



Bryan Pate helps create a bicycle for would-be runners. | Page 5

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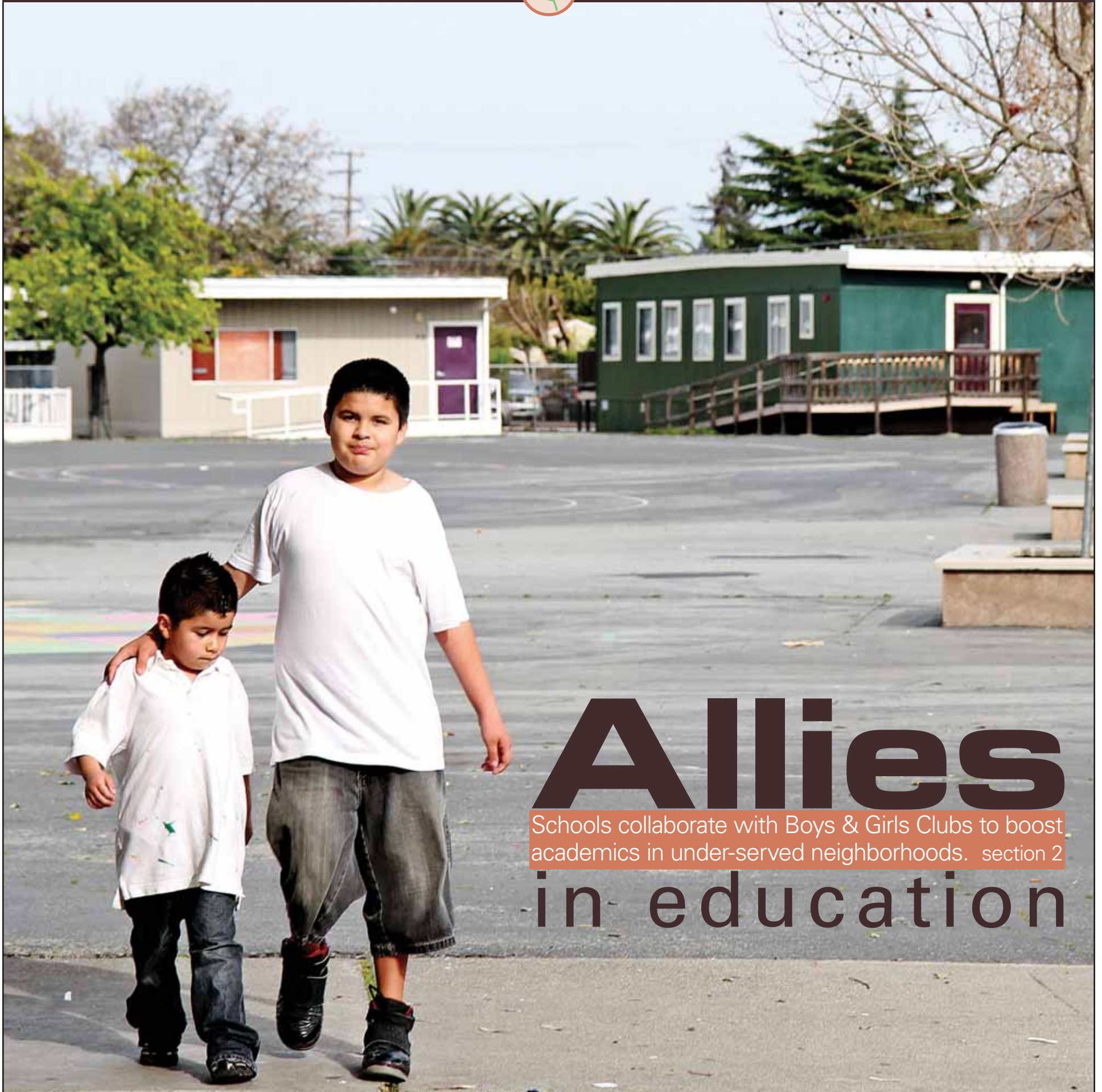
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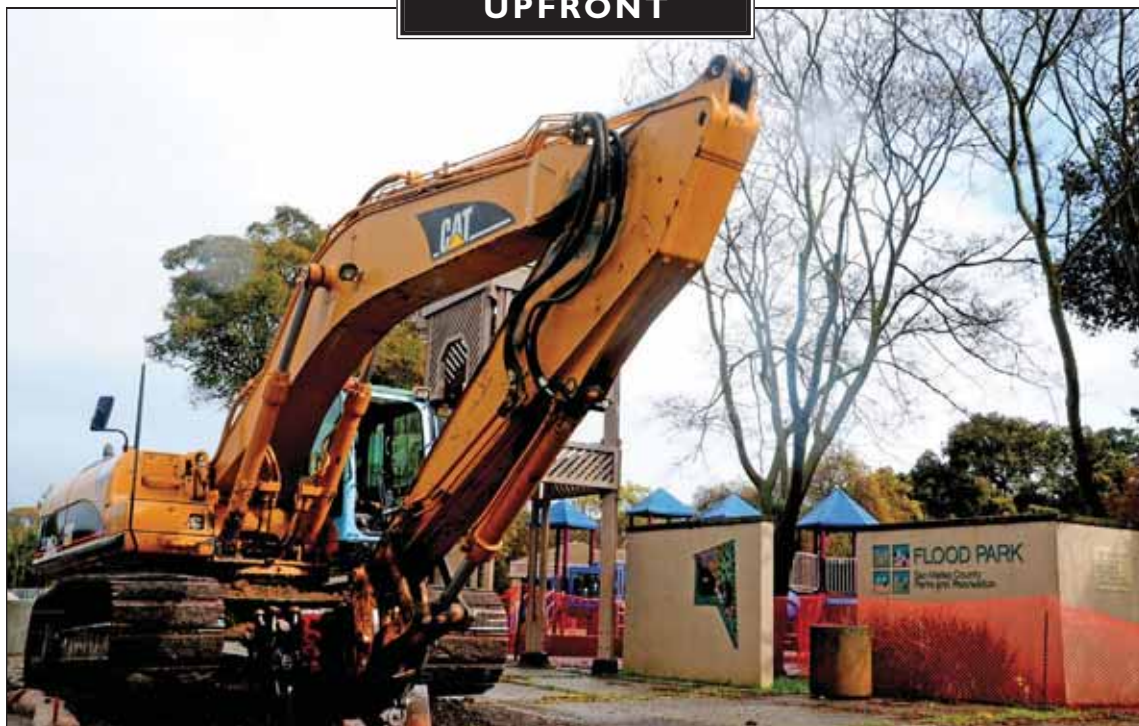


Photo by James Tensuan

Flood Park is now closed for water pipeline construction work. The temporary closure may become permanent.

County to Menlo: Please take Flood Park

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

Needing to slice 10 percent off San Mateo County's general fund operating budget, administrators scrambled to find ways to save \$655,000 on the county's 17 parks. One proposal asks Menlo Park to take over Flood Park, a wedge of land sandwiched between Bay Road and the Bayshore Freeway.

Public Works Director Jim Porter said the county has already eliminated the parks director position, a gardener slot, and four vacant positions. "But that puts us at a staffing level that can't operate the entire park system," he said.

The county Board of Supervisors reluctantly recommended shutting down the 21-acre Flood Park, which is closed until September 30 anyway while the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission installs a water pipeline. The park is recommended for closure because it's easy to fence off and other parks are available nearby, Mr. Porter explained.

"To keep it open, we'd have to find \$205,000 somewhere and the parks (department) doesn't have

that money," he said.

The county either has to find the money, or find someone to take the property off its hands, and that's where Menlo Park comes in. Community Services Director Cherise Brandell said city staff met with county representatives on March 22 to explore the associated costs.

"The City is facing major budget impacts if (redevelopment agencies) are taken away by the State that would limit our

The City Council and county administrators have received a significant number of emails from park visitors and neighbors, asking that the park stay open.

Menlo Park resident Jen Primuth wrote about seeing athletes and children at the park every weekend and often during lunchtime. She also asked whether closing the park could lead to higher crime rates.

"I'm concerned that if the park is closed, it won't really keep people from the park, but (the park) simply won't be maintained and could actually become a magnet for illegal activities like drug dealing & prostitution in our neighborhood," she wrote.

Former county sheriff and current Supervisor Don Horsley said he suspects a park can't really be closed since people will still enter an unsupervised park.

"I don't necessarily think that crime will spill out into surrounding neighborhoods, but a closed park could become a nuisance problem," Mr. Horsley said, adding that he is hopeful the county could find a better solution. ▣

"I'm concerned that if the park is closed, it won't really keep people from the park, but (the park) simply won't be maintained and could actually become a magnet for illegal activities like drug dealing & prostitution in our neighborhood."

PARK NEIGHBOR JEN PRIMUTH

options for the park, if not eliminate the possibility of taking it over completely," Ms. Brandell wrote in an email to the Almanac. "Even with the (redevelopment agency), the costs to maintain and complete capital projects at the Park would be a major financial challenge."

She said the Board of Supervisors may make its final decision about the park in May.

County data showed 75,000 visitors to Flood Park last year.

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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Menlo Park City Manager Glen Rojas to retire in July

■ New city manager may be hired under old pension formula.

By **Sandy Brundage**

Almanac Staff Writer

The hunt for a new city manager in Menlo Park is on. Current manager Glen Rojas announced last week that he is retiring, effective July 15.

Mr. Rojas told the Almanac that it was a tough decision, but he had been considering the move for a while.

Below is the text of an email he sent to employees, City Council members, and the city attorney on March 22:

“All employees

After careful consideration and consultation with my family I have decided to retire effective July 15, 2011. This decision was not an easy one considering

that I have had an exciting and challenging 37-year public service career which includes my experiences working with such a talented group of employees here in Menlo Park.

The diversity of issues that we find in public service cannot be duplicated in the private sector. We could not meet these challenges without you, the dedicated and hard-working employees that make Menlo Park a great place to live and work.

As an organization we have many challenging projects that are important to our future which requires that over the next few months that I work with the City Council and staff to ensure a smooth transition.

Over the next few months I hope to be able to express my appreciation to as many of you as possible for all



Glen Rojas

you do to make Menlo Park the quality City it is.”

Mr. Rojas listed working with other city employees and philanthropist John Arrillaga, the major private donor to the city's new gymnasium and recreation center, as high points of his four years with Menlo Park, along with getting the downtown specific plan closer to completion.

With the highs come some lows, of course. “We haven't gotten to the point where we have the full trust of some segments of the community,” Mr. Rojas said. “Surveys say the average resident is satisfied with our services, but there's a smaller segment that for whatever reason just doesn't trust us. That's frustrating.”

See **ROJAS**, page 8

Menlo district fire chief's new contract approved

■ No raise, sick-leave balance cut.

By **Sandy Brundage**

Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park Fire Protection District Chief Harold Schapelhouman will continue receiving \$191,616 per year through 2016, without any raises “unless and until there is a material and positive change in the economic climate and an adjustment is prudent and affordable at the discretion of the Board,” according to the new contract unanimously approved by the board of directors on March 22.

The contract slashes Chief Schapelhouman's accumulated sick leave by 75 percent, with the remaining hours transferred to his annual-leave bank, which is now capped at 596 hours—an increase of 320 from his previous contract.

That move reduces the district's financial liability in the event of the chief's retirement. Other agencies across the nation have found themselves facing hefty payouts of more than \$200,000, just for accumulated sick leave when workers retire.

As with other fire district employees, the chief also gets \$26,232 in medical, life insurance and other benefits per year.

Mr. Schapelhouman was hired as chief in 2007 at an annual base salary of \$190,800. In January of the following year he took a 3.6 percent pay cut, but by August, had seen an increase to \$191,616.

He said in an email that the terms of the new contract are in line with his expectations.

“Even though I am currently eligible for retirement, since I've given 30 years of service to this community, I didn't agree to continue as the Fire Chief because of the compensation,” Chief Schapelhouman said. “In fact, I was a proponent of freezing my salary and not taking advantage of other compensation increases because now is not the time to do that. I believe that leadership starts at the top and it's important to not only say I'm committed to the District but to show that as well.”

The district's other firefighters have been working without a contract for almost three years. Negotiations first stalled in 2009 after Menlo Park Firefighters Association Local 2400 filed a grievance with the state's Public Employee Relations Board (PERB) alleging unfair labor practices.

The district's firefighters also filed a lawsuit in July for overtime pay for time spent picking up equipment before and after their shifts start. In 2009 the district decided to replace salaries with hourly wages, leading to the overtime dispute.

Contract negotiations between the district and the firefighters association broke down again in October after union representatives refused to meet with the district's designated negotiators and asked to meet instead with district board members individually. The board declined the request, saying in a response letter that it would violate state law.

In November, the district made a “last, best, and final” offer to contribute \$1,500 per month to each employee's health plan, but that was also rejected by the union. ■



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

The ElliptiGO is designed to be a low-impact running machine. The eight-speed bike, seen here on the steep section of Valparaiso Avenue passing through Sharon Hills Park in Menlo Park, sells for \$2,500 and is made of aircraft-grade aluminum.

A bicycle for would-be runners

By **Dave Boyce**

Almanac Staff Writer

Atherton resident, athlete and former Marine officer Bryan Pate is a stand-up guy. Indeed, when he's riding the bike he and his friend Brent Teal built, he just can't sit down.

Mr. Pate and Mr. Teal, an ultra-marathoner, co-founded and are co-presidents of ElliptiGO, a four-year-old Solano Beach company that markets a bicycle/mobile running machine. It has no seat; to make forward progress, you

must be upright and running, more or less.

For former long-distance runners like Mr. Pate, 38, who hasn't run since 2007 due to exercise-related injuries, the ElliptiGO is something of a reprieve. He's out there again, upright in the wind and the rain and moving forward quickly, albeit more quickly than a runner and more smoothly.

The bike will do 30 mph and climb Woodside's steep and winding Old La Honda Road “with no problem,” Mr. Pate said in a recent interview at

Cafe Borrone in Menlo Park. And a trail-running version? “I think that's a ways off,” Mr. Pate said.

He has taken the ElliptiGO on the infamous Death Ride, a grueling one-day, 130-mile contest through five mountain passes in the Sierra. “It's like doing Old La Honda Road 15 times,” he said. “We're serious endurance athletes. We wanted to deliver an experience to our customers that is close to running.”

It is because Mr. Pate is a

See **BIKE**, page 8

Al's Nursery in Portola Valley sold to 'angel buyer'

■ Windmill preschool had been negotiating to buy property.

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

So it's goodbye to Al's Nursery, which closed on March 16 after 51 years of serving the town of Portola Valley at 900 Portola Road, and it's hello to ... well, that isn't clear. It's up to the "angel buyer" who bought the place to decide what to do with it, said former nursery co-owner John Wu.

The doors were supposed to reopen as the new home of Windmill preschool, another Portola Valley institution and one that's been looking for a permanent home.

The school's purchase of the nursery was just days away in early March, Mr. Wu told the Almanac, when Windmill asked for a six-month extension. "They dropped a bombshell on us," he said, speaking for himself and his wife and co-owner Karin Wu. "For us, it was

like sitting on pins and needles for the next five days."

To be a school, the property would need a zoning change from residential-commercial to straight commercial, Mr. Wu said. Such a change was not likely to be problematic, he added, but speculated that the school's donors and negotiators may have gotten cold feet at the prospect of dealing with the surprise of a zoning change in addition to a conditional use permit.

As for the future of 900 Portola Road, the "angel buyer" stepped in at the last minute. "We were stuck in a really bad place," Mr. Wu said. "We were very fortunate."

It could still be the new home of Windmill School, but perhaps on

a lease basis. "We have expressed to Windmill that this buyer would certainly entertain the idea of Windmill coming in," Mr. Wu said.

Monika Cheney, president of the school's board of directors, said in a

appreciation of nature, and a sense of community.

"Windmill's Capital Campaign is thrilled with the opportunity to secure this critical asset for families in our community, and continues to be prepared to acquire the property, pending a needed zoning adjustment."

'We have expressed to Windmill (preschool) that this buyer would certainly entertain the idea of Windmill coming in.'

FORMER NURSERY CO-OWNER JOHN WU

March 24 statement that Windmill "has been and continues to be very interested in purchasing Al's Nursery in order to provide the children and youth of our community with both a preschool and family education center.

"The beautiful grounds of Al's Nursery would provide an ideal setting for instilling in our children a life-time love of learning, an

The town had offered to buy the place about a year and a half back, but that went

nowhere, Mr. Wu said. The town's offer was, "to our liking, way too low," given the appraised value, he said.

There's been no word from the town since, Mr. Wu said, though the Town Council met in an emergency closed session about the property on March 23. The council took no action, Mayor Ted Driscoll said.

The private preschool was founded, according to its website, in the 1950s on Portola Road near the large windmill from which it took its name. It has had several homes since.

Windmill had proposed in 2004 to relocate to the new Town Center. At the time, plans for the Town Center had not yet coalesced.

A brainstorming session produced seven or eight layouts for the complex. The Town Council, while not opposed to the school's renting space in the two generic classrooms planned for the community hall, declined to dedicate space for it.

Opponents of having the school at Town Center cited traffic impacts eight times a day, the likelihood of two-story buildings in a town with "rural character," and the prospect of involving the town in education.

Advocates for the school at Town Center spoke of a greater sense of community that a preschool could help create. ■

Planner envisions alternative future for Bay Area rail travel

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

There are rumors of electric trains coming to San Mateo County. If high-speed trains someday travel between San Francisco and Los Angeles, and if their route includes the Peninsula, and if the Caltrain tracks are then electrified, then electric trains will run through Atherton and Menlo Park.

A consultant to the town of Portola Valley is proposing an alternative plan to bring electric and high-speed trains to the Bay Area, including Atherton and Menlo Park.

Electric trains could have been here long ago. In the late 1950s, San Mateo County was one of five counties in the San Francisco Bay Area Transit District. The district

could assess taxes and issue bonds and had a round-the-Bay light-rail system planned, according to a history at the website of Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART).

The plan derailed, according to the BART account, because San Mateo County supervisors were "cool to the plan." They chose to exit the district in December 1961, citing the proposed system's "high costs" and the "adequate service" from Southern Pacific commuter trains, now Caltrain.

George Mader, who retired in 2010 after 45 years as Portola Valley's town planner, has another angle. The "cool to the plan" characters were two men of influence, he said in a March 11 letter to Portola Valley Mayor Ted Driscoll.

The "major problems," Mr. Mader said, were T. Louis Chess,

who chaired the county Board of Supervisors and worked for Southern Pacific Railway, and David D. Bohannon, a "major player" in the county and the developer of the then-new Hillsdale Shopping Center.

BART would take shoppers away from Hillsdale and into San Francisco, "where shopping was rather good at the time," Mr. Mader said. For his part, Mr. Chess was protecting Southern Pacific. And the county voters would have had to decide on whether to join BART.

"These short-sighted and selfish people did not let the residents vote," Mr. Mader said. "A travesty!"

As for high-speed rail today, Mr. Mader suggests "a much better solution" to the route controversy: Stop it at San Jose and extend BART around the Bay using the money that would have been spent on the South Bay and Peninsula sections of a high-speed rail line. ■

Town may regulate commercial use of tennis/sports courts

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

A regulation is in the works in Portola Valley that would establish criteria to determine when a professional such as a tennis instructor will need to obtain an agreement with the town to teach at public recreational facilities such as the tennis courts at Town Center.

In a nutshell, occasional one-on-one lessons arranged by residents will not need town scrutiny, but an agreement and insurance will likely be necessary for instructors whose sessions have the tendency to displace residents.

The Town Council, at its March 23 meeting, agreed to consider three factors governing

the need for a permit: frequency of use, intensity of use, and the number of students who are from out of town. Staff is working on ordinance language.

No residents have complained, said Assistant Town Manager Janet McDougall. But because the town does have a formal relationship with a tennis pro who has an agreement and has paid for insurance, an instructor on a nearby court without such an agreement would have an unfair advantage, she said.

"Parity and liability are the issues," she said.

The council split initially on whether to craft a regulation that covers all scenarios. Councilman and attorney Steve Toben imagined an example of an aerobics class on the central lawn at Town Center in which students are asked to jump on to and off the low wall there. One of them might fall, and the town could be liable.

He questioned whether the regulation should be broad enough to cover that.

The suggested alternative has the ordinance aiming at the tennis courts and all-sport/basketball court at Town Center with the option to broaden it later if necessary.

Since the soccer and baseball fields are already well regulated, Councilwoman Ann Wengert suggested that the ordinance, for now, be directed at the Town Center courts. ■

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Woodside residents to recruiter: Find us another Susan George

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

Silence reigned in Woodside's Independence Hall for a brief time at the March 22 meeting of the Town Council.

Executive recruiter Bobbi C. Peckham, hired to find a new town manager, had listened to four residents sing the praises of outgoing (and absent) Town Manager Susan George. Ms. Peckham then asked the residents to name a few problems that Ms. George, who led Town Hall for the past 18 years, might not have addressed.

After 15 or 20 seconds, interrupted by so much as a syllable, resident Sandy Fontana broke the silence. "Nobody's perfect," she said.

The ideal, said Tony Fontana, would be to find a clone of Ms. George and hire her.

The meeting's agenda was simple: a community discussion, led by Ms. Peckham, on desirable traits and values in a new town manager. Ms. Peckham is expected to present a draft candidate profile to the council on April 12. Ms. George has said she would retire in January 2012.

Not unlike a cheerleader, Ms. Peckham raised questions in an effort to get a "conversation" going among the gathered residents on current and future issues and challenges, as well as elicit comments, whether of praise or otherwise.

That conversation never really got going, but there was plenty of praise for Ms. George, particularly for her fiscal acumen. The town, which has a mandate for a general fund reserve of 15 percent, had a projected reserve of 34 percent in June

2010. That is expected rise to 40 percent by this June, Ms. George said.

Residents commented that Ms. George's successor should have similar people and leadership skills and, most important, experience in small-town government. Ms. Peckham should start by looking in Woodside itself, they said.

"If we find someone that lives in the town now, that's the way we ought to go," Mr. Fontana said.

Resident Ronald Frede agreed. "There's no way that we can explain what we're like by going to other communities in California," he told Ms. Peckham. "I certainly believe that every-

'I certainly believe that everything we stand for in Woodside is conservative (fiscally) and tradition, tradition, tradition.'

RESIDENT RONALD FREDE

thing we stand for in Woodside is conservative (fiscally) and tradition, tradition, tradition."

"Woodside is constantly facing pressure from outside," said Betsy Hobson, a member of the town's Planning Commission. "You hear things like, 'We don't want to look like Atherton.' That's true. Woodside is really concerned about staying rural, but what does rural mean? I wrestle with that question a lot."



Susan George

The manager faces daily interactions with "all kinds of people," from town staff to big-shot Silicon Valley entrepreneurs, Ms. Hobson said. "It's quite a difficult juggling act to be able to manage all those people. The town manager has to be a leader of his or her staff so that all those people pull the wagon in the same direction."

Isn't a town's character, rural or otherwise, a matter for elected officials? Asked in an interview to comment, Janet McDougall, assistant town manager in Portola Valley, said staff's understanding of public policy is important in ensuring that legalities and issues surrounding fairness and liability don't get lost in the discussion, and that the discussion takes place in public.

"It's our responsibility to make sure that, if it appears that issues that need to be raised to protect the integrity of the town and the financial stability of the town, that they not get overlooked," Ms. McDougall said. "It's important that we have a role, but it shouldn't necessarily be at the forefront."

Ms. Peckham, who works out of Sacramento, said her candidate search would start with the Peninsula, followed by the East Bay, Marin County and Santa Clara County. "There is a certain culture in the Bay Area that I'm not going to find in Southern California," she said. "I think what's really critical is to start right here in this county."

Ms. Peckham said she expects to receive 50 to 80 resumes. Of those, she said, she expects to choose 20 to 25 for follow-up questionnaires. Face-to-face interviews with 12 to 15 will follow, then a recommendation of about eight finalists to the council, she said. ■

Menlo Park BBC sexual assault trial ends abruptly with plea

By Sandy Brundage
Almanac Staff Writer

Although the prosecution was no longer offering a deal, a man charged with committing sexual assault at the British Bankers Club tried to take the deal anyway.

Juan Gustavo Robles-Alejo, 30, pleaded no contest to felony sexual assault of an unconscious person and misdemeanor sexual battery in San Mateo County Superior

Court on March 24 after one victim testified.

The district attorney's office said he entered the plea even after prosecutors told him a pre-trial deal for reduced time was no longer on the table. Now facing up to eight years in state prison, he will be sentenced on May 14.

Formerly employed as a busboy and cook at the British Bankers Club in Menlo Park, Mr. Robles-Alejo and Moises Rojas, 26, were charged with assaulting two wom-

en at the club on June 9, 2010.

According to police, the suspects followed two women who went to an upstairs room in the club to sleep after becoming intoxicated. They awoke to find Mr. Robles-Alejo fondling them while Mr. Rojas kept watch.

The district attorney's office said the club's security cameras recorded the incident.

Last month Mr. Rojas pleaded no contest to being an accessory to sexual assault. He managed to avoid state prison, thanks to the plea, and instead was sentenced to time served, three years of supervised probation, and \$290 in fines. ■

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Is Leverage Always Good?

Dear Monica: I am interested in buying residential income/investment property using a minimum down payment and borrowing as much as allowed. My plan is to take advantage of current lowered prices in anticipation of good appreciation in the coming years. What do you think of this plan?

James W.

Dear James: When buying residential rental property the analysis of what is prudent or not is dependent on many factors. You will want to look at price, projected rents and vacancies, location, regulatory issues that may affect the property, and a range of other issues. How to structure the financing is another decision you will make and this is a very important one. The recent and

still current downturn in real estate values in nearly all markets should teach investors the impact of relying on too much leverage when buying property. You cannot always expect property values to rise. The market could be flat for a long period.

Even in periods of no appreciation, income property can still produce a good return if it produces good income and the owner has positive cash flow. Rental income can be much like dividend income. And by putting down sufficient cash to purchase the property, your investment is better protected should the market decline. Lenders are requiring borrowers to put more cash down for income property than they were during the pre-downturn years. This is a very good thing and makes the overall market much more stable.

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



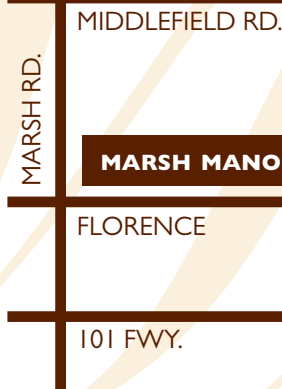
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Bicycle for would-be runners

BIKE

continued from page 5

serious athlete and was sidelined by injuries that the ElliptiGO came to be. "It was awful, it was awful," he said of his inability to run. He said he hated using elliptical workout machines in a gym and could not find the bike he imagined he wanted.

"Hey Dude, I want you to build me an elliptical bike," he recalled saying to Mr. Teal, who in addition to running ultra marathons is a consulting mechanical engineer.

"OK, I can do that," Mr. Teal reportedly replied.

"Six years later and here we are," Mr. Pate said.

"He's truly an elite guy within running," Mr. Pate said of Mr. Teal, who is also 38. "A lot of why this (bike) feels so much like running is because of him."

Evolution of a machine

"No one has ever tried to emulate the outdoor experience of running," Mr. Pate said.

Asked how many hours of thinking had gone into this bike, Mr. Pate estimated 1,000 initial hours by Mr. Teal, another 2,000 hours by both of them leading up to the day they quit their jobs to work on it fulltime, and about 7,000 hours altogether.

Their first paycheck was in



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Bryan Pate of Atherton is the co-president and co-founder of ElliptiGO, a manufacturer of a stand-up road bicycle in which the rider emulates the motions and muscular involvement of running while traveling at speeds of up to 30 mph.

January 2009. Now, with 10 employees, retailers across the country and \$2.5 million in revenue over the last 12 months, they expect to make a profit in 2011, Mr. Pate said. About 40 people, most of them customers, have invested in the company.

The bikes are manufactured in Taiwan, "where the best bikes in the world are built," he said.

Why not in the United States?

"I'm a former Marine," Mr. Pate said. "We wanted to build them in the United States, but we'd have trouble selling them at (the current price of) \$2,500. At \$4,500, it's not going to fly." For the five bikes built here, the frames were \$3,000 apiece, and even at \$1,500 it would not have worked, he said.

Taiwan and China are where 80 percent of the spokes, tubes, wheels, tires and brakes are made, he said. "I think we have the manufacturing expertise here but not the component parts."

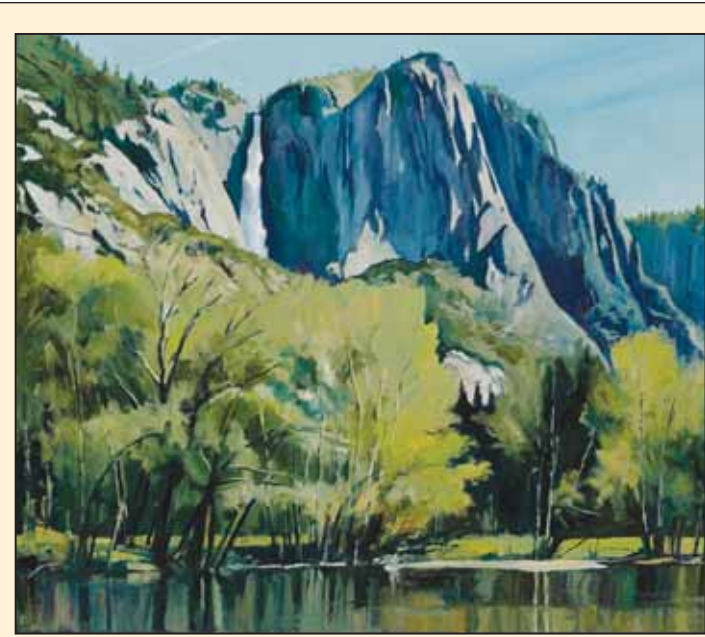
The frame is aircraft-grade aluminum to make it light and stiff, he said. The ski-like drive arms are carbon fiber and the eight-gear rear wheel hub can be shifted from the handlebars, including when stopped.

A twist loosens the collar on the handlebar column and the 40-pound bike folds in on itself. It fits on a bike roof rack, trunk rack or hitch rack, and three can fit in an SUV, Mr. Pate said.

The adjustable stride length on the bike can be set to focus on exercising the muscles on the front of the thigh, or calves and the muscles on the back of the thigh, he said.

Of the patents involved, two are licensed from elliptical-motion running machine inventor Larry D. Miller and 14 credited to ElliptiGO, Mr. Pate said.

Go to elliptigo.com for more information. ■



'Sierra Splendor'

"Yosemite Falls with River," an oil on canvas by Jim Caldwell of Woodside, is part of the artist's exhibit at Woodside Gallery, 3056 Woodside Road, in Woodside through April. The exhibit, called "Sierra Splendor: Celebrating Our Natural World," shows Mr. Caldwell's interpretations of Half Dome, Vernal Falls, Bridal Falls and Yosemite Falls. Woodside Gallery is located between Buck's restaurant and the Woodside Bakery and Cafe. Gallery hours are 10 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Saturday. Call 529-1988.

Whooping cough vaccine required for students

All students in seventh-grade through high school who attend California schools will have to show proof of vaccination against whooping cough before returning to school next fall, the county health department has announced.

"Nearly 55,000 students in San Mateo County will be affected by

the new law, which was prompted by California's recent epidemic of whooping cough, also known as pertussis," Robyn Thaw of the health department said in a press release. The law goes into effect on July 1.

In addition to whooping cough, the vaccine, known as Tdap, also protects against tetanus and

diphtheria, according to the press release. The health department also recommends the meningococcal vaccine, the HPV vaccine series, and a second chickenpox shot for teens and preteens.

Go to shotsforschool.org for more information about vaccine requirements for teens and preteens.

Atherton Library now offering delivery service to homebound

Atherton residents whose access to their local library is limited by illness or other factors may be eligible to have library materials delivered to their homes.

The Atherton Library's new Homebound Program began on March 15, and will serve residents

with short- or long-term illness, physical constraints that limit mobility, and visual disabilities. Senior citizens who don't drive also are eligible for the program.

Program participants will have longer lending periods and will not be charged overdue fines

for material they check out for home-delivery. All library material — including books, magazines, music recordings and films — will be available to participants.

The library is taking sign-ups for the program, and is also signing on volunteers who can help with deliveries. For more information, call the library at 328-2422.

Rojas to retire

ROJAS

continued from page 5

He described the council's reaction to his announcement as positive and gracious.

Mayor Rich Cline attributed the decision to Mr. Rojas' desire for more family time. "He has been in the local government job a long time. In this instance I think he feels it is time and that is all," he said.

The mayor added that the job of city manager, as well as council, is full of challenges and potential controversy, and that nothing happening currently differs from what people in those positions have faced during past years.

City staff and the council will meet during upcoming weeks to decide whether to promote from within or recruit outside Menlo Park for a new city manager.

What will Mr. Rojas do with all that free time, particularly on Tuesday nights when he no longer has to sit through council meetings past midnight? Some teaching, he said, working with his church, and hanging out with his grandchildren.

He plans to remain in Menlo Park, he said. As for the \$1.2 million loan he received from the city to buy a home in Menlo Park upon being hired in 2007, Mr. Rojas said he has two years to pay off the balance — approximately \$41,500 — and may either refi-

nance or sell the house.

Mr. Rojas currently makes \$224,500, according to a state database, and for a pension, will get 2.7 percent of his highest annual salary averaged over three years, times the number of years he's participated in the state's retirement fund up to 30 years.

The payout for accumulated leave time upon retiring will be worked out closer to July. "It depends on how much leave time I have at that point. I have options to consider regarding leave time so I will make those final decisions in a couple of months," Mr. Rojas said.

His replacement may be hired under the same "2.7 percent at 55" pension formula despite the passage of Measure L in November. The measure raised the minimum retirement age for new public employees, excluding police officers, by five years to 60, and also decreased their maximum pension benefits by 0.7 percentage points, to 2 percent of their highest annual salary averaged over three years.

But those changes have yet to be implemented, thanks to ongoing contracts with public employee unions such as the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME). City Attorney Bill McClure said that even if the new manager is hired from outside the city, the existing pension formula remains in effect until the current contract with AFSCME expires in October. ■

Pet Place hosts rabbit-adoption, fundraising event

The Pet Place in downtown Menlo Park is hosting a rabbit-adoption and fundraising event from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, April 2.

The event is sponsored by SaveABunny.org. Volunteers from the Menlo Park Girl Scout Troop 33170 will be on

hand to help out.

The Pet Place is at 777 Santa Cruz Ave. Go to SaveABunny.org for more information.

Caltrain cobbles together financial survival plan; negotiates for 5 million in VTA funds

By Sandy Brundage
Almanac Staff Writer

If negotiations with the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) go well, Caltrain might get an infusion of \$4.9 million over two years to prop up its operating budget.

Right now, the public transit program faces a projected \$30 million shortfall in its operating budget, and could run out of cash by 2015, according to the agency.

If it doesn't find a solution, Caltrain may cut the number of weekly trains from 86 to 48, eliminate weekend trains, and close up to seven stations.

But the VTA funds could ease the severity of those cuts.

"There will have to be some service reductions," San Mateo County Transit District CEO Mike

Scanlon told the board of directors on March 24, as quoted in an agency press release. "I'm cautiously optimistic that we can put together the puzzle and while there will be some sacrifices and some cuts, it won't be nearly as severe as we had originally planned."

The money would come as repayment of funds extended to VTA by SamTrans in 1991 to buy right-of-way for Caltrain.

"We agreed they wouldn't be obligated to pay it back, but would make their best effort to do so," explained Mark Simon, SamTrans executive officer for public affairs. The agency anticipated repayment in 2007, after voters passed a proposition allowing gas taxes to be allocated to transit.

"That was the first time around of \$4 gas, so that fund got very large," he said. "But instead of

allocating the funds to transit, the state took them. So we never quite got the money."

While the repayment could help Caltrain, it doesn't do much for its parent agency, which appears to be prioritizing buses over trains. "Saying 'you can have the money, but have to use it for Caltrain, doesn't help SamTrans,'" Mr. Simon said. "It all affects how much service we can provide. Either we find another source of money, or the cuts get worse."

According to the board, the funding would provide only two years' of relief, leaving the directors searching for ways to propose a permanent funding source to voters for approval in 2012. Currently Caltrain receives most of its money through contributions from San Francisco, the Santa Clara VTA, and SamTrans. ■

What's your frequency? Menlo library seeks council approval for upgrade

By Sandy Brundage
Almanac Staff Writer

A desire for faster checkout and fewer literary thefts lies behind a proposed Menlo Park public library upgrade. As part of a system-wide change within the Peninsula Library network, barcodes tagging each item will be replaced by radio frequency identification (RFID) chips.

Menlo Park Library administrator Susan Holmer said she is requesting money for the upgrade from the city's capital improvements program budget. The plan has yet to be approved by the council, which should vote on the improvements at its April 26 meeting.

The project to retag all of the materials and purchase equipment would cost about \$150,000, which would come

from a combination of general funds and special library funds, according to Ms. Holmer.

The Peninsula Library System negotiated the contract with vendor 3M since the upgrades are system-wide.

Librarian Nick Szegda said the RFID system would let patrons check out a stack of items at once, instead of going item by item. "The current system also gives us frequent false alarms — the library patron has (his or her) items checked out, but because of the limitations of the technology, checked-out items still trip the security alarm," he said.

"Front desk staff have to then call the patron back and recheck all of (the) items. This happens at least once an hour."

Not all Peninsula libraries will make the switch at the same time. The Foster City and Red-

wood Shores branches are first up, with Menlo Park currently figuring out its plan for retagging the collection and planning to start with the more popular collections by July or August, according to library staff.

San Mateo, Mountain View, and Santa Clara already use RFID; residents may also have spotted the technology in action at Ikea and Home Depot.

At a time when the City Council is thinking about closing the library one day a week, on top of deciding last summer to close the day after nine holidays, justifying the need to swap checkout systems could be an uphill battle.

"I would say RFID is a 'pothole' issue — it costs money to fix now, but it saves money in the long run," Mr. Szegda said. "We are automating the routine stuff to focus on the things we do best — talk to patrons about books, promote reading, and answer complicated reference questions that Google cannot. There are still quite a few of those!" ■

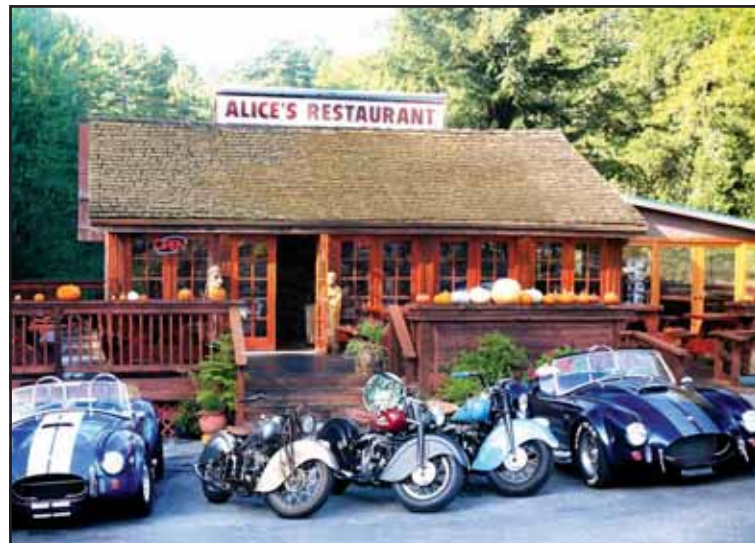
Healthcare district board appoints new president

Kim Griffin is the new president of the Sequoia Healthcare District board of directors. She was appointed by the board to succeed Don Horsley, who left in January to become a member of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors.

Ms. Griffin, 53, is a registered nurse with 25 years of experience as a bedside nurse in acute

care hospitals. She works as a pediatric cardiology nurse with her physician husband, Michael, at Children's Cardiology of the Bay Area, located in San Mateo.

The Sequoia Healthcare District board is Ms. Griffin's first elective office. She outpolled incumbent Malcolm MacNaughton in an election two years ago.



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Police Department HVAC
PROJECT NO. 56042

Notice is hereby given that SEALED BIDS will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, California 94027, until 3:00 p.m. April 13, at which time they will be publicly opened and read, for performing the following work:

Remove current split HVAC system (boiler/condenser) above police department squad room, furnish and install a new 4-ton rooftop unit tying it into current ductwork where possible. This price to be inclusive of demolition, electrical work, structural plans, roofing, all related carpentry needs.

The Engineer's Estimate for the project is: \$31,500.00

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

Bids must be for the entire work, and shall be submitted in sealed envelopes clearly marked: "Bid of (Contractor) for 2011 SPRING PATCHING, Project No. 56050", along with date and time of bid opening.

Plans and specifications may be obtained at the Town of Atherton's website at www.ci.atherton.ca.us under Bid Solicitation at no cost. Additional important information is contained in Town of Atherton Standard Specifications, which are available on line at www.ci.atherton.ca.us/publicworks.html. Contractor shall be responsible for any addendums that may be posted on the Town's website. No Planholders list shall be available.

Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the form of cash, a cashier's or certified check or bid bond for not less than ten percent (10%) of the amount of the bid, as a guarantee that the bidder, if awarded the Contract, will fulfill the terms of the bid.

The Town of Atherton, The City, reserves the right to reject any or all bids; to make any awards or any rejections in what it alone considers to be in the best interest of the City, and waive any informalities or irregularities in the bids. The contract will be awarded, if at all, to the responsible bidder that submits the lowest responsive bid. [NOTE: If there are alternates in the bid, the City will need to state how the low bid will be determined, as required by PCC 20103.8.]

Bidders are hereby notified that, pursuant to California Civil Code Sections 3247 and 3248 and Standard Specifications Section 3.02, the successful bidder will be required to provide payment and performance bonds in the amounts of 100% of the contract price.

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

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

All bidders shall be licensed under the provisions of the Business and Professions Code to do the type of work contemplated in the project. The City has determined that the Contractor shall possess a valid Class B license at the time the bid is submitted. Failure to possess the specified license shall render the bid non-responsive.

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

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

A mandatory pre-bid meeting will be held for all interested bidders to review the work site(s) and conditions, and for the Town staff to respond to questions, at;

**Atherton Council Chambers
94 Ashfield Road, Atherton, California
at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, April 6, 2011.**

Failure to attend this mandatory pre-bid meeting will result in disqualification of bidding for this project.

Any questions regarding the project should be directed to Steve Tyler, Project Engineer, telephone: (650) 752-0541 or by written Requests for Information (RFI) to: Public Works Department, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, CA 94027, no later than five business days before bid opening. RFIs may be emailed to styler@ci.atherton.ca.us or faxed to (650) 752-0591.

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

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

Date: _____



Photo by Anne Ashmead

The players, from left, are Rudy Diaz, Charlie Phillips, Phillip Myers, Scott Blankenberg and Adam Greenlow.

St. Raymond boys win title

The eighth-grade boys basketball team at St. Raymond School in Menlo Park won the North-South PPSL Championship against All Souls on Wednesday night, March 9, at Serra High School in San Mateo.

With a final score of 42-25, the five-man St. Raymond Cardinals team finished the season undefeated.

Coaches were Randy Keller, Terry Haught and Ken Gardner.

The five St. Raymond players — Scott Blankenberg, Rudy Diaz, Adam Greenlow, Phillip Myers and Charlie Phillips — dominated the 10-man All Souls team from South San Francisco, for the Peninsula Parishes School League Championship.

Submitted by Katie Blankenberg of Portola Valley, who attends Sacred Heat Prep in Atherton.

Woodside: May Day parade officials, royal court chosen

The officials for the 89th Woodside May Day parade scheduled for Saturday, May 7, have been chosen.

The grand marshals are Woodside Elementary School music teachers Kara DiAmbrosio and Beth Dameron, according to a statement from the parade coordinator.

The kindergarten Royal Court are Hunter Foster as king, Morgan Helfand as queen, Ryan Goldberg and Justin Pretre as princes, and Nina Pasquesi and Catherine Pittman as princesses.

After the parade, there will be a ceremony announcing Wood-

side's citizen of the year.

To nominate someone, send email by April 15 to www.woodsideCOY@yahoo.com or pick up a form in the Woodside School Office. The nomination must include the person's name, reasons why he or she deserves the award, and your own contact information.

For more information, send email to parade co-chairwomen Kerri Stenson and Kassia McCurdy at kerristenson@gmail.com or kassia@decorvm.com.

To participate in the parade, register by end of business on Monday, May 2.



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OBITUARIES

Laurel Crittenden

Portola Valley gardener

Laurel E. Crittenden grew up in Portola Valley, taught in Portola Valley schools as a substitute teacher, and helped design gardens there from her outpost at the Ladera Garden Center, where she worked for about 10 years.

Ms. Crittenden died March 18 at her home in Washington state, relatives said. She was 58. A memorial service is set for 3:30 p.m. on Sunday, April 17, at the Valley Presbyterian Church at 945 Portola Road in Portola Valley.

Washington, D.C., was Ms. Crittenden's birthplace, and the University of California at Santa Barbara her alma mater. She graduated college in 1973 and moved back to Portola Valley, living there from 1985 to 2005, her daughter Roxanne told the Almanac.

Ms. Crittenden was a popular substitute teacher. "She filled up her calendar completely because she was so much in demand," her daughter said.

Ms. Crittenden spent a lot of time outside, whether hiking, long-distance swimming or working in gardens. She swam at the Alpine Hills Swim & Tennis Club for about 15 years, her daughter said. She also did open-water swimming in San Francisco Bay and occasionally competed in the swimming leg of triathlons.

She was "an especially devoted mother" who knitted sweaters for her young relatives and made stuffed animals for sale, her daughter said. She loved the companionship of dogs, particularly Labrador retrievers.

Ms. Crittenden is survived by her daughter Roxanne of Berkeley; and sisters Beth Schwarzman of Cape Cod, Joan Crittenden of Jackson Hole, and Susan Zoller of Portland, Oregon.

The family is asking that donations in Ms. Crittenden's memory be made to the Sempervirens Fund at 419 South San Antonio Road, Los Altos, CA 94022; or to the Puget Sound Labrador Retriever Association at www.pslra.org.

Go to www.westfordfuneral-home.com to share memories of Ms. Crittenden.

William Malkmus

Pioneer in Oregon wine industry



William Malkmus

William Hull Malkmus, a long time Woodside resident, died peacefully on Feb. 27 in Palo Alto after suffering complications from pneumonia. He was 76.

A celebration of his life will be held at Christ Church, Portola Valley, at 10:30 a.m. Saturday, April 16.

Born in Los Angeles, he graduated from Harvard School of North Hollywood, and in 1958 from Stanford University, where he was president of his fraternity, Alpha Delta Phi. He served in the U.S. Marines Reserve. He went on to receive an MBA from Harvard Business School in 1961.

In 1961 he began his business career with Checchi and Co. of Washington, D.C., doing economic consulting in Somalia and Bangladesh. Upon returning to California, he worked as an investment banker for many years with J. Barth, Dean Witter and Bateman Eichler. Later he was CFO of Vivra, a healthcare service company.

A budding oenophile, he began making wine in his San Francisco garage in the 1970s. This led to the founding of Tualatin Vineyards in Forest Grove, Oregon, in 1973. From planting the first vines, to winning Best of Show for both red and white categories at the London International Wine Competition, he and winemaker Bill Fuller were pioneers of the Oregon wine industry. In 1997 Tualatin merged with Willamette Vineyards, and he served on the board.

He is survived by his son, James; daughter Reven; brother Stephen; stepchildren Anne, Shelly and Jim; and four grandchildren. Also surviving are his first wife, Lizbeth McCulloch Malkmus, and second wife, Luanne Grupe Rottici.

He enjoyed skiing, hiking, jogging with his dogs, Stanford sports, fine wines, and good times, family members said.

In his later years, Bill mentored young entrepreneurs and tutored exchange students. He enjoyed tending his vegetable garden, going to church, and watching his grandchildren play, the family said.

The family prefers donations to the Peninsula Humane Society or the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.

Margaret (Peggy) Morris

Voted 'Most Likely to Succeed'



Margaret Morris

Margaret (Peggy) Morris died at her home in Menlo Park on March 3. She was 87.

A memorial service was held March 21 at Menlo Park Presbyterian Church.

Born in Michigan City, Indiana, she moved, at age 2, with her family to Germany, where her father worked as a grain exporter. Five years later, the family moved to High Bridge, New Jersey, and later, Park Ridge, Illinois.

She was voted "most likely to succeed" of her 1941 graduating Maine High School senior class. In 1946, she married 1st Lt. Rex Morris, who was home from the Pacific at the end of World War II, and they moved to the Pacific Northwest, where Rex started his career in the paper industry.

In 1965, the family, now grown by sons Roy, Bill and Ken, and daughter Karen, moved to Menlo Park.

Before the children arrived, she worked as a medical secretary. Afterward, she focused her attention on raising her family.

She enjoyed travels with her husband to Europe, North Africa, and throughout the United States, family members said.

She did volunteer work at schools and hospitals, and with the homeless and youth, the family said.

She was preceded in death by her husband Rex, and her daughter Karen. She is survived by her sons, Roy of Los Angeles, Bill of Santa Cruz, and Ken of Boulder, Colorado; and nine grandchildren.

Memorial donations may be made to the donor's local SPCA.

Barbara Noble Haines

Former resident of Menlo Park

Barbara Noble Haines, a former resident of Menlo Park, died of cancer March 15 in Bennington, Vermont, after a short

illness. She was 70.

Born in Rochester, New York, she attended Brighton Schools and graduated from the University of Rochester in 1962.

She was the feature editor for the Columbus (Ohio) Times before moving to Menlo Park. A former editor and staff writer for the Almanac — then called the Country Almanac — and the Redwood City Almanac, she also taught writing.

Ten years ago, she moved to Manchester Center, Vermont.

See OBITUARIES, page 17

Avenidas presents the 4th Annual

Housing Conference

Saturday, April 2, 8:30 am - 3 pm



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—New York Post/Feb.24, 2009

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DOWNTOWN LOS ALTOS

POLICE CALLS

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

MENLO PARK

Residential burglary report: Loss estimated at \$8,450 in break-in and theft of video camera and memory cards, first block of Wildwood Place, March 22.

Grand theft report: Loss of \$1,500 in theft of cash, Sharon Green Apartments at 350 Sharon Park Drive, March 23.

Auto burglary reports:

■ Loss set at \$957 in break-in and theft of backpack containing wallet, \$40 in cash, earrings, two MP3 players with headphones and cigarette lighter, 900 block of Fremont St., March 23.

■ Loss estimated at \$160 in break-in and theft of GPS device, 700 block of Gilbert Ave., March 22.

Stolen vehicle report: Blue 2000 Toyota 4 Runner, 1000 block of Del Norte Ave., March 19.

Spousal abuse reports:

■ 700 block of Coleman Ave., March 19.

■ 1300 block of Carlton Ave., March 19.

Fraud reports:

■ Unauthorized use of bank card, 500 block of Willow Road, March 23.

■ Unauthorized subscription to newspaper, first block of Hallmark Circle, March 22.

■ Unauthorized use of Social Security number, 1800 block of Bay Laurel Drive, March 18.

WEST MENLO PARK

Theft report: Man stole cup of hot chocolate valued at \$1.29 from convenience store after rummaging about and appearing to threaten store clerk, 3600 block of Alameda de las Pulgas, March 19.

Camp Connection

For more info see our online camp directory at
PaloAltoOnline.com/biz/summercamps

Athletics

Athletic Fitness – “Train with the Best”

Riekes Summer Camps — A world of opportunity and fun-filled learning. Ages 9-18. Strength & conditioning, speed & agility, sport specific training, skills development, professional coaches, pre & post evals, leading edge methods, latest equipment. Sessions run from June through August.
www.riekes.org

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www.bayareaequestrian.net

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www.campjonesgulch.org

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www.alanmargot-tennis.net

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Join former Stanford University Men's and Women's head coach, Hall of Famer and 4-time NCAA Champion Don Shaw this summer at our camp for HS GIRL's July 13th, 14th & 15th and for HS BOY's July 18th, 19th & 20th. This camp gives players, who have the desire, the chance to improve their skills and learn proven techniques that will help them become more consistent and enhance their chances to play at a higher level.
www.mvclub.com

Earl Hansen Football Camp

Learn the fundamentals of football with Earl Hansen, Palo Alto High School and State Champion coach. This is a non-contact camp where kids develop fundamental skills with proven drills and techniques. Full practices in the mornings with 7 on 7 games in the afternoon. July 11 to 15 @ Palo Alto High School. Ages 10 to 14. Lunch provided daily.
www.earlhansenfootballcamp.com

Jefunira Camp

Celebrating our 20th year of Jefunira Camp summer fun in 2011! Come join us for some good old fashion summer fun! Our combination of an exceptional college aged staff and innovative, inclusive programming will create a memorable summer experience for your child. Programming for children ages 4-13. Pre and post camp care offered.
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Fun and Specialized junior camps for Mini (3-5), Beginner, Intermediate 1 & 2, Advanced and Elite Players. Weekly programs designed by Kim Grant to improve players technique, fitness, agility, mental toughness and all around tennis game. Camps in Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Redwood City. Come make new friends and have tons of FUN!!
www.KimGrantTennis.com

Matt Lottich Life Skills Basketball Camp

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www.mllscamp.com

Spring Down Camp Equestrian Center

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www.springdown.com

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<https://stanfordwaterpolocamps.com>

Summer at Saint Francis

Sports & Activity Camp (ages 6-12): This all sports camp provides group instruction in a variety of field, water and court games. Saint Francis faculty and students staff the camp, and the focus is always on fun. The program is dedicated to teaching teamwork, sportsmanship and positive self-esteem.
www.sfhs.com/summer

Summer at Saint Francis

Advanced Sports Camps (5th-9th grades): We offer a wide selection of advanced sports camps designed to provide players with the opportunity to improve both their skill and knowledge of a specific sport. Each camp is run by a Head Varsity Coach at Saint Francis, and is staffed by members of the coaching staff.
www.sfhs.com/summer

Team Esface Elite Basketball Skills Clinics

Spring Training (April-May). High-energy, high-level basketball training for ages 6-16. Use your offseason as a time to develop your basketball skills and IQ with the unparalleled coaching staff of Team Esface. Learn the fundamentals of the game, offensive attack moves and advanced footwork through dynamic drills and competitions led by young, positive coaches including former Division 1 athletes. April and May. Two days per week. Sibling and group discounts available. More information and sign up at: www.teamesface.com

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www.ymcasv.org/summercamp

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650-364-2509

Woodside

650-446-1414

La Honda

415-848-1200

Atherton

650-400-0464

Sunnyvale

408-329-0488

Palo Alto

650-269-7793

Palo Alto

650-291-2888

Palo Alto/Menlo Park/ Redwood City

650-752-8061

Woodside/ Redwood City

1-888-537-3223

Portola Valley

650-851-1114

Stanford

650-725-9016

Mountain View

650-968-1213 ext. 446

Mountain View

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(continued on next page)

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Location: Woodside Elementary School
- Session II** June 27 - July 1
Location: Woodside Elementary School
- Session III** July 11 - July 15
Location: Woodside Elementary School
- Session IV** July 11- July 15
Location: Sequoia High School
- Session V** July 18- July 22
Location: Woodside Elementary School
- Session VI** July 18 - July 22
Location: Sequoia High School

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www.summer.harker.org

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408-553-0537

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www.mid-pen.com

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www.supercamp.com

Stanford/San Jose/Berkeley

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www.techknowhowkids.com

Palo Alto/ Menlo Park/Sunnyvale

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www.woodland-school.org

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Palo Alto/Pleasanton

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www.janoindia.com

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www.riekes.org

Menlo Park

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Emerson: 7/18-7/22; Hacienda: 8/1-8/5

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Emerson: 7/25-7/29; Hacienda: 7/18-7/22

Media Production—integrates writing skills into a media-based project (video, website, photos, art, music, etc.).
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SUMMER CAMPS

Choosing a summer camp for your child

by Karla Kane

The phrase “summer camp” brings to mind images of woodsy cabins, canoes, games of capture the flag and lanyard making; the stuff of treasured memories and Hollywood movies.

But while many such traditional camps exist and are thriving today, the modern camper has a wide variety of camp styles to choose from, including specialty camps dedicated to sports, arts or other interests; church-sponsored retreats; day camps; fitness camps and many more. And camps today vary greatly in length, distance from home and cost. So how can families decide which camp is the best fit?

Sean Nienow, an adviser with the National Summer Camp Association, said it really depends on what the family is looking for in a camp experience, but the first step when considering a sleep-away camp (versus a day program) is to make sure both parent and child are ready for a separation, sometimes of weeks or months.

“It’s normal that there will be some measure of homesickness. But parents have to ask, ‘is the child ready to learn new skills and meet new people?’ Usually yes, they are.”

Often it’s the parents who aren’t ready to let their child go, Mr. Nienow said, and initial bouts of homesickness will quickly pass.

However, “is there value in imposing camp on a child who is completely not interested or ready? Probably not,” he added.

Most camps start accepting children around age 7, he said. Local YMCA and church camps can be short, lasting about one week, while more traditional sleep-away camps can run for several weeks or the whole summer.

Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital Child Psychiatrist Richard Shaw said rather than simply going by the child’s age, parents need to consider the individual needs and personality of their child to determine

Continued on next page

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SAINT FRANCIS HIGH SCHOOL

SUMMER CAMPS

Continued from previous page

whether he or she is ready to go away to camp and not be overly influenced by whether his or her peers are ready.

"Kids may not be at the same developmental age as their friends," he said.

Dr. Shaw said signs that a child is ready to go off to sleep-away camp include initiating basic self-care such as teeth-brushing, tying shoes and hygiene, making friends on their own and being able to trust adults in authority. Participating in sleepovers with friends or staying with relatives away from home successfully are also good signs of camp readiness, he said.

On the other hand, "if a child has never slept away from home, is afraid of the dark or is very shy or a picky eater," he or she may have a hard time adjusting to camp life, he said. Though camp can be a wonderful experience in socialization and confidence building for shy or anxious kids, Shaw recommends preparing them for camp by sending them on one-night overnights or weekend programs first, or to camp with a good friend to ease the transition.

Mr. Nienow recommends a more traditional camp experience, offering a wide variety of activities, for first-time campers, especially those who come from urban areas or who otherwise don't spend much time in the great outdoors.

For children with specific interests, a camp dedicated to one hobby, sport or topic may be a dream come true. However, parents should be sure their child really wants to focus intently on one interest rather than trying the more classic general-camp route.

"Choosing a specialty camp really comes down to making sure the child really and truly has the desire to go and devote themselves to this intense, in-depth experience," Mr. Nienow said.

"If they're at a basketball camp, they're going to be playing basketball four or six hours a day," he said.

For techno-minded kids, a specialty camp such as TechKnowHow (www.techknowhowkids.com), which offers programs at Nativity School in Menlo Park as well as in two Palo Alto locations (El Carmelo School and the Etz Chayim Congregation Center) could be the right choice.

At TechKnowHow, campers can choose between a "Summer Computer and

Continued on next page

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SUMMER CAMPS

Continued from previous page

Lego” program and one in game design.

“Lego builders make creations which move with a motor, gears, battery box, and other specialty parts. It’s a great way to learn how machines and vehicles actually work using a fun and familiar construction system,” Director Sue Mofsie-Stevenson said of the first program, serving campers ages 5 to 14.

In the game-design camp, kids ages 10 to 14 use software to create 2-dimensional and 2-dimensional games of all kinds.

“Campers build the games completely, creating the behavior for the game objects, designing the setting, scoring system, and even adding music and sound effects,” she said.

The cost of attending Tech-KnowHow runs from \$215 per week for half days and \$375 per week for all-day sessions.

Budget concerns can have a major impact on camp choice. Rates vary, but a standard entry-level sleep-away camp could start from around \$500 a week. Day camps or church camps can be cheaper, whereas high-end programs can cost thousands of dollars per week, Mr. Nienow said.

National Camp Association staff members such as Mr. Nienow offer free advice to any parent looking to choose a camp. A visit to www.summercamp.org puts the reader in touch with a variety of articles and tips on the camp-selection process.

Mr. Nienow said parents concerned with finding the right camp for their child should go directly to the source and check out interesting camps on an individual, in-depth basis. Speaking with the head of the camp can go a long way toward determining if the camp is a good choice, especially if the child has special needs or the parent has particular concerns.

“Check out what each camp is offering and make sure it’s a good fit for child. Talk to the staff and the director; they want to talk to parents and make sure it’s a good fit and that the child has a good time,” he said.

No matter what type of camp a child attends, the experience will make a lifelong impression, Mr. Nienow said.

“Any adult who ever went to camp as a child remembers it. For many kids, it’s their first time away from mom and dad, their first taste of independence, learning a new sport, finding a first love. They are impacted for life,” he said. ■



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OBITUARIES

continued from page 11

She is survived by her son, Russell T. Haines of La Honda; sisters Penelope Tobey of Amsterdam, New York, and Karen Noble Hanson of Rochester, New York; and a brother, Scott C. Noble of Stowe, Vermont.

Services will be held in Manchester, Vermont. A memorial service will be held May 28 at St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Rochester, New York, with burial at White Haven Memorial Park.

The family prefers memorial gifts to Vermont Public Radio in her memory: Vermont Public Radio, 365 Troy Ave., Colchester, VT 05446.

George McDonald*Lived a long, colorful life*

George Daniel McDonald, a Menlo Park resident since 2005, lived a long life with an employ-

ment history that reflected his times, including work in a logging camp, on an ocean-going vessel, and in a foundry. He also had a link to a famous family feud. Mr. McDonald died Feb. 20 at the age of 100.

His father, (Archibald) Daniel McDonald of the Arizona territory, cooked in Canadian lumber camps; his mother, Mary Elizabeth Hatfield of Kentucky, had been orphaned in the feud with the McCoy family, relatives said.

While still in school, George followed his father into logging as a whistle punk, a safety-oriented occupation running a steam-powered whistle to alert workers to ongoing operations at the camp, according to a logging glossary.

After a time as a competitive runner for Oakland Technical High School and the Olympic Club of San Francisco, he signed on to a banana boat that plied the waters between San Francisco

and Hawaii, relatives said.

His life's work was patternmaking, a meticulous craft of making wooden originals of what were to become iron parts. The patterns were packed in sand, which held its shape after the patterns were removed so that molten iron could be poured in.

Mr. McDonald, who was a 32nd degree Mason, worked at Macaulay foundry in Berkeley for decades, relatives said. One day on a streetcar en route to work, he met his future wife, Barbara Sainsot.

Mr. McDonald's wife preceded him in death and he is survived by his daughter Sally McDonald Menzel of Irvine; sons Warren McDonald of Menlo Park and Michael McDonald; seven grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren. No services are planned.

"George will be greatly missed by all who had the great fortune to know him," his daughter Sally said.

Laurel E. Crittenden*Sept 17, 1952- March 18, 2011*

Laurel E. Crittenden, 58, of Custer, WA, formerly of Portola Valley, CA, died unexpectedly of natural causes. The youngest of four daughters, Laurel was born to Max and Mabel Crittenden in Washington DC. In 1956, she moved with her family to Portola Valley, CA. She spent many summers with her sisters and parents in the high mountains of Utah. She graduated from UCSB in 1973 and returned to Portola Valley in 1985. Laurel was an excellent long-distance swimmer, avid hiker, gifted gardener, craftswoman, and an especially devoted mother. Dogs were constant companions throughout Laurel's life and she particularly loved Labrador Retrievers. She is

survived by her daughter Roxanne and her three sisters Beth Schwarzman, Joan Crittenden and Susan Zoller. She is already terribly missed by friends and family.

Donations can be made in Laurel's memory to the Sempervirens Fund, 419 South San Antonio Rd., Los Altos, CA, 94022 or to Puget Sound Lab Rescue Program online at www.pslra.org.

A Celebration of Laurel's life will be held on Sun., April 17th at 3:30 pm at Valley Presbyterian Church in Portola Valley, CA. Share memories with the family at www.westfordfuneralhome.com.



PAID OBITUARY

Robert MacDonald*Sept. 24, 1927-March 19, 2011*

Robert John MacDonald, the most wonderful and humorous husband, father and grandfather, left those who loved him most on Saturday, March 19th, 2011 at 3:45pm. He was 83 years old. Born in Scranton, Pennsylvania, he settled in San Francisco as a young man where he received his law degree from Hastings College of the Law. He went on to practice in San Mateo County for over 55 years.

Fair and generous, he provided his family with so many memorable opportunities and a wonderfully stable family life. We are grateful to have had him for so long. He loved the best of things, especially fine food. He never missed a meal and loved to dine out with friends. Travel for him was about where the next great meal would be. Whether a hot-dog, donut or a 5 star meal, that was one of his true pleasures in life.

Bob's generosity extended to his friends and charitable organizations. He was on the board of United Cerebral Palsy (UCP) for 30 years and National President for 8 of those years.

He is survived by his wife Jean, his four daughters; Lisa, Amy, Kathy and Joie, his two grandchildren, Stephanie and Rob and his son-in-law Steve Field. He will be missed and his memory cherished for the rest of our lives.

A heartfelt and special thanks to Carol, his Executive Assistant and dear friend of 30 years and her husband Dave, for their constant care and support.

We also thank Bob's many friends for their kind words and condolences. In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to either UCP or a charity near to your heart.

Friends and family are invited to attend his memorial service which will be held at 10am, Thursday March 31st at St Gregory's Church, 2715 Hacienda St. and 28th Ave. in San Mateo.



PAID OBITUARY

Arthur J. Sullivan*Dec. 21, 1923 - March 8, 2011*

Arthur J Sullivan passed away on Tuesday, March 8th, succumbing after a valiant three year battle with the cumulative effects of Parkinson's disease, minor strokes, and other ailments. Despite the diminished quality of life he endured over the past three years, Art maintained his positive spirit and sense of humor. His lifespan of 87 years was one of great accomplishment and had a tremendous impact on all of those fortunate to have known him.

Art was born and raised in San Francisco, and graduated from Saint Ignatius High School, and fought bravely in World War II before returning to complete his degree at the University of San Francisco.

Art met and married Evelyn Lavelle, his companion and soul mate in 1948, and they have lived on the Peninsula for the past sixty years. In addition to his beloved Evie, Art is survived by his six children Nancy (Hal), Joan, Jim, Martha, Paul (Claire) and Jerry (Betsy), in addition to his nine grandchildren. Art also had a very special relationship with Brian and Tim Sullivan, sons of his deceased brother Harry.

Art will be missed deeply by his family and a host of friends and loved ones. In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be made to the St. Vincent de Paul Society of St. Pius Church.

PAID OBITUARY

Beatrice Fox*Oct. 30, 1918-March 15, 2011*

Born in San Francisco October 30, 1918, she died peacefully on March 15, 2011. Known as Missy to her friends, her early years were spent in Juneau, Alaska where her father, John F. Mullen, ran the B.M. Behrends Bank, established by her grandfather in 1891. During high school, she would travel by steam ship from Alaska to San Francisco each year to attend Convent of the Sacred Heart Atherton. Her first two years of college were at Dominican College in San Rafael then she transferred to San Francisco College for Women (Lone Mountain - USF) where she graduated with a degree in history.

Living and working in San Francisco during WWII, Missy met her husband-to-be Robert B. Fox while he was on leave from duty as Lt. Commander on the U.S.S. Spence, one of three destroyers sunk in a typhoon in 1944. They married in 1946 and settled on the Peninsula in Menlo Park and later Atherton, where they had a son and three daughters.

After the children were raised, she served on the Board of Directors of her family's bank until it was sold in 1989. She also was a member of the Board of Trustees of Sacred Heart Preparatory in Atherton and was involved with its evolution from a women's school to one of the best co-educational prep schools on the west coast. Her late aunt, Reverend Anna Mullen RSCJ was President of Barat College Lake Forest from 1929 to 1931.

She later continued her life-long dedication to Sacred Heart Schools through her volunteer work at Oakwood of the Sacred Heart and involvement with alumni activities. She also volunteered in the Chaplain's office of the Stanford University Medical Center for a number of years. She was a longtime member of the Menlo Circus Club and the Town & Country Club of San Francisco.

Her devotion to her Catholic religion was reflected in her relationships with her friends and family. She will be remembered as a true lady and a true friend, and mostly as a loving mother to her four children.

Preceded in death by her husband Robert B. Fox and her son, Robert B. Fox, Jr., she leaves behind three daughters: Anne Gruening (Winthrop) of Juneau, Alaska, Peggy Fox (John Marlatt) of Lake Forest, Illinois, Molly Shamir of Tiburon, California. She also leaves five grandchildren: Robert Gruening, Caroline Gruening Vines, Anne Shamir, Daniel Shamir and Maya Shamir. They all adored "Mama".

Friends are invited to a memorial service on Friday May 6th at 3:00pm at Church of the Nativity, Menlo Park, California.

In lieu of flowers, contributions can be made to The Religious of the Sacred Heart at Oakwood, 140 Valparaiso Avenue, Atherton, CA 94027, or to a charity of your choice.

PAID OBITUARY

Editor & Publisher

Tom Gibboney

Editorial

Managing Editor Richard Hine

News Editor Renee Batti

Lifestyles Editor Jane Knoerle

Senior Correspondents

Marion Softky, Marjorie Mader

Staff Writers

Dave Boyce, Sandy Brundage

Contributors Barbara Wood,

Kate Daly, Katie Blankenberg

Special Sections Editors

Carol Blitzer, Sue Dremann

Photographer Michelle Le

News Intern Miranda Simon

Design & Production

Design Director Raul Perez

Designers Linda Atilano,

Gary Vennarucci

Advertising

Vice President Sales & Marketing

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Heather Hanye

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Coordinator Diane Martin

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Newsroom: (650) 223-6525

Newsroom Fax: (650) 223-7525

Advertising: (650) 854-2626

Advertising Fax: (650) 854-3650

e-mail news and photos with
captions to:

Editor@AlmanacNews.com

e-mail letters to:

letters@AlmanacNews.com

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



WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

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

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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 223-6507.

Park offer too good to refuse

Ever since Menlo Park kids and others from the surrounding communities have become year-round sports fanatics, the city has suffered from a chronic shortage of playing fields.

Unlike the days when Little League and AYSO soccer were virtually the only sports options for kids, today we have AYSO and advanced soccer for boys and girls; Little League and higher-level baseball teams; rugby and more exotic sports like field hockey and lacrosse.

But these sports all need practice and game time on playing fields, preferably close to home. Meeting that demand has been a

EDITORIAL
The opinion of The Almanac

scheduler's nightmare in built-out Menlo Park, where little if any vacant property exists to accommodate playing fields. Now, a potentially good deal has surfaced — a bid by the county to possibly turn 21-acre Flood Park on Bay Road over to the city. The park has a baseball field, softball field and tennis court, along with open space and picnic areas. But it is the potential — space to build two more soccer fields — that is so appealing. If this once-in-a-lifetime offer comes through it presents a tremendous opportunity for Menlo Park, but also an equally huge challenge that goes with this “gift horse.”

Owning a 21-acre park is one thing; maintaining it is quite another when money is short and the county has no interest in helping out with the estimated \$200,000 annual expenses.

The financial burden of acquiring Flood Park was raised last week by Community Development Director Cherise Brandell, who is already worried about loss of funding if the Las Pulgas redevelopment agency (RDA) is taken away by the state, as proposed by Gov. Jerry Brown. Without the RDA funds, it would limit the city's options for the park, “... if not eliminate the pos-

sibility of taking it over completely,” she told the Almanac.

But she added, “Even with the RDA, the costs to maintain and complete capital projects at the Park would be a major financial challenge.”

We agree, but before summarily turning down this possible gift of a 21-acre park within its borders, the city should make every effort to win private support for maintaining and enhancing the property.

As far as we know, no one has offered to help out, but the city should challenge the local athletic community — AYSO, Little League, rugby, lacrosse and field hockey families — to provide financial help and leadership to raise the funds necessary to operate and maintain Flood Park.

Another option would be for the city to acquire the park and then sublease space for two or more sports fields to a private party that would operate and maintain them according to stipulations set down by the city.

We believe parents whose children are heavily involved in youth sports should be willing to help pay for park maintenance, and perhaps begin a campaign to build two new soccer fields there.

Even without the threat of losing the RDA funds, the city would be hard-pressed to find \$200,000 a year just to keep the doors open at Flood Park. But the park is an asset that shouldn't go unclaimed. Opportunities like this don't come often.

There are also public safety concerns; Suburban Park residents who live nearby are already worrying that a vacant park could attract criminal activity if the county closes and fences off the property.

Unfortunately, this opportunity comes at a time when the city's revenues are falling, and employee expenses are rising. But if the county actually decides to let the park go, the city — and sports parents — should not let this opportunity pass by.

LETTERS
Our readers write

Finding fun in letter supporting Kelly Fergusson

Editor:

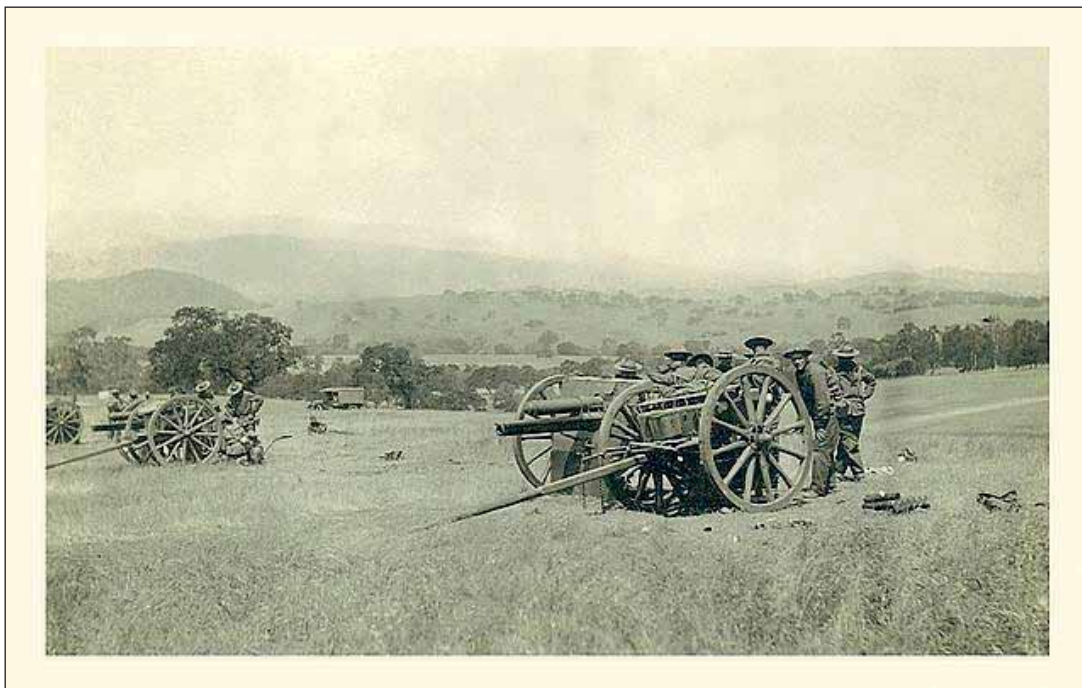
Heyward Robinson's letter last week, sticking up for City Council member Kelly Fergusson, is hysterical!

Mr. Robinson is just as guilty of taking a trip on the city's dollar as Ms. Fergusson. Remember when Mr. Robinson, serving as mayor at the time, couldn't find Rep. Anna Eshoo's Palo Alto office, so he jumped on a plane to Washington, D.C.? This trip happened to coincide with President Obama's inauguration so Mr. Robinson's wife went along for the ride and the party.

Mr. Robinson: Mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa is in order!

Pat White
Fremont Street, Menlo Park

See **LETTERS**, next page



Portola Valley Archives

Our Regional Heritage

Soldiers stationed at Menlo Park's Camp Fremont during World War I took to the hills to practice maneuvers. Here they are seen in the vicinity of the Stanford "Dish," looking toward the hills of Portola Valley.

LETTERS

Continued from previous page

A note of gratitude to the PV community

Editor:

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to everyone in town for your thoughtful well wishes.

This has meant a great deal to me during my recovery. I am making good progress and look forward to returning in the near future.

What a wonderful community! Thank you ever so much.

Leslie Lambert
(Town of Portola Valley Planning Manager)

Trim trees, bushes and save energy

Editor:

An article published Feb. 2 by the Almanac reporting how a neighbor spotted two people searching for an open window at a house in Menlo Park is a good example of why people should be encouraged to trim and prune their trees and bushes on a regular basis. Unsightly, shaggy bushes make easy hiding places for burglars.

Tidier trees can reduce gutter-cleaning to once or twice a year instead of four times a season. Stop wasting electricity and gas by allowing the sun fill your house with light, dry your clothes and add heat to your home in the winter.

There are other valuable ways to spend your time rather than raking up after other peoples' trees on a constant basis. It is fun to grow fruit and vegetables, and give them to friends, neighbors and those less fortunate, but it takes sun.

Trimmed bushes and trees make a yard look neater, cleaner and larger. It invites a sense of friendliness with neighbors. It helps prevent heavy limbs from breaking in a strong wind.

In short, well-maintained trees contribute to a safer, cleaner, neater, food-producing, energy-efficient and friendlier environment.

Jackie Leonard-Dimmick
Walnut Avenue, Atherton

Cargill is paying for Redwood City staff time

Editor:

On March 22, Redwood City Mayor Jeff Ira said that Cargill is paying for staff time to work on their application to develop 1,436 acres of salt flats. This "provides an additional revenue source" for the city, he said, which is particularly helpful in these lean times.

Unfortunately for the citizens of Redwood City, it seems that not all revenue sources are equal. When staff in the city manager's

office raised over \$100,000 in grants in 2009/2010 to study and implement a climate action plan and environmental program, the council in a March meeting last year criticized them and ordered an audit to make sure they were not costing the city any money.

Is it that when the source is Cargill, the revenue is good, but when the source is the Packard Foundation for implementation of environmental programs, the revenue is bad?

Bryan Beck
Redwood City

EYE CARE NEWS

Presented by **Mark Schmidt**
Licensed Optician

DO READING GLASSES MAKE EYES WORSE?

Middle-aged individuals first start wearing reading glasses when the age-related condition ("presbyopia") that leads to their increasing inability to read printed material worsens. Consequently, they may blame their glasses for their declining condition. However, it is the worsening presbyopia, not the glasses, that is at fault. Moreover, wearing reading glasses may lead to a more pronounced contrast between corrected and uncorrected vision when the glasses are removed.

This can be explained by the brain's ability to interpret blurry images and make them look better defined by making adjustments. If reading glasses make these adjustments unnecessary, the brain may get out of the habit of correcting vision with reading glasses removed, which is not the same as glasses making eyesight worse.

Our eyes change as we get older, so glasses are often needed. You don't need to compromise your appearance because you need glasses. Today's eyewear is a fashion statement that can enhance your appearance. Bring your eyewear prescription to **MENLO OPTICAL** at 1166 University Drive, on the corner of Oak Grove Avenue and University Drive. We offer lightweight, scratch-resistant lenses for all vision needs and designer frames in a variety of shapes, sizes, and materials. Call us at 322-3900 if you have any questions about eyewear.

P.S. Presbyopia usually becomes noticeable in a person's early to mid-40's and continues to worsen until around age 60.

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.

Make a difference with a meal

THURSDAY April 7

Dine Out for Packard
Palo Alto

Please join us for the 3rd annual Dine Out for Packard day!

Participating restaurants in Palo Alto, Los Altos, and Menlo Park will donate a percentage of sales to Packard Children's Hospital.

For more information, please visit supportLPCH.org/dineout.

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This Spring, Ed Kahl believes the market is blooming.



WOODSIDE – New 3-acre estate that blends Old World style and craftsmanship with the warmth of sunny country living. Wrap-around stone veranda w/ stone fireplace, dramatic interiors w/ extensive custom woodwork. Elegant LR and formal DR plus 4BR, 5 fireplaces, 2 offices, spacious kitchen/ family room. Glorious pool and separate 2BR guest house. Serene country location in prime neighborhood. All the best, including Woodside Elementary School District. **\$8,995,000**



WOODSIDE – 9.7 acres \$6,000,000*



ATHERTON – \$3,500,000*



WOODSIDE \$9,995,000*

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WOODSIDE – \$17,500,000*



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