

Help children and others in need | Page 20

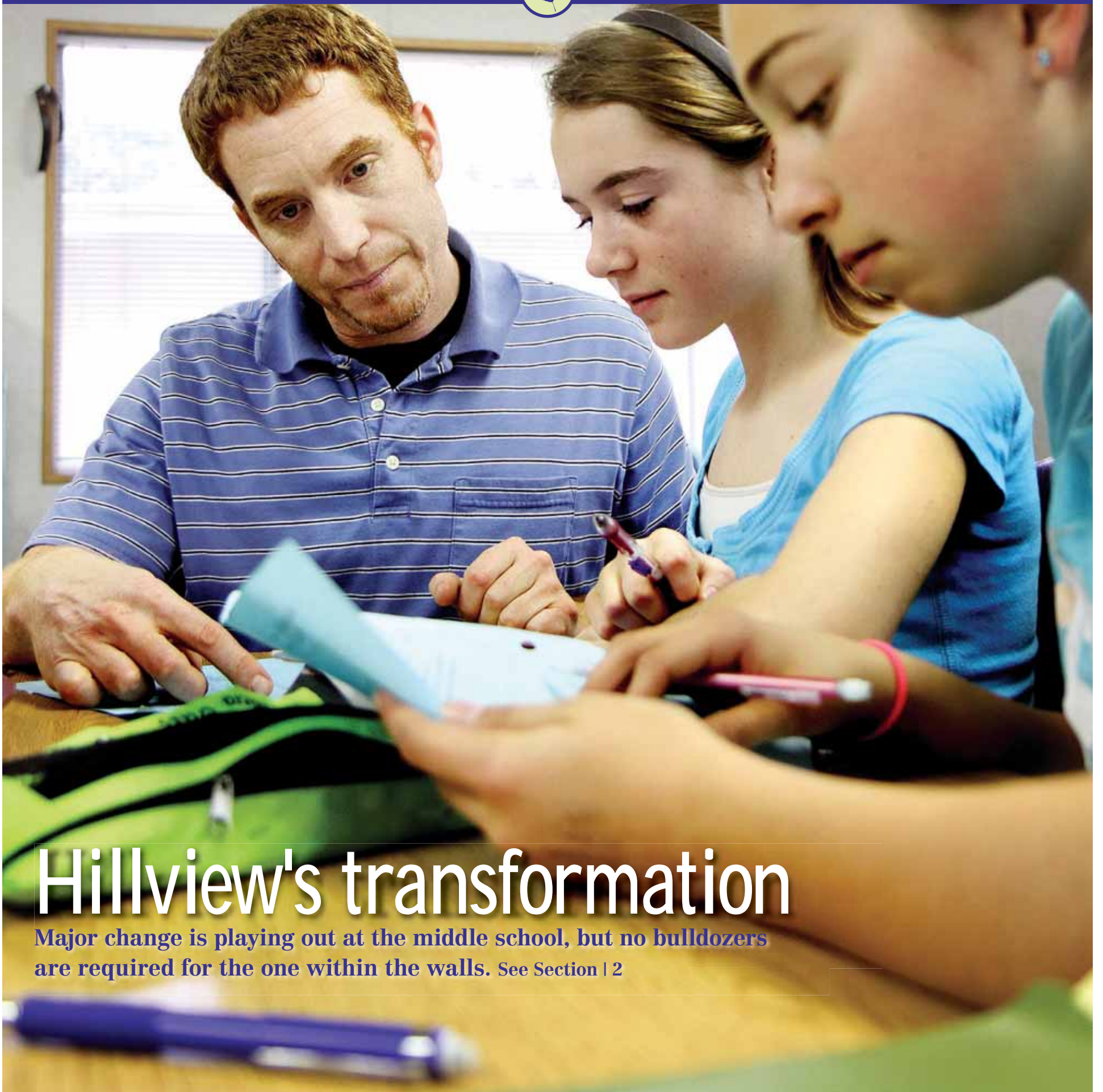
The Almanac

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

DECEMBER 15, 2010 | VOL. 46 NO. 16



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Hillview's transformation

Major change is playing out at the middle school, but no bulldozers are required for the one within the walls. See Section | 2

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Holiday warning

What was a living room holiday scene became, in minutes, a 1,600-degree inferno when a fire discreetly escaped a fireplace in this demonstration by the Menlo Park Fire Protection District. This annual warning by the district shows once again that fire can overwhelm careless decorations with devastating rapidity.

Photo by Dave Boyce/The Almanac

Firefighters stage safety demonstration

By Bay City News Service

Last Christmas season, eight people almost died in San Mateo County when carbon monoxide built up to dangerous levels in their North Fair Oaks home, incapacitating most of those residents.

Firefighters arrived before it was too late, but not all families have been so fortunate, says Chief Harold Schapelhouman of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District.

In 2003, two children lost their lives in an early morning East Palo Alto fire that began when their Christmas tree caught fire near an unscreened fireplace.

Two years later, an Atherton man was killed when he returned home from his fam-

ily's Christmas Eve celebrations and accidentally set fire to his clothing when trying to light his pellet stove.

The fire district is working to avert holiday tragedies through educational efforts such as its annual holiday fire safety demonstrations conducted Dec. 9 at the district's Baylands Structural Collapse Training Site located behind the PG&E substation off of Bayfront Expressway in Menlo Park.

The live demonstrations addressed burning Christmas trees, candles, radiant heaters, fireplace fires, carbon monoxide poisoning, and other potential holiday safety emergencies.

Besides home safety scenarios, the demonstrations included two simulated school classroom fires to compare the performance of a classroom

equipped with a sprinkler system to one without.

According to Chief Schapelhouman, the classroom simulation was designed to shed light on a state loophole that allows school districts to build new schools without sprinkler systems.

The fire district is asking school districts across the state to voluntarily sign the pledge not to use this exemption.

In July, an elementary school in San Jose sustained more than \$10 million in damage after it was gutted by a fire believed to have been set by arsonists, Chief Schapelhouman said.

That school, Trace Elementary, was equipped with neither sprinklers nor an automatic fire alarm system.

Visit tinyurl.com/HolidayFire for holiday fire safety tips. ■

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Small (10-12 lbs.) serves 8 to 10 people **\$50**

Large (16-18 lbs.) serves 14 to 16 people **\$60**

Prime Rib

Whole serves approximately 16-20 people **\$185**

Half serves approximately 10-12 people **\$100**

Spiral Sliced Ham

Baked with a honey mustard glaze.

Serves 8-10 people **\$65**

Sides

Traditional Stuffing

Mushrooms, onion, celery, water chestnuts, and sage.

Qt. **\$10⁷⁵** Pt. **\$5⁵⁰**

Cornbread Stuffing

Dried cranberries, apricots, and green onions.

Qt. **\$10⁷⁵** Pt. **\$5⁵⁰**

Mashed Potatoes

Fresh potatoes whipped with cream and butter.

Qt. **\$11⁰⁰** Pt. **\$5⁷⁵**

Porcini Mushroom Gravy

Rich and creamy made with turkey drippings.

Qt. **\$12⁰⁰** Pt. **\$6²⁵**

Beef Au Jus

Made with pan juices, red wine, and beef stock.

Qt. **\$12⁰⁰** Pt. **\$6²⁵**

Onion Sage Gravy

Red wine, caramelized onions, and sage.

Qt. **\$12⁰⁰** Pt. **\$6²⁵**

Green Bean Almandine

Sautéed shallots, butter, and almonds.

Qt. **\$11⁵⁰** Pt. **\$6⁰⁰**

Potato Au Gratin

Baked with cheese, garlic, and cream.

Serves 12-14 **\$30** per tray

Fresh Cranberry Sauce

Whole cranberries slow cooked with a hint of orange.

Qt. **\$9⁰⁰** Pt. **\$4⁷⁵**

Good Earth Bakery Pumpkin Pie

8" pie serves 8 people **\$12⁴⁹** ea

Gianna's Bakery

8" Apple, Cherry, 4 Berry, Sweet Peach.

Serves 8 people **\$15⁹⁹**

9" Pecan **\$18⁹⁹**

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Local News

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Mayoral mayhem in Menlo Park

■ Will council follow policy in replacing Fergusson?

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

When Kelly Fergusson resigned as mayor of Menlo Park a mere four days after being elected, the roar of the power vacuum could be heard for miles as those interested in the outcome scrambled to suggest replacements.

Councilmen Rich Cline and Andy Cohen emerged from the noise as the two most likely candidates for mayor, but the seat

remains up for grabs to everyone except Ms. Fergusson, who said she won't stand as a candidate this time.

Brown Act

Ms. Fergusson resigned as the mayor of Menlo Park on Dec. 10 as a consequence of Brown Act violations committed by meeting one-on-one with at least two council members to discuss her desire for the position. The council plans to re-vote on Tuesday, Dec. 14.

In a statement issued last week,

Ms. Fergusson apologized to the community. "My resignation is a symbol of the respect I have for the Brown Act, and of my intention to be completely mindful and aware in the future and to act in full compliance with the law as I always have in the past," she wrote.

As the Almanac first reported, the councilwoman held private discussions with council members Rich Cline and Peter Ohtaki about her desire to serve as mayor. Both men said they were unaware she had spoken with anyone else.

"Kelly and I did discuss the upcoming mayoral vote, and I did expressly tell her I was planning to follow the protocol. I had no interaction with other electeds," said Mr. Cline.

Mr. Ohtaki met with her the morning of the vote. "It's not my intention to put her in an awkward position," he said. "She called and asked to meet."

Former member Heyward Robinson said he'd also met with her, but the city attorney had advised his conversation didn't violate the

Brown Act since he would no longer be on the council by the time the vote for mayor was taken.

City Attorney Bill McClure said Ms. Fergusson may also have asked an intermediary to lobby Kirsten Keith, who was chosen as vice mayor.

Community demands sunshine

At the attorney's request, the council postponed a special meet-

See KELLY, page 8

Atherton woman arrested in hit and run in Menlo

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

A 62-year-old Atherton woman was arrested for allegedly driving under the influence during a chaotic exit from a Menlo Park parking plaza Tuesday, Dec. 7.

Police said the driver's vehicle struck parked cars twice, injuring two people. Each time, bystanders came to the rescue, helping a man pinned between two parked cars, and taking the keys from the suspect after her car collided with a tree, police said.

Margaret Brill was booked into the San Mateo County jail on suspicion of driving under the influence, reckless driving, and hit-and-run with injury, according to Nicole Acker, a spokesperson for the Menlo Park Police Department.

Police said it began at around 1 p.m. when she was backing out of a parking space in the plaza behind the 600 block of Santa Cruz Avenue. Her vehicle struck a parked

car, which then hit another car, pinning a man between them, police said.

Several bystanders pulled the cars apart and freed the victim, police said. Firefighters with the Menlo Park Fire Protection District assisted the man, who was taken to Stanford Hospital with "non-life threatening injuries," Ms. Acker said in a statement.

Without stopping, the car pulled out onto Curtis Avenue before fishtailing on Santa Cruz Avenue, striking two more vehicles. Her car stopped after leaping the center median into a tree, according to the police department.

A woman in one of the parked vehicles received minor injuries, but was not hospitalized, police said.

Police ask any witnesses to call 330-6300. ■



Margaret Brill



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Pilgrim's progress

Meredith Loughlin rides her horse Pilgrim at the Horse Park at Woodside on a recent weekday morning.

Peter Carpenter returns to board of Menlo Park fire district

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

Peter Carpenter, never out of public view for long, has rejoined the governing board of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District. The board members voted 4-0 Dec. 9 to appoint him to replace Peter Ohtaki, who left to take a seat on the Menlo Park City Council.

Mr. Carpenter previously served on the fire board from 2001 to 2009. His return to the fire district even as a temporary director came as a surprise to those who remember him

saying he was finished with public service.

He explained that his filling the position now would prevent anyone from gaining an advantage over other candidates when the district holds an election for the seat in November 2011. He said he doesn't plan to run.



Peter Carpenter

Fire Chief Harold Schapelhouman commented: "From our standpoint as staff, and as the fire chief, there's no mystery as to what Director Carpenter's expectations are or what he feels strongly about. I know where we stand and what he expects from us."

Four applicants vied for the position during a round-robin interview on Thursday, Dec. 9.

Robert Solano, Virginia Chang Kiraly, Steven Kennedy and Mr. Carpenter took turns answering nine questions posed by the board,

according to Chief Schapelhouman.

Like Mr. Carpenter, Mr. Kennedy previously served on the board, but his service was plagued by reports of unethical behavior. He was censured three times and stripped of his director's badge.

Chief Schapelhouman complimented everyone who applied. "It's nice to have four people who want to be board members," he said. "Sometimes there's no one."

The new board member faces the challenge of getting the local

firefighters union back to the negotiating table.

Last week the Menlo Park Firefighters Association rejected the fire protection district's "last, best, and final" offer of contributing \$1,500 per month to each employee's health plan.

Rick Bolanos, a labor attorney representing the district, said the board can now either choose to impose the offer or decide to do nothing until the union becomes willing to negotiate again. The firefighters have been working without a contract for almost three years. ■



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Fire consumes interior of cottage in Woodside

There isn't much that's undamaged in the one-story, two-bedroom cottage at 45 Mission Trail Road in northern Woodside after a suspected arc from the electric wall heater ignited the living room drapes around 9 p.m. Thursday night, Dec. 9, firefighters said.

The occupants, a woman in her 40s and her dog and two cats, escaped unharmed but the one-alarm fire consumed the living room, dining room, kitchen and one bedroom, and there was smoke damage throughout, said Battalion Chief Kevin Butler of the Woodside Fire Protection District.

The woman called 911 at 9:03 p.m. and firefighters were on the scene four minutes later. By that time, the fire had vented through a front window, was lapping at the roof, and was readily visible from the front gate 300 feet away, Mr. Butler said.

Anna Eshoo opposes Obama tax deal

Congresswoman Anna Eshoo, D-Menlo Park, is not happy about a White House tax proposal, crafted with congressional Republicans, that would extend current tax breaks for individuals who earn more than \$250,000 per year.

Noting that the bill increases the deficit by nearly \$1 trillion, Ms. Eshoo said in a statement that she opposes the bill "for 900 billion reasons."

"While one can find items that are politically and practically attractive, in its totality it borrows just shy

Free wrapping paper

The California Geological Survey-USGS information center is offering free outdated topographical maps for holiday wrapping paper.

"These colorful maps, at 24 inches by 30 inches, are an ideal size for many gifts," says John Parrish, state geologist of California. "They have a distinctive look, and, of course, the price is right."

The center, at 345 Middlefield Road in Menlo Park, also has many gift items, including maps, books and digital products. For more information, call 688-6327.

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But while the fire had had a good head start, it didn't have much fight in it. "Once we actually put water on the fire, it was out within a matter of moments," Mr. Butler said.

Firefighters were on the scene for nearly two hours, but most of that was wetting down the structure and its contents to ensure that the fire was well and truly out, Mr. Butler said. The attic was "completely full of smoke" which then needed venting which then meant firefighters had to cut a hole in the roof, he added.

About 20 firefighters fought the blaze. Assisting Woodside were firefighters from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, Redwood City and the Menlo Park fire district, Mr. Butler said.

The cause of the fire is under investigation. The house seemed to be about 40 years old, Mr. Butler said.

of one trillion dollars to pay for, amongst other items, expiring tax breaks for the top two percent (income bracket) of our country," she said.

"My fear is that the 2001-2003 Bush tax cuts will become permanent, and our fiscal future will dim as America struggles with the largest transfer of wealth and debt creation in its history," she continued. "We should instead be investing in capital formation, technological innovation, job creation and education — the building blocks for a strong future for all Americans."

The package would also extend benefits for the long-term unemployed for 13 more months and cut the estate tax, which resumes in 2011, from 55 percent on estates valued at \$1 million or more to 35 percent on estates valued at \$5 million or more.

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American Treasures exhibition

This painting of Point Lobos is part of "American Treasures: Yosemite & Point Lobos" by Jim Caldwell of Woodside that is on display at the Stanford Faculty Club, 439 Lagunita Drive at Stanford, through Jan. 15.

Portola Valley council rejects Cargill development

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

The Portola Valley Town Council is not waiting for completion of an environmental impact report to take a position on the proposed Cargill development, which would build as many as 12,000 new homes and a million square feet of commercial space on a 1,436-acre salt flat off Redwood City.

Rather than making the salt flat home to a housing project, it should be home to creatures that lived there before it was a salt flat, the council said in resolution it adopted on Dec. 8. The area should be returned to its natural state and made a part of the adjacent Don Edwards National Wildlife Refuge, the council declared.

Though Councilwoman Ann Wengert was absent for the 4-0 vote, she has said she favors a "strong statement opposing" the project.

The council's resolution staked out positions in favor of environmental values, against increases in traffic and population, skeptical of a proposed fix to Redwood City's anticipated drinking water shortage, and concerned about the effects of climate change.

"We, as current elected officials, understand the pressures cities face to solve the housing and jobs imbalance in San Mateo County," the council said, but this proposal is not the answer and over 100 current and former elected officials from throughout the Bay Area agree.

"The Bay belongs to all of us and we all must protect it," the resolution said.

"The Bay doesn't belong to Redwood City," chimed in resident Derry Kabcenell during the public comment period. Rather than wait for the project applicants — Minneapolis-based Cargill Salt Corp. and an Arizona developer — to dramatically modify this proposal, as is expected to happen, Portola Valley should recommend that it be thrown out and the project re-designed, Mr. Kabcenell said.

In the end, the resolution was approved essentially as drafted. ■

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Gloria Darke



Friend or Foe?

Dear Gloria, I have just purchased a property through a bank. There were a few offers and I feel fortunate to have gotten it. I had to have a preapproval from a certain lender through the bank that owns it. However, now I would like to give the loan to my good friend's father-in-law. He is actually a stockbroker but his son is in the lending part of this brokerage. My agent is adamant that I use the lender who wrote the preapproval. He says he has worked with him many times and he will deliver. He is concerned that this brokerage is from out of the area and will not respond quickly enough. Do you think it really matters who one uses for the lender? The rates are about the same.

Diana L, San Mateo

Dear Diana, Does it ever matter who you use for a loan? It is one of the most important components of your package. I worked

in a situation such as you describe a few years ago with a buyer from New York who worked with a large firm that had a banking relationship with a large NY institution. Once we had the appraisal we were ready to close as per the contract.

The person we were dealing with from NY said he thought he could get it closed in "about a month". We quickly found another lender, local and service oriented who got it closed in a week. And this was a person with a large company with a lot of clout with this bank. I can also tell you many sad tales about getting to the sign off with lenders with whom we have no relationship or history and the interest rate has changed, the points have changed and closing costs have changed and never in the borrowers favor. You are dealing with a challenging situation anyway in dealing with a short sale with a bank and you need all the professional help you can get. Why ever would you go with an unknown lender?

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

Mayoral mayhem in Menlo

KELLY

continued from page 5

ing on Friday afternoon called 24 hours earlier to re-vote on mayor and vice mayor, and will instead discuss the matter on Dec. 14 at its regular Tuesday night meeting.

The postponement came in the wake of outrage from local government watchdogs over the timing of the special session. According to the city clerk's office, four of the five council members requested the Friday meeting.

"Specific reference to the public's right to comment on the item was missing from the notice as it turns out — I had thought there was boilerplate language regarding public comment at the bottom of the notice — but it turns out that language was not there," said Mr. McClure when asked about the reason for the postponement, describing it as a "technical defect" in the city's announcement of the special meeting.

That defect was brought to his attention by open government advocate Peter Carpenter, who urged the city attorney to properly notice the meeting, after realizing the notice didn't include a public comment period. He

had also sent a letter last week asking Mr. McClure to correct the Brown Act violations, and to the district attorney's office requesting an investigation into Ms. Fergusson's conduct.

Ms. Fergusson, who has served on the council for six years and once before as mayor, said she intends to remain on the council. She was elected mayor by the council again on Dec. 7 in a split 3-2 vote, with Andy Cohen and Peter Ohtaki dissenting.

Her main competition came from Mr. Cohen, who, despite statements to the contrary — "I didn't campaign for this position," Mr. Cohen told the audience on Tuesday night before the vote — had asked the council and incoming members Kirsten Keith and Mr. Ohtaki for the job in a memo mailed last month that outlined his qualifications.

Mr. Cohen has yet to respond to the Almanac's request for comment. According to the city attorney's investigation, only Ms. Keith actually discussed the mayoral selection policy with Mr. Cohen prior to last week's vote — a discussion that didn't violate the Brown Act since a majority of council members

did not participate.

Despite Ms. Fergusson urging the council to follow policy in selecting a mayor last week, her resignation letter stated that now the policy should be suspended "because of the unusual circumstances associated with this year's mayoral selection process."

By the city's non-binding policy, Ms. Fergusson and Mr. Cohen were the members of the council most eligible to pick up the gavel, as council members must have at least one year of council experience to become mayor. If the candidates have all served as mayor before, then the one with the longest time elapsed since holding the position gets priority.

The policy has been ignored at least twice by previous councils since its enactment in 1993. If this council chooses to do so, all bets are off.

"We have moved somewhere outside the traditional protocol so I think anything can happen. As I said before, if my name is called I will vote for myself and accept the job as mayor," said Mr. Cline.

Both the position of vice mayor and mayor pro tem are filled by Ms. Keith until the re-vote, according to the city attorney. ■

Portola Valley baseball field redesign drawings can proceed

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

To rehabilitate Ford (baseball) Field with a new backstop, public restrooms, perhaps a paved parking lot and other such improvements, the town of Portola Valley has been considering a proposal that would cost about \$300,000, a large part of which would be reimbursed by the state.

The first step — design drawings — can go ahead, the Town Council said by consensus on Wednesday, Dec. 8.

It's been a long time coming. Around about 2004, the town applied for and won two state grants that would reimburse about \$230,000 (in current dollars) to rehab this Little League field at the corner of Alpine Road and Westridge Drive.

If contracts had been let and construction begun, work might have been completed ahead of the grants' expiration date of June 30, 2011. But the state has offered the money and then reneged so many times that it's always seemed ill advised to proceed, Assistant Town Manager Janet McDougall

told The Almanac.

Given the approaching expiration, state officials have said the money will remain available if applicants ask for extensions, Ms. McDougall said. Portola Valley will request one and will likely get it, she said, but whether the town risks spending on more than design drawings is an open question.

"In an abundance of caution, staff contacted the state and requested a letter or other documentation indicating that the (availability of) funds had indeed been extended," Ms. McDougall said in a staff report. "We have now been advised that no such assurance can be provided."

"It is clear," Ms. McDougall added, "that with the state's budget woes the reliability of this funding is questionable, at best."

By consensus, the council agreed to ask the state for an extension on the grant money and to solicit bids for the preparation of construction drawings.

"We'll never get anywhere without a design," Ms. McDougall told The Almanac. ■

JENNEFER LLOYD WINEMAN

1931-2010



Jennefer was born on May 15, 1931 in Montreal, Canada and died on November 26, 2010, at home in Menlo Park, California. She resided there with her husband, Paul Wineman, whom she married in 2002. Her last days were filled with loving visits with family and friends.

She was raised in Carmel, California in the days when children walked along sandy paths through the pine forests to Sunset School. She graduated from Carmel High School in 1949 and was awarded the "Gold C" as the outstanding female graduate. She was known for her graceful beauty, intelligence, and poise.

She attended Stanford University until her marriage in 1951 to Nathaniel ("Nat") Baylis. They had two sons, Owen and Lloyd Baylis, who were raised in Menlo Park. She was a member of the Ladera Oaks Swim and Tennis Club. Jennefer and Nat divorced in 1972. She eventually returned to Stanford and completed her bachelor's degree in psychology (1953).

Jennefer taught at the Charles Armstrong School for dyslexic learners when it was located in a small house in Menlo Park. She later served on the board of trustees. Her involvement with the Mid Peninsula Speech and Language Clinic expanded her interest and expertise in learning differences.

She was married in 1974 to Harold Santee, a Superintendent of the Palo Alto Unified School District, until his death in 1990. They relocated to the Monterey Peninsula, where Jennefer worked as a researcher for the

Stanford Heart Disease Prevention Center.

In the early 1980's, her volunteer activities at a school for children with learning differences in Seaside developed into an integral role in the establishment of Chartwell School. She held many titles there, including Interim Executive Director, Development Director, and President of the Board of Trustees. She implemented a vision to expand the school at a new site and promoted a fundraising campaign to build a state of the art "green" facility, the completion of which fulfilled a long held dream.

In the past years, Jennefer was happy in her married life with Paul. They shared homes in Menlo Park and Carmel. She remained active on the boards of the Morrissey-Compton Educational Center, Inc. (Palo Alto), the Friends of Moss Landing Marine Labs (Moss Landing), and Chartwell School (Seaside). She belonged to Daughters of the American Revolution and the Casa Abrego Club. She and Paul enjoyed their wine group, planning Stanford reunions, travel, annual "honeymoon" trips to Yosemite, and visiting friends.

She possessed a natural and intuitive gift of being a wonderful and caring mother. She was a warm and loving presence to her sons, to the Baylis and Wineman grandchildren, and to her informally "adopted" children and grandchildren. Her kindness and love touched many.

She is survived by her husband of eight years, Paul Wineman, her two children, Owen Baylis and wife Polly, of Saratoga, California, and Lloyd Baylis and wife Cherie, of Los Altos, California. Also, she is survived by five grandchildren, Morgan Baylis and wife Tracy, of Los Angeles, California, Tyler Baylis, Cole Baylis, Sarah Baylis, and Amy Baylis.

It was Jennefer's wish that memorial contributions be sent to Chartwell School, 2511 Numa Watson Rd., Seaside, California, 93955.

PAID OBITUARY

BBC sexual assault trial delayed

The Dec. 6 trial for a busboy and a cook at the British Bankers Club on four counts of sexual assault was postponed at the request of the defense, according to the district attorney's office. A pre-trial conference has now been scheduled for Feb. 28, 2011.

Moises Rojas, 26, and Juan Gustavo Robles-Alejo, 30, allegedly assaulted two women at the club on June 9, according to the Menlo Park police department.

The women went to an upstairs room to sleep after becoming intoxicated, and reportedly awoke to find Mr. Robles-Alejo fondling them while Mr. Rojas kept a lookout. The district attorney's office said the club's security cameras recorded the incident.

Audit committee vacancy

In addition to finding a new mayor, Menlo Park is also hoping to fill a vacancy on the city's Finance and Audit Committee. The appointed commissioner's term will run until April 30, 2012.

Visit tinyurl.com/25lpwbr to apply, or contact City Clerk Margaret Roberts at msroberts@menlopark.org or 330-6620. Applications also can be picked up at the Civic Center (701 Laurel St.). The deadline is Jan. 4, 2011.

BRIEFS

Local barber-poet plans second celebratory walk

On Monday, Dec. 20, poet and barber Jym Marks will take a second 12-mile celebratory walk from his Fremont home to Markstyle, his hair salon at 828 Willow Road in Menlo Park.

Mr. Marks is the author of three motivational books, and 12 books of poetry, including one volume titled, "Seeing What You're Looking At." His first walk last year, also on Dec. 20, was in honor of his 75th birthday. Accompanied by his son, he finished the walk in three hours and 35 minutes.

Registration open for city activities

Registration for Menlo Park's public activities, classes, and camps is now open for city residents. Non-residents will be able to register starting Monday, Dec. 20.

Sign up at menlopark.org/registration. Copies of the activity guide are available at the Chamber of Commerce (1100 Merrill St.).

Visit menlopark.org or call 330-2200 for more information.



"Grazing in the Wide Open Spaces" is the title of this painting by Martha Putnam of Woodside.

Dave, Martha Putnam hold open studio

Artists Dave and Martha Putnam will have an open studio at their home, 1101 Canada Road in Woodside, from noon to 5 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, Dec. 18 and 19. The Putnams will show new art inspired by their recent trip to Bali and Singapore.

On Dec. 24, the Putnams will be in Santa Fe for the annual luminaria walk. Ms. Putnam's dog and cow paintings and Mr. Putnam's abstract expressionist paintings and wire horse paintings will be on display at Adieb Khadoure Fine Art, 613 Canyon Road in Santa Fe.

The artists' paintings are on display during business hours at Putnam Lexus, 390 Convention Way in Redwood City. They are also exhibiting paintings at the Wine Bar, Harbor Village Mall, 270 Capistrano Road in Half Moon Bay.

OBITUARIES

Muriel Haegele

Longtime Menlo Park resident

Muriel Anne Fugate Haegele of Menlo Park, a resident of Sharon Heights for 50 years, died peacefully at home on Dec. 4 at the age of 87. Services have been held.

Ms. Haegele was born in Pocatello, Idaho, and grew up in Aberdeen, Idaho, where her father, Glenn Fugate, was one of the owners of the Bank of Aberdeen. She was a graduate of Aberdeen High School and a 1945 graduate of the University of Idaho, where she was a member of Kappa Alpha Theta sorority.

She met her future husband, Rowland Haegele, when they were students at the university. Theirs was a wartime romance. They were married Jan. 4, 1945, in Aberdeen, while she was a senior in college and he was on leave from the U.S. Navy.

After graduation, she taught history, journalism and English at Aberdeen High School, while her husband was serving on the destroyer USS Benner overseas.

After the war, the young couple lived in New York City, San Mateo, and Salt Lake City before moving to Menlo Park in 1960. The Haegeles were among the first families to move into the Sharon Heights subdivision.

While her sons, Glenn and Jay, were young, Ms. Haegele was active with Cub Scouts. She was a member of P.E.O., the Children's Home Society, and her Kappa

Alpha Theta alumnae chapter.

A housewife from another era, Ms. Haegele elevated homemaking to a fine art, say friends. Her home was immaculate and, wearing a white lab coat, she prepared delicious meals, even when eating alone. Her sons fondly remember her pies and angel food cakes. She took classes in flower arranging, cooking, even napkin folding.

She also loved gardening and enjoyed meeting with her gardener every week.

After her children were grown, Ms. Haegele worked in the home furnishings department of Saks Fifth Avenue in Palo Alto for 10 years.

The Haegeles were season ticket holders for Stanford football and men's and women's basketball games. They attended the Rose Bowl three times and traveled to San Antonio with Stanford alumni when the men's basketball team played in the Final Four. They were members of the Buck Club. Friends recall the gourmet tailgate picnics Ms. Haegele prepared for football games.

Mrs. Haegele is survived by her sons Glenn R. Haegele of Menlo Park and Jay E. Haegele of Willets, brother-in-law John Olson of Portland, Oregon, and four

grandchildren. Her husband, Rowland Haegele, died in 2001.

Memorials may be made to the University of Idaho Scholarship Fund.

Phillip Kuekes

Menlo Park resident

Phillip Kuekes, 53, a resident of Menlo Park, died of glioblastoma Nov. 29.

He was born in Cleveland, Ohio, and raised in Fairfield, Conn. He graduated from Yale University in 1969 with a degree in physics.

He moved to the Bay Area in 1969, owned his own computer consulting business and worked for TRW in Mountain View.

He later worked for Hewlett-Packard, specializing in nanotechnology. He received many awards for his work and authored more than 70 patents, family members said.

He enjoyed hiking and traveling the world, and was a devoted family man, they said.

He is survived by his wife, Cynthia Kuekes, and his daughter, Ofelie Kuekes, both of Menlo Park.

Memorial services will be announced at a later date.

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Assemblyman Rich Gordon at the Dec. 6 swearing-in ceremony.

Settling into Sacramento

By Bay City News Service

Peninsula politician Rich Gordon is quickly settling into a new schedule of responsibilities in Sacramento after being sworn in as the 21st District assemblyman Dec. 6.

Since Mr. Gordon's last meeting as San Mateo County's District 3 supervisor was Nov.

30, he had to make a quick transition from his job in Redwood City to his new role as an assemblyman.

"The good news is I've found where the men's room is," he joked in a phone interview Dec. 9.

Mr. Gordon, a fourth-generation San Mateo County resident,

See GORDON, page 18

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Stanford Hospital Health Notes

A community health education series from Stanford Hospital & Clinics

Transplants Are Never Simple: Collaboration Key to Beating Odds

Michael Moore was balanced precariously between a rock and a hard place, although in his case it was his heart and his liver. Fixing only one couldn't be done without putting both – and Moore – in high peril. Such competing interests are classic medical Catch-22s. Often, those situations have unhappy endings.

Yet, three years later, Moore's eyes twinkle with fun, his step is strong and lively and he's learning to play the guitar, something he's always wanted to do. What saved Moore was a highly unusual, two-fer collaborative surgery performed by Stanford Hospital & Clinics liver transplant team, one of the best in the nation, and Stanford's cardiothoracic team, also one of the best.

"We don't take no for an answer," said Moore's physician, Stanford transplant hepatologist Tami Daugherty. "We have the physicians to be able to support high-risk patients. We have the drive to provide excellent care for everyone, even for people who can't get that care at other places. At Stanford, there's no 'I can't do it.'"

Moore's journey toward Stanford and his surgery in 2007 began more than a decade ago, when he woke up one morning so swollen and bloated he knew something was very wrong. Invaded by a virus, his liver had started to lose its ability to manufacture proteins, to metabolize and store fats and carbohydrates and to rid the body of harmful toxins. Moore could still work, but he tired far more quickly.

Another health emergency sent him to a local hospital where doctors told him he would need a liver transplant.

"We take care of the whole patient, not just the liver. Life is not static and everything affects everything else."

– Tami Daugherty, MD, Stanford Hospital & Clinics transplant hepatologist

People who need a healthy organ of any kind face long waiting lists. This fall, more than 16,000 people in the U.S. were on the waiting list for a liver. Some may wait as long as two years.

Not just the liver

Moore's Stanford hepatologist put him on medications that put him into a biological remission. That gave him hope that he could stay alive long enough to move up the line for a transplant. That was before the change in organ transplant lists that adjusted for medical need, putting the sickest patients first. Moore's care at Stanford included all of his body. Moore's heart was checked out by an electrocardiologist, who found something that Moore had no idea was anything dangerous. "She goes, 'What's that?' I said, 'It's this buzzing I've had all my life.' It turned out I had a hole in my aortic valve that had enlarged and weakened my heart."

Physicians used a technique called ablation, an adjustment made with electricity, to stabilize, at least tempo-

rarily, the behavior of Moore's heart. "When they did my heart," Moore said, "they said it was lucky I got in because my heart probably wouldn't have lasted a week."

The comprehensive viewpoint that sent Moore for a heart evaluation is part of what supports the Stanford liver transplant program's success rate. Since 1991, the liver transplant team has performed more than 800 adult liver transplantations, consistently exceeding national patient survival rates at the one- and three-year marks after transplantation. The team includes five transplant surgeons, six transplant hepatologists, two transplant psychiatrists and a support staff that includes social workers, dieticians, nurses, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, pharmacists, educators, and patient and financial coordinators who specialize in transplant patient care. "We take care of the whole patient," said Daugherty, "not just the liver. Life is not static and everything affects everything else."

Once Moore's heart problem was identified, it represented a major complication. With a failing heart, Moore couldn't get a liver transplant. And



After years of health eroded by liver disease, Michael Moore has a life he enjoys to the fullest. The journey was not easy, but the comprehensive and collaborative care he found at Stanford Hospital & Clinics made all the difference.

Norbert von der Groeben

his liver condition meant the heart repair would be too dangerous. "It was a Catch-22," Daugherty said. The liver team consulted with the heart team to figure out how to replace Moore's aortic valve and transplant a liver at the same time, something very rarely done. The heart condition also helped Moore get his new liver. Under a new organ listing procedure revised to give transplant priority based on medical need, Moore's name was bumped to the front of the line. As soon as a liver became available, the Stanford heart and liver teams would work together in one back-to-back procedure.

"Not only did I have a fleet of the best doctors, but the next generation was there, also learning from the best."

– Michael Moore, transplant patient at Stanford Hospital & Clinics

"The great thing about transplant is that we all work together well," said Daugherty. "That's what I really enjoy about it."

More than surgery

Stanford's liver transplant programs – in fact, all its transplant programs – include a thorough evaluation process to make sure a patient will be



Norbert von der Groeben

Michael Moore, now recovered from a double surgery that gave him a new liver and fixed a years-old heart condition, is determined to give back to the place where he found the care that saved him. When he comes to Stanford to volunteer, he also returns just to say hello in the nursing unit where he spent so much time getting better.

Understanding Your Liver

The liver is the largest solid organ in the body. It filters toxins from the blood, processes fats, makes proteins, stores some vitamins and minerals, and metabolizes medications. When it fails, many body systems also falter.

Taking care of your liver

- Avoid toxic substances, including industrial chemicals, and excessive alcohol consumption
- Maintain a healthy weight. Don't eat a high proportion of fatty foods.
- Get vaccinated against Hepatitis A and B

Common causes of liver failure

- Cirrhosis, which transforms normal liver tissue into scar tissue
- Hepatitis A, B and C vary greatly in behavior, but all can damage the liver
- Cancer
- Autoimmune system disorders

When to see your doctor

- skin develops a yellow tinge
- unexplained fatigue
- swelling of legs
- easy bruising

About transplant

Not everyone who develops a liver disease needs a transplant. Many people are able to manage their disease for years as a chronic illness. When that is no longer possible, then transplant is considered. First, a prospective patient will go through an extensive evaluation to qualify to be on the waiting list. The United Network of Organ Sharing, under a federal contract, maintains that list. The list is ordered by medical need.

For more information, visit stanfordhospital.org/livertransplant or call 650.498.7878. Join us at stanfordhospital.org/socialmedia, www.facebook.com/StanfordHospital, twitter.com/StanfordHosp or www.youtube.com/stanfordhospital

able to cope with life after transplant and has a good support system to help. Once a patient is accepted and even after surgery, the program encourages his or her participation in one of the special support groups Stanford provides its patients. Having others to talk to about the experience is a crucial part of transplant success. The hospital also sponsors a support group, not commonly available, for the transplant patient caregivers who are such an important part of pre- and post-transplant life.

“No one can really understand what it's like to have a liver transplant until they have one,” Daugherty said. “It may seem to be a no-brainer, but it's not.” At one of his support group meetings, Moore met the first person to have the kind of double surgery he was being offered, “and he was feeling fine and back to work. I was never in fear for my life.”

The surgery took 17 hours and Moore began his recovery, cheered on by a somewhat larger team of professionals. “One day, my heart team came in and my liver team came in, all at one time,” said Moore, “and they were high-fiving each other like a bunch of high school kids who had just won the homecoming game!”

The serendipity of Moore's medical care had already made itself clear months before. When he was working at a local restaurant, three doctors



Norbert von der Groeben

Liver transplant patient Michael Moore loves to be outdoors, and he's healthy enough to be an active volunteer at the Stanford Golf Course.

were regular customers. “I knew they were on call and didn't have much time, so as soon as I saw them in the parking lot, I'd order their dinners and get them set up. We'd talk baseball and bicycling and sports. I never really introduced myself and I never knew their names.”

“I've just been getting better every day. I never thought I would actually get to the point where I feel the way I do.”

– Michael Moore, transplant patient at Stanford Hospital & Clinics

When Moore returned to work after months off for medical care before his transplant, one of those regular doctor customers asked where he'd been. “I tell him the story of my liver and he goes, ‘Mike, do you know what I do? I'm the head of liver transplant at Stanford. He ended up overlooking my operation, and was cracking jokes with his colleagues that he was drumming up business at local

restaurants!” The man Moore had been serving for so long was Carlos Esquivel, MD, PhD. Esquivel is surgical director of the Liver Transplant program and chief of the hospital's Division of Transplantation.

Moving forward and giving back

Moore takes pride in having been a part of Stanford's function as a training center for physicians. “Not only did I have a fleet of the best doctors,” he said, “but the next generation was there, also learning from the best.” Stanford's transplant team is also actively involved in research, in particular to find ways to reduce post-transplant medication needs and to broaden transplant possibilities.

For all transplant patients, life after their life-giving surgery requires many changes. The immunosuppressant drugs that Moore and other transplant patients take to prevent rejection of their transplant can raise the risk of post-transplant diabetes. Moore did develop diabetes. He is doing everything he can to be as healthy as he can. He eats a low-fat diet of mostly fruits and vegetables. He has become even more physically active than before he became so ill: He cycles, walks and lifts weights. He loves being outdoors as a volunteer marshal and starter at the Stanford Golf Course.

He is also doing as much as he can to give back to the hospital. He volunteers hours each week working the phone for Farewell to Falls, a program that offers

home evaluations of safety risks in the homes of seniors. Moore's warm and concerned tone makes him very popular with the program's clients. He also works with the American Liver Foundation, the Alzheimer's Association and the American Cancer Foundation.

His volunteer work has been “the most rewarding thing I've ever done. I'll do it until the day I drop. Except for my diabetes, I'm feeling better than I have in 20 years,” said Moore, 59. “I'm working to get control of my diabetes, the last battle in my health. But I've been making great steps. I've just been getting better every day. I never thought I would actually get to the point where I feel the way I do.”



Norbert von der Groeben

Michael Moore had the support of friend Lynn, who, like so many others who volunteer to care for transplant patients, kept him going through the tough moments.

Stanford Hospital & Clinics is known worldwide for advanced treatment of complex disorders in areas such as cardiovascular care, cancer treatment, neurosciences, surgery, and organ transplants. Consistently ranked among the top institutions in the U.S. News & World Report annual list of “America's Best Hospitals,” Stanford Hospital & Clinics is internationally recognized for translating medical breakthroughs into the care of patients. It is part of the Stanford University Medical Center, along with the Stanford University School of Medicine and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at Stanford. For more information, visit stanfordmedicine.org.



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by Sarah Trauben

Everyone has a friend who's incorrigibly difficult to shop for. Instead of wrapping another unnecessary tchotchke or resorting to a gag gift, why not give them the gift of a unique experience this holiday season?

Whether a friend is picky, humble or just well-funded, the old slogan about teaching a man how to fish might be of use. After all, everyone needs to eat. Instead of buying a gift basket of goodies, you could give them the gift of cooking skills.

The Palo Alto Adult School offers affordable cooking classes in a variety of mouthwatering genres. Upcoming courses include seafood, Thai, sushi and cooking with spirits.

Yanette Edwards, who has taught courses at the school for years, also offers at-home sessions. The sky's the limit on themes, Edwards said. She has given everything from moms and daughters cooking classes to team-building sushi workshops to tutorials for students about to enroll in college.

One option is holding a holiday baking party. With a cooking instructor's help, friends can

Shopping outside the box



Penny Fuller and Gabriel Hoffman perform in TheatreWorks' production of "A Christmas Memory."

come together to learn how to make cookies and hand off the products of their labor.

"Instead of re-gifting something for your girlfriends this year, you can give a really unique gift of skills, entertainment and your time," Edwards said.

A novel gift option is provided by Joanie King, founder and "chief scribe" at the Palo Alto-based company Rhyming Tributes (www.rhyming-tributes.com). For \$250 and a list of 15 facts about the intended recipient, you get an epic poem, a rap or a familiar song (rewritten) about your friend.

"One of our slogans is 'we're not

happy until you're crying," King said. "You can't get around being personal with this kind of gift."

For an additional fee, you can even buy a sung tribute.

If film is more a friend's bent, the Aquarius Theatre in Palo Alto and Guild Theatre in Menlo Park offer stylish gift cards; a covert way to grant your hard-to-buy-for friend a treat. The indie theaters show documentaries, art house, and foreign films, providing a dose of culture to any evening out on the town. The Stanford Theatre, which shows double features of classics from Hollywood's golden age (complete with live pipe-organ music before and after shows) too offers gift cards for some good old-fashioned fun.

Gift suggestions for the person that has it all

Want to add a little drama to a friend's life (in a good way)? A subscription to a local theater company might tickle the fancy of a supporter or would-be patron of the arts. Mountain View-based Theatreworks offers

Continued on next page

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Continued from previous page

a gift subscription.

For \$89, the recipient can see three shows of their choice from the Theatreworks season.

"It's a lovely gift and experience at a time of year when people are struggling to decide which gifts to give," Director of Marketing Sean Kelly said.

One of the most kind things you might give a friend who "has it all" is the chance to help someone who could stand to have a bit more.

One way to help the community is to donate in honor of a gift recipient to InnVision (www.innvision.org), a local charity that provides housing, emergency services, and tools for self-sufficiency to over 26,000 needy Silicon Valley individuals and families each year. Its 26 locations provide a number of supports for struggling neighbors, including shelter, food and toy drives for children, as well as a variety of social services to help those in need.

"Our resources are limited and donations are down for many nonprofits, but we have not closed a single program and continue to serve the needs of our population," Anne-Marie Meacham, Director of Development, said.

The website details the services each donation level funds, but you can direct your donation for the general fund or alternately designate it to a particular program.

Meacham said that a program in particular need is the Opportunity Services Center in Palo Alto. There, homeless and at-risk people can access a wide variety of InnVision services aimed at giving them tools to make their lives more stable.

With the help of a donation in a friend's honor, you can together improve the lives of others who call the Peninsula home. ■

Editorial Intern Sarah Trauben can be e-mailed at strauben@paweekly.com



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Happy, Healthy Holidays

by Kelly Jones

For some, the holidays can be a time of stress — or overindulgence in unhealthy goodies or activities. A gift that supports health, beauty or fitness may be just what the doctor — or Santa — ordered.

Over the holiday season, some local companies are offering discounts and gift packages for physical-fitness classes and wellness products.

For those looking to help a loved one relax or give their bodies a treat, spas offer gift certificates in a range of values and discounts on beauty products.

“We’re all about giving the gift that they truly deserve. People are so busy with their lives they don’t take the time to get a massage or a facial,” Palo Alto’s Destino Spa Director Christine Rivera said. “It’s like giving them tranquility or serenity. They can work out their knots and kinks.”

Each spa also offers its own package deals, such as Destino Spa’s “Renewal Package” for \$185, which includes an aromatic steam shower, a 40-minute “Destino Journey Massage” and a custom facial.

“We see a lot of new moms here who are overwhelmed and sleep deprived. A lot of dads and husbands who come in here want to make it special for them,” Rivera said.

Spas can also offer makeovers, such as the LaBelle Day Spas and Salons’ “Special Event Glamour Package.” For \$315, the pack includes an exfoliation treatment, brow shaping and tint, lash tint, glamour makeup, manicure and pedicure, and hair styling. LaBelle has two locations: Town & Country Village and Stanford Shopping Center.

Some people look for a more active solution to holiday stress and calorie overload, and gift certificates for fitness classes could be just what they’re seeking.

A potential stocking stuffer offered by Avalon Art & Yoga Center is a package of 10 or 25 classes that can be purchased and given out individually. Recipients can choose which class they would like to attend as a free session, based on level of difficulty and yoga style.

“Yoga is a well rounded practice,” said Lina Chae, Avalon

manager.

“Not only is it good for physical fitness, but it helps with emotional and mental well being.”

Chae recalled the time a manager came to the studio to purchase a set of classes and a yoga mat for one of her employees after learning the employee was going through tough times.

“It was one of the most thoughtful things I ever heard of,” Chae said. Rather

than just giving the employee a day off, Chae saw the manager was trying to actively help. Avalon, located on California Avenue in Palo Alto, also offers

yoga mats, books, other accessories and gift cards.

For those who may be struggling with weight or nutrition, there is a holiday helper.

Greenlite Medicine is a physician-supervised weight-loss program with a location on Fairchild Drive in Mountain View. With the Greenlite “Gift of Health Holiday Special,” clients receive a gift certificate for a personal nutrition/weight-loss consultation, body-composition analysis, weight-loss plan and a gift bag with a guide to getting started and helpful tips. The plan, which would normally cost \$150, is on sale for the holidays for \$50.

Another way to keep in shape over the holidays is a personal-trainer session at a local gym.



Veronica Weber

Yoga teacher Patricia Becker demonstrates a twist pose at Avalon Art & Yoga Center.

ally consist of five to eight people and are held once a week for six weeks. Using suspension straps that hang from the ceiling, students use the resistance of the bands to build power, strength, flexibility, balance, and mobility.

With gifts that support fitness, beauty or relaxation, recipients can start the year off feeling and looking their best.

And as Rivera put it, “It’s a non-materialistic gift that people can’t re-gift.” ■

Editorial Intern Kelly Jones can be e-mailed at kjones@paweekly.com.



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Rich Gordon settles into Sacramento

GORDON
continued from page 10

was elected Nov. 2 by 63 percent of the voters in District 21, which includes Atherton, Menlo Park, Portola Valley and Woodside, among several other towns.

He said his initial duties in Sacramento have included attending a week-long orientation session for newly elected assembly members, a Democratic Party caucus on state

budget and legislative issues, and a special forum addressing the projected state budget deficit hosted by Governor-elect Jerry Brown.

The state budget deficit, which Mr. Brown's office said could hit \$28 billion in the 2011-12 fiscal year, is at the top of Mr. Gordon's list of issues to address when the Assembly reconvenes in January.

"I want to look closely at budget debate and discussion," he said. "There has been no thinking ahead here in Sacramento."

His ideas for improving the state's budget outlook range from reassessing Proposition 13, which he maintains "aggregated too much power in Sacramento," and proposing the adoption of a two-year cycle for budget planning, similar to what was implemented by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors.

Before he can tackle the state's issues, Mr. Gordon said he has to take on some crucial business in his own office.

"I still don't have staff hired," he said, adding that once his office is assembled, he'll start reaching out and interacting with his constituents in a variety of platforms.

At his final meeting as county supervisor — an office that he was elected to three times beginning in 1997 — a group of his former staff members brought him close to tears when they showed up to congratulate him on his new position and wish him luck.

"I really believe that if I have any legacy that I leave at the county, it will be with those young people," he said. ■

Funds for Habitat

Through a month-long raffle, Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage Community Foundation has raised more than \$105,000 for Habitat for Humanity, the nonprofit that helps low-income families build their own homes.

This is the 12th year Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage has held the fundraiser throughout its 58 Northern California offices.

Peninsula Christmas Services

St. Bede's Episcopal Church

2650 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park, 854.6555
www.stbedesmenlopark.org

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Sunday, December 19th

4:00pm Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols

We proclaim the good news of Christmas, in story and song, from the ancient prophets through the joy and wonder of the nativity.

Friday, December 24th Christmas Eve

4:00pm Christmas Pageant & Holy Eucharist

The Sunday School enacts the good news of Christmas, and we are all fed!

10:00pm Candlelight Choral Eucharist

We celebrate Christ's birth, in sacred story and song, accompanied by musical instruments.

Saturday, December 25th Christmas Day

9:00am Holy Eucharist with Carols, Rite I

Sunday, December 26th 1 Christmas

9:00am Holy Eucharist with Carols, Rite II

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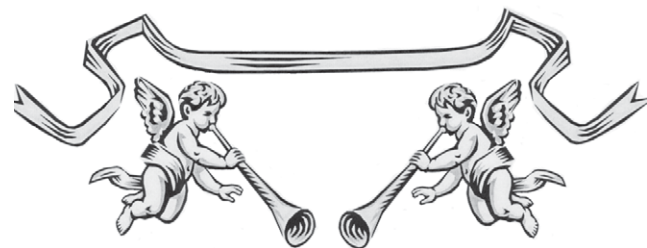
Friday, December 24 @ 5 p.m.*, 6:30 p.m., 8 p.m., 9:30 p.m., and 11 p.m.

CHILD-FRIENDLY SERVICES @ THE CAFE
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Friday, December 24
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www.ccpvw.org

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CHRISTMAS DAY

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■ POLICE CALLS

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

ATHERTON

Auto burglary report: Forced entry into vehicle and theft of two leaf blowers and two chainsaws, Fenwood Drive, Dec. 7.

Grand theft report: Gift card stolen, first block of Linda Vista Ave., Dec. 8.

MENLO PARK

Grand theft reports:

■ Jewelry valued at \$24,000 stolen some-

time between Oct. 21 and Nov. 11, Hallmark Circle, Dec. 3.

■ Loss estimated at \$1,440 in theft from unlocked vehicle of prescription sunglasses and glasses, flashlight, backpack and cell phone charger, first block of Willow Road, Dec. 8.

■ Computer valued at \$900 stolen from unlocked vehicle, 1300 block of Willow Road, Dec. 6.

■ Bicycle valued at \$300 stolen from carport, 800 block of Coleman Ave., Dec. 4.

Residential burglary reports:

■ Losses estimated at \$5,700 in theft of safe, two laptop computers, a video camera and three TVs, 600 block of Hamilton Ave., Dec. 5.

■ Jewelry valued at \$2,100 stolen via

unlocked window, 1100 block of Willow Road, Dec. 7.

Auto burglary reports:

■ Forced entry into vehicle and loss estimated at \$700 in theft of purse, 2700 block of Haven Ave., Dec. 3.

■ Loss estimated at \$520 in theft of GPS device and other items, 900 block of Arnold Way, Dec. 6.

■ Window smashed and loss estimated at \$420 in theft of Apple iPod, 300 block of Sharon Park Road, Dec. 8.

Stolen vehicle reports:

■ Gray 1987 Toyota Camry, 600 block of Oak Grove Ave., Dec. 6.

■ White 1999 Nissan pickup truck, 900 block of Hamilton Ave., Dec. 8.

Fraud reports:

■ Loss estimated at \$595 in unauthorized use of credit card, 400 block of Oak Grove Ave., Dec. 6.

■ Arrest made on charges of identity theft and false representation in connection with \$50 worth of yard work, 400 block of Chester St., Dec. 7.

WOODSIDE

Theft report: Loss estimated at \$30,000 in cash in theft of safe from residence in October or November, 600 block of Lombardy Way, Dec. 1.

Arson report: Fire at construction site, Canada College at 4200 Farm Hill Blvd., Dec. 1.

■ CORRECTION

In a story in the Dec. 8 Almanac about Mark Lussier being awarded the Bronze Star for service in Iraq, we reported that his grandfather, the late Cedric Lussier, received the Bronze Star for his service in World War II. A family member called to say that Cedric Lussier actually received the Silver Star.


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Christmas Eve Friday, December 24
 4:00 pm | 6:00 pm | 11:00 pm
 Candlelight Worship & Communion

Christmas Day Saturday, December 25
 10:00 am Carols & Lessons

www.gracepa.org



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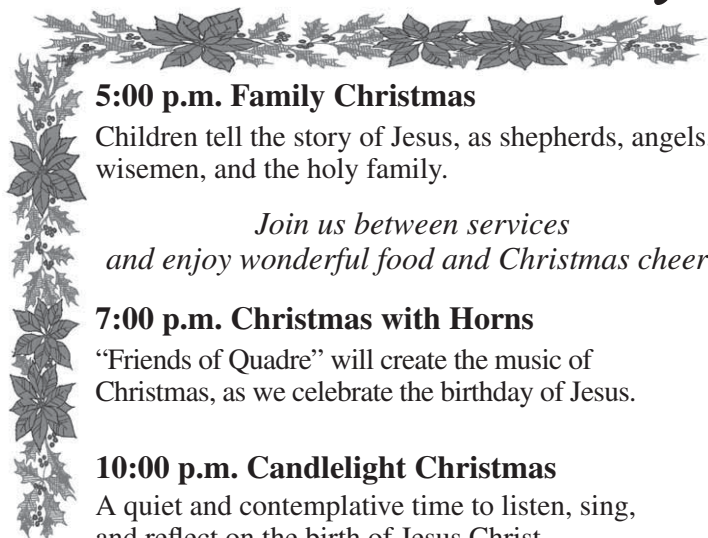
Christmas Eve
(All services will be about an hour)

4:00 pm Children's Communion Service with Pageant
 6:00 pm Christmas Communion Service with the Festival Choir
 9:30 pm Carol Sing
 10:00 pm Christmas Communion Service with the Festival Choir

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 10:00 am Christmas Day Communion with Hymns

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**Peninsula
 Christmas
 Services**




Holiday Fund

■ Helping increase your donations to local charities

Taking on the school-dropout problem

Submitted by Peter Fortenbaugh, executive director of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula.

Arnoldo Verduzco and Guillermina Mendez were worried that their limited English didn't permit them to provide their two youngest children — 9-year-old Arnoldo Jr. and 14-year-old Alejandro — with the homework assistance they needed to be successful in school.

So, five years ago, they enrolled both of them in the after-school enrichment program run by the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula (BGCP) at Belle Haven Community School in Menlo Park.

Both boys had low grades when they joined the program but that began to change during the first year. Son Alejandro was even chosen as Scholar of the Year at Belle Haven two years ago and learned valuable skills that have helped him succeed in an academically challenging high school. Alejandro and his parents got help with admission and financial-aid applications

and that help, together with Alejandro's dedication and commitment, resulted in his admission last year to St. Francis High School in Mountain View.

The Verduzco's experience is not an isolated example. BGCP welcomes all youth, ages 6 to 18, from three of the most under-

In the communities served, more than half of the youth do not graduate from high school.

served communities in the Bay Area (East Palo Alto, eastern Menlo Park, and the North Fair Oaks section of Redwood City), where over half of the youth do not graduate from high school and more than 80 percent score below proficient in math and reading.

The organization serves about 1,000 youth daily at three full-service clubhouses and eight school sites—four elementary and middle schools and four high schools.

BGCP's vision is a community where all youth graduate from high school with a plan for post-secondary education or training — an environment where it is cool to learn.

Bringing about real change requires collaboration. No one organization can meet the needs of these at-risk youth alone. The Club partners with schools, school districts, families, cities, and other community-based organizations to create a community of learners who expect to succeed academically and in life.

Together with these other community players, BGCP is implementing proven practices to double high school graduation rates.

To respond to the challenges faced by youth in our underserved communities, BGCP provides safe places where kids can belong, feel respected and respect others. The caring staff and over 500 volunteers challenge members to meet high expectations and help them make good choices.



The Verduzco family (from left, Guillermina, Alejandro, Arnoldo Sr. and Arnoldo Jr.) celebrate Alejandro winning Scholar of the Year honors at Belle Haven Community School.

Members benefit from tutoring and small group enrichment in reading, math and science, athletics, life skills and social education, exciting programs in visual/digital arts and performing, as well as leadership and community service activities.

BGCP's College Bound program gets kids ready to succeed in high school and provides intensive staff involvement to keep students on track to graduate. Parents join for fun family nights and can also enroll in ESL and parent education classes.

"We like the program because

it offers the support students need to achieve their goals," says Arnoldo Verduzco. "Kids get help with their homework and enrichment classes help them develop their academic and social skills. The Club's hours also are very convenient for working parents. We would recommend the Club to other parents."

Visit bgcp.org or call 650-646-6140 for more information. Donations to the Holiday Fund benefit the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula and nine other community-service organizations.

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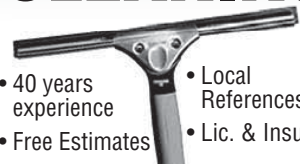
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**Portola Valley Town Hall
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**Friday, December 24, 2010
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New center will provide nurturing environment for young people

Submitted by Sue Mitchell, administrative associate, St. Francis Center.

The St. Francis Center of Redwood City is bursting at the seams with pride. Not only did our tireless volunteers manage to unload, package and distribute food and clothing to more than 4,620 people in November, our community has come together in support of our exciting new project: The Siena Youth Center.

What's that, you ask? Quite simply, the youth center is the culmination of the thoughts and prayers of our community. Its purpose is to provide our children with a safe and nurturing environment, where they can gather for sports activities, after-school tutoring or mentorship, critical elements to the well-being of our youth, and factors that are currently lacking in our

community.

The mission of the St. Francis Center is to help challenged Redwood City and east Menlo Park families in a multitude of ways that allow them to live in dignity and become self-supporting members of the community.

In truth, the North Fair Oaks neighborhood where we are based is challenged in many respects beyond economics. A strong gang presence leaves parents with little choice but to keep their children indoors, thus creating more obstacles and boundaries for them to overcome.

The fact that there isn't one park, gym or green space in our section of North Fair Oaks is especially challenging when you consider that the neighborhood is bordered

ST. FRANCIS, next page 21

Holiday Fund Donations

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S. & A. Ambrosini.....**	Joan Rubin.....100
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TOTALS: As of December 10, 2010, a total of 58 donors have given \$37,750 to the the Almanac Holiday Fund.

ST. FRANCIS

continued from previous page

by the railroad tracks, 5th Avenue, Woodside Road and El Camino Real — tricky pedestrian borders for youngsters to navigate.

Better yet, the Sheriff's Office has partnered with the St. Francis Center to change the paths of these young, impressionable kids. The office will, in fact, have an on-site satellite office that will be staffed with able and willing members of the Sheriff's Office. We know their involvement will help to bridge the gap that currently exists between the community and law enforcement.

The Siena Youth Center, which will be built in 2011 a block from the St. Francis Center, will also house our annual Holiday Toy Program. Since its inception 18 years ago, the toy program has been housed in various halls, warehouses and vacant store sites around Redwood City. What a great relief not to "hop scotch" in the future and have a permanent location for this wonderful program and other events held during the year.

Also on the design board is a new and improved version of our community garden. The former garden was demolished last month

to accommodate Hetch Hetchy water supply upgrades. Once work is completed, we will expand upon our former site — which sustained 24 local families — and enhance its size and productivity.

The Holy Family School received an upgrade, as well. Our students will now have the benefit of learning from an interactive "Smart Board." Sister Susan is honing her skills on this technologically advanced support tool, where she can download curriculum directly from her laptop and engage the students in a new fashion. The advantages of this "Smart Board" are numerous and Sister Susan is pleased to be a part of this tech-savvy generation.

The St. Francis Center, in its mission to give dignity to and improve the quality of the lives of those we serve, is grateful for all of the support that we receive from our volunteers, the community and our benefactors. Quite simply, you make it happen.

Visit stfrancisrwc.org for more information. Donations to the Holiday Fund benefit St. Francis Center of Redwood City and nine other community-service organizations. St. Francis Center is located at 151 Buckingham Ave. in Redwood City. The phone number is (650) 365-7829.

Giving to the

Holiday Fund

Your gift helps children and others in need



Contributions to the Holiday Fund go directly to programs that benefit Peninsula residents. Last year, Almanac readers contributed about \$100,000, and with available matching grants, nearly \$130,000 was raised for 10 agencies that feed the hungry, house the homeless and provide numerous other services to those in need.

Contributions to the Holiday Fund will be matched, to the

extent possible, by generous community corporations, foundations and individuals, including the Rotary Club of Menlo Park, the David and Lucille Packard Foundation and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. No administration costs will be deducted from the gift, which are tax-deductible as permitted by law.

All donations to the Holiday Fund will be shared equally among the 10 recipient agencies listed below.

This year, the Almanac's Holiday Fund will support these nonprofit organizations in the community

- Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula**
Provides after-school academic support and enrichment activities for 1,000 youths 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 baskets for more than 1,500 households.
- Project Read-Menlo Park**
Provides free literacy services to adults in the Menlo Park area. Trained volunteers work one-to-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 tutors assisted more than 300 students.
- 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. 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- Shelter Network**
Provides short-term shelter and transitional housing services to more than 3,700 people and children each year. Offers programs for families and individuals to become self-sufficient and return to permanent housing.
- 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.
- Youth and Family Enrichment Services**
Provides many programs to help people who struggle with substance abuse, domestic violence, and mental health, relationship and communications issues. Helps strengthen youth, families and individuals to overcome challenges through counseling, education, and residential services.

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The organizations named below provide major matching grants to the Holiday Fund.



*The William and Flora
Hewlett Foundation*

*The David and Lucille
Packard Foundation*



Rotary Club of Menlo Park

The Almanac will make every effort to publish donor names for donations received before Dec. 31, 2010, unless the donor checks the anonymous box. All donations will be acknowledged by mail.

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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.

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WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

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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.

Musical chairs for Menlo Park mayor

Will the real mayor of Menlo Park please stand up! It was a question on the minds of many residents over the weekend, and for good reason. In the space of three days last week, City Council member Kelly Fergusson was elected mayor, admitted that she violated the Brown Act while campaigning for the office, and then officially resigned the office. This Tuesday, after The Almanac goes to press, the new City Council will be back at square one, with new member Kirsten Keith serving as both “accidental” mayor and vice mayor (to which she was elected last week) until a new mayor is elected, which is

the first item on the agenda.

To complicate matters even further, Andy Cohen, who along with Ms. Fergusson has the most seniority and thus is next in line to be mayor, may not prevail this time around despite the council’s succession policy. We respect Mr. Cohen, but his sometimes quirky comments and behavior are not what the city needs right now and should be a deterrent to giving him the gavel.

We say that because the two most critical jobs facing the mayor and council next year will be to guide the El Camino Real/downtown specific plan through its final public hearing process and to continue pressuring the California High-Speed Rail Authority to reduce the impact of the project on Menlo Park and other Peninsula communities. During the past year, outgoing Mayor Rich Cline has chaired the Peninsula Cities Consortium, the group of five Peninsula cities that have banded together to articulate their concerns about high-speed rail, which means he is already up to speed on how this major project will impact Midpeninsula cities.

He also believes that the city’s downtown plan must go forward, but not without fine-tuning to take into account feedback from downtown merchants and others. He is an articulate

spokesman for this \$1 million-plus planning effort that finally will offer a blueprint to redevelop the abandoned car dealerships lining south El Camino Real and to implement a new vision for downtown that will help solve the perennial employee parking problem and add sidewalks and bike lanes as suggested by the hundreds of residents who attended workshops on the plan. He also would explain what the plan will NOT do, which is build garages on every parking plaza and interfere with the farmers’ market.

We believe Mr. Cline’s experience on these two major issues outweigh the pressure to abide by the succession process. In this case, a one-year term limit is not in the city’s best interest.

The musical mayoral chairs began a week ago when Ms. Fergusson admitted violating the Brown Act while campaigning to be elected mayor prior to the Dec. 7 regular meeting. Somehow, she failed to remember that a council member cannot have one-on-one discussions with more than one colleague (in this case Rich Cline and Peter Ohtaki) about her strong interest in becoming mayor. City Attorney Bill McClure said Ms. Fergusson may have asked an intermediary to lobby Kirsten Keith for her vote as well. Ms. Keith obliged, but Mr. Ohtaki joined Andy Cohen as the two opposed in the first vote.

The entire affair leaves Menlo Park voters wondering what will happen next. Some have called for Ms. Fergusson’s resignation from the council and already are talking about how her replacement should be selected. That is a solution that would not benefit Menlo Park.

The City Council must put this debacle aside as quickly as possible. A new mayor should be chosen, allowing the council to move forward. We doubt if Ms. Fergusson will resign from the council voluntarily, and unless the district attorney somehow believes a case can be made to remove her from office (highly unlikely) Ms. Fergusson will serve out the remainder of her term.

EDITORIAL
The opinion of The Almanac

LETTERS
Our readers write

Cyclist has a message for the man in blue car

Editor:

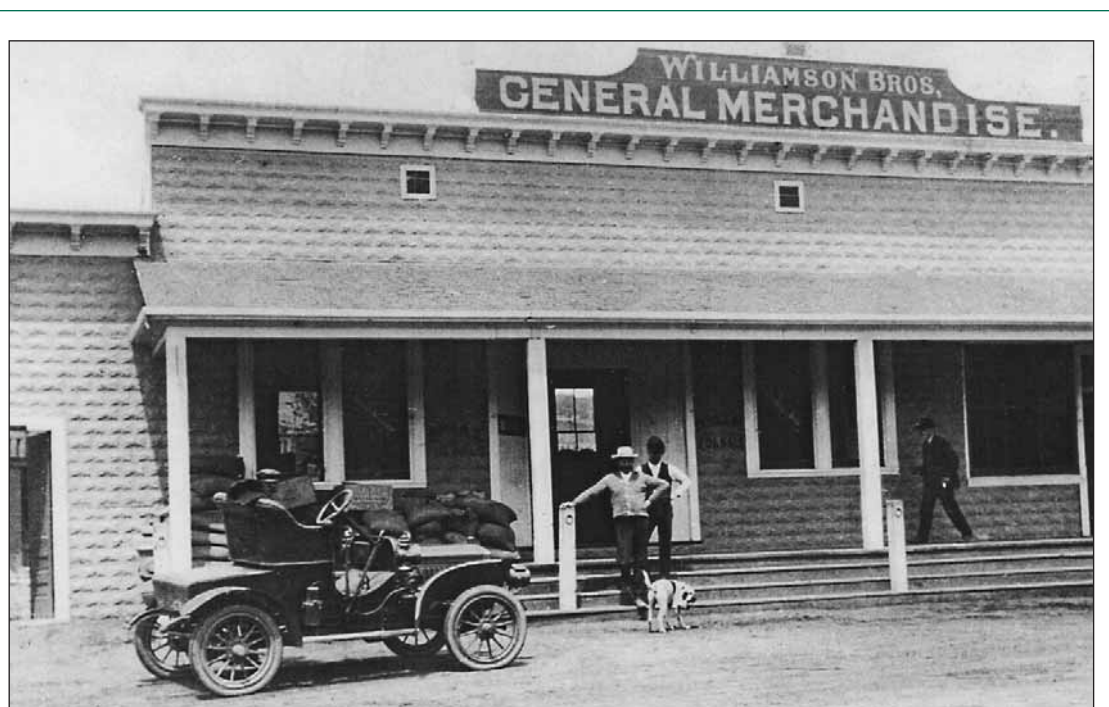
On December 5, I was riding my bicycle in Menlo Park on University Drive between Santa Cruz Avenue and Valparaiso.

I was traveling north, and when I reached the high-rise apartment building on the Valparaiso corner, I had to edge around a large debris box sitting in the street.

During that time, a honk just in back startled me. I was even more startled when the blue car passed me at full speed just inches away from my bicycle. Because of the dumpster, I could not move closer to the sidewalk.

I caught up with the driver at the stop sign on Valparaiso where

See **LETTERS**, next page



Woodside Library Collection

Our Regional Heritage

This early 1900s photo shows an automobile pulled up at the Williamson Brothers store in Woodside, adjacent to the posts where patrons hitched their horses not many years before. The photo is from the J. Volpiano collection.

Housing not best use of Menlo plazas

By Andy Cohen

Menlo Park has a history of downtown studies conducted at great expense only to be shelved. The current undertaking has already cost more than \$1 million, including staff and consultants. It remains to be seen whether it too will end up on the shelf.

Earlier this year, when merchants and property owners complained that their input had not been received, I called upon staff and council to slow down the process and ensure that these essential stakeholders' input be fully considered; I was outvoted.

Since then, the council's consideration of the specific plan has been postponed twice, and staff and the other council members have attempted to reassure the business community that the farmers' market will be preserved and all input will be considered before council decides finally on new zoning.



Charles Burgess understood the need for convenient parking downtown 50 years ago and conceived the plan for eight plazas on either side of Santa Cruz Avenue. As a city we are now considering parking structures as well as a proposal (recently submitted or resubmitted) to build new housing in one parking plaza (Crane and Oak Grove). These ideas follow two years of citizen workshops and consultants' and staff effort.

In order to understand merchants' and property owners' concerns, the discussion must move beyond its present political context. Two parking studies have been conducted in the past five years, and 2011 will be a testing period for certain changes recently proposed by those consultants.

Parking structures and new residences are alternatives presently under consideration, but both have met with resistance from downtown stakeholders. In order to avoid having wasted over a million dollars and two years studying the matter, we should carefully consider the

ideas being proposed, how they will be financed, and whether, ultimately, they will serve the needs of residents and other shoppers from surrounding communities whose needs coincide with ours.

The steering committee of the Downtown Alliance has proposed decoupling the downtown from the El Camino Real portion of the specific plan. El Camino properties should be addressed first. A somewhat higher density along El Camino may make sense in order to encourage the development of the empty car dealerships and the other vacant properties there. The Alliance does not support five-level parking garages in the central downtown area — that is, in any of the existing parking plazas. It would support a modest two- to three-story parking structure on Plaza 2, similar to the one on Cambridge Avenue in Palo Alto.

They (the Alliance) do not feel that housing in the central business district is necessary or will be good for businesses, and would much prefer to see up-zoning of the apartment belt around the downtown. This area is already zoned for higher density and allowing owners to upgrade these older apartment buildings with taller structures would make more sense. The same goal is accomplished but in a more appropriate location.

Most of these recommendations are not part of the specific plan. For example, Plaza 2 is proposed to be a mixed use residential development, not a parking structure. The area surrounding the downtown is not included in the plan, but, these are recommendations that would benefit the downtown — for both shoppers and business owners.

Ultimately, convenient parking is something all can agree on, and just as Charles Burgess conceived and executed a plan to create our parking plazas, we must now make sure that changes to that arrangement, which has worked well for half a century, are carefully designed to assure success.

Andy Cohen is a member of the Menlo Park City Council.

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

he had to wait behind two cars to make a right turn. I tapped on the driver's window and asked him why he didn't slow down or stop altogether to allow me safe passage. I noticed that the middle-aged man's blond hair was tied in a ponytail. All he could repeat twice was, "That's how bicycle accidents happen." It never occurred to him that he would have been the cause.

This is a plea to all motorists who are not bicyclists to please be courteous to bicyclists who have the same right to the road as they have.

I have been riding my bicycle for over 40 years in Menlo Park, always marveling at how congenial the city and the motorists are except for the driver with the ponytail.

Sylvia Wildmann
Menlo Park

Not a fan of Eshoo's stand on taxes

Editor:

I would hope that Rep. Anna Eshoo realizes that the top money-makers in this country provide not only jobs but extend their finances to charities that otherwise would be defunct, whether its arts, animals, medicine, schools and many others.

So I want them to keep their earned money. I think her distaste is very misplaced. Unlike Ms. Eshoo, I am happy about the tax cuts and for those who want to give more in that bracket, let them write a check (which I have yet to hear about).

As far as unemployment, has she not seen the scams or heard the statistics of what happens after two years of being on benefits? Not only do your job skills tend to atrophy but John Stossel has produced a segment showing how a woman used the system to her advantage so she didn't have to find a job. I

myself went to OICW and met a woman on welfare who had a four-bedroom house, television in every room, Xbox and a gun.

While we struggled with three boys in one room of our two-bedroom home, my husband worked hard to afford this while I tried to stay home and wasn't always able to do so, especially when one child needed a private school and we didn't qualify for a loan.

The system is broken and needs to be fixed. There needs to be bipartisanship and I do not see her advocating that, which is why she does not have my vote.

Her attitudes are not helping Menlo Park. Take a look at our downtown. It is dying and we need capitalism to thrive and give it a life. I am ashamed of you, Ms. Eshoo, and you probably won't see this, but I sure wish the Almanac would be fair and balanced.

Mara Brill
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