

*Making Merry with
the arts. Section 2*

The Almanac

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

NOVEMBER 24, 2010 | VOL. 46 NO. 13



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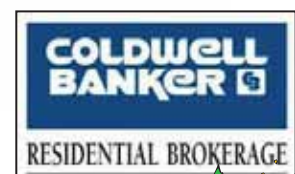


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*Happy
Holidays*



Give me a call...let's talk.

James and Devon Diller of Woodside get ready to bike with their father, Jim, in the memorial ride for their mother, Tricia.

Photo by Kate Daly



Daughter starts bike ride in memory of mom

By **Kate Daly**

Special to the Almanac

Bicycle Sunday on Cañada Road in Woodside turned into Tricia Diller Day on Nov. 14, when hundreds of friends and family gathered for a bike ride to remember her and raise money for breast cancer research.

Ms. Diller died in January at the age of 52 after an eight-year battle with the disease that went into remission for a stretch, then returned. She left behind her husband, Jim Diller of Woodside, and two children, James, a seventh-grader at Woodside School, and Devon, a fifth-grader there.

Devon wanted to do something in her mother's memory, said Joanie Davidson, Devon's grandmother. Since she was too young to participate in a Susan G. Komen Race for the Curte, Devon started her own event.

Riding bikes on a road that was already scheduled to be closed off to vehicular traffic seemed like a natural choice.



Tricia Diller

A group of mostly Woodside School moms mobilized to help support the fundraiser, working with Devon to come up with an entry form, a waiver and publicity.

With the help of her best friend and fellow classmate, Sophia Ashworth, Devon designed a T-shirt for the event. The back features a picture of Ms. Diller with her children and a line her family says describes her well: "Live, Laugh, Love."

A college friend of Ms. Diller's helped underwrite an order for 250 shirts, and they sold out before the ride at \$20 each.

Friends, family and students also pitched in by making fresh baked goods. They set up a table at the corner of Cañada and Edgewood roads on the day of the event and asked for donations in return.

That Sunday, the day smiled on everyone; it was sunny with temperatures reaching up into the seventies. As people lined up their bikes or prepared to walk the 7.6-mile roundtrip route, the atmosphere felt festive for the Tricia Diller Memorial Bike for Breast Cancer.

Carol Arvidsson of Woodside

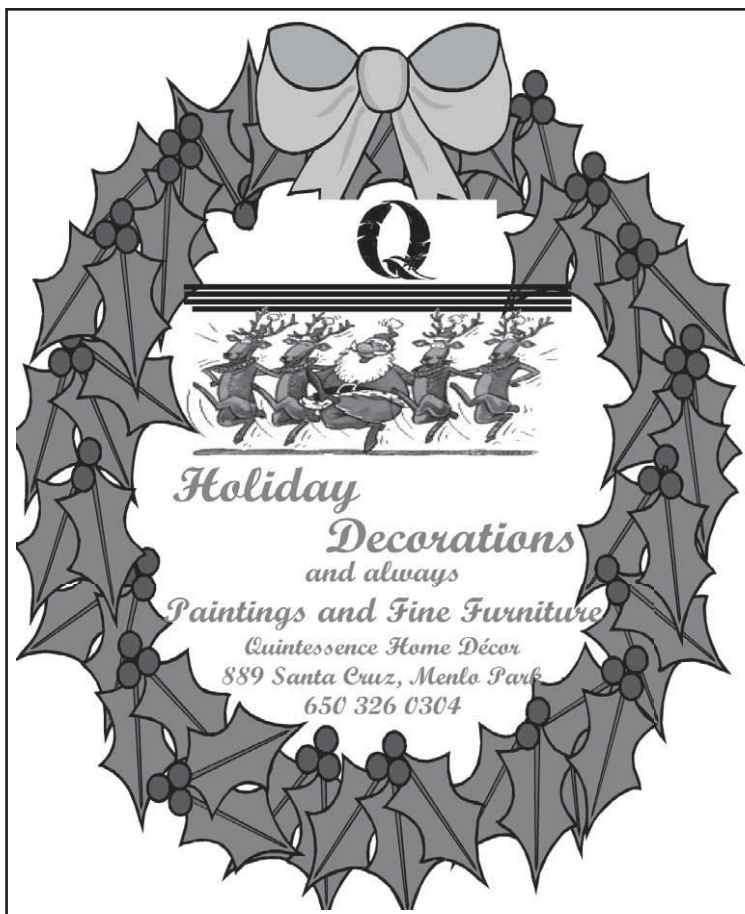
was there with her husband and son, Karl, a classmate of James since preschool. She went to Woodside High and college with James' father, and choked up a bit when she recalled meeting Tricia Diller for the first time with their two-year-olds in tow. After a pause, Ms. Arvidsson said the best thing about the ride was, "This is for us to get together, a celebration of life."

Devon said she was thrilled with the great weather and large turnout. Shortly after 11 a.m. she led the ride surrounded by friends. Her older brother complimented her for all of the effort she put in. "It's pretty cool she stepped up to raise money for such a good cause," James said.

Stephanie Ashworth, one of the main organizers, estimated more than 300 people participated, and that \$15,000 has been raised so far for the Tricia Diller Breast Cancer Research Fund at the Stanford Cancer Center.

The Raynor family of Woodside won a prize for signing up the most sponsors, and money is still being collected. Contributions may be made with checks payable to: Tricia Diller Bike for Breast Cancer, c/o Stephanie Ashworth, 303 Glenwood Ave., Woodside, CA 94062.

Devon's grandmother said Devon and Sophia are "already designing the shirt for next year," so this could become an annual memorial ride. ▀



Jerry Carlson
Atherton Town Council
jerrycarlson2010.com



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ATHERTON
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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

M-A and residents reach truce over field lights

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

For 59 years, it's always been dark after sunset on the athletic fields at Menlo-Atherton High School, but no more. There will be lights for football, for lacrosse, for soccer and for practice sessions now that a group of residents concerned with what lights would bring to their neighborhood have dropped their lawsuit and come to an agreement with the school district.

In talks that took place over a month and a half, the Sequoia Union High School District and residents who called themselves Protect Atherton's Residential Character agreed to restrictions

close to what the district first proposed, according to attorney Tim Fox, who represented the district from the San Mateo County Counsel's office.

In the settlement, the district and residents "came up with a workable plan for a workable use of the lights," Mr. Fox said.

"There were a number of very obviously fruitful discussions with district staff and board members," said residents' attorney Anna Shimko of the San Francisco firm Sedgwick, Detert, Moran & Arnold. "Everybody was satisfied, so we're moving forward in a cooperative way."

Agreement details

As originally proposed by the

school district, lights will be allowed for four football games at night, and will now be off within 30 minutes of the games' end, according to the agreement.

The agreement allows an additional 12 scheduled games such as lacrosse and soccer, but not football. These games would allow the PA system for announcements, but not game commentary, and must end by 8:30 p.m., again with lights out within 30 minutes.

In addition, M-A can have four weekday-evening, school-related activities, such as a fundraiser, but they must end by 8 p.m. If they're held on a Friday, they have until 9 p.m.

On all other weekdays, the lights must be off by 8 p.m. except

between March 31 and the end of the school year, during which time the lights must be off by 7:30 p.m.

The field can be lit on a weekend only if an M-A football team is in a Central Coast Section playoff game.

The PA system is off-limits for anything other than a scheduled M-A game.

No more injunction

The school has had temporary lights sitting near the field since September in anticipation of this year's football season, but the neighbors were successful in getting an injunction against their use.

In a decision reflecting the necessary environmental study required for such a project, Superior Court

Judge Marie S. Weiner said the district had improperly divided the installation of the lights into a "temporary" project and a "permanent" project.

The settlement infers an end to the injunction, but it won't be formal until Judge Weiner signs a court order to that effect, Ms. Shimko said, adding that she anticipates no further complications.

The settlement respects the high school's need to serve its community, and the neighbors' lives "won't be unduly interrupted," Ms. Shimko said.

"I think that the district was disappointed that it came to this, but the process that led to a resolution was very cooperative," Mr. Fox said. ▀

Menlo incumbent files complaint with state bar over Brown Act stories

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

On the same day that the Daily Post ran a front page apology for two stories and an editorial that said three Menlo Park council members violated the Brown Act by exchanging e-mails discussing campaign issues, one of those council members, Heyward Robinson, filed a complaint with the state bar association regarding noted First Amendment attorney Terry Francke's involvement with the stories.

After the stories ran a few days before the Nov. 2 election, Mr. Robinson discovered that Mr. Francke had never actually seen the e-mails before declaring "a very serious Brown Act violation" had occurred.

Once Mr. Francke did view the e-mails, the day before the election, he retracted his statement and apologized, saying there was in fact no Brown Act issue.

He told The Almanac this was the second correction run by the Post and that he had personally apologized to Mr. Robinson. "I've read the complaint and I sympathize with its sentiment, but I've checked the Rules of Professional Conduct and don't see any that address this situation," Mr. Francke said.

The complaint filed on Nov. 19 asked the state bar to hold the attorney accountable for his errors "and their serious and irreparable

consequences," namely, the possible political harm done to the two council members running for re-election.

"It most certainly did political damage to the incumbents, causing some to vote against them," Mr. Robinson wrote in the letter.

He told The Almanac that his review of precinct-level voting data from San Mateo County showed a weaker-than-expected performance in the precinct encompassing the Willows neighborhood; copies of the Post stories were distributed to the neighborhood's Yahoo message board online.

"To see that tells me something had an effect, but I don't think it was any one factor," Mr. Robinson said, explaining that fellow incumbent Rich Cline's third-place finish came as more of a surprise than his own loss.

Another factor he cited as affecting the election included lack of public awareness about the council's accomplishments during the past four years.

Since both incumbents were mentioned in the Post stories and share a similar history of service on the council, yet Mr. Cline will keep his seat on the dais, there may be an additional factor at work.

The passage of the pension reform initiative by 71 percent indicates most Menlo Park resi-

See **BROWN**, page 8



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Jesse Taylor feeds his chickens in his backyard in Menlo Park.

Where chickens may safely hunt and peck

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

What's black and white and round all over ... more or less ... if you don't count the legs, and the head. And the tail. And the wings; they're not round.

Maybe at this point you're thinking, "Plymouth Barred Rock chicken?" You're right! They are black and white and they do behave like chicken-sized beach balls rolling around at your feet and mak-

ing gentle clucking sounds.

Menlo Park resident Jesse Taylor has five of them in his backyard on East Creek Drive. They produce eggs, about three dozen each week, which he sells.

Jesse, a freshman at Summit Preparatory Charter High School in Redwood City, says that on a typical week, he saves a dozen eggs for his family and sells the other two. Of his three paying customers, all of whom live in Menlo Park, two alter-

nate and buy eggs every other Saturday.

Jesse's delivery vehicle is his bicycle, with the full cartons in his backpack sharing space with the empty ones that his customers return to him. Selling fresh eggs is a viable alternative for a teen in an era when newspaper routes aren't available, Jesse's mother Joanne Taylor noted in an e-mail.

Most of the \$6 per dozen

See **CHICKENS**, page 8



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Mark Schmidt is an American Board of Opticianry and National Contact Lens Examiners Certified Optician licensed by the Medical Board of California. He can be easily reached at Menlo Optical, 1166 University Drive, Menlo Park. 650-322-3900.

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Toxic cleanup effort planned at Hillview Middle School

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor

Residents living near Hillview Middle School in Menlo Park received a letter last week from a state agency notifying them that the school district is in the planning stages of a project to clean up a contaminated portion of the 9.36-acre campus that is now undergoing major reconstruction.

Ahmad Sheikholeslami, director of facilities for the Menlo Park City School District, said the district knew about the contaminated soil long before the district broke ground on the school's reconstruction project, and had included the cleanup project in the overall construction budget.

The Nov. 15 letter to residents from the state Department of Toxic Substances said elevated levels of chlordane were found in the southern portion of the site. Mr. Sheikholeslami said the contaminant is found in the agent used to kill termites, and was likely used when the school buildings were

constructed in the 1950s.

The site targeted for cleanup is on the southern portion of the campus, which will be a playing field once the school reconstruction is complete. Mr. Sheikholeslami said the contamination is in the soil surrounding buildings that will be demolished; the soil is now covered with fabric and mulch and will remain so until it can be removed, which is scheduled to happen over the summer.

The Department of Toxic Substances oversees cleanup projects at school sites, Mr. Sheikholeslami said. The letter to nearby residents is part of the protocol that must be followed before the cleanup project begins, he said.

The remainder of the campus is contaminant free, he said, and the entire campus "is safe for the kids right now."

The project to construct 80,000 square feet of new facilities and an open playing field at the site is scheduled for completion in 2012. ■

Parking tickets to cost \$3 more

■ Average citation to be \$45.

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

With apologies from Mayor Rich Cline to all those parking in Menlo Park, the council voted Nov. 16 to raise fines for parking violations by \$3. The hike goes into effect Dec. 7.

Menlo Park is passing along an increase in how much money the state collects per citation. Currently the state gets \$9.50 for each ticket.

But Senate Bill 857, which passed earlier this year, contained a clause allowing the state to collect an additional \$3 per ticket from the city, or about \$50,000 more annually, as estimated in the staff report. Without raising the ticket

fines, the city would be responsible for paying that amount.

Police Management Analyst Susan Tsai told the council members the average ticket cost would be \$45 if they approved the increase.

Vice Mayor John Boyle asked whether the increase could be affected by Proposition 26, which passed during the November elections. The statewide proposition requires a two-thirds vote by either both houses of the Legislature or by local voters, to raise certain types of fees or charges.

According to City Attorney Bill McClure, parking tickets don't fall into that category.

With grumbles and apologies, the City Council voted unanimously to pass the surcharge on to local drivers. ■



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Alpine Road fatality is third for truck driver

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

In an unusual set of incidents, the Nov. 4 collision of a bicyclist and a tractor-trailer at the Alpine Road/Interstate 280 interchange was the third time since 2003 that the truck driver had been involved in a fatal accident.

In the first two cases, he was found not to be at fault, and preliminary findings from the Nov. 4 accident investigation suggest he wasn't at fault in that incident, either.

In December 2003, a woman died after her vehicle crossed the center line on Highway 1 near Moss Landing and collided head-on with a truck being driven by Gabriel Manzur Vera, 44, said Officer Robert Lehman of the California Highway Patrol.

In August 2007, a bicyclist died as a result of a collision with the right side of Mr. Vera's truck as it was making a turn at an intersection in the city of Santa Cruz, CHP Officer Art Montiel said.

In the Nov. 4 incident, in which Los Altos Hills cyclist Lauren Perdriau Ward, 47, died after colliding with the left side of his truck, the preliminary indications are that Mr. Vera was not at fault, Mr. Montiel said.

Mr. Vera, who drives for Monterey-based demolition contractor Randazzo Enterprises, had been headed onto southbound I-280 from a job in Menlo Park, Mr. Montiel said. CHP investigators have not yet determined what happened.

"That's very unfortunate: same driver, similar situation," Mr. Montiel said about the two bicycle fatalities.

In the Santa Cruz incident, a video originating either from

a surveillance or street camera showed that Mr. Vera was not at fault, Mr. Montiel said. A call to the Santa Cruz Police Department has not been returned.

The CHP keeps records for four years, so details of the 2003 incident on Highway 1 have been purged, said Mr. Lehman of the Monterey office of the CHP. That section of the highway is two lanes and runs through a marshy area without much shoulder, Mr. Lehman said. "There's not a lot of places to go if someone's coming into

action and has retained San Francisco-based attorney John Feder, of the firm Rouda Feder & Tietjen.

In a brief interview, Mr. Feder said it was clear that Mr. Vera had been inattentive in the 2007 incident and that the ensuing lawsuit, which ended in a settlement, supported that position. "His sworn testimony under oath indicated that he was, in fact, at fault," Mr. Feder said.

The case may turn on the question of whether the Nov. 4 accident was preventable, Mr.

Feder said, while also noting the importance of the CHP's determining what actually happened. Witnesses, if there are any, have not yet come forward, Mr. Montiel of the CHP said.

The fact that Mr. Vera was involved in similar accidents in the past does not automatically trigger an investigation into his driving habits, Mr. Montiel said. If he had been found at fault, then investigators would begin to look for similarities.

In the Nov. 4 incident, the truck was found to be in its own lane and preparing to make a right turn onto the freeway; investigators found nothing to indicate a leftward turn into the cyclist, he said.

Does the configuration of this particular truck warrant special precautions? "There's really only so much (drivers) can do," Mr. Montiel said. Cyclists and operators of other small vehicles should take it upon themselves to make sure they are seen, he said.

"If you can't see me, I can't see you" is a sign, in the voice of the driver, that is commonly seen on big trucks, referring to the rear-view mirrors. Such signs should be taken seriously by cyclists, Mr. Montiel said. ■

In the first two cases, the driver was found not to be at fault, and preliminary findings from the Nov. 4 accident investigation suggest he wasn't at fault in that incident, either.

your lane," he said.

With truckers on the road so much longer than the average driver, do they have a greater likelihood of being involved in an accident? "They absolutely do, just because that's just their job, to be out on the road," Mr. Lehman said.

They are also held to a higher safety standard and are expected to drive more defensively, he added. In an accident, professional drivers are evaluated as to whether they were getting enough sleep, eating adequately, "things that you normally don't think about, but we want to double check in their state of mind," Mr. Lehman said.

Mr. Vera's series of similar incidents "is uncommon (but) I wouldn't doubt the integrity of the investigators in the fault that they found," Mr. Lehman said. "Some individuals are in the wrong place at the wrong time."

Lawsuit ahead?

The family of Ms. Ward is apparently considering legal

Cyclist injured in unusual accident on Woodside Road

There was an accident involving a cyclist on Woodside Road near the intersection with Interstate 280 at about 6 a.m. Friday, Nov. 19, but contrary to earlier news reports, including a story on AlmanacNews.com, it was not a case of hit-and-run, authorities said.

The cyclist in the incident was a 56-year-old Menlo Park man who was taken by medics to Stanford Hospital with possible fractures in

his pelvis and sacrum, said Lt. Ray Lunny of the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office.

The cyclist, who gave an account of the incident to sheriff's deputies, may have lost control of his eastbound bicycle after a westbound vehicle of unknown make made an illegal turn and crossed the lane in front of the cyclist and headed on to the I-280 northbound off ramp.

The rider braked and went down, Lt. Lunny said he was told.

As to the fate of the driver, nothing is known. The driver may have realized the error and simply turned into the northbound lane upon reaching the freeway, Lt. Lunny said.

If there were witnesses to this incident, they have not yet come forward and are asked to contact Lt. Lunny at 363-4049.

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REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Rents Are Going Up

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Susan

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Residents getting nervous over police outsourcing option

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor

In what could be a sign of things to come if Atherton's elected officials decide to outsource police services, a number of Atherton residents attended an early morning meeting of the City Council and town's Finance Committee on Nov. 18 to hear a presentation on another city's experiences in turning over police operations to the county Sheriff's Office.

In spite of the 8 a.m. start time, about 15 residents attended the session, Councilman Jerry Carlson estimated. A number of them spoke, he said, and to his recollection, they all were against farming out police services.

The council has not actively explored outsourcing police services, but it has been struggling to find ways to fix the town budget's \$1 million structural deficit, and had directed the Finance Committee to look at options that include outsourcing a number of town services.

The committee had scheduled a presentation by Jeff Maltbie, interim city manager of San Carlos, who was to talk about his city's outsourcing of police services to the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office. When Councilman Carlson learned of the presentation, scheduled for the committee's Nov. 18 meeting, he requested that the meeting be held jointly with the City Council, he said.

The meeting's turnout by residents may have been the result, in large part, of an e-mail sent out by former police chief Glenn Nielsen, alerting residents to the meeting and encouraging them to attend, according to people who saw the message.

Councilman Jim Dobbie said the e-mail from Mr. Nielsen "stirred things up. ... It just generated a lot of concern that was totally inappropriate." To the best of his knowledge, he

added, "no council member wants to outsource the (police) department. ... We love our police department, but we'd be irresponsible not to look at all options for fixing the financial situation."

Councilman Dobbie said if the council ever decided it wanted to turn over police operations to another agency, he would push for putting the question on the ballot. Bill Widmer, who will take a seat on the council in December, also said voters should be the ultimate decision-makers on outsourcing.

Councilman Carlson said he would want the public to be heavily involved in making a decision of such consequence, but he wasn't certain the question would have to go to a vote. "People need to tell us what services are important to them, and what they're willing to pay for," he said.

Mr. Maltbie's presentation included an overview of San Carlos' move from its own police force to its outsourcing to the Sheriff's Office, a transition that became effective Nov. 1. The process, Mr. Carlson said, included a paring down of services over a number of years in an attempt to reduce costs and retain the department; but after a time, only core services were available and financial problems remained.

Mr. Carlson noted, though, that "San Carlos had a different situation from what we have, at least for now."

Employee costs in Atherton account for nearly 80 percent of the town's budget, with police costs representing just over 50 percent, Councilman Dobbie said. The police department has already been trimmed down to 17 employees, from 22, he said, but costs are still a problem.

The town must "come up with some more revenue or more savings" to restore the town's fiscal health, he added. ■

distance behind second-place winner Kirsten Keith.

Still, notoriety is not the sort of attribute that wins elections. "Certainly it doesn't help to have blazing headlines that say 'e-mails expose incumbents,'" Mr. Robinson said. "Unfortunately journalism is largely self-policed. There's not a lot of recourse for someone on the other end of an incorrect story, especially if you're a public figure."

The Daily Post did not respond to Almanac requests for comment. ■

Where chickens may safely hunt and peck

CHICKENS

continued from page 5

that he earns goes into his savings account, he says. Jesse, 14, is a member of the San Carlos 4H Club and says he plans to study veterinary medicine. To that end, he spends one day a month in the offices of a Pescadero veterinarian where, he says, he helps with inoculations and, on occasion, surgery.

His husbandry of chickens began in the second grade, he says, but the egg sales started only last year. The family used to give them away.

Jesse likes his eggs scrambled. "He's pretty good in the kitchen," his dad Phil Taylor says. "He can whip up his own eggs."

"The quality (of the eggs) is great," Mr. Taylor adds. "People tell us they can really tell the difference." The chickens are free range and have dug up the yard extensively in the search for insects. On occasion, they get to investigate some leftover spaghetti — which they treat like worms, Jesse says — and cooked corn on the cob.

At night, they're caged in a chicken-wired coop that includes a separate enclosure for two Rhode Island Red hens† that are no longer laying but live out their lives in



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Jesse Taylor delivers fresh eggs to Melissa Mills in Atherton.

comfort and safety.

The two breeds are separated because the Reds, unlike the Barred Rocks, form a pecking order, Mr. Taylor says. Barred Rocks, according to Wikipedia, "are docile, friendly and easily handled."

The only other intimidating factor for these chickens has been a dog, a boxer from next door that jumped over a 6-foot solid wooden fence and was discovered with one

of the Barred Rocks in its jaws. Apparently the dog did not know what to do next and the chicken was rescued unharmed.

Though the yard is open to the sky with its fences easily breachable, there have been no excursions by raccoons, hawks or other predators, Mr. Taylor says.

While the chickens no longer receive names, they are accorded the respect of pets: no soup pots or roasting pans in their futures. ■

Menlo Park garbage price hike looms again

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

Last year, Menlo Park garbage rates jumped 18 percent. This year, 28 percent. Next year? Maybe another 15 percent.

The City Council, after much debate and opposition from exiting council member John Boyle at its Nov. 16 meeting, decided to state "as much as 15 percent" on public notices mailed to residents informing them about the upcoming rate increase.

The call for a third increase in as many years reflects the state of negotiations with garbage collection and recycling service providers. Allied Waste, during talks with the Teamsters union that supplies its labor force, agreed to pay raises of 17 to 19 percent over the span of a five-year agreement, signed in December 2008 after the company learned that it lost a bid to renew its contract to serve Menlo Park and 11 other jurisdictions.

Those increases are passed

through the regional agency that oversees garbage collection and processing, the South Bayside Waste Management Authority (SBWMA), to the jurisdictions it serves. And in this case, they're also passed along to the new service provider. When Recology takes over from Allied on Jan. 1, it will be forced to honor those salary rates for the remaining time left on the 2008 contract.

"In theory, they could just decide to double everybody's salaries and they could just pass it along? There's no oversight?" Mr. Boyle asked city staff, who responded that while there's a process "to monitor" salaries, if the SBWMA did refuse to honor pay increases, the negotiations could end up in court.

Mr. Boyle argued for capping the potential hike at 10 percent, pointing out that the lower increase would still allow the city to pay off \$895,000 owed to Allied Waste by the 2012 deadline. "Ten percent keeps pres-

sure on for contractors to stop these ridiculous levels of cost increases. Ten percent is high," he said. "The city has time, when it sets 2012 rates, to force some changes if the system continues to be broken."

"There's one person in my house who will react to any increase," said Mayor Rich Cline. "Any." The difference between writing 10 percent versus 15 percent on the public notice therefore seemed unimportant, he suggested, given that any increase will leave residents disgruntled.

Tongue in cheek, outgoing council member Heyward Robinson suggested a 50 percent increase before expressing frustration over what he described as "exorbitant collective bargaining agreements."

Council member Kelly Ferguson stated she'd appreciate the flexibility offered by a greater range of rate increases. In the end, everyone except Mr. Boyle voted to announce the cap as 15 percent. ■

BROWN

continued from page 5

dents supported Measure L. While Mr. Cline chose to stay publicly neutral about the initiative, Mr. Robinson openly opposed it.

Data released on Nov. 17 by the county suggests the articles may not have had a huge impact; Mr. Robinson trailed the other incumbent by 167 votes among those cast on election day — a slightly smaller gap than in the vote-by-mail category. The same trend held for Mr. Cline's

Silicon Valley Bank co-founder dies at 91

William E. "Bill" Biggerstaff, whose career included senior positions with Ford and Wells Fargo Bank, culminating in 1983 as a co-founder of Silicon Valley Bank, died Nov. 15 in Portola Valley. He was 91.

Mr. Biggerstaff was born in Berkeley. An avid sportsman, he lettered in basketball three years, while attending the University of California at Berkeley. After graduation in 1940, he entered the U.S. Navy and later commanded a destroyer escort in the South Pacific during World War II.

After the war, he attended Harvard Business School. Returning to the Bay Area, he worked first in auto sales, and later for Mechanics Bank in Richmond. He met Shirley Gibson of Piedmont and the couple was married in 1951. Two years later, Mr. Biggerstaff joined the international division of Ford Motor Company, working in New York City, Dearborn, Michigan, and Brussels, where he was responsible for opening new markets for Ford.

After relocating in Atherton, Mr. Biggerstaff joined

Wells Fargo in San Francisco and, among other duties, introduced MasterCard to banking clients in Japan, Australia and other markets.

In 1983, Mr. Biggerstaff and his friend and Sanford professor Robert Madearis, along with the-CEO Roger Smith, opened the first Silicon Valley Bank office in San Jose, recognizing the need for investment banking for small- to medium-size technology firms. Mr. Biggerstaff

OBITUARIES

helped develop new markets and clients for the bank well into his 80s, say family members.

He is survived by his wife of 59 years, Shirley; children Barry Biggerstaff of Carbondale, Illinois, Beth Anderson of Rocklin, Jan Owen of Seattle, and Brandon Biggerstaff of Emeryville; and seven grandchildren.

The family is planning a private memorial to celebrate Mr. Biggerstaff's life. Donations may be made to Pathways Hospice, 585 North Mary Ave. in Sunnyvale.

Richard Ward Lennen

Formed Lennen Masonry

Richard Ward Lennen, who owned Lennen Masonry in Redwood City, died Nov. 4 at age 73. He "laid countless bricks and build hundreds of fireplaces" in Atherton, Woodside and the Midpeninsula, said his son, Christopher Pedrin.

Born in San Francisco, he was a 13th generation Californian. He attended St. Ignatius High School for two years and then moved to the Peninsula to attend Sequoia High School. He became a star basketball player and met the woman who would become his first wife, Brenda Lehman. He graduated in 1955.

An accomplished diver, he

barnstormed around the state doing shows with the Clyde Devine Comedy Divers, his son said. After graduating from the College of San Mateo, he became a lifeguard in Crescent City and Seattle.

Returning to the Peninsula, he married Brenda and they had four children. He worked in the construction field and started a career as a bricklayer.

From 1967 to 1969, he served in Vietnam with the U.S. Navy's SeeBees 58th Battalion.

After graduating from San Francisco State in 1972, he taught history at Sequoia High School and Kennedy Middle School in Redwood City, his son said.

He was an expert snow and water skier, surfer, swimmer, and he loved to cliff dive with his oldest son, family members said.

In 2004, he retired to Pine Mountain Lake in Groveland, California.

He is survived by his first wife, Brenda, and their sons Christopher Pedrin, Robert and Rick Lennen, and daughter Jill Judd; his son Patrick Lennen and daughter Erika Lennen by Rosanna (Davis); six grandsons; and three granddaughters.

He will be buried in the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific, located in the Pu'owaina Crater (known as Punchbowl) in Honolulu.

Donations in his memory can be sent to the Sequoia High School Alumni Association in Redwood City. A casual gathering of friends and family was held Nov. 21 in Redwood City.



Richard Lennen

POLICE CALLS

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

ATHERTON

Grand theft report: Jewelry missing from home, first block of Cebalo Lane, Nov. 15.

MENLO PARK

Residential/commercial burglary reports:

■ Losses of \$9,229 in theft of seven laptop computers and \$486 in cash, Job-Train at 1200 O'Brien Drive, Nov. 8.

■ Losses of \$2,844 in residential theft of laptop, laptop bag, DVD and gold ring, 1000 block of Ringwood Ave., Nov. 12.

■ Loss of \$1,999 in theft of LCD projector, Peninsula Ventures at 3000 Sand Hill Road, Nov. 8.

■ Loss of \$1,500 in cash after window smashed, Baneth's Willow Road Pharmacy, Nov. 15.

Grand theft reports:

■ Loss estimated at \$13,000 in unauthorized international phone calls, Bridgescale at 2200 Sand Hill Road, Nov. 11.

■ Loss of \$420 in theft of bicycle, 1100 block of elder Ave., Nov. 11.

■ Loss of \$630 in theft of cell phone, 600 block of Sharon Park Drive, Nov. 14.

■ Loss of \$600 in theft of cell phone from bicycle saddlebag, Middlefield Road and Ravenswood Ave., Nov. 8.

■ Loss of \$140 in theft of video game player and game, 1300 block of Willow Road, Nov. 14.

Stolen vehicle reports:

■ Blue 1989 Toyota Camry stolen, 1100 block of Willow Road, Nov. 9.

■ Tan 1987 Volvo 740 Turbo, 1300 Windermere Ave., Nov. 13.

Fraud reports:

■ Loss of \$2,000, first block of Politzer Drive, Nov. 9.

■ Loss of \$194 in unauthorized use of credit card, 1100 block of Windsor Way, Nov. 8.

■ Loss of \$60 in unauthorized access to checking account from somewhere in Las Vegas, 1100 block of Crane St., Nov. 9.

Spousal abuse reports:

■ Arrest made, 1200 block of Carlton Ave., Nov. 14.

■ Arrest made, 1100 block of Madera Ave., Nov. 15.

WOODSIDE

Auto burglary report: Smashed passenger side window, estimated loss of \$840, Woodside Park and Ride, Nov. 13.

PORTOLA VALLEY

Theft reports:

■ Sunglasses valued at \$30 stolen from unlocked vehicle, 200 block of Canyon Drive, Nov. 14.

■ Loss of about \$50 in theft of sunglasses, bag of change, and keys from unlocked vehicle, 200 block of Canyon Drive, Nov. 14.

WEST MENLO PARK

Auto burglary report: Passenger window smashed and laptop computer, bag and calculator stolen, 2000 block of Cedar Ave., Nov. 16.

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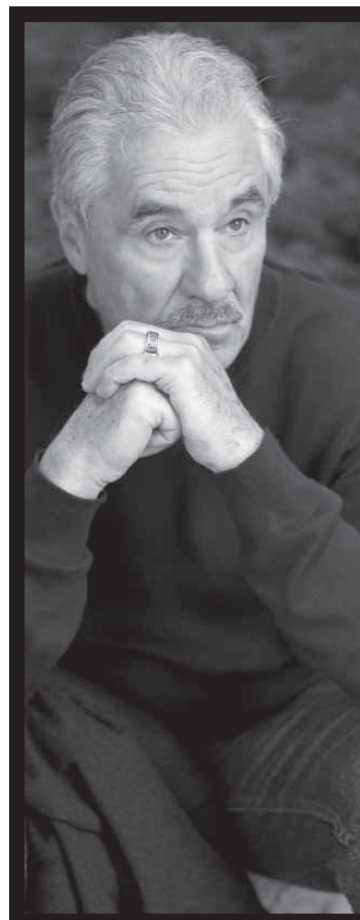
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Photo: Marc Silber

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Atherton town employees get pay hikes, make concessions

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor

With retroactive pay in the cards for them, most non-safety employees in Atherton will be returned to a perch on the pay scale that ensures that their paychecks will be higher than average when compared with those of employees of comparable towns in the area.

The City Council on Nov. 17 unanimously approved a labor contract for represented miscellaneous, non-police and non-management employees, and a resolution for management staff, which is not represented, giving both groups a boost in salary but requiring them to pay more of their medical benefit costs. The employees had been working without a contract since July 2009.

The two-year agreements for both groups cover the 2009-10 and 2010-11 fiscal years. They provide no increase for the first year, and a small increase for the current year, retroactive to July.

For both groups, the agreement will boost their pay to

a level representing the 70th percentile of the pay range for comparable positions in other specified towns.

The agreements cover all but non-management police officers, and three employees who are in the "confidential" category. An agreement with the confidential employees will come before the council at its December meeting. The police officers have a contract that expires June 30, 2013.

The council has been struggling to rein in employee costs, which represent nearly 80 percent of the town's budget. The agreements make some headway in this area, requiring management staff to pay 3 percent of their medical coverage, beginning Jan. 1. The town now pays 100 percent of that cost.

The non-management employees, represented by the Teamsters Union, will begin paying 6 percent of their medical benefit costs, beginning Jan. 1 — up slightly from the 5 percent they now pay.

New employees in both employee groups will be brought in on a new

See **CONTRACT**, page 13

Downtown holiday parking hours extended

■ MENLO BRIEFS

Downtown shoppers may find it easier to linger in Menlo Park, despite a recent \$3 hike in the cost of parking tickets. Starting Monday, Dec. 6, the police department will extend the time limit from two to three hours in all of the city's parking plazas except for the lot behind Draeger's, which will remain at two hours.

Street parking, however, will still have a one-hour time limit unless otherwise posted. The holiday parking hours will end on Monday, Jan. 3, 2011. For more information, call 330-6308.

Menlo council meeting cancelled

There will be no meeting on Tuesday, Nov. 23, for the Menlo Park City Council. The council will convene again the following week, which will also be the final meeting in office for Vice Mayor John Boyle and Councilman Heyward Robinson. What

weighty items of city business will occupy their last hours on the dais remains to be seen.

Goodbye, WAMP

Hello, The Paper? Keen observers noticed the Weekly WAMP boxes scattered around town are now sporting new decals, and a new name: The Paper. Neither WAMP publisher Sloane Citron nor his editorial staff responded to questions about whether new ownership was in place and what that meant for the publication's future.

On Aug. 16 The WAMP launched as a daily covering Woodside, Atherton, Menlo Park, and Portola Valley, only to turn weekly after the first week due to quality concerns, Mr. Citron said at the time. Publication became sporadic and then ceased around the November elections.

City responds to downtown plan concerns

In response to concerns raised about the potential release of the draft environmental impact report for the El Camino Real/downtown specific plan and financial impact analysis, the city of Menlo Park is taking steps to ensure the reports don't get lost in the holiday shuffle.

Earlier this month, the Planning Commission recommended waiting until after the New Year to start the meeting process, which will give the commission as well as the City Council a chance to formally discuss the plan, along with allowing the public to comment.

Associate city planner Thomas Rogers said the reports may still be released in December to let community review start as soon as possible, but that depending on the specific date of release, the standard 45-day review period could be extended by the project's council subcommittee.



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Local to sing in Thanksgiving Day Parade

By **Samantha Bergeson**

Special to the Almanac

Macy's iconic Thanksgiving Day Parade will have a Woodside performer aboard a float.

Julia Belanoff, a sophomore at Woodside High School and a Woodside resident, has been selected to sing on the "Office-Max Elves Raise the Roof" float.

The float's performers are associated with the Stagedoor Manor performing arts summer camp, based in Loch Sheldrake, New York, which Julia has attended for three summers.



Julia Belanoff

She was selected out of 400 camp singers and dancers.

Bella Norvig, 16, of Palo Alto; Chris Garber, 17, of Hillsborough; and Abigail

Doctor, 15, of Los Altos will also participate.

Julia, 15, a "dancing elf" on the float, has studied dance at Dance Arts Center, and voice with Debra Lambert. She has performed at the San Francisco playhouse and the Custom Made Theatre.

Julia has a family tie to the parade, according to Kathy Blanco, Julia's mother: Julia's grandmother worked for Macy's in New York for 35 years, and walked in the Thanksgiving Day Parade.

The performers will come together for rehearsals three days before the televised parade in Herald Square. The performance will consist of a choreographed dance routine and the singing of an undisclosed song.

The 84th annual Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade airs on NBC-TV on Thursday, Nov. 25, from 9 a.m. to noon.

Menlo Park cyclists takes bronze

Haley Juno-Galdes, Andi Smith, and Jane Wolcott of Menlo Park recently won a bronze medal at the USA Cycling 2010 Elite Track Nationals in Carson, California.

On Sept. 30, they competed in the team pursuit at an indoor, 250-meter racing track used for brakeless bicycles.

The women usually train together with the Webcor/Alto Velo bicycle racing development team.

"I'm impressed with their ability to work as a team, and to accommodate each others' weaknesses and strengths," said Dan Smith of SportVelo in Menlo Park, who coached them "I think that they exceeded their own expectations, but I know that they each have plenty of potential that we will see in the year to come."

SPORTS

Go to AlmanacNews.com for sports news and photos.

Portola Valley native competes in IronMan

Jessica Weiher Robinson, a Portola Valley native, finished her second World Championship IronMan competition in Kona, Hawaii, on Oct. 9.

She improved her time by 2 hours and 25 minutes, finishing the race in a total of 12 hours, 19 minutes.

The IronMan race consists of a 2.4-mile swim, 112-mile bike race, followed by a marathon (26.2 miles). Over 50,000 international athletes compete to qualify for the 1,800 spots in the World Championship.

Ms. Robinson has been a triathlete for three years. She and her husband, Patrick Robinson of Menlo Park, currently reside in Waikoloa, Hawaii.

— *Samantha Bergeson*

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WILLIAM R. KIELER

William R. Kieler, Menlo Park resident & former MP Police Lt. dies at home at 93.

It has been a good life and Bud knew it. Orphaned in Wyo. from the flu epidemic of 1918, Bud was raised by grandparents until age 14. On his own thereafter, he lived at one point above a pool hall where he learned to shoot a wicked game of pool which he was still known for until a stroke 2 years ago.

Bud came to Sac. CA to apprentice as a plasterer in the '40s where he married divorced & was fathered 4 children. He moved to the Bay Area where he met his sweetheart Midge, they were married 62 years and fathered 4 children. They lost Rex at 18 months & Tim at 38, but between Midge's family & his community Bud found the family he never had.

Bud joined the Menlo Park police dept. where he went through the ranks to Lt. He loved his job and his community & was well known & respected. He continued to enjoy these relationships until the last. He very proud that he never had to draw his gun, instead using his personality & charm to build relationships & trust.

He went on VP of Security at Bay View Federal Bank where employees said he was an inspiration. He always said, "If you don't like your job, change it". He always loved what he did & it showed.

He leaves his wife Margery, children Scott Kieler & wife Grace of Campbell & Rebecca Kieler of Redwood City. Also Bud Kieler, Peru Nebraska, Renee Waters, Sac. CA, Leilani Wild, Charleston S. Carolina & George Casebeer, Redding CA.

As he said, when he looked back on his childhood, he never in his wildest dreams would have thought he would have the wonderful life he has had.

We love you & will never forget you; Bodie, Dad, Bud, Inspector...

Donations in his name to: Palo Alto Elks Lodge "Most Valuable Student" fund - Menlo Park Police Explores, Menlo Park Police Department, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

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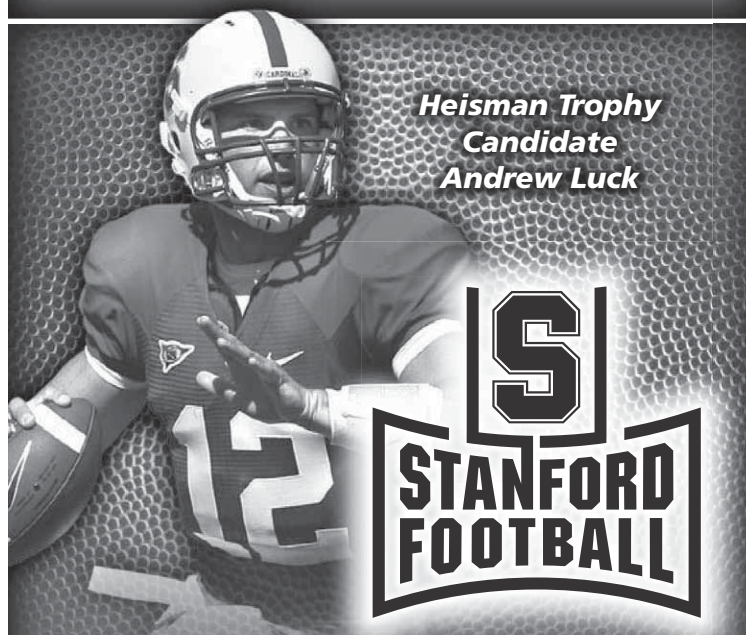
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Locals bring soccer gear to El Salvador

This story is by Karen Jordan and Luther Orton, parents of Sting players.

For years, local soccer coach Ernesto Cruz has visited his home country of El Salvador with an extra piece of luggage packed with used soccer uniforms for delivery to kids living there. But this past summer, Cruz and members of his California Youth Soccer Association under-17 girls' soccer team in Portola Valley (Alpine FC Sting) traveled to El Salvador with nearly 1,000 pounds of uniforms and other soccer gear to donate.

Cruz, who immigrated to the Bay Area from El Salvador in the 1980s, also coaches the Palo Alto High School varsity girls' soccer team and other club teams in the area.

Cruz and the Sting players were able to collect and bring with them about 500 uniforms, 150 pairs of soccer shoes, 50 soccer balls, and hundreds of T-shirts and miscellaneous soccer items contributed by Alpine FC, AYSO coaches, and families in Atherton, Menlo Park, Portola Valley, and Woodside.

Local high schools Menlo-Atherton, Sacred Heart Prep, Woodside Priory, Menlo and Palo Alto also contributed uniforms.

The Alpine club alone contributed more than 150 new uniforms the club could not use due to a switch to a new uniform vendor.

"We were amazed by the number of donations we received," Sting player Savannah McKinnon said.

"It shows not only how generous our community is, but also how much we have and can contribute if some one just asks," teammate Sara Orton said.

Cruz's friend and mentor, Salvador Mariona, a soccer legend in El Salvador, hosted the trip and arranged through the mayor's office in San Salvador for transportation and security for the girls throughout their seven-day stay,



Alpine FC Sting players Sara Orton, center, and Savannah McKinnon, far right, share photos of a team outing with players in El Salvador.

which included two exhibition soccer games as well as the delivery of the soccer uniforms and gear to El Salvadoran kids.

Mariona's son Tony expressed thanks on behalf of the kids who received the uniforms and other

'You have no idea what that means to a kid that probably would never be able to buy a good pair of soccer shoes or a nice uniform.'

gear: "You have no idea what that means to a kid that probably would never be able to buy a good pair of soccer shoes or a nice uniform. Thank you and God bless you all."

The girls' first exhibition game (a 1-1 tie) was against San Salvador's girls' team (whose members included players from the El Salvador National team) in the 50,000-seat Estadio Cuscatlan, the largest stadium in Central America.

They played their second game

(a 2-1 victory) in Izalco's Salvador Mariona Stadium, named after the trip's host. The Sting team was supplemented by El Salvadoran club players, giving the Sting girls an opportunity to learn first-hand about life in El Salvador as they traveled and practiced together.

"It was amazing to be able to bond with the El Salvadoran players and hear about the struggles they face just to play soccer," said Sting player Ali Jordan.

It was in Izalco that Sting team representatives Eugenia Jernick, Ali Jordan, Savannah McKinnon, Sara Orton, Brittany Scheuch and Ali Spindt delivered the bulk of the soccer uniforms and related gear they had brought with them.

The mayor of Izalco, the town band, and more than 100 local soccer-loving children hosted and greeted the girls and their families. Izalco Mayor Roberto Alvarado sent his thanks to Cruz and the Sting players: "It was an honor to have you all here in Izalco, and we await your return. Thank you so much for all the soccer equipment that you brought."

'Bullying' is focus of panel discussion

A community forum on iBreaking the Stigma: Bullying is being held at the Media Center, 900 San Antonio Road in Palo Alto, on Tuesday, Nov. 30, from 9 to 10 p.m.

Sponsored by Adolescent Counseling Services (ACS) in Palo Alto, the panel discussion will be aimed at teenagers and broadcast live on public access TV.

E-mail curtis@acs-teens.org (Curtis Hill) to sign up to attend the broadcast.

Dr. Philippe Rey, Executive Director of ACS, will moderate the panel of speakers, which

SCHOOLS BRIEFS

includes Roni Gillenson, also with ACS; Eileen Ross of Outlet; Monique Kane of Community Health Awareness Council; and Michael Milliken, principal of Jordan Middle School.

Schools foundation plans May Gala

The Portola Valley Schools Foundation, which holds Gala events every other year, has announced that its theme for the

2011 event will be "Our Night in New Orleans."

The event will take place on the evening of Saturday, May 21, at the Sharon Heights Golf Club. "Guests will take a walk down Bourbon Street as they experience the decor, the New Orleans-style faire, live jazz music and dancing," says foundation spokesperson Laura Kavanaugh.

The event will have a silent auction and a live auction. Community members are encouraged to donate an item, underwrite portions of the event, or volunteering their time.

Go to pvschoolsfoundation.org/gala for more information.

Peninsula Women's Chorus performs holiday concerts

The Peninsula Women's Chorus is performing three holiday concerts in December, one in Menlo Park and two in Palo Alto.

Artistic director Dr. Martìn Benvenuto has designed a wide-ranging program featuring a triptych of Magnificat pieces by Javier Busto, Paul Chihara and Ralph Vaughan Williams.

The program will also include the world premiere of "The Jumblies" by composer Judith Shatin, and some holiday favorites.

The concerts will be held at St. Patrick's Seminary, 320 Middlefield Road in Menlo Park, at 4 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 4, and at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 600 Colorado Ave. in Palo Alto, at 4 p.m. Sunday, Dec. 5, and 2:30 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 11.

Tickets are \$20 for general admission and \$10 for students.

Visit pwchorus.org or call 800-838-3006 to buy tickets through Brown Paper Tickets, or buy them at the door.

For more information, call (650) 327-3095.

Founded in 1966, the Peninsula Women's Chorus made up of 50 women who perform contemporary and classical music. In this concert series, they will be collaborating with local composers and guest instrumentalists.

Christmas lunches in Woodside

The holiday tradition of Farm-

house Christmas Tea Lunches continues at Yerba Buena Nursery, 19500 Skyline Blvd. in Woodside.

The lunches will be held in the Great Room of the 100-year-old farmhouse on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, Dec. 3, 4, 5, and 10, 11, and 12. The hot meal will include an appetizer, choice of Chicken Wellington or Vegetable Wellington, and a yuletide dessert.

Arrival time is noon with the luncheon-tea served promptly at 12:30 p.m. Cost is \$45 per person, with a non-refundable check payment required. No credit cards will be accepted. To reserve, call 851-1668.

Menlo Park Chorus at the library

If the grocery store decorations didn't give it away, the holiday season is now in full swing. The Menlo Park Chorus will hold its free winter concert, titled "Twisted Christmas," at 11 a.m. Sunday, Dec. 4, in the Menlo Park Library at 800 Alma St.

Why the concert title? According to the flier, "The Menlo Park Chorus will perform seasonal songs that you know, but not like you've ever heard them sung before."

April McNeely will serve as musical director, and John Iosefa as accompanist.

Free van service is available for Menlo Park seniors and people



Artists at the Portola Art Gallery will show a selection of smaller works through December.

'Small Treasures' at Portola Art Gallery

Big gifts come in small packages this season at the Portola Art Gallery at the Allied Arts Guild in Menlo Park.

The gallery's nine Bay Area artists are presenting "Small Treasures," a group exhibition of smaller scale original paintings,

pastels and photographs they hope will be perfect for holiday gift-giving.

A special artists' reception will be held Saturday, Dec. 4, from 1 to 4 p.m. Otherwise, the gallery will be open the rest of the year, Monday through Saturday from

10 a.m. to 5 p.m., and on Sundays, Dec. 5 and 13, from noon to 5 p.m.

Portola Art Gallery is located at 75 Arbor Road in Menlo Park.

Go to portolaartgallery.com or call 321-0220 for more information.

with disabilities. Call 330-2512 or e-mail rlroth@menlopark.org for more information.

Thanksgiving dinner at Little House

Continuing a 30-year tradition, Peninsula Volunteers will

serve its annual Thanksgiving dinner at 1 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 25, at Little House, 800 Middle Ave. in Menlo Park.

Dinner will feature turkey, mashed potatoes, stuffing, gravy and vegetables, followed by pumpkin pie and ice cream. Cost is \$15 per person, with tickets on sale at Little House. For more information, call 326-2025.

Coldwell Banker clothing, toy drives

Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage is kicking off its annual Toys for Tots drive, as well as its annual One Warm Coat collection. Each drive ends

Dec. 17.

Founded in 1947, Toys for Tots has evolved from a small Los Angeles-area project to a nationwide campaign. Over the past 63 years, the U.S. Marine Corps Reserves have distributed more than 400 million toys.

New, unwrapped toys and new and slightly used winter coats, sweaters, jackets, sweatshirts, hats, mittens, and blankets may be taken to the following local Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage offices: 800 El Camino Real, Suite 300, 930 Santa Cruz Ave., both in Menlo Park; 116 Portola Road, Portola Valley; 2969 Woodside Road, Woodside.

CONTRACT

continued from page 10

retirement vesting formula that will shrink the town's portion of costs for post-employment medical benefits, and eliminate coverage for retired employees' dependents, according to Louise Ho, the town's finance director.

Ms. Ho said she is working on a calculation of the town's savings on retirement costs under the new vesting schedule.

Under the new agreements approved last week, current non-management employees will receive an average 2.4 percent increase. The estimated cost of the increase

is \$52,000 for this fiscal year if all positions are filled.

Management staff would average a 5.4 percent increase. If all positions were filled, the estimated cost of the increase would be \$72,000 this fiscal year. But the town is likely to realize some savings with the vacancies in some key positions: The assistant city manager left her post in October, and the building official resigned effective mid-September.

Because the newly approved agreements expire next June, more employee cost-cutting is likely, beginning in the 2011-12 fiscal year, as the council comes under increasing pressure to tackle a \$1 million structural deficit. ■



Peninsula Youth Ballet

The Prince and the Mouse King battle in the Peninsula Youth Ballet's production of "The Nutcracker" on Nov. 27 and 28 and Dec. 4 and 5 at the San Mateo Performing Arts Center, 600 N. Delaware St. in San Mateo. The production combines professional dancers with amateurs under the direction of artistic director Ayako Takahashi. After each 2 p.m. performance, children will be able to meet characters from the "Sugar Plum Kingdom" at Clara's tea party, which includes cookies, punch, a photo and gift. Cost is \$15 per person. Tickets to "The Nutcracker" range from \$10 to \$35. All performances are at 2 p.m. For more information and tickets, go online at pyb.org or call 800-595-4849.

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

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



WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

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

TOWN SQUARE FORUM

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

EMAIL your views to:

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

MAIL or deliver to:

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

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

Holiday Fund will help strapped local agencies

Last year, as much of Silicon Valley remained in the grip of a persistent recession, Almanac readers brushed aside the downturn and contributed nearly \$100,000 to the Holiday Fund. Not surprisingly, donations were down compared to 2008, but when foundation grants were included, the Holiday Fund was able to contribute nearly \$13,000 to each of the 10 nonprofits that benefit from the Fund.

We hope that readers will keep that spirit alive this year, as the nonprofit agencies supported by the Holiday Fund say that their demand for help continues to outstrip their ability to provide it. This year, more than ever, it is important for those who have the means to share with those who are down on their luck.

If you are able, we urge you to consider a donation to the Almanac's Holiday Fund, now in its 19th year. Your contribution will help support 10 nonprofit agencies that provide a safety net to local residents who have nowhere to turn. These are our neighbors who may have been laid off unexpectedly, or had a catastrophic illness, or suffer from addiction or mental health problems. They deserve our help.

The Holiday Fund provides grants to organizations that can offer a temporary home, arrange health care or provide counseling to bring an end to the substance abuse that destroys families and victimizes young children.

Last year the Holiday Fund and its partners — the Rotary Club of Menlo Park, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation — were able to raise nearly \$130,000 for 10 local agencies. Well over half of that contribution — \$100,000 — was donated by more than 200 Almanac readers.

Monies contributed to the Holiday Fund are held by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation and will be distributed to the nonprofits in February or early March. No administrative costs or fees are deducted from Holiday Fund gifts, so 100 percent of all donations will be received by the nonprofit agencies.

Over the last 18 years, Almanac readers and the supporting foundations have contributed more than \$3 million to local social service agencies. More than half came from Almanac readers, and the rest from generous individuals and foundations.

The Almanac's Holiday Fund this year will support the following nonprofit organizations in the community:

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula

Provides after-school academic support and enrichment activities for 1,000 youth each day, ages 6 to 18. Operates clubhouses in Menlo Park's Belle Haven neighborhood, East Palo Alto and Redwood City, and after-school programs at schools in these communities designed to extend the learning day and supplement the school's curriculum.

Ecumenical Hunger Program

Provides emergency food, clothing, household essentials, special children's programs and sometimes financial assistance to families in need, regardless of religious preference, including Thanksgiving and Christmas

LETTERS

Our readers write

Downtown plan not needed in Menlo

Editor:

It is claimed that Menlo Park's Downtown Plan was driven by residents. In fact, an almost identical "vision" plan has been proposed in Los Altos by consultants hired to revitalize that downtown.

In Redwood City, a similar downtown precise plan was implemented at a cost of over \$50 million. It has been a retail disaster.

Up and down the Peninsula, the

concepts of "vibrancy, connectivity, and walkability" are being promoted by outside consultants who are achieving it by building out surface parking plazas at the expense of convenient parking and access. Did Menlo Park ask for this?

No. We residents prefer our village-like atmosphere because we are comfortable walking with our families in the unhurried, uncrowded environment of our downtown. Parking is easy and access to many stores is available at both the front and rear of the shop. Delivery trucks can conveniently unload in the lots behind

See **LETTERS**, next page

baskets for more than 1,500 households.

Ravenswood Family Health Center

Provides primary medical care, behavioral health services and preventive health care for all ages at its clinics in Belle Haven and East Palo Alto. It also operates a mobile clinic at school sites. Of the 22,700 registered patients, most are low-income and uninsured.

St. Anthony's Padua Dining Room

Serves hundreds of hot meals six days a week in a social and friendly atmosphere to anyone in need. Funded entirely by contributions from the community, St. Anthony's is the largest soup kitchen between San Francisco and San Jose. It offers groceries to take home and distributes clothing to families.

Second Harvest Food Bank

The largest collector and distributor of food on the Peninsula, Second Harvest Food Bank distributed 30 million pounds of food last year. It gathers donations from individuals and businesses and distributes food to some 162,000 people each month through more than 700 agencies and distribution sites in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

Shelter Network

Provides short-term shelter and transitional housing services to more than 3,700 adults and children each year. Offers programs for families and individuals to become self-sufficient and return to permanent housing.

Youth and Family Enrichment Services

Provides many programs to help people who struggle with substance abuse, domestic violence, mental health, relationship and communications issues. Helps strengthen youth, families and individuals to overcome challenges through counseling, education, and residential services.

Project Read-Menlo Park

Provides free literacy services to adults in the Menlo Park area. Trained volunteers work one-on-one or in small groups to help adults improve their basic reading, writing and English language skills so they can achieve their goals and function more effectively at home, at work and in the community. In 2007-08, a total of 120 volunteer tutors assisted more than 300 students.

The Art of Yoga Project

Offers incarcerated teen girls a rehabilitation program of yoga and creative arts to instill greater self-awareness, self-respect and self-control. The project serves over 500 girls annually at four local sites, including San Mateo County's juvenile detention centers.

St. Francis Center

Provides services for families in need with the goal of helping them to live in dignity and become self-supporting community members. The center assists some 2,000 people each month with such services as low-income housing, food and clothing, shower and laundry, counseling, community garden, and education.



Menlo Park Historical Association

Our Regional Heritage

This undated photo shows the relatively new Menlo Park train depot, which was built in 1867 and still survives today on Merrill Street. The station is said to be the oldest "passenger" depot in the state.

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

many stores, thereby not interfering with the street traffic.

Our pace of life downtown is relaxing and pleasant. This specific plan is a "strait jacket" restricting current retailers and services and is promoted by various real estate development partnerships. We are not in awe of San Mateo, Redwood City or worse, San Francisco.

D. J. Brawner
Waverly Street, Menlo Park

Save Caltrain, and high-speed rail

Editor:

Steve Schmidt makes a very good case (in last week's guest

opinion) that Caltrain provides a vital service, with or without high-speed rail.

He says that he can't believe that "opponents have all along wanted Caltrain to curtail service or even stop running." Unfortunately that is exactly what many anti-high-speed rail folks want. People who would be most impacted by high-speed rail, those who live near Caltrain, would just as soon Caltrain disappear as well. Contrariwise, high-speed rail supporters tend to be pro-Caltrain and favor all public transit improvements.

Implementing high-speed rail would lead to vast improvements in Caltrain service, including electrification. Caltrain would be vital to high-speed rail as well, as it would provide con-

nections to stations not directly served by high-speed rail.

The best way to save Caltrain is to build high-speed rail. Let's not allow the shrill voices of fanatics who simply do not understand the huge benefits of high-speed rail end up destroying both high-speed rail and Caltrain.

Roderick Llewellyn,
San Francisco

Tofurky a better option for Thanksgiving

Editor:

While President Obama is pardoning two turkeys for Thanksgiving, every one of us can exercise that same presidential power by choosing a nonviolent Thanksgiving observance.

It shows our compassion for an innocent animal and our con-

cern for our family's health. It's a most fitting way to give thanks for our own life, health, and happiness.

The 270 million turkeys killed in the U.S. each year have nothing to give thanks for. They breathe toxic fumes in crowded sheds. Their beaks and toes are severed. At the slaughterhouse, workers cut their throats, and dump them into boiling water, sometimes while still conscious.

Consumers, too, pay a heavy price. Turkey flesh is laced with cholesterol and saturated fats that elevate the risk of chronic killer diseases. Labels warn of

food poisoning potential.

This Thanksgiving, I won't be calling the Poultry Hot Line, or wondering how that turkey lived and died. Our Thanksgiving dinner may include a "tofurky," lentil roast, mashed potatoes, corn stuffing, stuffed squash, chestnut soup, candied yams, cranberry sauce, pumpkin pie, and carrot cake. An Internet search on vegan Thanksgiving and a visit to my local supermarket will provide me more recipes and delicious turkey alternatives than I can possibly use.

Malcolm Davidson
Encinal Avenue, Menlo Park



Searsville School's last day: Although no pictures of Searsville School have survived the century since it closed, someone took (and saved) this image of the interior. The school itself was sold and moved to an estate near Old La Honda Road where it served as an outbuilding.

Portola Valley Archives

Portola Valley schools to mark 150th birthday

By Nancy Lund

In 2011 the Portola Valley School District will celebrate its 150th birthday. Seems surprising, doesn't it, for such a long history in a town that has been incorporated for only 46 years? Here's how it came about.

In May of 1861, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors authorized the creation of Searsville School to serve the children of lumberjacks and those folks who provided services for them. It stood off Sand Hill Road near the reservoir that today bears the same name. By the 1870s, the redwoods had been cut, and Searsville was a sleepy little village. The reservoir, created in 1891, brought the end of the town and of the school.

To fill the gap, Mrs. Andrew Hallidie donated land for a new school at the base of the Hallidie estate in Portola Valley near an area that was becoming a community center for the former residents of Searsville. In 1894, a replacement school was built at what became 765 Portola Road. It boasted a bell tower, a small library, separate entries for boys and girls and a shed out back for the teacher's horse and the children's ponies.

When the population became large enough to require a second school in 1909, the schoolhouse that survives today was built, and the district's name was changed to Portola. Only men could vote at that time, and they passed a bond issue of \$4,000 by a vote of 20 to 1 to fund the school. The new building

had no plumbing and no electricity, but it did have a battery-operated doorbell.

Those two little one-room schoolhouses stood by the side of Portola Road until 1950 when the post World War II boom on the Peninsula sent the population skyrocketing. The 1894 school was sold for \$10 and dismantled; a new, modern building rose on the site. That building served as Portola Valley School until 1977, when it was closed over concern about the San Andreas Fault that passed underneath the property. It was not until 1955 that the district received its current name: Portola Valley School District.

So that's a brief version of how the 150 years passed: two one-room schoolhouses and a multi-room school that served their time and disappeared, and one schoolhouse that survived. In 1954 voters (considerably more than 21!) saved the 1909 school from demolition. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Two newly renovated schools, Corte Madera and Ormondale, stand today to take their place in the march of time.

Plans are under way to celebrate this significant birthday with a grand and glorious reunion of everyone who has had a connection to the schools on the weekend of Oct. 1-2, 2011. Stay tuned for more details.



Nancy Lund is
Portola Valley's town historian.



NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING AND NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING CITY OF MENLO PARK PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING OF DECEMBER 6, 2010

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Planning Commission of the City of Menlo Park, California, is scheduled to review the following items:

PUBLIC HEARING ITEMS

Use Permit/Mark Johnson/2027 Menalto Avenue: Request for a use permit to demolish an existing single-story, single-family residence and construct a new two-story, single-family residence on a substandard lot with regard to lot width and lot area in the R-1-U (Single-Family Urban) zoning district.

This item was continued from the Planning Commission meeting of October 18, 2010 with direction for redesign. The proposal has since been revised to relocate the new residence approximately 7 feet back, in order to allow for a new front entry court. The residence's floor plans and elevations have not been modified.

Use Permit and Variances/Chris Kummerer/626 Central Avenue: Request for a use permit to determine the Floor Area Limit (FAL) of a lot with less than 5,000 square feet of area, associated with the construction of a second-story addition to an existing two-story, single-family residence in the R-1-U (Single-Family Urban) zoning district. In addition, a request for variances for the addition to encroach approximately one foot, two inches into the five-foot, left side setback and approximately 10 inches into the five-foot, right side setback, in line with the existing nonconforming first-floor walls, as well as variances for architectural features to intrude greater than 18 inches into the required side setbacks, associated with eaves on the second-story addition.

As part of the proposed development, two heritage stone pines (25-inch and 37-inch diameter) in fair condition at the left side of the property would be removed.

Use Permit Revision/Magnussen Phelan LLC/401 Burgess Drive: Request for a use permit revision to allow additional medical office uses at an existing building that is nonconforming with regard to parking and located in the C-1-A (Administrative and Professional) zoning district. The applicant also requests to add 67 square feet of gross floor area and requests to provide 34 parking spaces based upon 1 space per 333 square feet of general office use and 1 space per 222 square feet of medical office space where the zoning district requirement is 1 space per 200 square feet of gross floor area. The existing approval from 2002 is a blanket use permit for all non-medical office uses and for medical office for a portion of the building.

Use Permit/Andrew Young/441 El Camino Real: Use permit request to allow a specialty pharmacy that focuses on customized, compounded prescription medications for unique patient needs to occupy an existing tenant space in a commercial building that is nonconforming with regard to parking in the C-4 (General Commercial - Applicable to El Camino Real) zoning district.

Use Permit/Clearwire/1340 Willow Road: Request for a use permit to install three wireless telecommunications antennas, RRUs, and microwaves, and an associated equipment cabinet in a stealth box on the roof of Mid-Peninsula High School in the M-2 (General Industrial) zoning district.

NOTICE IS HEREBY FURTHER GIVEN that said Planning Commission will hold a public hearing on public hearing items in the Council Chambers of the City of Menlo Park, located at 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, on **Monday, December 6, 2010, 7:00 p.m.** or as near as possible thereafter, at which time and place interested persons may appear and be heard thereon. If you challenge this item in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City of Menlo Park at, or prior to, the public hearing.

The project file may be viewed by the public on weekdays between the hours of 7:30 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Friday, with alternate Fridays closed, at the Department of Community Development, 701 Laurel Street, Menlo Park. Please call the Planning Division if there are any questions and/or for complete agenda information (650) 330-6702.

Si usted necesita más información sobre este proyecto, por favor llame al 650-330-6702, y pregunte por un asistente que hable español.

DATED: November 18, 2010 Deanna Chow, Senior Planner
PUBLISHED: November 24, 2010 Menlo Park Planning Commission

Visit our Web site for Planning Commission public hearing, agenda, and staff report information: www.menlopark.org



Mary & Brent Gullixson
650.888.0860/543.1194
mgullixson@apr.com
brentg@apr.com



ATHERTON \$12,500,000
Remodeled, updated French Provincial-style home near Menlo Circus Club. The grounds of 1.2+/- acres include manicured gardens, pool, guesthouse. Menlo Park schools.



Carol & Nicole
650.543.1195
CarolAndNicole@apr.com



PALO ALTO \$4,995,000
Beautiful, light-filled home in prestigious Old Palo Alto location. Two bedrooms, 2.5 baths. Guest cottage.



Carol & Nicole
650.543.1195
CarolAndNicole@apr.com



MENLO PARK \$2,750,000
Lovely home with 5 upstairs bedrooms with hardwood floors. Detached room could be guest quarters or home office. Sunny yard with well sited pool. Moments to downtown!



Barbara Williams
650.814.0741
bwilliams@apr.com



LOS ALTOS HILLS \$2,199,000
Sophisticated 4bd/3.5ba remodel in Los Altos Hills with stunning interior design on over an acre of land.



Maggie Heilman
650.543.1185
mheilman@apr.com



ATHERTON \$1,150,000
Sophisticated updated living in this spacious one bedroom two bath cottage nestled amongst the gallant trees in this wonderful Atherton neighborhood.



Kathleen Wilson
650.543.1094
kwilson@apr.com



SOLD
PALO ALTO \$1,310,000
Greenmeadow Eichler community offering updated 3bd/2ba home with family room. Neighborhood pool and park nearby.



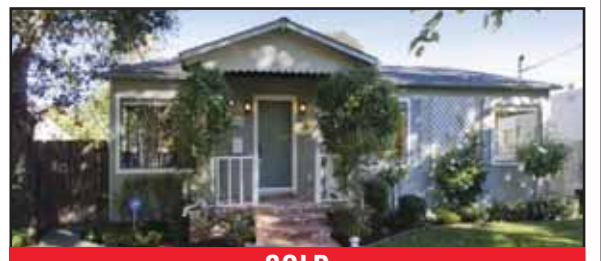
Julie Tsai Law
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julie@julietsailaw.com



PALO ALTO \$1,285,000
Beautifully remodeled home on one of the most desirable streets in South Palo Alto. Large lot surrounded by many new constructions.



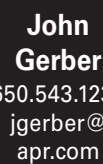
Roseann Miller
650.543.1237
ramiller@apr.com



SOLD
MENLO PARK \$820,000
Charming 3bd/1ba Willows home. Remodeled kitchen flows to the family room area and through French doors to the deck and patio beyond. Detached 2-car garage.



Marybeth Dorst
650.543.1227
mdorst@apr.com



John Gerber
650.543.1235
jgerber@apr.com



REDWOOD SHORES \$675,000
Elegant 3bd/2.5ba townhome with almost 1900sf. Excellent floor plan featuring formal living and dining rooms. Attached 2-car garage. Private patio.



Diane Rosland
650.575.6594
drosland@apr.com



MENLO PARK \$570,000
One of the best floor plans in Lincoln Green! Updated larger 2 bedroom/2 bathroom condo with washer/dryer, fireplace & 2 private courtyards in unit.

MENLO PARK 1550 El Camino Real, Ste 100 650.462.1111 | **PALO ALTO** 578 University Avenue 650.323.1111
WOODSIDE 2930 Woodside Road 650.529.1111

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