



**2012 Readers' Choice**

It's time to vote! | Page 20

# The Almanac

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

JUNE 13, 2012 | VOL. 47 NO. 42



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Section 2



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# Coach's exit not what she expected

Pam Wimberly departs as M-A girls' basketball coach after 42 years

By Keith Peters

Sports editor, Palo Alto Weekly

It could have been an ending to any other school year for Pam Wimberly, who handed out some diplomas at Menlo-Atherton's graduation ceremony on June 7 and looked ahead to teaching summer school.

When Wimberly returns to school in the fall to resume her PE teaching duties, however, things will be very different.

For one, Wimberly will not be standing on the basketball court for the first day of practice on Nov. 1. After 42 years of coaching the girls' hoop team at M-A (she started in 1968-69 but missed two seasons), Wimberly will be a spectator for the first time.

That decision was made on June 1 when M-A Principal Matthew Zito informed Wimberly that her coaching career at the school was over.

"I will go on and teach my classes, and enjoy more things in life," she said. "I'm coming to grips with what happened."

What happened was, after two losing seasons, co-Athletic Directors Paul Snow and Steven Kryger, along with Zito, decided that Wimberly evidently had seen better days. Forget the fact she had compiled a won-loss record of 663-340 in her 42 years while becoming the third-winningest girls' hoop coach in California. Forget the fact she had won four Central Coast Section titles (1984, 1991, 1992 and 1993) or been runner-up six times. And forget that she missed the CCS playoffs only 10 times in 36 years since the section post-season began in 1977.

In 2001, Wimberly was named Girls' Basketball Coach of the Year by the California Coaches Association and was selected as

one of 13 coaches honored with the Model Coach Award by the California Interscholastic Federation.

While no one wanted to state the obvious, going 10-16 this past season and 7-18 in 2010-11 while missing the CCS playoffs both times reportedly did not enamor Wimberly with a group of M-A parents who evidently wanted more. It was a clash of style over substance and the supposed weight of parental pressure won out.

A statement released by Kryger said: "Pam accomplished many great feats over the

she said. "I got teary-eyed from what people said. There's been a lot of out-pouring of support."

One e-mail of support was sent to the entire staff at M-A by Dr. Jerry Brodkey, another veteran staff member and a fan of women's basketball from his days of growing up in Iowa, when they played 6-on-6.

"Pam Wimberly is a record-setting, legendary basketball coach, but she has been so much more than that here at MA. I have watched her coach for so many years, sometimes with championship teams, sometimes with poor teams. At all

times, she was a model of professionalism. I don't believe I ever saw her get a technical, never saw her lose her composure. She was a role model, not just for her players, but for other coaches, for parents, for fans. I would watch Pam during games, watching her as a teacher.

Even in moments of great stress and tension she was positive, patient, and caring."

It didn't matter, he said, whether the students were in AP classes or struggling with remedial math. "She treated each student with respect. She would mold her players into a team, blending their individual skills and talents."

He was impressed, he said, with how these diverse individuals would come together under her tutelage. "She taught her players how to win, how to lose, and how to be a family together."

Over the years, he said, he didn't get to see her as much as he would have liked. "I was in the D-wing, she was in the gym. Each time I saw her or thought of her, I had the same thought: There goes a teacher's teacher, a coach's coach. Pam Wimberly, a true member of any Hall of Fame." ■



**'I'm coming to grips with what happened.'**

PAM WIMBERLY

course of her career and the M-A community is grateful for all that she did for hundreds of student-athletes. We feel this is the time to make the transition to a new head varsity coach for our girls' basketball program."

Somehow, that rings hollow. Coaches at public schools are removed from their position for verbal or physical abuse, lack of effort or causing more headaches than it's worth. Wimberly, however, was a role model with an exemplary career. It was never about the wins and losses for her.

"Six hundred wins wasn't a goal," she said. "I just started coaching the kids. It was never about the records. I know I fell short of 700 (wins), but that's not a big deal."

Wimberly had a tough day on Wednesday, June 6, as phone calls and e-mails flooded in.

"It was a tumultuous day,"

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**THE ALMANAC** (ISSN 1097-3095 and USPS 459370) is published every Wednesday by Embarcadero Media, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558. Periodicals Postage Paid at Menlo Park, CA and at additional mailing offices. Adjudicated a newspaper of general circulation for San Mateo County, The Almanac is delivered free to homes in Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside. Subscriptions for \$60 per year or \$100 per 2 years are welcome. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Almanac, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558. Copyright ©2012 by Embarcadero Media, All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited.



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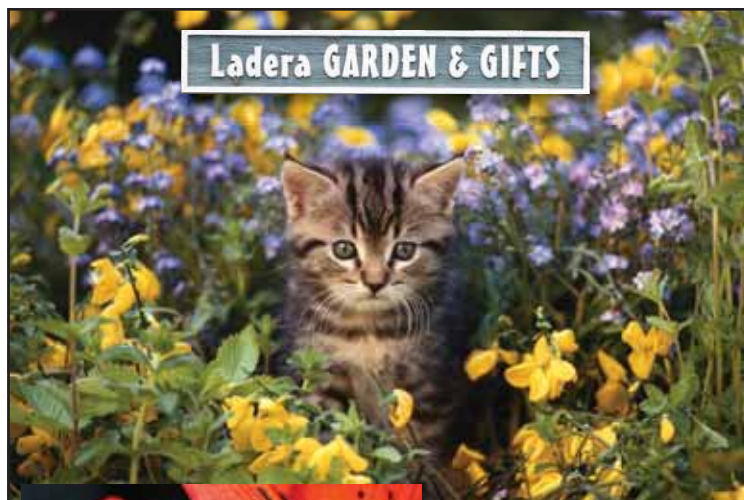
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# Local News

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## Schools face \$2 million in budget cuts

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

In the face of an unexpected fiscal crisis that came to light in April, Portola Valley school district officials are proposing a budget for the next fiscal year that cuts \$2.1 million in spending, eliminates programs such as summer school and K-5 Spanish, increases class size at several grade levels, and has no reserves.

Even with these severe measures, the Portola Valley School District would end the 2012-13 school year with a balance of only \$46,871, according to a

report reviewed by the school board and jittery parents, teachers and other staff during a June 6 board meeting.

The proposed budget will come back to the school board at its June 20 meeting. A final budget must be approved by the end of June.

Meanwhile, the San Mateo County Board of Education on June 6 unanimously approved a \$300,000 bridge loan to the school district — money that could be tapped if the district's cash runs out before June 30.

The loan must be paid back by September 30. Interest will

### PORTOLA VALLEY

be at the rate the money would have earned on deposit with the county treasurer's office, which changes from month to month but has been running at about 1 percent, according to Anne Campbell, the county superintendent of schools.

Board members were already struggling to address a projected deficit of about \$854,000 for the next school year when auditors informed them in late April of more fiscal uncertainty due to bookkeeping irregularities and

the possible misappropriation of funds during the tenure of Tim Hanretty as superintendent. Mr. Hanretty resigned in January after the county District Attorney's Office launched an investigation into alleged misdeeds stemming from his earlier work with the Woodside Elementary School District.

Several community meetings have been held to address the fiscal crisis, but understanding the magnitude of the problem has been a slow process, with figures changing frequently as auditors "keep finding things buried under rocks," according

to Mark Bonnett, the district's interim finance official.

The latest estimates are that the district will end this fiscal year on June 30 with a \$1.65 million deficit. With only \$11.4 million in revenue, the district is expected to spend \$13.08 million this fiscal year, the latest audit figures show.

The proposed 2012-13 budget outlines a spending plan of about \$10.97 million, with projected revenues of just over \$11 million.

In addition to summer school

See **SCHOOLS**, page 10

## Menlo Park's future now has blueprint

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

Change is coming to Menlo Park, but slowly. Five hours of discussion on June 5 after five years of analysis led to Menlo Park's approval of the framework for a new vision of development downtown and along El Camino Real. The impact of that decision will likewise take some time to become clear.

About 40 residents commented for and against the final version of the downtown/El Camino Real specific plan, with the balance tilting toward approval.

"This is the longest process I've ever been a part of," said Dexter Chow, owner of Cheeky Monkey Toys on Santa Cruz Avenue. "It's time to move forward and attract new business by showing we have a unified plan for the future."

Richard Draeger, of the eponymous grocery store, said he supported many aspects of the plan, while remaining concerned about some optional elements that could lead to competition from food trucks in the paseo and loss of parking. He suggested the city form a task force to recruit complementary businesses such as an Apple store.

Representatives from the Menlo Park Fire Protection District told the council that some of their concerns have been resolved, and that discus-

sions with the city continue. Chief Harold Schapelhouman said he was pleased that the district would now be included in meetings regarding water infrastructure.

The City Council generally voted unanimously, with Kelly Fergusson and Peter Ohtaki recused from portions of the discussion related to El Camino Real.

The council asked staff to add language creating an advisory downtown parking task force, made up of a council member, transportation commissioner, and three business representatives, that would meet monthly.

Certain elements of the specific plan, such as the trial installation of wider sidewalks, could incrementally remove 11 to 59 parking spaces downtown, according to staff. The plan also allows two parking garages to be built, perhaps funded by a parking district, although that remains to be decided in the future. The garages could absorb all-day employee parking to free up short-term spaces in the shopping district.

Council member Andy Cohen inexplicably abstained from a vote to accept the plan's environmental impact report. He later told the Almanac that he couldn't support "the immense giveaways that the consultants built into this plan" but that he

### Plan for downtown and El Camino passes council with unanimous vote.

See **MENLO PARK PLAN**, page 10



Almanac photo by Daniella Sanchez

Warren Slocum tracks the results online at his election night party in Redwood City.

## Slocum, Masur face off in November

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

It's down to a two-person race for a seat on the five-member San Mateo County Board of Supervisors. The two candidates with most votes in the June 5 primary — former county official Warren Slocum and Redwood City school board member Shelly Masur — have five months to refine their messages and campaigns for the November runoff.

A runoff is required if no

candidate wins more than 50 percent of the vote. Mr. Slocum drew 39 percent of the vote, and Ms. Masur placed second with 21 percent, according to semi-official results from the county Elections Office.

"You know what, my goal was to be in the top two and make it to November," she told the Almanac. "I'm very happy about it. Sixty percent of the county did not vote to support him. It's a new race. (The primary) race is over. It's going to be a lot of work and

we're ready."

Asked for his take, Mr. Slocum paused, then suggested that his victory may have been due to name recognition and his "innovative" ways during 24 years as chief elections officer and assessor-county clerk-recorder. He retired in 2010. "Voters still remember some of my positive record," he said. "I crafted a message that represented (my priorities) and what I was all

See **SUPERVISORS**, page 10

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# Rustic Italian eatery to replace Mike's Cafe

By Jane Knoerle

Almanac Lifestyles Editor

Owner Mike Wallau is transforming Mike's Cafe in Ladera into an Italian eatery, but don't call it a ristorante or trattoria. Its new name is Portola Kitchen. The cuisine? Authentic rustic Italian food prepared by chef Guillaume Bienamie.

Chef Bienamie is the former executive chef of Marche in Menlo Park and, more recently, consulting chef at Cuisinett in San Carlos.

Mr. Wallau knows Italian. He helped open Il Fornaio restaurant in Palo Alto and worked there for six years. He says it has always been his passion to have an Italian restaurant featuring food of the highest quality, while remaining a reasonably priced neighborhood dining choice.

The restaurant space at 3130

Alpine Road in the Ladera Country Shopper will reopen in July after a complete remodel. The Italian menu will include fresh house-made pasta. (Chef Bienamie has already acquired the pasta machine.) Decor will be "kind of like an Italian barn," says Mr. Wallau.

Mike's Cafe has been a popular dining spot in Ladera Country Shopper since opening six years ago.

The new eatery will retain the attractive outdoor seating under a translucent covered canopy.

In the restaurant business for more than 30 years, Mike Wallau is also sole owner of Mike's Cafe in Palo Alto and Mike's Sports Bar and Grill in Menlo Park. Portola Kitchen will be his fourth restaurant.

"I'm extremely excited about this. It's something I've always wanted," he says. ■

### FOOD & DRINK

# New Menlo Park steak house names chef Ryan Ellison

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

The apron, toque blanche and chef knives are at the ready, and with any luck, LB Steak Menlo Park will open by its target date — Monday, June 25 — in the Santa Cruz Avenue space formerly occupied by Marche restaurant.

Ryan Ellison, now heading up the kitchen of the LB Steak restaurant in San Jose's Santana Row, will don the toque as the new steak house's chef de cuisine.

The announcement naming Mr. Ellison was made last week by Roland Passot, owner and chief culinary officer of LB Steak and Left Bank Brasserie, which also has a restaurant in Menlo Park.

In addition to working with Chef Passot and master French Chef Joel Guillon at the San Jose steak house, Mr. Ellison, 37, worked at Oliveto in Oakland with Paul Bertolli. (He says with some pride that his hand is shown in a photograph in Mr. Bertolli's book, "Cooking by Hand.")

He has also worked in several other restaurants in San Jose and in Hawaii.

Mr. Ellison says that the menu for the Menlo Park restaurant is nearly completed. One of its signature dishes will be a "tomahawk chop"; diners will be able to choose from a variety of sauces for the steak.

Although there will be plenty of choices for a steak entree, the menu will also include fish and fowl, as well as vegetarian and vegan dishes, Mr. Ellison says.

"It's a prime steak house, but we try to broaden the appeal" to accommodate a range of tastes and preferences, he says.

In preparation for opening the restaurant, he and other staff are working with local farmers and developing relationships with local fishermen to guarantee fresh foods for the seasonal menu.

Sommelier Eric Entriiken has put together a list of domestic and imported wines, many of which will be available by the glass, according to LB Steak spokesman Tom Walton. The restaurant will also feature "contemporary and signature handcrafted cocktails," Mr. Walton says.

Mr. Ellison says the restaurant has been completely renovated. A dimly lit dining space has been transformed with an abundance of windows that provide natural light and a more open feel. The design changes were the work of architect Mark Stevens of Architecture & Light.

With about 4,000 square feet, the restaurant will seat 130 people, according to Mr. Walton.

The restaurant is at 898 Santa Cruz Ave., at the corner of University Drive. It will be open daily. ■

# Group gives \$3.3 million to schools

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

## ■ MENLO PARK

As student enrollment continues to soar in the Menlo Park City School District — next year, by a projected 100 students — and state and other revenue continues to fall, the district is reveling in the fact that it can keep pace and add teachers to meet enrollment growth for the next school year, thanks to a major boost in funding from the non-profit foundation that supports it.

At the June 4 meeting where the school board passed a \$32.7 million budget for the 2012-13 school year, the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation presented the district with a \$3.35 million check — a \$750,000 increase over last year's gift.

Children from all four of the district's schools delivered an oversized "check" to the board. The gift will make up an estimated 10 percent of the district's revenue next year.

The lion's share of that money will fund salaries of 30 staff members (27 full-time-equivalent

jobs), including nine classroom teachers, according to Theanne Thomson, co-president with Alison Leupold of the foundation.

The foundation's gift also supports specialists in the district's art, music, science, and library programs, and provides partial support for counseling services, Ms. Thomson said.

Other programs supported by the gift include the Jeanie Ritchie grants that fund innovative classroom projects, and professional development for staff.

The foundation set an ambitious goal of raising \$4 million this school year, and was able to bolster contributions from parents with a number of matching grants. "We set a growth goal this year, and said, let's just do the best we can," Ms. Thomson said. "We're so proud of this result."

The milestone foundation leaders are most proud of, she said, was the increase in parent participation — one of its major goals.

Last year, about 53 percent of

district families were foundation members, and the group wanted to raise that figure to 70 percent. Ms. Thomson said the goal was surpassed, with about 74 percent of families joining. For meeting the goal, the foundation will receive a \$50,000 incentive that was offered by a district family.

In addition to having a strong foundation board, a key to the organization's success this year is that it collaborated with the PTOs of the individual schools, creating a new dynamic of cooperation and fundraising energy, Ms. Thomson said.

The annual spring auction also exceeded the foundation's goal and prior years' take, raising \$367,000, she said.

With state funding cuts and enrollment growth, including kindergarten signups that far exceeded projections for the next school year, parent and community donations to the schools "is the new reality of funding for public education," Ms. Thomson said. The foundation's donation allows the district "to continue keeping pace." ■

# State probes lab explosion

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

As the state opens an independent investigation that could lead to prosecution, Membrane Technology & Research has appealed the seven citations and \$55,850 in fines levied by the California Occupational Health and Safety Association (Cal-OSHA) for an accident that killed a 56-year-old scientist in Menlo Park.

On Sept. 2, Adrian Martin reportedly was adding methane to a tank containing methane, nitrogen, helium and butane when the pressurized cylinder exploded, blowing the scientist 15 feet into an adjoining laboratory and killing him. A woman standing near the door of the lab was thrown clear and survived with a damaged eardrum.

The Cal-OSHA inquiry found that the pressure in the tank reached nearly triple the rated safe level. Its pressure relief valve was set to vent only after pressure reached 3,360 psi, about 10 times as high as the cylinder could withstand.

The seven citations include six labeled as "serious." One cites the lab for not doing everything reasonably necessary to protect its employees, in this case, not noting that the tank was only rated for 300 psi.

The lab has retained attorney Jeffrey Tanenbaum of Nixon Peabody LLC. Appeal paper-

work filed with Cal-OSHA cites "independent employee action" as a basis for overturning the citations. According to Cal-OSHA, five elements must be proven for the defense to be successful: 1) the employee was experienced in that particular job; 2) the lab has a safety training program; 3) the lab enforces its safety rules; 4) The lab can demonstrate a history of sanctions against employees who violate the safety rules; and 5) the employee knew what the rules were and broke them anyway.

The appeal also challenges the classification of the violations, referring to a section of the state labor code, 6432(c) that says a violation can't be rated "serious" if the employer demonstrates

that it "did not know and could not, with the exercise of reasonable diligence, have known of the presence of the violation."

Mr. Tanenbaum said he could not comment while the case was active.

Meanwhile, the state Bureau of Investigations opened its own inquiry in May. The bureau looks into all deaths and serious accidents, according to Cal-OSHA representative Peter Melton, and decides whether to refer a case to a district attorney for prosecution.

Representatives from Membrane Technology, located at 1360 Willow Road, were not available for comment. The lab had no previous record of safety violations, according to OSHA.

Mr. Martin left behind a wife, Livia, and a 17-year-old daughter. ■



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## Woodside fire

A neighbor, Greg Carrier, took this photo of the June 2 fire that consumed a one-story house at 1200 Bear Gulch Road in Woodside. An investigation into the fire is continuing, said Fire Marshal Denise Enea of the Woodside Fire Protection District. "We are getting closer," she said in an email. "A process of elimination (as to causes) is how we tackle something of this magnitude."

## Budget, taxes on Menlo Park agenda

It's hard to talk about the city's budget without talking about taxes, as the Menlo Park City Council will demonstrate during its meeting on Tuesday, June 12.

The \$65 million budget for fiscal year 2012-13 depends on increasing the hotel guest tax rate from 10 percent to 12 percent. According to staff calculations, passing the higher tax would raise more than \$560,000 annually for the city, and bring local rates in line with neighbor-

ing cities, including Palo Alto and Redwood City.

All five Menlo Park council members agreed to put the hotel tax on the Nov. 6 ballot, which means voters make the final decision. San Mateo County failed to pass a similar measure during the June 5 election, with 52.3 percent of voters opposing the tax increase.

The regular meeting starts at 7 p.m. Tuesday in the council chambers at the Civic Center at 701 Laurel St.

## Friends of the Menlo Park Library Book Sale

Sunday, June 17  
Noon to 4:00

This event will be held in the Oak Room, located across the library parking lot and next to the Arrillaga Family Gym.



Featuring a wide selection of gently used books for everyone in your family!

Art & collectible, biography, children's, cooking, fiction, history, literature, mystery, science-fiction/fantasy, religion & philosophy, young adult books, and much more!

Great books. Great prices. Great cause.

All proceeds benefit the Menlo Park Library & Belle Haven Library.

# Stanford Hospital Health Notes

A community health education series from Stanford Hospital & Clinics

## A Different Kind of Donor: Two Lives Saved, None Lost

Judith Lattin's life had become a very dark landscape. What she thought was a simple case of stress-induced intestinal trouble in her 20s had been the beginning of the end of her liver. At 48, she sat stunned in a doctor's office listening to the news that an autoimmune disease had scarred that all-important organ beyond recovery.

For the nine years that followed, Lattin fought the consequences of liver failure, enduring procedures to control a bleeding esophagus, an enlarged spleen and major vein blockages. In one unnerving incident, she became completely disoriented and confused, unable to get up and walk to her bedroom door. Her life became an unpleasant regimen of medications, with uncomfortable side effects, that could not always control or compensate for her condition. Once a trusted accounting professional, Lattin found her world contracting to a distressing equation: She was not sick enough to be high on the list for a transplant, but she was sick enough to be told she should live very close to the hospital where her doctors practiced. Then came the day, almost eight years into her wait, when those doctors told her that the complications of her liver disease made them uncomfortable with a transplant that they thought she wouldn't survive it. But she did have one more option, they said.

They recommended she go to Stanford Hospital & Clinics to meet with its liver transplant team. It was a group of expert and experienced surgeons whose train-

ing originated with Thomas Starzl, the American physician who pioneered successful liver transplantation. For Lattin, that changed everything. At her first meeting with Stanford's chief of clinical transplantation, Waldo Concepcion, "He said, 'Yes,' they could do it, and there was hope. I saw light at the end of the tunnel again," Lattin said. "When you've been told that surgery is not an option for you, that's basically a death sentence. It can be a very uncomfortable death. I had seen that as inevitable for me."

### A different kind of donation

Stanford was also willing to do something else that many others would or could not: use a piece of Lattin's sister's liver as a transplant. Instead of having to wait on the list for a deceased donor liver, Lattin could get that life-saving transplant as soon as Stanford's team approved the donation from Lattin's sister, Christine Webb. She was nine years younger and in good health, a strong candidate for the procedure. But Lattin wasn't so sure it was a good idea.

*"My sister didn't want me to be in harm's way, but I didn't want her to have to wait. I wanted to help her."*

—Christine Webb, living donor, Stanford Hospital & Clinics liver transplant program

"She has three children, and a husband, and I just felt it was too dangerous," Lattin said. She was not unjustified in her fear; the history of liver transplantation from a living donor was not without incident. The drive to make it work, however, grew from the continuing challenge shared by all forms of organ transplant: more people in need than organs to give. Campaigns to raise awareness are a common occurrence, yet the number of available deceased donor livers has been stable at about 6,000 each year for the last decade, while the waiting list has climbed steadily, now averaging between 16,000 and 18,000. One

in seven die before receiving a new liver. There is no equivalent of kidney dialysis or cardiac-assist devices for the liver.

At about 3 1/2 pounds, the liver is the body's largest solid organ by weight. Its functions are crucial. It detoxifies the blood, stores vitamins, breaks down fats and sugars, generates hormones, and, most vital when surgery is involved, it produces the substance that clots blood. And, it is the one organ in the body that responds to loss by expanding to restore its original volume. That remarkable quality is what enables someone to give away as much as 60 percent of a liver without repercussion if a surgery is done well. For that to happen, surgeons must control bleeding in an organ that's rich with blood vessels and pumping through 1 1/2 quarts of blood each minute.

But Christine Webb, told very carefully and frankly about all the possible complications, was not dissuaded. "My sister didn't want me to be in harm's way, but I didn't want her to have to wait. I wanted to help her." Webb had the support of her children and husband. Yet she couldn't convince Lattin, until one night on the phone. "Judy," she said,

"you need to stop trying to talk me out of this. This is my purpose in life. This is my reason for being alive, to give you this piece of me." After that, Lattin said, "I just accepted that this was something that she had to do."

### Experience and expertise and endurance

Because Lattin and Webb were about the same height and size, such a transplant would not have to leap any great physical disparity. Nor do donated livers have to be a perfect match of tissue only blood type must match, said Webb's Stanford hepatologist Glen Lutchman, MD.



Judith Lattin's life had become a very dark landscape. What she thought was a simple case of stress-induced intestinal trouble in her 20s had been the beginning of the end of her liver.

Photo courtesy of Christine Webb

## How to Keep Your Liver Healthy

- One increase in diagnosis that has disturbed hepatologists is fatty liver disease. As rates of obesity have risen, so has that illness. Maintaining a healthy weight and getting regular exercise are two of the first recommendations for protecting your liver.
- Avoid heavy alcohol consumption.
- Certain over-the-counter medications, taken in large doses, can stress the liver. Talk to your physician about how to be safe.
- Get vaccinated for Hepatitis A and B. Hepatitis can cause serious and permanent liver damage.
- Include plenty of fruits and vegetables in your diet and keep high-fat foods to a minimum.
- Ask your doctor about a liver function evaluation. Based on your health history, it might be appropriate.

Stanford put Webb through a tough evaluation, Webb was assigned her own donor advocate and both women were asked to lose weight. "It's a challenging, difficult surgery in a person who is healthy, who doesn't need surgery," said Stanford transplant division chief Carlos Esquivel, MD, PhD. "The risk of life-threatening hemorrhage is ever present, but we do this because there aren't enough organs to go around."

It's experience, however, that distinguishes Stanford's liver transplant team. Only the most senior surgeons are allowed to do this type of operation, Esquivel said. The surgery to remove the diseased liver and the surgery to remove the donor liver portion take place simultaneously, followed by the surgery to connect the transplant. Esquivel, Concepcion and their colleague, C. Andrew Bonham, MD, all worked the sisters' surgery day. Bonham is the youngest of the three and free with his admiration. Esquivel, he said, "has been doing this longer than any other surgeon who's still doing it. He's seen it all and done it all." Said Esquivel, "I cannot say enough about our transplant team, every single one of them is a star."

Concepcion spent hours meticulously clearing out old blood clots from a vein, just half of an inch across, that connects the intestine to the liver. It was that vein that had given Lattin's previous doctors



Because Lattin and her sister, Christine Webb, were about the same height and size, such a transplant would not have to leap any great physical disparity. Nor do donated livers have to be a perfect match of tissue.

Photo courtesy of Christine Webb

pause. "He said he'd be my roto-router, my plumber," Lattin jokes. It took time, Concepcion said, "but you have to make it work because with a living donor liver, you don't have the veins that come with a deceased donor. You do this with trepidation, but you think of the benefit."

### Making it safe and successful

"I have a lot of faith in God," Webb said, "and I also had faith in the Stanford medical team that took care of me. I knew that they were some of the best in the world, and that they don't go into these surgeries lightly at all. I knew they would leave nothing unchecked, so I really trusted them."

The team uses instrumentation and tools to reduce blood loss and it carefully calculates just how much liver to take. Every step has been developed to be protective of the donor and recipient. "We're kind

## When to See Your Doctor

- Fatigue, skin irritation, nausea and abdominal pain
- Darkened urine
- Increase in abdominal girth
- Yellowing skin and eyes

For more information about live liver transplant program at Stanford, please call 650.498.7878 or visit [stanfordhospital.org/livertransplant](http://stanfordhospital.org/livertransplant)

Join us at <http://stanfordhospital.org/socialmedia>. Watch the new Stanford Hospital Health Notes television show on Comcast: channel 28 on Mondays at 8:30 p.m., Tuesdays at 3:30 p.m. and Fridays at 8:30 a.m.; channel 30 Saturdays at 10:30 p.m. It can also be viewed at [www.youtube.com/stanfordhospital](http://www.youtube.com/stanfordhospital).

of obsessive-compulsive when it comes to managing these patients," Bonham said, "to reduce the risk of complications."

*"I saved my sister but I also saved the person who will now get the deceased donor liver she won't need."*

—Christine Webb, living donor, Stanford Hospital & Clinics liver transplant program

The living donor procedure emerged in the late 1990s. There have been a small handful of deaths, the most recent in 2010; those deaths, Bonham said, have helped make transplant "the most highly regulated aspect of medicine. We have three to four government agencies we have to answer to." Stanford performs three to five living donor transplants each year and 50 to 60 deceased donor liver transplants each year; its government-reported results place it in the top ranks for safety and survival. In addition to the wisdom gained from doing many procedures, advances in imaging used by Stanford surgeons also have improved safety, said Walid Ayoub, MD, who has been Lattin's pre- and post-transplant hepatologist. With that imaging, "surgeons can see all the vessels ahead of time. They have a road map of the liver that allows them to stay clear of large veins and partition the liver safely."

Lattin was in the hospital for several days. Webb was released after four. Lattin lives carefully, following the rules for her medication, diet and exercise. "It's a matter of being compliant, and, uh, if they need you to take this medicine, and maybe you don't like the taste of it, because it's a liquid or something, too bad. You have to take it." It's a little thing, those rules, given all the other changes in

her life. "I have energy to do things," she said. "I have just so much more of a joy for life. I waited nine years for a transplant and I didn't realize just how much I had declined until after transplant when I started to feel so much better, and then I just started to do things."

Webb needed all the three months her Stanford doctors told her she would to make a full recovery. "I don't think of myself as a supreme athlete by any stretch," she said. "I'm just a normal person and I feel like I passed with flying colors. There's not a feeling in the world that is better than when doctors come to you and say, 'You saved two people.' I saved my sister but I also saved the person who will now get the deceased donor liver my sister won't need. It really brings it home when you think about it that way."



Daily walks in her neighborhood are now a way of life for Lattin. "I have just so much more of a joy for life. I waited nine years for a transplant and I didn't realize just how much I had declined."

Photo courtesy of Christine Webb

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. It is currently ranked No. 17 on the U.S. News & World Report's "America's Best Hospitals" list and No. 1 in the San Jose Metropolitan area. Stanford Hospital & Clinics is internationally recognized for translating medical breakthroughs into the care of patients. The Stanford University Medical Center is comprised of three world renowned institutions: Stanford Hospital & Clinics, the Stanford University School of Medicine, the oldest medical school in the Western United States, and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, an adjacent pediatric teaching hospital providing general acute and tertiary care. For more information, visit <http://stanfordhospital.org/>.





## MENLO PARK PLAN

continued from page 5

would do everything he could to make the plan succeed.

He also abstained from a motion to approve the floor area ratio levels at which public benefits will be required as set in the specific plan, with a review scheduled for next year. Ms. Fergusson had asked her colleagues to lower the trigger level, arguing that doing so would increase the city's bargaining power with developers. The council voted 3-1-1 to leave the levels as is, but to evaluate the effect after one year.

Most of the changes suggested by the Planning Commission were approved by the council, including adding a bicycle-pedestrian crossing of El Camino at Middle Avenue as a priority on the public benefit list; allowing smaller side setbacks along northeast El Camino Real; and permitting a contractor to certify that new buildings meet LEED environmental standards.

The council did, however, reverse the commission's decision to delete bulb-outs from the plan. The council voted to add them back in as an option; the bulb-

outs allow sidewalk segments to extend into the street, providing a haven for pedestrians.

The council also approved a \$1.13 per square foot fee for new development projects within the plan area. Staff estimated that would allow the city to recoup the \$1.7 million spent on preparing the specific plan.

Now that the framework's in place, when will Menlo Park residents start seeing changes? Not for some time, according to Associate Planner Thomas Rogers. He said most public space improvements — the trial installations of pocket parks and a Chestnut Street paseo, for example — will probably go through the city's capital improvement program after further discussion.

"There may also be some opportunities for the Santa Cruz Avenue sidewalk extensions to be considered separately if adjoining businesses want to sponsor them," he said, similar to how San Francisco proceeded.

A second reading of actions taken on the specific plan is scheduled for the June 12 council meeting, which starts at 7 p.m. in the council chambers at the Civic Center at 701 Laurel St. ■

## SCHOOLS

continued from page 5

and K-5 Spanish, the proposed budget assumes cuts that include: reduction or elimination of contract technology staff for an \$84,000 savings; a 25 percent cut in the facilities maintenance budget for a \$25,000 savings; a 15 percent cut in all supply budgets for a \$58,300 savings; a reduction in the district office staff to save \$30,000; and elimination of \$25,000 in funding for the traditional eighth-grade trip.

The district will "work with community representatives" to either restructure the eighth-grade trip or find alternative funding, according to a report by interim Superintendent Carol Piraino.

Ms. Piraino said in an earlier interview that the district is also talking with leaders of the nonprofit Portola Valley Schools Foundation about increasing the amount of privately donated funds the foundation gives the schools each year.

The district will try to make further cuts that would require agreement with employee unions. These recommended cuts include a salary freeze to save \$110,032; elimination of up to 10 school days to save \$300,000; and elimination of the summer technology institute for teachers to save \$28,000.

At the June 6 meeting, a number of parents and teachers pressed board members for explanations about how the

financial mess developed without their notice, clarifications about what cuts the educational program would suffer, and plans for policy changes that would ensure that such a crisis would be prevented in the future.

Although board members initially were generally silent in response to questions directed at them, deferring to staff, board member Ray Villareal at one point told the group that "for all of us on the board, it was pretty awful to learn" about the unexpected funding shortfall. He acknowledged that board members realize "we haven't collectively done the job we needed to do."

Speakers challenged board members for not being transparent about plans for program cuts and other matters related to the fiscal crisis, and encouraged district officials to talk more openly with the public, especially if they expect the community and school foundation to help staunch the district's unexpected financial wound.

Mr. Villareal and other board members agreed that they need to keep the school community better apprised about developments. But they noted that, after the financial problems were revealed, the board and district "went into triage mode" to try to figure out just what happened, and to ensure that classroom education and day-to-day school operations wouldn't be affected by the crisis. ■



Almanac photo by Michelle Le

**Shelly Masur** accepts a congratulatory call from state Senator Leland Yee at the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers building in Redwood City on election night.

## Slocum, Masur face off in November

### SUPERVISORS

continued from page 5

### ■ ELECTION 2012

about and who I was. Maybe that message resonated with them."

Mr. Slocum and Ms. Masur, both residents of Redwood City, are running to replace Rose Jacobs Gibson in the District 4 seat on the Board of Supervisors. The district includes Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, Redwood City and the unincorporated communities of North Fair Oaks and Oak Knoll.

The election drew 85,227 votes, according to the latest count, with Mr. Slocum receiving 31,100 and Ms. Masur 18,126.

The rest were distributed among the five other candidates: Menlo Park Mayor Kirsten Keith, 12,774 (15 percent); East Palo Alto City Council member Carlos Romero, 7,565 (8.9 percent); county Board of Education member Memo Morantes, 6,830 (8 percent); Menlo Park City Councilman Andy Cohen, 4,152 (4.9 percent); and Redwood City Planning Commissioner Ernie Schmidt, 2,680 (3.1 percent).

Reelected and running unopposed were supervisors Dave Pine and Adrienne Tissier, who represent communities in the north part of the county. Supervisors must live in the district they represent, but they run for election county-wide.

Services the Board of Supervisors oversees include public health, the county jail, criminal prosecution, child support, care for the aged and people with disabilities and behavioral problems, protection of the environment and county parks, and housing for residents with financial hardships.

Supervisors receive an annual salary of \$117,460. Mr. Slocum, who has a pension from his 24 years as chief elections officer and assessor-county clerk-recorder, said he would follow the example set by former longtime county sheriff and current supervisor, Don Horsley, and forego his salary.

Mr. Slocum, 64, is a 30-year resident of Redwood City. He and his wife Maria-Diaz-Slocum have two sons. He graduated from San Diego State University with a bachelor's degree in U. S. history, he told the Almanac.

Ms. Masur, 47, has a bachelor's degree from Macalester College and a master's degree in public health from Hunter College/City University of New York, she told the Almanac. She is the executive director of Teen Talk, a nonprofit organization devoted to preventing teen pregnancies, according to her online biography.

### Key factors

Among factors crucial to winning a county-wide election are fundraising, endorsements and name recognition.

Mr. Slocum likely won the name-recognition contest hands down. Anyone who registered to vote or had real property assessed between 1986 and 2010 in San Mateo County would have seen his name as the chief elections officer and assessor.

Ms. Masur beat Mr. Slocum soundly in convincing people to give her campaign money and endorse her candidacy.

She raised a total of \$96,818, according to campaign finance reports. She had an early start,

with \$28,202 in contributions from the last half of 2011.

Mr. Slocum, who joined the race in early March, received \$20,237 in campaign donations, but he is ready for a fight. His campaign's overall revenues include family loans of \$102,683, finance reports show.

Ms. Masur, alone among the seven candidates, neither borrowed nor lent her campaign money, according to her reports.

She is also alone in the extent of her support from organized labor, including electrical workers, plumbers and steamfitters, firefighters and government employees.

Mr. Slocum's list of endorsements once included the San Mateo County Labor Council, but the council told him to remove it, he said in an interview. It was an "open" endorsement, meaning that the Labor Council allowed member unions to endorse him if they chose to. Apparently, none did.

Unions can help a candidate with funding for direct-mail campaigns and providing volunteers to go door-to-door, both important when running in a large metropolitan county.

If endorsements by current or former elected officials are valuable, Ms. Masur won that category, too. Her website lists 93, including four from Sacramento, 71 from San Mateo County, and 21 from elsewhere in the state.

Mr. Slocum's website listed endorsements from 13 elected officials, all from the county and exceeded by Menlo Park Mayor Kirsten Keith with 47 such endorsements and East Palo Alto City Councilman Carlos Romero with 22. ■

## Menlo Park man dies 2 months after stabbing

By Sandy Brundage  
Almanac Staff Writer

A funeral service was held June 5 for a 67-year-old Menlo Park businessman who had been stabbed during a robbery in March. Police have not yet announced whether his death is related to the attack.

Two men attacked Lawrence Cronin as he stepped outside an office building at 1100 Alma St. around 9:45 p.m. on March 26, police said. The victim told police the assailants stabbed him while trying to commit robbery. Investigators reported that he was in stable condition at a local hospital following the attack.

Both assailants were described as Hispanic and about 5-foot-8-inches tall, with short hair and thin builds, and investigators released a sketch of one suspect.

Visit [tinyurl.com/Sketch-330](http://tinyurl.com/Sketch-330) to see the sketch.

Police spokesperson Nicole Acker said there are no new leads in the case.

Mr. Cronin, who owned an

insurance brokerage in Menlo Park and belonged to the Menlo Circus Club, died May 30. The San Mateo County Coroner's Office declined to release the cause of death, and no information was available as to whether it was related to the stabbing.

His friends and family held the funeral service at the Church of the Nativity in Menlo Park, followed by a reception at the Menlo Circus Club.

Long-time friend Doug Lawrence enjoyed playing basketball with Mr. Cronin. "I often defended him because I was

so awful at the game and he was so willing to extend me a little grace," he said, and described a man who played a strategic game. "If he got away with a particularly clever move, he got a little devilish look in his eye, and the side of his lips would turn up slightly — sort of a 'gotcha' look. He loved to play like a clever, bright, and skillful kid, which he pretty much was. He was a wonder to watch! You can form a treasured friendship with a man on the basketball court." ■

**No information was available about whether his death was related to the stabbing.**

## Trainer arrested in drug bust

By Sue Dremann  
Palo Alto Weekly

A 46-year-old Palo Alto man who is a personal trainer in Menlo Park was arrested Thursday, June 7, in connection with the seizure of tens of thousands of doses of prescription medications, the Menlo Park Police Department reported.

Perry Mosdromos was arrested by the Menlo Park Police Department's Narcotics Enforcement Team, Homeland Security agents and FBI agents, who are part of the Safe Streets Task Force.

Two search warrants were obtained after Homeland Security agents intercepted a package containing 499 grams of anabolic steroids and 4,374 Xanax pills that were to be delivered to a UPS box in Menlo Park. The investigation revealed that the box belonged to Mr. Mosdromos.

Agents searched Mr. Mosdro-

mos's place of business at One-2-One Fitness in Menlo Park and his Palo Alto residence on Loma Verde Avenue. He was home when the search warrant was executed, police said.

Menlo Park police originally reported that his business was Peak Performance. In a subsequent note of clarification, the police said:

"Perry Mosdromos is the owner of '1 2 1' Personal Training. Although Mosdromos' offices are located at Peak Performance in Menlo Park and the personal training services are offered there, he is not an employee of the chiropractic offices and in fact is an independent contractor.

"The investigation is con-



Perry Mosdromos

tinuing into this case and at this time, there is no evidence that indicates the chiropractic offices at Peak Performance are involved."

A search of his residence found tens of thousands of prescription drugs in various forms, police said. The drugs included Vicodin, Percocet, Lorazepam, Diazepam, Valium, along with thousands of anabolic steroids and several illegal narcotics such as MDMA. The estimated street value of the seizure is more than \$250,000, police said.

Mr. Mosdromos was ordering the controlled drugs from other countries, re-packaging them, selling them, and shipping them to people all over the United States, according to police.

He was booked into the San Mateo County jail on multiple counts of sales of narcotics and prescription drugs. ■

## Wayside residents raise their taxes

A majority of residents of Wayside Road, a steep and winding rural private road in Portola Valley, agreed in the June 5 election to raise their annual road maintenance tax by \$325 — to \$950 per household.

Nineteen votes were cast for Measure V, or 82.6 percent of the total, more than enough to exceed the two-thirds majority needed to pass the tax increase. Four voters opposed the measure.

## Eshoo, Chapman in general election

Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Menlo Park, will face Republican Dave Chapman in the November general election for the 18th Congressional District seat.

On Tuesday, she received 61.4 percent of the vote. Mr. Chapman came in second with 29.9 percent of the vote.

Under the new primary rules, the top two vote-getters advance to the general election.

## Two county tax measures defeated; one may pass

By Dave Boyce  
Almanac Staff Writer

San Mateo County voters defeated two San Mateo County tax measures on June 5. The vote on Measure T, a tax on rental-car companies, is close.

In the latest tally, the "yes" vote on Measure T is 49,587, just 311 more than the "no" vote.

The county has about 14,000 ballots still to

count, according to elections official David Tom.

Visit [tinyurl.com/Tax-612](http://tinyurl.com/Tax-612) to see the latest count.

Measure T would create a 2.5 percent tax on the gross receipts of vehicle rental companies in unincorporated parts of the county, including San Francisco International Airport. The companies would be expected to pass the increase along to customers, mostly visitors to the county. The measure would raise \$7.75 million a year for San Mateo County's general fund,

analysts have said.

Measures U and X were defeated, with about 53 percent of voters opposing the tax measures.

Measure U would have raised the hotel and motel occupancy tax rate in unincorporated parts of the county to 12 percent from its current 10 percent, raising about \$200,000 a year.

Measure X would have raised an estimated \$5 million a year by imposing an 8 percent tax

on commercial parking facilities located in unincorporated parts of the county, including SFO.

A \$1.83 billion budget is coming before the county Board of Supervisors in June. The defeat of measures U and X will raise the projected deficit to about \$33 million from the current \$28 million projected for the fiscal year that begins July 1, 2012.

If, after all ballots are counted, Measure T also loses, the deficit will rise by another \$7.75 million a year, analysts said. ■

■ ELECTION 2012

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## Third Menlo Park man is sentenced in fatal shooting

It took nearly seven years and two trials, but a Menlo Park man was found guilty of second-degree murder and sentenced to 22 years to life in prison on June 4.

Michael Edwards, 24, and Menlo Park residents Tramel Walker and Leavell Jordan, were each convicted in relation to the shooting death of 18-year-old Michael De Jesus at a party in San Jose in 2005. The three men were told to leave the party, but returned later and opened fire, according to court testimony. The first trial of Mr. Edwards ended with a hung jury, but prosecutors decided to re-try the case.

### Clock tower

The Menlo Park Clock Tower turns 25 this year, and has a

### BRIEFS

fresh coat of paint to mark the occasion. The Menlo Park Historical Association will host an anniversary celebration at the train station (1120 Merrill St.) on Tuesday, June 19, at 11 a.m.

### Tip-A-Cop

It's the one time of year you're allowed to give a police officer a tip, as Menlo Park police team up with the Special Olympics of Northern California to fundraise for local athletes to train and compete.

The event will be held on Wednesday, June 13, at Amici's Pizzeria, 880 Santa Cruz Ave. in downtown Menlo Park, from 5 to 9 pm.

## Library remodel in Woodside budget

A major remodel of Woodside public library is part of the town's proposed annual budget to be discussed by the Town Council on Tuesday, June 12.

For the fiscal year starting July 1, there is money allocated to upgrade the in-pavement lights for two school crosswalks, repair or replace three bridges, repair two storm-drain facilities, and start on the library remodel.

The Town Council will review the budget with staff at the meeting starting at 7:30 p.m. in Independence Hall near the corner of Woodside and Whiskey Hill roads. The proposed budget will return for a public hearing and council action on Tuesday, June 26.

Much of the infrastructure work would be underwritten by other agencies. The \$215,600 crosswalk project would be paid for from a federal Highway Safety Improvement Grant of \$189,000 and \$21,600 from San Mateo County's Measure A funds.

The \$189,000 project to repair or replace the bridges would include \$167,322 reimbursable through the federal Highway Bridge Program.

General fund revenues are expected to total \$5,650,878 in fiscal year 2012-13, with expenses estimated at \$5,560,862.

Go to [tinyurl.com/budget-1234](http://tinyurl.com/budget-1234) to download the town's budget proposal in a PDF document.

## Nicholas tops Peninsula sales for Coldwell Banker in 2011

Keri Nicholas ranked as Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage's top agent on the San Francisco Peninsula and one of the most successful in the nation for sales last year, the company announced.

Ms. Nicholas sold \$113 million in real estate in 2011, Coldwell Banker said. She finished fourth in the U.S. and worldwide, surpassing some 87,000 Coldwell Banker sales associates in 49 countries, the company said.

Over the past two decades she is responsible for sales of more than \$1 billion, Coldwell Banker said.

Ms. Nicholas works in Coldwell Banker's Menlo Park - Santa Cruz Avenue office, managed by Wendy McPherson.

Born and raised in Atherton, she has received many honors during her 22-year career. She was recently named by the Wall Street Journal as one of the top 50 of three million residential agents in the U.S.



Keri Nicholas



### TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO SITE DEVELOPMENT AND ZONING ORDINANCES TO ADJUST PERMIT APPEALS PERIODS AND TIME LIMITS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Town Council of the Town of Portola Valley will hold a public hearing on June 20, 2012 to consider amendments to the site development and zoning ordinances relative to permit appeal periods and time limits. The proposed amendments would change the appeal periods for variances and conditional use permits to 15 days from the action on the application. In addition, the proposed amendments would adjust the time limit for a variance to one year from issuance, establish a time limit of one year for a fence permit, and would allow site development permits, variances and fence permits that are issued in conjunction with an architectural review to have a two year time limit.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Town Planner has determined that above described project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to Section 15061(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines. The amendments only impact appeal and permit life time limits and do not affect land uses or environmental review requirements. Because it can be seen with certainty that the amendments could not have a significant effect on the environment, the project is exempt from CEQA.

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Town Council of the Town of Portola Valley will initiate the public hearing on the proposed amendments at its special meeting of June 20, 2012 at 7:30 p.m., Town Hall (Historic Schoolhouse), 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, California. All interested persons are invited to appear before the Town Council at the times and place herein above-mentioned. Copies of the proposed site development and zoning ordinance amendments and related materials will be available at Portola Valley Town Hall, 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, California starting on June 8, 2012.

Dated: June 5, 2012  
Signed: Sharon Hanlon, Town Clerk

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## Election: Hill, Lieber poised for November showdown

Jerry Hill and Sally Lieber cruised to the top-two spots at the June 5 primary election and will now square off in November for a chance to represent a newly formed state Senate district 13 in the heart of the Peninsula.

The two political veterans were widely expected to advance to the next round in a four-way race that also included Mountain View teacher Christopher Chiang and John Webster, a libertarian who has run several times in the past. Mr. Hill dominated the field with 51 percent of

the votes. Ms. Lieber trailed in a distant second with 23 percent.

District 13, formed last year during the redistricting process, includes most of San Mateo County and northern Santa Clara County. Most of the district is currently represented by state Sen. Joe Simitian, who is termed out of Sacramento this year and who was elected June 5 to return to his old spot on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors.

Visit [tinyurl.com/Senate-609](http://tinyurl.com/Senate-609) for the full story.

## Assembly race: Gordon, Yang to face off

The only question regarding the District 24 state Assembly election on June 5 was which of the three political novices in the race would run in November against Rich Gordon, a former San Mateo County supervisor and current first-term assemblyman.

That person will be software engineer and Republican Cheng-

zhi "George" Yang, 35, of Menlo Park. Mr. Gordon garnered about 56 percent of the vote. Mr. Yang finished second with about 29 percent of the vote.

Because of California's new primary rules, the top two vote-getters automatically advance to the general election in November. Visit [tinyurl.com/Assembly-609](http://tinyurl.com/Assembly-609) for the full story.

### ■ POLICE CALLS

#### MENLO PARK

##### Residential burglary reports:

■ Losses estimated at \$60,900 in break-in through locked apartment bedroom window and theft of safe containing jewelry, collectible coins and personal documents, Sharon Park Drive, June 1.

■ Losses estimated at \$2,400 in entry through unlocked rear window and theft of two laptop computers and two external hard drives, Menalto Ave., June 4.

■ Loss estimated at \$2,000 in entry through unlocked garage door and theft of mountain bike, Creek Drive, June 4.

■ No losses but interior of home ransacked by someone who entered through open rear window, Eastridge Ave., June 2.

**Attempted robbery report:** Juvenile lost his balance and then fled after trying unsuccessfully to grab cell phone from hands of 70-year-old woman sitting on bench, 2:30 p.m. at Santa Cruz Ave. and Chestnut St., June 1.

**Auto burglary report:** Unknown losses in break-in to SUV and theft of wallet, musical instruments, speakers, and wheeled dolly, Hedge Road, June 5.

##### Theft reports:

■ Loss estimated at \$750 in theft of laptop computer from unlocked vehicle in parking lot, first block of Middlefield Road, June 7.

■ Loss estimated at \$600 in theft of bicycle from underground parking structure of condo complex, Laurel St., June 4.

■ Loss estimated at \$400 in theft of unattended jacket, 2800 block of Sand Hill Road, June 1.

■ Loss estimated at \$250 in theft of unattended bike from outside of residence, Oak Court, June 6.

■ No losses after witness confronted two juveniles who dropped delivered package

they had taken from in front of apartment door, Evelyn St., June 6.

#### WEST MENLO PARK

**Theft report:** Unlocked bike leaned against store wall was stolen after owner went inside, Country Corner at 3207 Alameda De Las Pulgas, June 5.

#### ATHERTON

**Residential burglary report:** Losses estimated at \$400 in theft of copper wire from construction site, Laburnum Road, June 4.



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**letters@AlmanacNews.com**

The Almanac, established in September 1965, is delivered each week to residents of Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside and adjacent unincorporated areas of southern San Mateo County. The Almanac is qualified by decree of the Superior Court of San Mateo County to publish public notices of a governmental and legal nature, as stated in Decree No. 147530, issued December 21, 1969.

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



**WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?**

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

**TOWN SQUARE FORUM**

Post your views on the Town Square forum at [www.TheAlmanacOnline.com](http://www.TheAlmanacOnline.com)

**EMAIL** your views to:

[letters@almanacnews.com](mailto: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.

## A pair of major milestones for Menlo Park

Three years ago the outlook for passage of a new downtown plan for Menlo Park was break-even at best. And no one had any idea that Facebook might snap up the Oracle/Sun campus near the city's eastern border, bringing its high-tech luster to the city that is now known as the company's hometown nearly every time Facebook is mentioned in the media.

The city has embraced Mark Zuckerberg's creation with open arms, eagerly accepting an offer sheet from Facebook that will be worth more than \$8 million over the next 10 years in return for permission to hire up to 6,600 employees at its Willow Road campus.

Even more satisfying for many Menlo Park residents is last week's passage on first reading of a downtown plan that lays out a blueprint for new buildings in the downtown core and along El Camino Real. Thoroughly discussed every step of the way, the new plan will provide a framework to slowly bring new life to the downtown, which saw its last major changes in 1989 when Menlo Center, including Kepler's, took over a space on El Camino Real between Ravenswood and Oak Grove avenues.

The new downtown plan came after five years of concerted effort by consultants and the planning department led by associate planner Thomas Rogers. The planning staff and the consultants stayed on course through tedious and often contentious meetings to finally produce a document that the City Council could live with and that will guide future development downtown and on El Camino for years to come.

The work could not have progressed without the strong support of the City Council, including Mayor Kirsten Keith,

Rich Cline, Kelly Fergusson, Andy Cohen and Peter Ohtaki. As a resident living near El Camino, Mr. Ohtaki often had to recuse himself, as did Ms. Fergusson, whose husband works at Stanford (the university owns several properties on El Camino Real). Mr. Cohen surprised the public when he abstained from two final votes on the project last week.

It was a whirlwind few weeks for the council, which just last month gave a thumbs up to the Facebook deal. The company is settling in after offering its stock to the public on May 18 for the first time.

The Facebook agreement and passage of the new downtown plan herald a new beginning for Menlo Park that over time will help the city meet its financial obligations and remake its downtown core. It will enable the city to restore the blighted area near the town's southern border that was home to a clutch of car dealers who moved out and left behind empty buildings and parking lots.

Repurposing the dealerships is the key to restoring life to a key commercial area of the city. If developers believe they can be successful building housing units over street level retail with underground parking on these sites, it will be huge step toward moving hundreds of new residents and numerous retailers into valuable space near downtown. If the plan is built out, which could take years, it would bring 680 units of housing and 330,000 square feet of new retail, office and commercial space to the city. In addition, 380 new hotel rooms are permitted by the plan, which could generate substantial transit occupancy tax dollars for the city.

Neither the improvements made possible by the downtown plan nor the Facebook offices will destroy Menlo Park. Instead, they will give the city a more up-to-date appeal that will benefit all residents in the years ahead.

**EDITORIAL**

The opinion of The Almanac

**LETTERS**

Our readers write

**Writer sees disaster in downtown plan**

*Editor:*

Last Tuesday night (June 5), in spite of hearing many residents and merchants speak out against the downtown plan in person, in spite of the many emails and anguished letters to the City Council and local newspapers, in spite of the fact that these residents and merchants have raised dozens of serious issues with the city's aggressive downtown plan, the Menlo Park City Council ran roughshod over its constituency and passed the downtown plan. In my opinion, this council will be known as the City Council that destroyed Menlo Park.

Just as the sham facilitator-led "visioning" meetings in Menlo Park came up with the same template we're seeing all over the Bay Area — Plan Bay Area/ABAG-style high-density infill building, "pedestrian-and-bicycle-friendly" hostility toward drivers (which all of us are when we're in our cars, magically



Menlo Park Historical Association

**Our Regional Heritage**

At first welcomed, Stanford students soon gained a reputation as a curse on the nearby town of Menlo Park. Students who frequented the town's saloons were scrupulously avoided by residents. In 1909, a law was enacted making it illegal to sell alcoholic beverages within 1.5 miles of the campus, which enraged saloonkeepers.

transforming into pedestrians if and when we can find a parking space) — the council meeting seemed also to have had its outcome fixed well in advance.

This plan was going to move through regardless of its fiscal irresponsibility, its harm to merchants, its inconvenience to residents, its alarming traf-

fic congestion implications, its overburdening of our already strained schools and infrastructure, and the swell of public

Continued on next page

## LETTERS

Our readers write

Continued from previous page

indignation over its multifarious indignities to our community.

A plan this flawed and this contentious should at least be put before the voters as a ballot measure rather than forced down our throats by a majority of the council, dutifully marching to city staff's drumbeat, and catering to a few developers waiting hungrily in the wings.

**Cherie Zaslowsky**  
Menlo Park downtown

### Anonymous Athertonians site misleads users

Editor:

The private, anonymously administered Athertonians Yahoo Group misrepresents itself, breaks its own rules regarding inclusion, and manipulates its membership rolls. These are not generalizations. Here are the facts of my interchange with this group:

1. On April 25, I received an invitation at my Yahoo.com email address to "be a part of the 'Athertonians' email list ..." I responded by entering my email, home address and other identifying information on the Athertonians Group Web page as requested.

2. On May 2, having heard nothing from the group, I emailed the moderators, requesting an update.

3. On May 8, I received an email titled "File-Removal from Group," which stated in part that "The Athertonian group is for current residents of Atherton only," reciting that I was not an Atherton resident, based on "information that either you provided to us ... or from other information sources." On the same day, I replied to the removal notice, again providing the Atherton address at which my family and I have lived for over 25 years. I have heard nothing more from the group's administrators and cannot access the site.

This group clearly screens out and rejects inclusion of Atherton residents who may be suspected of disagreeing with positions advocated by its anonymous administrators. As a matter of fact, I understand that other residents who have been members of the group for some time have been summarily removed from the rolls. Since the Athertonians group administrators keep secret their identities, there is no person who can be called to account for conduct reminiscent of the "black ball" practices of 19th century fraternities and secret societies.

This group's activities would normally be of little import, were it not for:

# Court needs chance to overturn Citizens United

By Anna G. Eshoo

On June 14, the United States Supreme Court will have its first opportunity to revisit the infamous Citizens United decision, handed down in January of 2010. Since that decision and the mayhem it created, experts have pondered whether the court fully understood the ramifications of upending almost 100 years of settled law by deregulating corporate spending rules assembled during that time. Two and a half years and two election cycles later and with the benefit of hindsight, the court can no longer claim ignorance.

Thanks to a defiant Montana Supreme Court and Steve Bullock, the state's determined attorney general, the court has the opportunity to rehear and reconsider Citizens United in the case of American Tradition Partnership v. Bullock. Enacted exactly 100 years ago by ballot initiative, Montana's Corrupt Practices Act prohibits corporations from contributing to — or spending in support of — political candidates. The law rightly prevents the state's wealthy stakeholders, such as mining companies, from exercising undue influence in state elections. It was enacted in direct response to cases of political corruption tied to corporations, and until Citizens United, it protected voters.

Today, the Corrupt Practices Act is under fire by an independent nonprofit group called the American Tradition Partnership, which

is seeking to overturn the state law using the cudgel of Citizens United. The American Tradition Partnership is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(4) nonprofit group, meaning its funding sources are completely undisclosed and unlimited. They may include individuals, out-of-state corporations, or, for all we know, even foreign nationals seeking to influence Montana's elections. The group was so certain of victory that they moved to summarily dismantle the law. In a well-drawn and comprehensive 5-2 majority opinion, Montana's Supreme Court disagreed.

At its core, the logic behind Citizens United relies on a finding that direct corporate participation in elections does not subject voters to corruption or the appearance of corruption. If it did, Congress would be justified in imposing rules to prevent it, as it has since Teddy Roosevelt was president. Because the country is large and the system is so complex, proving that one kind of spending leads to corruption is difficult, and free-spending corporations took advantage.

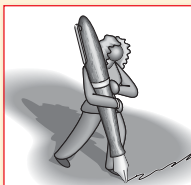
In the much smaller Montana political system, the impact of such spending is indisputable. As the state's justices note in a litany of specific examples, when allowed to do so, entities from Standard Oil to Wall Street investors dominated the state's political scene, and campaign finance laws were and are vital to protect its voters.

The outcome of American Tradition Partnership v. Bullock will have a profound effect

on every state with laws designed to prevent corruption and curtail corporate power. It could also present a lifeline for Congress to once again play a role in responding to egregious misbehavior in federal campaigns. Over the last two years, we've all witnessed the emergence of Super PACs, representing a perverse and staggering failure of our laws. There is a glaring need for action in a system riddled with loopholes and abuses. As senators John McCain and Sheldon Whitehouse wrote in a brief to the Supreme Court asking them to side with Montana, "the news confirms, daily, that existing campaign finance rules purporting to provide for 'independence' and 'disclosure' in fact provide neither." These were the safeguards offered by the Citizens United majority to prevent corruption and abuse, and in their absence, we desperately need a legal assessment more in line with the reality voters face every day ... a tsunami of secret money from secret donors flooding our elections.

This month, the Supreme Court will decide whether to summarily dispose of Montana's law using the Citizens United decision, or to schedule oral arguments and finally confront the system it created. The court should hear the arguments. On the eve of the most consequential presidential contest in generations, the justices and all Americans deserve to hear directly from Montana's attorney general why voters, and our elections, deserve a second chance.

**Rep. Anna G. Eshoo, D-Menlo Park, represents the 14th House District in the U.S. Congress.**



GUEST  
OPINION

■ The identity game which the group has been playing with our town's own publication, the Athertonian.

■ The "impartial" surveys that the group and others, such as former Mayor Didi Fisher, conduct

of the group's now-remodeled membership, and which they will tout as being representative of the views of our town's citizens.

■ The misrepresentations that the group makes with respect to the proposed library and its

environmental impact (which is minimal, as documented in the exhaustive draft EIR).

■ The group's unwillingness to propose (and publicly stand behind) any alternative (accompanied with verifiable data) to

the thorough and public process conducted by our elected Town Council and the hardworking volunteers on the Library Building Steering Committee.

**Smith McKeithen**  
Maple Leaf Way, Atherton



### TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY NOTICE OF A PUBLIC HEARING ON THE PROPOSED TOWN BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 2012/2013

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN, that the Town Council of the Town of Portola Valley will hold a public hearing on the Proposed Town Budget for Fiscal Year 2012/2013, Wednesday, June 27, 2012 at 7:30 p.m., in the Historic Schoolhouse, 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, California.

Comments may be submitted in writing prior to the Town Council meeting or presented at the meeting. All interested persons are invited to appear before the Town Council at the time and place herein above mentioned.

The Proposed Town Budget for fiscal year 2012/2013 is available for viewing on the Town website at [www.portolavalley.net](http://www.portolavalley.net), as well as copies are available between 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.; 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m. at Portola Valley Town Hall, 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley, California and, via mail by contacting Sharon Hanlon, Town Clerk at 650-851-1700 ext. 210.

Dated: June 5, 2012  
Signed: Sharon Hanlon, Town Clerk

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