 since the last finance filing, donations for his campaign stand at \$3,975 total, with \$500 in non-monetary contributions for campaign signs and graphics from Palo-Alto based Mike Cobb Creative. ■

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November 21, 2010 at 1:00 p.m.

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Community Report from the Menlo Park C

Dear Friends,

The Community once again demonstrated its support of our schools during these challenging financial times by approving Measure C this past June by a vote of 76%. The additional revenue that this 7-year Parcel Tax provides has enabled the Menlo Park City School District to develop a financial plan that keeps our comprehensive educational programs intact and enables the District to hire the teaching staff required to maintain targeted class sizes while addressing enrollment growth over the next seven years.

This report to the Community illustrates the ways that your local funding supports our schools. During these uncertain economic times, our District is very fortunate that local property taxes, parcel taxes, grants from the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation and other local sources represent 92% of the total District revenue for operations. As a result, State and Federal government funding represents only 8% of our total revenue for operations.

Thanks to the Facilities Bond passed by the Community in 2006, facility projects at our elementary schools are near completion and construction at Hillview Middle School is now underway. The Bond has provided the District with the funding to develop and improve each school site so that we are prepared to accommodate the District's growing enrollment of future students in up-to-date facilities and learning environments.

The Board of Education and I appreciate this remarkable level of support for our schools and we take very seriously our responsibility to act as good stewards of these local funds. With your support, we will continue to provide a strong educational program for the children of our Community.

Thank you for your ongoing support.
Ken Ranella, Superintendent

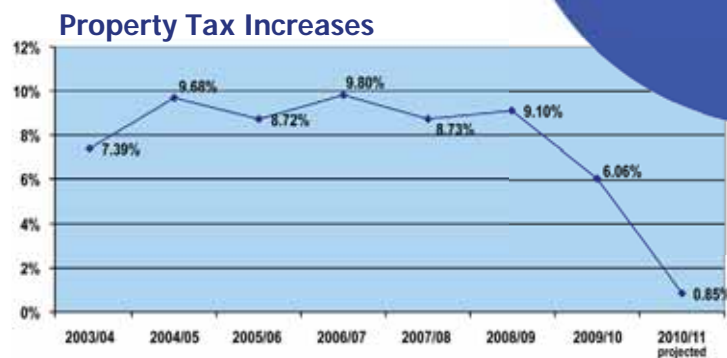


Our Schools are Locally Funded

Role of Property Taxes

The Menlo Park City School District is primarily funded by revenue from property taxes. Local property taxes represent 65% of all revenue sources in the District budget.

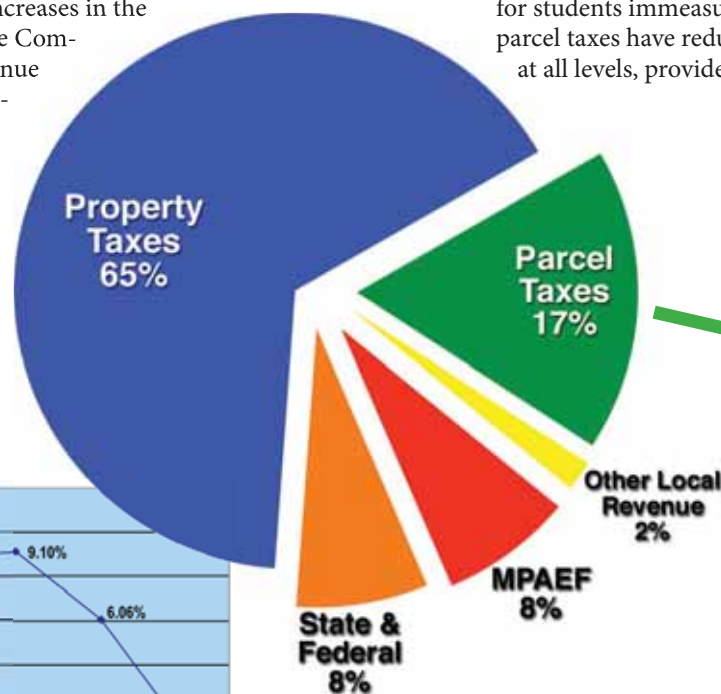
Over the last seven years, property tax revenue increased annually between 7% to nearly 10% due to increases in the assessed valuation of all properties within the Community. These increases in property tax revenue supported enrollment growth, normal escalation of operating costs, and the expansion of educational programs. Since 2008, the rate of growth of our District's property tax revenue has declined significantly. This year we expect a modest .85% increase. We are fortunate that funding from Measure C and a larger annual grant from the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation have offset the decline in property tax growth to the District.



"California is shamefully behind in education funding. But we are lucky enough to live in a school district where we can do something about it."

—Kailish Ambwani, District parent

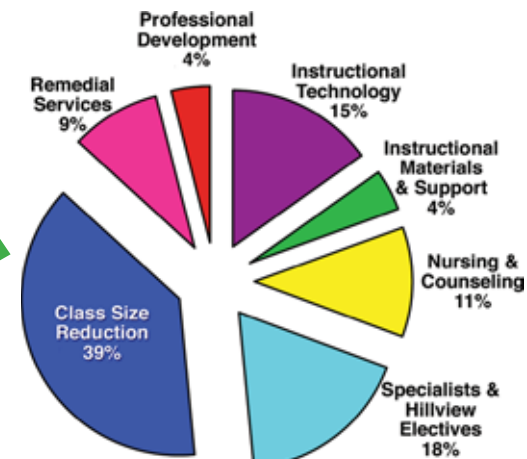
2010-11 Revenue Sources \$29.9 Million



Ongoing Parcel Taxes

The passage of Measure A in 2000 along with the addition of Measure B and 2003's Measure A has enriched the educational programs for students immeasurably. These parcel taxes have reduced class sizes at all levels, provided enrichment

specialists in music and the arts, supported students with counseling and nursing services, extended the electives at the middle school, provided updated technology and supported training and professional development for our faculty. The following shows the uses of all three parcel taxes:



Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation Grants

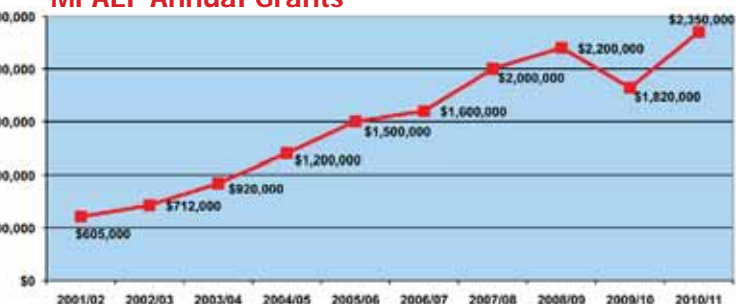
The District has benefited from its strong partnership with the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation (MPAEF). The Foundation has provided critical funding during challenging times, and has enabled the District to invest in innovations that have propelled our efforts to improve educational services to students. In addition its financial support has helped to ensure for the consistency and continuance of programs that would have otherwise been difficult to fund as other revenue sources declined. This year's record \$2.35 million grant provides ongoing support for elementary hands-on

science, elementary music and art education, instructional technology, recruitment incentives, training and career development opportunities for teachers and full funding for the operation of school libraries staffed by credentialed librarians. The MPAEF has

also invested in educational initiatives such as the 21st Century Classroom, the new Academy structure at Hillview School and annual grants to teachers to spark innovation. Visit www.mpaef.org for more information.



MPAEF Annual Grants



City School District - 2010

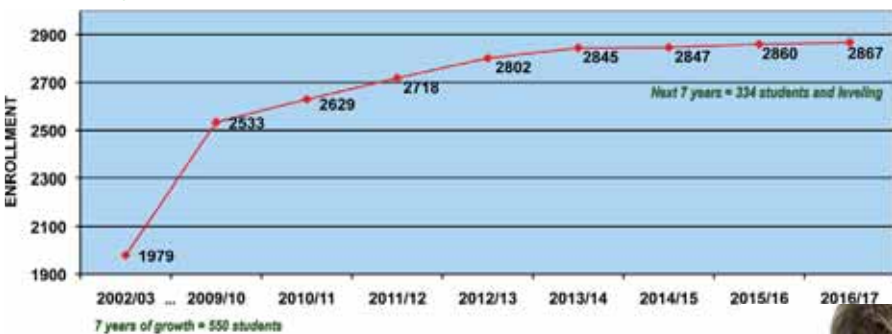
Thank you for Measure C

Measure C is a dependable seven-year funding source for our School District. During the 2010 school year, \$842,000 of funds generated protected current educational programs and teachers. The seven-year financial plan supports the employment of additional teachers to maintain class sizes allowing other revenue sources to be allocated to maintain educational programs and services that would otherwise be subject to reductions in future years.

Enrollment Projected to Increase

From 2002 to 2009, the District grew by 550 students (28%). During the next seven years, enrollment is projected to continue to grow by 334 students (14%). Sixteen additional teachers will need to be hired to accommodate this enrollment growth. Longer-term projections indicate that enrollment will level after 2016.

Projected Growth of Enrollment



"We are so grateful to the community for keeping our schools strong and protecting so many important programs for our students."

*Kay Hatfield
2nd grade teacher at Encinal Elementary*



District Facts

Recently Reported API – Fall of 2010

The State publishes the overall performance of public school districts on State tests each year. The target for all schools is 800 on a 1000-point scale.

District (Overall)	933
Laurel School	914
Encinal School	937
Oak Knoll	941
Hillview Middle School	931

Average Class Sizes

K-3	20.6
4-5	25.2
6-8	21.9

District Enrollment: 2,628
(4% growth over 2009-2010)



District Administration

Superintendent:	Ken Ranella
Assistant Superintendent:	Jo Mitchell
Director of Student Services:	Olivia Mandilk
Chief Business Official:	Diane White
Director of Facilities:	Ahmad Sheikholeslami

Board of Education

Jeff Child, President	Deborah Fitz
Maria Hilton, Clerk	Laura Rich
Mark Box	

District Opens New Elementary Facilities...Hillview on the way

Laurel School



Encinal School



Oak Knoll School



by 70%, planned for necessary additional classrooms and multi-purpose facilities at the elementary schools and middle school.

In addition to the facilities projects, other actions taken to manage the projected increase in enrollment included the reconfiguration of grade levels at the schools, a change in student attendance boundaries and a change of school assignment for many teachers.

The three-year reconfiguration and construction plan at the elementary schools concluded this fall on time and within budget. Besides creating additional classroom space, open space for playgrounds and fields has increased as the result of the elimination of the portable classrooms on each of the campuses.

Because enrollment growth at Hillview Middle School was projected to reach 38%, the Board approved the complete redevelopment of the campus. The District is now focused on the reconstruction of the campus with occupancy of the new school planned for the fall of 2012, with full completion of the project occurring a few months thereafter. We are proud that plans for the new Hillview Middle School won The Design Excellence Award from the Society of American Registered Architects.

The District has aggressively pursued State funding for construction that became available as matching revenue from the local bond. An anticipated \$17.5 million from the State will further enhance the District's projects. (A full description of the District facility projects can be accessed at www.mpcsd.org.)

District Initiatives for Green Construction

Early in the facility planning process, the District committed to the environmental guidelines of the Collaborative for High Performing Schools (CHPS) to illustrate its commitment to green construction in all its projects. With the opportunity to build a new Hillview campus, the District's commitment to green construction has expanded significantly. Once completed, the goal of the new Hillview School will be to operate as a fully carbon-neutral school. The Hillview staff envisions using the building as an opportunity for learning and environmental stewardship as students monitor the school's energy use, calculate the effects of solar production and ensure conservation in daily operations.

Expenditure Budget for Facility Projects

Hillview School	\$46.60 m
Encinal School	\$23.86 m
Oak Knoll School	\$15.16 m
Laurel School	\$12.57 m
Teacher Educational Resource Center	\$ 4.97 m
(and extended site development at Encinal)	
Contingencies	\$ 7.58 m

Projected enrollment growth estimates done in 2005 demonstrated that each of the District's schools would soon grow well beyond their current capacities. As part of a wide range of integrated strategic actions and after considerable study regarding the use and future of the District school sites, the Board of Education asked the Community to approve a Facility Bond in 2006. The \$91.1 million Facility Bond, approved by the Community



Rendering of the new Hillview School

Laurel, Encinal, Oak Knoll and Hillview Schools!

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Dobbie still lead spender in Atherton

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor

City Councilman Jim Dobbie is still in the No. 1 spot in fundraising and spending in the race for three seats on the Atherton City Council, with challenger Bill Widmer not far behind, according to the latest campaign finance statements from the four candidates.

The statements cover the period from Oct. 1 to Oct. 16.

During that period, Mr. Dobbie raised \$445 and spent \$1,258, bringing the total amount of money raised for his campaign to \$14,576, and the total spent to \$11,180.

Mr. Widmer raised \$2,180 during this period, and spent \$2,187. The total amount of money raised for his campaign is \$12,020; spending now totals \$9,082.

Donors contributing \$500 or more to Mr. Widmer's campaign during this period were Marcia Wythes and Paul Wythes. Each donated \$750, and each have now contributed a total of \$1,500 to the campaign.

Incumbent Jerry Carlson received \$1,227 in contributions during this period, bringing the total amount of money raised to \$7,374. He listed no spending during the period. During the last reporting period, he spent \$3,053.

Challenger Cary Wiest received a \$500 donation from Councilwoman Elizabeth Lewis and her husband, Joe, and \$500 from resident Edwin Hannay.

Contributions to Mr. Wiest's campaign during this period total \$1,446, bringing the overall fundraising total to \$2,822. Mr. Wiest spent \$79 this period, which brings his total spending to \$1,020. ■

Scholarship for Lauren McDonnell

Lauren McDonnell of Menlo Park, the daughter of Kenneth McDonnell, has won a Terumo Medical Corp. scholarship, given to the children of Terumo Medical associates based on academic and personal achievements.



Lauren McDonnell

A graduate of Menlo-Atherton High School, where she was a member of the swim team, environmental club and triathlon team, she plans to study international economics at UCLA.




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BILL Widmer IS FOCUSED ON ATHERTON'S MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES:

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|---------------------|---|
| Financial Stability | Stop Deficit Spending |
| High Speed Rail | Halt or Re-route |
| Litigation | Mediate to Reduce Expense |
| Police Department | Ensure Superior Police Services |
| Town Management | Hire New Experienced Town Manager and Building Official |
| Communications | Use Technology to Engage Residents & Establish Accountability |

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- Herm Christensen
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- Greg Conlon
- Diane Crittenden
- Howard Crittenden
- John Davy
- Bob Dunlap
- Lauanne Dunlap
- Gene Elsbree
- Alain C. Enthoven
- Rosemary Enthoven
- Erv Ericksen
- Janet Ericksen
- Carol Flaherty
- John Flaherty
- Robert Francesehini
- Valerie Gardner
- Ellenrose Godard
- Susan Grindley
- William Grindley
- Elizabeth Hammack
- Paul Hammack
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- Sally Herrick
- Steve Herrick
- Harvey Hinman
- Jim Janz
- Kathryn Janz
- Gerald C. Johnson
- Paul Jones
- Farida Kaye
- Sandy Kaye
- Elizabeth Lewis
- Joe Lewis
- Linda Liebes
- Sid Liebes

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- Philip Lively
- Jim Massey
- Judith Massey
- Kathleen McKeithen
- Smith McKeithen
- Michael McPherson
- Etta Mae Mehler-Bauer
- Clarice Merrill
- Frank Merrill
- Patricia Moore
- Richard Moore
- Chuck Nile
- Ginny Nile
- Bob Oster
- Marion E. Oster
- Julie Quinlan
- Paul Quinlan
- Charles Ramorino
- Jan Rasmussen
- Neil Rasmussen
- John Ruggiero
- Virginia Ruggiero
- Joan Sanders
- Mo Sanders
- Jean Schaaf
- Ray Schaaf, Sr
- Jan Simonds
- Joan Solari
- Debbie Thibault
- John Thibault
- Betty Ullman
- M B Widmer
- Mary Widmer
- W R Widmer Jr
- Jeff Wise
- Maria Wythes
- Paul Wythes
- Marie Zahn
- Paula Zappettini
- William Zappettini



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Anna

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- ▶ Reformed credit card rate hikes and arbitrary contract changes
- ▶ Outlawed predatory lending practices linked to the U.S. housing meltdown
- ▶ Created first-time homebuyer tax credit
- ▶ Increased access to more affordable student loans
- ▶ Saved American Auto industry – now, repaying loans with interest to taxpayers
- ▶ Protected Social Security against privatization
- ▶ Expanded health care coverage for 32 million Americans



“WHEN MY WORK IS RECOGNIZED, IT MEANS I’M DOING WELL FOR YOU.”

Anna

2009 - 2010

- ▶ National Champion of Public Broadcasting Award for Advocacy and Leadership
- ▶ National Venture Capital American Spirit Award
- ▶ Housing Trust of Santa Clara County Champion
- ▶ California Health Institute Champion of Life Sciences Innovation Award
- ▶ Arthritis Foundation Advocacy Leadership Award
- ▶ Green Business Award for first certified congressional district office
- ▶ Congressional Leadership Award from American College of Emergency Physicians



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Jimmy Carter at Kepler's on Tuesday

Former president Jimmy Carter will at Kepler's bookstore in Menlo Park at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 26, to sign his new book, "White House Diary."

The book is based on the diary of more than 5,000 pages that he kept during his presidential years.

The 39th president, who received the Nobel Peace Prize in 2002, is the author of numerous books, including "Palestine: Peace Not Apartheid."

This is a meet-and-greet book signing. A ticket is required to enter the signing line, which will form at 6 p.m. The ticket costs \$32.78 and includes the book

and admission to the signing line.

Keplers.com/white-house-diary-ticket is the Web address to use for buying a ticket.

Hit-and-run driver pleads no contest

The driver who hit a motorcyclist in Menlo Park, then fled the scene despite the victim begging for help, pleaded no contest on Oct. 19 to felony hit-and-run in San Mateo Superior Court.

The victim suffered a broken back.

Police arrested Eric Olvera Nieto, 21, at his girlfriend's home in Ripon, after he ran from the Oct. 4 accident scene.

According to the district attorney's office, Mr. Nieto reentered the motorcycle at a red light, throwing the victim onto the hood of the car.

Mr. Nieto was unlicensed, and fled because he was in the United States illegally, said the district attorney's office. He remains in custody on \$50,000 bail, and will be sentenced on Dec. 3.

SUPERMAN

continued from page 3

multiple jobs or distracted by crushing poverty, school is where a neighborhood sends its kids. Could they or should they go somewhere else? Can they improve their options where they are? This film does not deal in detail with such questions.

At Woodside, while Mr. Reilly noted that all students are considered candidates for college, about 900 of the 1,800 families are classified as Title I, meaning socio-economically challenged and deserving of federal aid.

The school invites these 900 families to three information nights a year to attempt to explain the critical importance of succeeding in high school. The events are catered and offer babysitting, and notices go out redundantly via phone and mail, Mr. Reilly said.

"The most we've ever had attend," he said, "is 90 families."

The next step is to hold at least some of these get-togethers in the neighborhoods. "We're trying to meet families more than halfway," Mr. Reilly said. "Students do fall through the

cracks, but not without a bunch of scratches on their arms."

A principal target in "Waiting for Superman" is teachers who are not great, and the unions that protect and sustain them. In the film, Michelle Rhee, chancellor of Washington, D.C., public schools, described the situation as "injustices that are happening to kids every single day in our schools in the name of harmony amongst adults."

Asked if the mission is about the students first and foremost at Woodside, Mr. Reilly replied: "When push comes to shove, it is. It is."

The continuous and collective growth of Woodside's teachers "inspires me and gives me hope," he added.

A recent change is the adoption of a program from the Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations, a nonprofit based in Maine with a mission of providing guidance on effectively motivating students.

Among the essentials are building their confidence, creating for them a sense of belonging and of accomplishment, and fostering a spirit of adventure. These and other conditions "need to be in place if students are to strive for, and fulfill, their academic, personal and social promise," according to the website.

A core team of 24 of the school's 112 teachers meet with other teachers to talk about putting these principles into practice, Mr. Reilly said.

"We have spent a great deal of time and energy on the explicit curriculum. There is equal value in the implicit curriculum," he said. "Let's get this right and let's strike the right balance."

As for the film: "I think it's stimulated a great deal of dialogue, and that's for the better," Mr. Reilly said. "I'm happy that the film has been a catalyst for this dialogue." ■



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PAUL E. BUECHNER III

Paul Buechner III, a partner of San Francisco CPA firm John H. Forbes & Co. for almost 30 years, died at his Menlo Park home on October 15 from complications of Parkinson's disease. Paul joined Forbes in 1955 and was an expert in estate planning. Forbes later merged into KMG Main Hurdman and subsequently into KPMG Pete Marwick. Paul retired from public accounting in 1986. He was a member of the board of directors and secretary of Green Investment Co. until 2008.

Paul grew up in Alameda and graduated from Alameda High School in 1946. He received a B.S. from the Haas School of Business at U.C. Berkeley in 1950 and an LL.B. from Boalt Law School in 1954. He served a year in the U.S. Army between his first and second years of law school.

He is survived by Joan, his wife of 53 years; two daughters, Mary Larkin of Monterey and Jeannie Urbina of Auburn; four grandchildren, Juliette and Trinity Larkin, and Elissa and Jayson Urbina.

Paul was an active volunteer in the community. He attended Holy Trinity and then St. Bede's Episcopal churches in Menlo Park serving as senior warden and long-time member of finance committees. He was on the board of directors of the charitable Brenner Foundation and treasurer of SIRS Mid-Peninsula Branch #51. He also worked for many years at various local polling locations during elections.

A memorial service will be held at St. Bede's Episcopal Church, 2650 Sand Hill Road on Saturday, November 6 at 12 o'clock noon. The family would appreciate anyone wanting to make a donation contribute either to St. Bede's Maintenance Fund or to the Palo Alto Medical Foundation.

PAID OBITUARY

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EYE CARE NEWS

Presented by
Mark Schmidt
Licensed Optician

A LONG SHOT

According to Australian researchers, the day may come when people with farsightedness may be able to take a pill that cures their refractive error. The discovery that raises this hope of seeing clearly without glasses or laser surgery involves the gene thought to be associated with farsightedness. It seems this condition has been linked to the hepatocyte growth factor (HGF) gene. Based on the study of the DNA of over 500 adults, this finding is the first to link a gene

to farsightedness and may provide insight as to what might transpire in the development of the eye that causes farsightedness.

People who are farsighted can see objects that are very far away, but they have difficulty seeing objects that are close. At this time, farsightedness can be remedied with corrective lenses. Bring your eyewear prescriptions to MENLO OPTICAL at 1166 University Drive, on the corner of Oak Grove Avenue and University Drive. We carry a wide selection of eye-catching designer frames in several sizes, colors, and materials. Please call us at 322-3900 if you have any questions about eyeglasses or contact lenses.

P.S. Farsightedness can be caused by an eye that is too short (from the front to back) or a cornea that is too flat.

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.

Menlo Park Residents Your New Carts Are Coming!

Recycle, Compost and Garbage Cart Deliveries Start Now

As of August 30, Recology San Mateo County has begun delivering new carts to homes throughout the RethinkWaste service area. Be sure to review the information found attached to your new Garbage cart. This kit will help walk you through the new collection service, letting you know exactly what can and what cannot go into each cart. Visit www.RethinkWaste.org for the delivery schedule.

Out With The Old

Please make sure to set out your old green yard trimmings cart on your **FIRST COLLECTION DAY** immediately following the delivery of your new carts. The old cart will be taken away. You can choose to keep your recycling tubs, but if you want them taken away, simply place them upside down next to your carts during a recycling collection week. You can also have your old garbage cans taken away. Simply affix one of the "Take Me" stickers that came with the information kit. You can have your old tubs and cans taken away through December 31, 2010.

TAKE ME

How To Use Your New Carts.



BLACK CART = GARBAGE
(20, 32, 64 and 96 gallon)

Basically anything that can't go in the blue or green cart goes here. Waste, such as Styrofoam packaging, peanuts, and food containers; bagged animal waste and diapers; ceramics, glassware, mirrors, and window glass; wrappers and juice pouches; black plastic; and plastic bags, buckets, and broken toys.



BLUE CART = RECYCLE
(64 gallon)

For single-stream recycling, meaning all recyclables in one cart – no more sorting! You can mix newspapers, junk mail, cardboard and other paper products with plastic, metal, and glass containers. Recycling will be picked up every other week through December 31, 2010.



GREEN CART = COMPOST
(96 gallon)

Use your new green Compost cart the same way you've been using your current Yard Trimmings cart – by putting in only materials that come from your yard. Compost carts will be picked up every other week through December 31, 2010.

CartSMART

Visit RecologySanMateoCounty.com or RethinkWaste.org for details.



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 October 23 & 24: 3-5pm
 November 6 & 7: 3-5 pm

For more information, or to attend our Open House, please contact the school's director
 Mary Adham, M.Ed.
 Lic. #414002685
650-391-5136
 mapleleafmary@gmail.com

Bohannon adds \$325,000 to Measure T campaign

By **Sandy Brundage**
 Almanac Staff Writer



Thanks to developer David Bohannon, financial support has skyrocketed for Measure T, the ballot proposal that would allow him to build a nearly million-square-foot office-hotel complex near Bayfront Expressway and Marsh Road in Menlo Park.

design consultants, and friendlier mailers touting the virtues of Menlo Gateway.

The opposition, "Measured Growth for Menlo Park" (also known as "No on Measure T"), has more donors, but fewer dollars.

He contributed \$325,000 during the past two weeks, and remains the sole contributor, giving almost half a million dollars total in support of Measure T. The developer stands to make millions annually if the hotel-office complex becomes a reality.



David Bohannon

The donated money has not sat idle. \$14,864 has been spent targeting the one City Council candidate who opposes the plan: Chuck Bernstein, who the developer accused of trying to "sabotage" Menlo Gateway in a series of attack ads. That amount is nearly as much as Mr. Bernstein's entire campaign fund.

The group collected \$9,400 to spend fighting the developer, with \$5,350 in new donations reported on Oct. 21. Repeat donor Morris Brown contributed another \$2,500, and Councilman Andy Cohen, \$250, as did David Speer, Robert Ekedahl, and Susan Ringler.

"No on Measure T" leader Patti Fry donated \$100; so did Menlo Park Downtown Alliance founder Nancy Couperus. Attorney Michael Brady and Transportation Commissioner Charlie Bourne made the largest donations, adding \$500 each.

Campaign literature and yard signs have cost the coalition a total of \$7,361 so far, with one week left before the Nov. 2 election. ■

The rest of the \$280,027 in expenses went toward public relations, office expenses, surveys,

City of Menlo Park Community Services Department Presents

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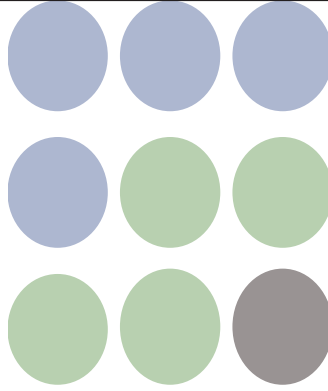


11:45 am Halloween Costume Parade
 Come in costume and participate in the annual parade from Burgess Recreation Center to Fremont Park. Receive a free trick or treat bag!

1:00 - 3:00 pm Trick or Treat
 After the parade, trick or treat in downtown Menlo Park stores that display trick or treat sign on their door. Magic show and crafts will also be available at Fremont Park.




For more information please contact Menlo Park Community Services Department at 650.330.2200 or visit www.menlopark.org



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Menlo council's interminable plans for Terminal Avenue property

■ Parcel's fate rests with new subcommittee.

By **Sandy Brundage**
 Almanac Staff Writer

Twenty-two Habitat for Humanity homes, or 1.5 acres for Beechwood School? That's the question the Menlo Park City Council debated at its Oct. 19 meeting, and in the end, the council members agreed to let a new subcommittee answer it.

our throats," he said during the council meeting.

"We think education is more important," Mr. Henry said. "If Beechwood could get all of this property, and it doesn't cost an arm and leg, that would be ideal for our community. Education is important on one side of town, seems like it's not important on the other side of town."

Habitat for Humanity has wanted to build the homes since 2001, but community opposition has kept the program waiting. Now, nine years later, so much time has passed that the nonprofit wants to pull the plug altogether.

The council, however, wasn't happy with the price the school is willing to pay for the parcel, about \$600,000 less than what the city estimates as fair market value, according to Mayor Rich Cline.

"We need to either fish or cut bait here," Phillip Kilbridge, executive director of the nonprofit's San Francisco branch, told the council. "We're asking for your direction. Lacking it, and no offense to any of you, we will have to move on and work with Menlo Park on the next opportunity."

"Terminal Avenue is terminally ill," Mr. Cline said, expressing skepticism that the Habitat for Humanity plan could survive neighborhood protest.

The Belle Haven community would be happy to see the school buy the land, according to neighborhood association president Matt Henry. "Why would Habitat for Humanity continually push to bring housing here when the community for like 10 years has said we don't really want it? It's like you come in and try to shove it down

The City Council and Housing Commission have struggled with where to build affordable housing in Menlo Park. Of the city's 57 below-market-rate units, 20 are located in a mixed-income housing development in Belle Haven.

Council members Kelly Ferguson and Heyward Robinson volunteered to serve on the subcommittee. Mr. Robinson suggested that having City Council participate in negotiations would finally bring plans for the parcel to fruition. ■

MP man sentenced to jail in 'Good Samaritan' robbery case

A Menlo Park man received a sentence of nine months in San Mateo County jail on Monday, Oct. 18, after pleading no contest to robbery charges in connection with a Redwood City incident involving the forcible taking of a gold chain and the intervention of a "Good Samaritan" (the prosecutors' term) who happened to be a witness.

In addition to his jail sentence, Noah Wayne Bennett, 22, agreed to a plea bargain that includes three years of probation, no weapons possession, counseling, random search and seizure, and \$310 in fines, Chief Deputy District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe said in a report.

Mr. Bennett will receive 102 days credit for time already served in jail. He had been in custody on a bail of \$50,000.

Mr. Bennett admitted to coming up behind the 17-year-old male victim, a resident of Red-

wood City, around noon on Aug. 12 on an El Camino Real sidewalk, and yanking a gold chain valued at \$700 off the victim's neck, prosecutors said. Mr. Bennett then flagged down and boarded a SamTrans bus.

Enter the Good Samaritan, a 35-year-old Redwood City resident who saw what happened, invited the victim into his car and trailed the bus for about 15 blocks while they called police, prosecutors said.

Officers from the Redwood City Police Department stopped the bus, detained Mr. Bennett and asked the victim and the Good Samaritan to verify his identity as the robbery suspect, which they did, prosecutors said.

Police searched Mr. Bennett, found the chain in his pocket and arrested him. At the time, he was on felony probation for possession of a firearm.

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

Robbery report: Victim robbed of \$300 iPhone that was sitting on seat next to him while he was in car, Willow and Middlefield roads, Oct. 15.

Residential burglary reports:

- Losses estimated at \$3,325 in theft of jewelry, DVD player, digital camera, jacket, video games and \$500 in cash, 1200 block of Carlton Ave., Oct. 16.
- Losses estimated at \$1,225 in theft of five rings, two necklaces and \$900 in

cash, 1200 block of Willow Road, Oct. 19.

Grand theft report: Bicycle valued at \$700 stolen from open garage, 800 block of Roble Ave., Oct. 20.

Auto burglary report: Of three vehicles, tool box pried at unsuccessfully in one, lock vandalized in another, and theft of car stereo and tools valued at \$680 in third, 1000 block of Ringwood Ave., Oct. 21.

Fraud reports:

- Alleged family member called and convinced victim to send \$975 by wire transfer to allegedly get out of jail, first block of Willow Road, Oct. 20.
- Loss of \$249 in unauthorized use of credit card, 1300 block of Bay Laurel Drive, Oct. 15.

Sen. Joe Simitian seeks entries for 'Oughta be a Law' contest

State Sen. Joe Simitian, D-Palo Alto, is inviting California residents to submit ideas for state legislation in his 10th annual "There Oughta Be A Law" contest. Proposals to repeal or modify a law are also accepted. Deadline for entries is Nov. 1.

In the past nine years, 16 of the winning ideas have become law, Sen. Simitian said.

Winners will have their bills introduced as legislation, and will have an opportunity to testify at a hearing in Sacramento. In addition, the winner will have lunch with Sen. Simitian and receive a California state flag

that has flown over the Capitol.

"Most importantly, winners stand a good chance of seeing their ideas become law for more than 38 million Californians," Sen. Simitian added.

In the past, winners have ranged from nurses to high school students, and laws have been enacted regarding topics such as drunken driving, environmental quality, and child safety, he said.

Go to senatorsimitian.com to submit your idea online, or call 688-6384 to request an entry form.

— Samantha Bergeson

EXPERIENCE MATTERS!

We support re-electing Heyward Robinson for Menlo Park City Council.



Organizations

- The Almanac
- Sierra Club
- San Mateo County Democratic Party
- CA Apartment Association, Tri-County Division
- Belle Haven Neighborhood Association

Current and former Menlo Park Mayors and Councilmembers

- Mary Jo Borak, former Mayor, Menlo Park
- Rich Cline, Mayor, Menlo Park
- Chuck Kinney, former Mayor, Menlo Park
- Gail Slocum, former Mayor, Menlo Park
- Kelly Fergusson, Menlo Park City Council, former Mayor
- Gerry Andeen, former Menlo Park City Council

Current and former Elected Officials

- Ruben Abrica, East Palo Alto City Council, former Mayor
- Pat Burt, Mayor, City of Palo Alto
- Jerry Carlson, Atherton City Council, former Mayor
- Maryann Derwin, City Council, Town of Portola Valley, former Mayor
- Peter Drekmeier, former Mayor, Palo Alto
- Rich Gordon, Pres., San Mateo County Board of Supervisors
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- Don Horsley, Ret. San Mateo County Sheriff
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- Ira Ruskin, CA Assemblymember, 21st District
- Court Skinner, East Palo Alto Planning Commission
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- April Vargas, former Member, Midcoast Community Council
- Steve Westly, former Controller, State of CA
- Christine Wozniak, Mayor, Belmont

- Daniel Kocher, Envir. Quality
- Kristin Kuntz-Duriseti, Chair, Envir. Quality Com.
- Laure Laprais, former Chair, Bicycle Com.
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- Rabbi Charles Familant, Stanford Hillel, Menlo Park Resident
- Laura Haphung, Simpson's Family Barber
- Kathy Hamilton, Community Coalition on High Speed Rail, Menlo Park Resident
- Matt Henry, Pres., Belle Haven Neighborhood Association
- Clark Kepler, Owner, Kepler's Books, Menlo Park Resident
- Art Kramer, Crescent Park Neighborhood Assn. (Palo Alto)
- Trish Mulvey, Co-founder, CLEAN South Bay
- William Nack, Business Manager, San Mateo County Building Trades Council
- Lennie Roberts, Legislative Advocate, Commission for Green Foothills
- Stephanie Savides, Savides RE, Menlo Park Resident
- Sam Sinnott, Samuel Sinnott & Company
- John and Tig Tarlton, Menlo Business Park
- Jeff Warmoth, Sand Hill Properties
- Ranier Zaechelein, Owner, Menlo Velo Bicycles
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- Ron Ballweber and George Lynch, Menlo Vacuum and Fix-it
- Rose Bickerstaff, Belle Haven Neighborhood Association
- Bridget Biscotti Bradley, Owner, RECLAIM
- David Bohannon, Bohannon Org., Menlo Park Resident
- Anna and Dexter Chow, Cheeky Monkey Toys, Menlo Park Resident

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- Brigitte Alexander
- Bev Altschuler
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- Keayn Allard, Community Coalition on HSR; Menlo Park Resident
- Ron Ballweber and George Lynch, Menlo Vacuum and Fix-it
- Rose Bickerstaff, Belle Haven Neighborhood Association
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- David Bohannon, Bohannon Org., Menlo Park Resident
- Anna and Dexter Chow, Cheeky Monkey Toys, Menlo Park Resident

- Current and former Residents
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- Martin Alexander
- Brigitte Alexander
- Bev Altschuler
- Lee Altschuler
- Mary Stuart Alvord
- Sheri Baer
- Doug Baer
- Erika Bailey
- Philip Bailey
- Susan Basso
- Lawrence Basso
- Cheryl Beecher

- Rabbi Charles Familant, Stanford Hillel, Menlo Park Resident
- Laura Haphung, Simpson's Family Barber
- Kathy Hamilton, Community Coalition on High Speed Rail, Menlo Park Resident
- Matt Henry, Pres., Belle Haven Neighborhood Association
- Clark Kepler, Owner, Kepler's Books, Menlo Park Resident
- Art Kramer, Crescent Park Neighborhood Assn. (Palo Alto)
- Trish Mulvey, Co-founder, CLEAN South Bay
- William Nack, Business Manager, San Mateo County Building Trades Council
- Lennie Roberts, Legislative Advocate, Commission for Green Foothills
- Stephanie Savides, Savides RE, Menlo Park Resident
- Sam Sinnott, Samuel Sinnott & Company
- John and Tig Tarlton, Menlo Business Park
- Jeff Warmoth, Sand Hill Properties
- Ranier Zaechelein, Owner, Menlo Velo Bicycles
- *Titles and organizations for identification purposes only

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- Kathy Berra
- Rich Berra
- Aparna Bhardwaj
- Sanjay Bhardwaj
- Dianne & Richard Blake
- Cheryl Bogart
- Dave Bogart
- Nancy Borgeson
- Kirk Bradley
- Tom Buch
- Stephanie Buch
- Larry Bucka
- Chris Bui
- Dave Button
- Bobbie Carcione
- Joe Carcione
- Carolyn Clarke
- Paul Chua
- Jim Clendenin
- Shoshannah Cohen
- Collin Cohen
- Patrick Corman
- Pixie Couch
- Russ Dember
- Bob Elliot
- Craig Falkenhagen
- Sally Falkenhagen
- Judy Font
- Carol Foster
- Lynne Fovinci
- Mike Gullard
- Christine Hansen
- Jay Hansen
- Kevin Harris
- Carolyn Heller
- Lenore Hennen
- Al Hirschon
- Nancy Hoffman
- Georgina Hum
- Anne Leahy Jones
- Beth and Tom Keelin
- Bud Kohn
- Liz Laderman
- Steve Laderman
- Ingo Lange
- Craig Lewis
- Adina Levin
- Diane Mavica
- Margo McAuliffe
- Malcolm McGinnis

- Tobias Meyer
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- Betsy Nash
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- Elana Reese
- Oscar Salvatierra
- Pam Salvatierra
- Randy Schmitz
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- Irene Searles
- Earl Shelton
- Dana Shields
- Bonnie Sickingner
- Michael Sickingner
- Barb Silano
- Sam Sinnott
- Barrie Skinner
- Haydi Sowerwine
- Wally Sowerwine
- Peg Spak
- Eugene Spurlock
- Lucile Spurlock
- Deb Stoner
- Kristi Roos-Taylor
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- Kristin Vais
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Tom Gibboney

Editorial

Managing Editor Richard Hine

News Editor Renee Batti

Lifestyles Editor Jane Knoerle

Senior Correspondents

Marion Softky, Marjorie Mader

Staff Writers

David Boyce, Sandy Brundage

Contributors Barbara Wood,

Kate Daly, Katie Blankenberg

Special Sections Editors

Carol Blitzer, Sue Dremann

Photographer Michelle Le

Design & Production

Design Director Raul Perez

Designers Linda Atilano,

Gary Vennarucci

Advertising

Vice President Sales &

Marketing

Walter Kupiec

Display Advertising Sales

Heather Hanye

Real Estate Manager Neal Fine

Real Estate and Advertising

Coordinator Diane Martin

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Newsroom: (650) 854-2690 (ext. 213)

Newsroom Fax: (650) 854-0677

Advertising: (650) 854-2626

Advertising Fax: (650) 854-3650

e-mail news and photos with
captions to:

Editor@AlmanacNews.com

e-mail letters to:

letters@AlmanacNews.com

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WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

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

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Good, bad in state propositions

The Almanac analyzed selected state propositions that will be on the Nov. 2 ballot and has taken these positions.

Proposition 20: Vote Yes

Removes elected representatives from establishment of congressional districts and gives that authority to a bipartisan 14-member redistricting commission.

Proposition 27: Vote No

Eliminates 14-member state redistricting commission and returns redistricting authority to elected representatives.

Propositions 20 and 27 are about how voting districts for the state Legislature and U.S. House of Representatives should be drawn up — by a bipartisan independent panel, or by incumbent politicians. Voting districts are redrawn after every 10-year census.

In 2008, California voters passed Proposition 11, which took the redistricting of the state Assembly, Senate and Board of Equalization out of the hands of the Legislature and gave the authority to a 14-member Citizens Redistricting Commission. Established once every 10 years, the commission — with five Democrats, five Republicans, and four others — redraws the districts based on the latest census, while keeping the integrity of geographic boundaries and respecting city, county and neighborhood limits.

Proposition 11 didn't affect congressional district lines. Proposition 20 seeks to bring those under the purview of the redistricting commission.

Proposition 27, meanwhile, is a proposal to throw out the Citizens Redistricting Commission altogether and stick with the old ways for both the state Legislature and U.S. congressional districting.

It's no act of brilliant political insight to suggest that it's probably not the best idea to have legislators influencing their own district boundaries — or those of their fellow party members.

Proposition 21: Vote Yes

Establishes \$18 annual vehicle license fee to help fund state parks and wildlife programs.

California's state parks are the frequent target of funding cuts — and last year park-goers felt it in a big way, as 150 of our 246 state-operated parks suffered deep reductions in services and hours of operation. This \$18 vehicle registration "surcharge" would create about \$500 million in revenue for the parks. Of that amount, 85 percent would go to park operations and most of the rest toward wildlife protection programs. In return, all registered vehicles would receive free daytime parking at all state parks.

Proposition 22: Vote Yes

Prohibits the state from diverting funds intended for transportation, redevelopment or local government projects.

In its farcical triage of annual budget-balancing decisions, the state often shifts funds away from their intended local targets to help pay for things the state deems more pressing. For instance, cities' transportation and redevelopment funds have been unilaterally raided during fiscal crises to help pay for other state budget needs. Proposition 22, among other things, would eliminate the state's ability to use fuel-tax revenue for non-transportation purposes, and prohibit the state from borrowing local property tax funds to pay for schools. While we don't like the trend toward protecting an ever-growing list of services from cuts through ballot initiatives, we also object to the Legislature seizing local funds instead of legitimately balancing the state budget through tax increases or reduced expenses.

Proposition 23: Vote No

Suspends air-pollution-control law AB-32 until unemployment drops to 5.5 percent for full year.

What do the companies Valero Energy, Occidental Petroleum, Tesoro Corp., Tower Energy Group and World Oil Corporation all have in common? They're all big oil companies based in Texas.

The Almanac recommends

Menlo Park City Council

Rich Cline, Heyward Robinson, Peter Ohtaki

Measure L, the pension initiative

Vote Yes

Measure T, the Menlo Gateway Project

Vote Yes

Atherton City Council

Jerry Carlson, Jim Dobbie, Bill Widmer

Menlo Park City School District

Laura Linkletter Rich, Joan Lambert and Terry Thygesen

Los Lomas School District

Jay Siegel, Mark Reinstra and Ann Jaquith

14th Congressional District

Anna Eshoo

21st Assembly District

Rich Gordon

San Mateo County Supervisor

Don Horsley

County Treasurer-Tax Collector

Dave Mandelkern

Sequoia Health Care District

Art Faro, Ruth West-Gorin, Dr. Jerry Shefren, Alpio Barbara (vote for three)

And they've all donated more than \$100,000 to put California's Proposition 23 on the ballot.

The oil companies are calling it the "California jobs initiative," but Proposition 23 should more accurately be called the "kill AB 32 initiative," — suspending that 2006 legislation until the state unemployment rate drops to 5.5 percent, which would likely keep the global warming bill in limbo for years, if not decades.

AB 32, or the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, establishes the target of reducing the state's greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2020, through stiffer rules and regulations for the energy industry. California is one of the largest emitters of greenhouse gases in the world, and AB 32 is estimated to reduce our GHG in the next decade by 30 percent.

That Valero Energy, the initiative's biggest funder, has one of the worst environmental records in the state should come as no surprise. Cleaning up its act by 2020 will not be easy on its bottom line. Proponents of Proposition 23 argue that such regulations as those called for by AB 32 would drive industry out of the state — resulting in lost jobs. Opponents counter that the evidence suggests the opposite: that not only is the job loss exaggerated, but the gain in green jobs would more than make up the difference.

To us, such a negligible short-term move could have disastrous long-term consequences to California's environment and the health of its citizens — as well as its economic future in green technology, a particular interest of Silicon Valley.

Proposition 25: Vote Yes

Changes legislative vote requirement to pass budget and budget-related legislation from two-thirds to a simple majority.

Only Arkansas, Rhode Island and California ask for a two-thirds vote by state legislatures to pass budgets — all other 47 states require simple majorities.

Currently, a two-thirds vote is needed to pass the state budget, and to raise taxes. Proposition 25 would change the budget requirement to 50 percent plus one; it would not change the two-thirds needed to raise taxes.

A two-thirds vote is an arbitrary number to weigh so heavily on the workings of any state. Why not 57 percent? Why not 61 percent? It tends to be high enough to make sure small minorities can keep practically anything from getting done.

There's an argument that a simple majority gives too much power to the political party in the majority — perhaps 55 percent is a better number that would require an inkling of bipartisan support. Maybe. What we do know is that any majority below two-thirds would be an improvement at this point. ■

Endorsements from the public

Commission chair backs Measure T

Editor:

As chairman of the Menlo Park Planning Commission, I believe residents of Menlo Park would like to know why I support the Menlo Gateway Project and why I encourage all to vote yes on Measure T.

First, it is a high quality “green” development in the right place and sponsored by David Bohannon, a local trustworthy developer, loyal to Menlo Park. This stand-out project along the U.S. 101 corridor will be a beautiful gateway to our city and it will lead to significant upgrades to adjacent properties.

Second, it will create thousands of jobs, many with priority to residents of Menlo Park, and has the strong support not only of our Belle Haven community, but of Mitch Slomiak, a member of the environmental commission; Gail Slocum, past mayor of our city; and four candidates for the council in this election. John Boyle, who sits on the council but is not running for re-election, and hundreds of other residents of Menlo Park also support it.

Third, as a result of the Gateway Project, annual tax revenues to the city will increase by approximately \$1.67 million. It will also provide \$8 million for below-market-rate housing and another \$1.75 million for improvements to Bayfront Park and the Belle Haven community.

Menlo Park voters, please vote yes On T.

John O’Malley
Planning Commissioner,
Hidden Oaks Drive, Menlo Park

Yes on both L and T doesn’t make sense

Editor:

Logical inconsistencies fascinate me. My recent afternoon “waddle” took me past a home that had both a yes on Measure T sign and also a yes on Measure L sign posted on the front lawn.

How any resident can logically support both escapes me.

Measure L would rein in pension costs. Thus, support for it presumably is based on concern about Menlo Park’s structural budget deficit.

On the other hand, concern about Menlo Park’s financial situation should logically result in opposition to Measure T.

Measure T would give away to the Bohannon interests for an extended period the valuable right to extensive development in the M-2 zone. The city would get nothing in return, either now or in the future, except for the illusion of increased tax revenue in the unlikely event, given the market outlook, any part of the Gateway project is ever built. In addition, until the development agreement expires, the city would be precluded from planning decisions that would yield revenue increases.

James Madison
Holly Avenue, Menlo Park

Vote no on county Measure U

Editor:

I encourage a “no” vote on county Measure U, which would change the way vacan-

cies are filled on the Board of Supervisors and in other county elected offices.

The critical part of the measure is how vacancies occurring after Oct. 15 (of the third year of the term of office) are filled. One of the options is by appointment by the supervisors. The 2008-2009 civil grand jury warned the supervisors that the “... power of incumbency is demonstrable and should not be bestowed by an appointment.”

Resignations can be shrewdly timed so as to allow supervisors to make appointments, pre-empting voter participation.

The current charter, and the proposed measure if approved, would continue this form of “political incest.”

Measure U is undemocratic.

Henry Organ

Henry Organ was a member of the 2010 San Mateo County Charter Review Committee and is a resident of Menlo Park

Why we need Sequoia Healthcare District

Editor:

In the Nov. 2 vote for board members of the Sequoia Healthcare District, three candidates, led by incumbent Jack Hickey, want to disband the district, and four want to continue its worthwhile cost-saving programs.

There are two key issues to understand. One is the value of preventive health care in reducing the cost of running local hospitals and of our state-funded Medi-Cal program.

The other is that if we disband the Sequoia Healthcare District, the taxes which fund its valuable programs will still be collected. But, instead of using those funds for local community programs, the money will go to Sacramento.

Preventive health care pays big dividends: Local community clinics for the uninsured and less-well-off families currently provide doctor visits at a fraction of the cost of emergency-room treatment (the main alternative used by the uninsured). The district funds effective local clinics where doctors volunteer their services to those in need.

The property tax law is very clear: If our health-care district is disbanded, as Jack Hickey is mistakenly lobbying for, the portion of our taxes that currently support pro-active health programs will be sent to our state’s general fund. There will be no reduction in taxes.

The health-care efforts that the district invests in clearly lead to reducing the overall cost of health care in our region. That saves you and me from escalating taxes in the future. The real path to saving taxes is to vote for three candidates among these four: Alpio Barbara, Art Faro, Dr. Jerry Shefren, and Ruth West-Gorriin.

Clem Malony
Menalto Avenue, Menlo Park

Vote for candidates who support downtown plan

Editor:

In order to grow downtown as a thriving environment for independent businesses such as ours, Menlo Park needs to have a clear vision. Embracing a plan with more pedestrian friendly, vibrant spaces that draws

and accommodates more people downtown is critical for a sustained business district.

We were invited and participated in many of the six major community meetings over the last three years, and were happy to see the city create a community driven process that has specifically included business owners like ourselves.

This plan represents zoning changes that will be the foundation for future prosperity for residents and merchants alike. Individual elements will still be subject to review, but putting the brakes on three years of progress and starting over is not the right thing to do. Finalizing this plan and creating certainty will help potential new businesses feel confident in the city’s direction and support of the downtown district. More retail and services will be attracted to the downtown with a cohesive vision in place.

We understand the specific plan is a big campaign issue. But if we are still having this conversation in 10 years, our town will likely be a ghost town, bereft of a charming and functional downtown. Seizing the opportunity of finalizing this process over the next several months will position our city for a strong post-recession recovery. It is time for the downtown community to come together.

Dexter & Anna Chow
Menlo Park residents and owners
Cheeky Monkey Toys

Dave Mandelkern for San Mateo County treasurer-tax collector

Editor:

All of our local school districts have felt the devastating impact of our current county treasurer’s loss of \$155 million in the Lehman Brothers bankruptcy. As a school board member, I’ve had to make tough budget cuts, reduce services to our students, and lay off teachers, in part because of these losses.

I’m also a certified public accountant and an MBA. We need to elect someone as county treasurer who understands that managing the county’s \$2.4 billion Pooled Investment Fund requires professional expertise that goes beyond what one individual county employee can handle.

I believe that Dave Mandelkern’s background in building companies in Silicon Valley and taking them public, dealing with investment bankers and managing hundreds of millions of dollars of shareholder’s money, gives him the proper background and experience to provide the right leadership for the county treasurer’s office. That’s why on Nov. 2 I’m voting for Dave Mandelkern for San Mateo County treasurer-tax collector.

Dennis P. McBride, CPA
President, Redwood City School District

Why I’m voting for Chuck Bernstein

Editor:

Menlo Park needs to elect City Council members who will help us move past the partisan politics that have divided our community for many years.

We need a council that will objectively assess projects based on thorough inde-

pendent analyses and real community feedback. I believe that Chuck Bernstein will be that kind of council member.

My experience with Chuck is that he approaches new issues with an open mind, listens to both sides, and actively seeks out all available information before coming to a conclusion. The fact that Chuck’s signs are on the lawns of people with very divergent political views shows that I am not alone in this opinion.

While I do not always agree with Chuck, I am supporting him because I know that he will do his homework and come back with thoughtful, independent and practical ideas.

Jennifer Fisher
Hermosa Way, Menlo Park

My vote is for Heyward Robinson

Editor:

I have worked with Heyward Robinson over the last decade. I’ve found him to be fact-based and flexible. I think he and Rich Cline have done a fantastic job fighting for Menlo Park’s interests regarding high-speed rail.

He is not bound by ideology that I’ve observed in other candidates for City Council. He does not let “perfect” get in the way of getting things done, which is what has kept Menlo Park from progressing in recent years.

Heyward is an excellent listener and a consensus builder both at work and when working on council matters. He uses a common sense, practical approach, which is why he is getting support this year on both the “liberal” and “conservative” sides of Menlo Park.

We need someone who can find win-win solutions between disparate sides. That is why I am voting for Heyward Robinson for Menlo Park City Council.

Diane Walter
Mills Court, Menlo Park

We don’t need hit pieces

Editor:

This is not a recommendation to vote for him or her, but an opinion that we are, in fact, moving closer to honest and open campaigns. I’ve been pleased to read the informative pages under my door mat. This year we have seen little demagoguery, so the two slick and well-funded exceptions stand out. In a way, that’s a good sign.

We were doing so well, it was an unfortunate surprise that the Menlo Gateway group had to slime Chuck Bernstein (three mailers, no less) to “defend” a campaign that was already won. And it stands out that a hefty \$15,000 from the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) funded a huge and slick mailer putting one of our city employees in the spotlight as a poster child for resisting pension reform — even feeding her a line directly from union leadership.

Let’s take this the next step. We don’t need \$15,000 hit pieces in Menlo Park to tell us what to think. Let’s hope the strong-arm types just wasted their money on this town.

Henry Riggs
Callie Lane, Menlo Park

Editor’s Note: Henry Riggs was co-chair of the effort to put Measure L pension reform measure on the ballot.

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OFFERED AT \$2,250,000



Woodside Hills
OFFERED AT \$1,575,000



Woodside Glens
OFFERED AT \$1,995,000



Skywood Acres, Views, 9+ acres
OFFERED AT \$1,995,000



Woodside, 7-acre knoll top
OFFERED AT \$1,695,000



Woodside Heights
OFFERED AT \$2,795,000



Woodside, Folger Estate
OFFERED AT \$12,500,000



Woodside, 1.1 acres
OFFERED AT \$1,945,000



Woodside, 17.6-acre lot
OFFERED AT \$1,695,000



Information and all acreage deemed reliable, but not guaranteed.

2969 Woodside Road
Woodside, CA 94062

Scott Dancer
650.529.2454
scottdancer.com

