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life after brain injury** | Page 3

The Almanac

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

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'You are a different person'

Leslie Lambert talks of life after brain injury

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

On waking up in the morning, those of us in normal good health have abilities that are all but instinctual: knowing how to take a shower, for example, or how to get dressed; how to make breakfast and the routine of going to work; navigating the workday; planning an evening and getting dinner together.

Life no longer has such easy familiarity for former Portola Valley planning manager Leslie Lambert, who recently retired after 20 years in Town Hall. Her retirement was voluntary, but it was also necessary.

On an evening in January 2011, Ms. Lambert, 54, fell to the sidewalk outside her Mountain View home and suffered a traumatic brain injury and cerebral hemorrhage. Exactly why she fell is not known, she said in a recollection provided to the Almanac, but before the accident, she said she not infrequently felt dizzy when standing up or lying down.

Since her accident, she's had to relearn how to cope with waking up, getting dressed and walking. She did not recognize the alphabet. She had to revisit phonics. Multi-tasking is out; she needs a calendar to know the day of the week. To concentrate, she needs curtains drawn, shades down and deep quiet. She was a very accomplished writer on the complexities of urban planning before the accident, but now it can take her all day, she said, to write a substantial email.

"It's a chore for me to comprehend," she said. "You have to be strong and it takes will to move it forward."

After months of rehabilitation, she returned to work in August 2011 on a half-day schedule with responsibilities related to her old job. That, too, is over. On May 29, she suffered a brain seizure on the way to work. She managed a safe stop but had another seizure on the



Almanac photo by Michelle Le

Leslie Lambert at home. The former Portola Valley planning manager decided to retire following a traumatic brain injury. "I loved doing what I was doing, but I'll get better and I'll find something to do," she says.

way to the hospital. She remembers none of it, she said in an interview.

"I think I had the angels help me," she said, referring to how she slowed and stopped on the side of the road. "I don't remember putting the car in park or the CHP or the ambulance."

With the seizure, she lost ground so she's back to relearning. "Ehh," she said. "I did it before and I can do it again."

She used to enjoy speeding around in sports cars, biking, tobogganing, skiing. No more. No more glider flying either — or as she put it in an email, to "fly in one of those planes that you fly after it lets go of the plane that has an engine ... darn,

can't think of what that is called, it will come to me."

Ms. Lambert has retained her way of taking herself lightly. "Be grateful and have a positive attitude and remember to have fun and lots of laughter," she wrote. "You have your own journey to make and a gift to give. Your life is different ... You are a different person."

Her retirement was arranged by her husband Terry and Town Manager Nick Pegueros. "While I am not thrilled with this decision, I understand I agreed to it and know that it is the right thing for me and for the Town," Ms. Lambert wrote

See **LESLIE**, page 6

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SAN FRANCISQUITO CREEK JOINT POWERS AUTHORITY NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY Draft Environmental Impact Report for the San Francisquito Creek Flood Protection Project - East Bayshore Road to San Francisco Bay

The San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority (SFCJPA) has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the San Francisquito Creek Flood Protection and Ecosystem Restoration Project - East Bayshore Road to San Francisco Bay (Project) and is making this document available for public review.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The Project would ultimately protect properties and infrastructure between East Bayshore Road and the San Francisco Bay from San Francisquito Creek (Creek) flows resulting from 100-year fluvial flood flows occurring at the same time as a 100-year tide, accounting for projected sea level rise through 2067. The Project would reduce local fluvial flood risks in the Project area during storm events, provide the capacity needed for future upstream improvements, increase and improve ecological habitat, and provide for improved recreational opportunities. The Project components proposed to improve management of flood flows along the Creek from East Bayshore Road to San Francisco Bay include opening the Creek channel to flow into the Baylands Preserve, reconfiguring and raising levees, creating a marshplain terrace to convey high flows, installing floodwalls, widening the Creek channel, and constructing access roads for maintenance purposes. The majority of the Project elements would occur on properties in Palo Alto and East Palo Alto and owned by the City of Palo Alto, or within Santa Clara Valley Water District or City of East Palo Alto rights-of-way.

PROJECT IMPACTS: Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act, the SFCJPA, as the lead agency for the Project, has prepared a DEIR to evaluate environmental impacts of the proposed Project. The DEIR identifies potentially significant environmental impacts associated with aesthetics, air quality, biological resources, cultural and paleontological resources, geology and soils, greenhouse gases, water resources, noise and vibration, public health, recreation, and traffic. Most of the impacts were determined to be less than significant after the implementation of mitigation measures proposed for the Project.

Construction impacts related to air quality were determined to be significant and unavoidable even after implementation of traffic and air quality mitigation measures. Additionally, because implementation of the mitigation measures proposed to compensate for recreational impacts to the Palo Alto Golf Course are outside the lead agency's jurisdiction and fulfillment cannot be guaranteed, a significant and unavoidable impact on the Golf Course is also assumed. SFCJPA's judgment is that the flood control benefits to residents in East Palo Alto and Palo Alto outweigh the identified significant and unavoidable impacts.

DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY: The DEIR will be available for public review at the following locations:

San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority 615 B Menlo Avenue Menlo Park, CA 94025	City of Palo Alto Main Library 1213 Newell Rd. Palo Alto, CA 94303	City of East Palo Alto Library 2415 University Ave. East Palo Alto, CA 94303
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A limited number of copies of the DEIR are available on a first request basis, by contacting the San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority at the address, telephone number, or electronic mail address indicated herein. It is also available at on the SFCJPA website at <http://sfcjpa.org/web/documents/san-francisquito-creek-jpa/>. The public comment period on the DEIR closes at 5 p.m. on September 13th, 2012.

PUBLIC MEETING: In conjunction with public review, the SFCJPA will also conduct two public hearings to take comments on the DEIR on August 15th and August 29th, 2012, both occurring at 6:00 p.m. at East Palo Alto City Hall (2415 University Avenue).

COMMENT PERIOD: The public is encouraged to ask questions and provide comments on the DEIR by email, direct mail or fax. Comments and feedback received between July 30th and September 13th, 2012 will be reviewed and incorporated into the Final EIR, as appropriate. Comments on this document should be directed to:

Kevin Murray, Project Manager
San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority
615-B Menlo Avenue
Menlo Park, California 94025
650-324-1972
email: kmurray@sfcjpa.org

Beating the drums for jazz

Stanford professor melds life in the academy with passion for music, creating sparks with his band, Charged Particles

By Elena Kadvany

Special to the Almanac

Most of us forever remember the magical moment when a great passion ignites. For Jon Krosnick, the magic occurred in 1972, when jazz drummer Peter Erskine performed with the Stan Kenton orchestra at the Interlochen Center for the Arts in Michigan.

Young Jon was a student participating in the Interlochen National Music Camp at that time, and was in the audience as the dynamic orchestra performed.

"It was just this electrifying wall of sound from this really strong brass section — orchestrated music that had a lot in common with classical music," Mr. Krosnick says.

"It was clear that there were ingenious arrangements and powerful emotions oriented by these people who had rehearsed a lot. That was really the dawning of my excitement about jazz."

This excitement led to a lifelong love and pursuit of music for Mr. Krosnick, a Portola Val-

On the cover: Jon Krosnick on drums at his Portola Valley home. *Almanac photo by Michelle Le.*

ley resident who melds a career as a psychology, political science and communications professor at Stanford with a life as percussionist for the contemporary electric jazz band, Charged Particles.

Born outside of Philadelphia to a former opera singer mother and an "avid audience member" father, Mr. Krosnick started his music training early. He began playing piano when he was 6 years old. When he was 9, he attended the eight-week summer music program in Interlochen.

At that time, the world of serious music he was exposed to was almost exclusively focused on the classical genre. But the Erskine-Kenton concert opened his eyes to the wild possibilities of jazz and the art of percussion, he recalls during a recent interview.

Now 53, Mr. Krosnick performs with the Charged Particles at various Bay Area venues, including his home town. The trio appeared at a Portola Val-

ley Earth Day Festival, and has provided a musical backdrop to events at Portola Vineyards on Los Trancos Road. It will perform there again on Aug. 5 as part of the vineyard's summer concert series.

The group, which includes keyboard player Murray Low and bassist Jason Muscat, has reached a milestone with a performance set for July 27 at the Freight & Salvage Coffeehouse in Berkeley.

"The Berkeley concert is really a high point for us," Mr. Krosnick says. "It's one thing to play in a restaurant and be sort of background noise. It's a whole different thing for people to come pay money to sit in a dark room and just listen to you."

In the beginning

Mr. Krosnick played percussion for his elementary, middle and high schools' jazz bands. Yet the private high school he attended in New Jersey "had essentially no music of any seriousness at all," he says.

So during the academic year, he studied with Fred Hinger, who held the principal timpani chair in the Metropolitan Opera



Photo courtesy of Charged Particles

Members of the contemporary electric jazz band Charged Particles. From left, they are Murray Low, Jon Krosnick, and Jason Muscat.

Orchestra. For 10 summers, his musical education continued at the Interlochen camp, ranging from classical percussion and jazz drumming to playing with orchestras, concert bands, percussion ensembles and jazz bands.

College presented a cross-

roads: "Was I going to go to a music conservatory or an academic school?" he recalls asking himself. "I really liked science and math, so I could do an academic career and music on the side, but it was

See **CHARGED**, page 10

County may ask voters to raise sales tax

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

The county wants your half-cent's worth of opinion on whether to increase the sales tax. After the failure of two tax increases during the June election — only a tax on car rentals passed, by a bare 197 votes — the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors finds itself confronting the same budget deficit with fewer options.

The proposed ordinance, if approved by voters, would raise the sales tax by a half-cent per dollar to 8.75 percent for 10 years. The increase is projected to add about \$60 million a year to the county's general fund, according to a memo from

supervisors Adrienne Tissier and Don Horsley.

Mr. Horsley said he would support the increase even if all three tax measures had passed in June. "If you look back on my campaign for the Board, I said that I supported an extension of the State's 1 percent sales tax that expired in June of 2011. That is no longer possible but the proposal that Supervisor

Tissier and I are sponsoring is the right thing to do to maintain County services."

The board would get to decide how to spend the money since the tax goes into the general fund. The memo suggests pos-

The proposal would increase the sales tax to 8.75 percent for 10 years.

See **TAX**, page 10

Former superintendent offered plea bargain

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

Tim Hanretty, the former superintendent of the Portola Valley School District who is charged with stealing nearly \$101,000 from the school district, has been offered a plea bargain by the county District Attorney's Office.

He is expected to decide at a court hearing later this month whether to accept or reject the offer.

Neither Mr. Hanretty nor his attorney, Michael Markowitz, could be reached for comment, but the Daily News reported that the attorney said it is very likely the offer will be accepted.

At a July 18 San Mateo County Superior Court review, prosecutors offered Mr. Han-

retty a plea deal that includes the potential for state prison, District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe told the Almanac after the hearing.



Tim Hanretty

Mr. Markowitz requested time to discuss the plea offer with his client, and a July 31 date was set for 9 a.m., Mr. Wagstaffe said.

He declined to disclose further details of the plea offer.

If the offer is accepted, Judge Mark Forcum will decide whether Mr. Hanretty will serve time in prison, Mr. Wagstaffe said.

A likely consideration in sentencing will be Mr. Hanretty's ability to pay restitution to the district, Mr. Wag-

staffe said, adding that, so far, he has paid no restitution.

The amount of restitution the DA's office will seek is still being determined, Mr. Wagstaffe said. That's because in addition to allegedly embezzling about \$101,000 from the Portola Valley district to help pay for a construction project on his Woodside home, he also allegedly misappropriated funds from the Woodside Elementary School District when he was the business official there. In that case, he secured a loan for nearly \$2 million more than what was authorized by the school board for the Woodside School construction project, causing the district's debt to soar.

Investigators believe Mr.

See **HANRETTY**, page 10

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Leslie Lambert: 'You have your own journey to make'

LESLIE

continued from page 3

in a June 13 email.

She probably composed that sentence in the morning. "By 1 p.m., the fog starts rolling in, making me feel inefficient," she said. "By 4 p.m., my day is actually virtually over. My husband says (he) regularly needs to finish a sentence for me to find the right word that I'm looking for."

"It's so difficult (to read)," she said. "I just sit there and stare at it. I can't comprehend anything I'm looking at."

Some days are tougher. "When you push your body beyond its limitations, you may well experience something akin to circuit overload and (an) uncomfortable heaviness comes over you," she wrote.

"The need to lie down and rest is overwhelming, mental exhaustion leaves you confused, spacey, and faint and the smallest frustrations make you feel emotionally wrung out. This opens the door to other emotional responses such as grief over your losses or diminished abilities."

She misses work. "The retirement thing is difficult for me," she said. "There are so many people that I admire and that I love to deal with and work with. ... I loved doing what I was doing, but I'll get better and I'll find something to do."

A pleasure to work with

Asked to comment on Ms. Lambert's retirement, Councilman Ted Driscoll replied: "I would be honored to, because I think VERY highly of Leslie."

"She has been a great pleasure to work with," Mr. Driscoll said. "She often had to deliver sensitive or tough messages to homeowners or applicants, in person or by letter, and she always managed to keep things constructive, rather than confrontational."

Jasper Ridge Preserve Director Philippe Cohen complimented Ms. Lambert on her listening abilities. "But for me, my favorite thing about her is her ability to laugh," he said. "Even recently, given all the physical pain and the enormous disruption she has had to endure, she continues

Leslie Lambert has retained her way of taking herself lightly.

to find reasons to laugh. I think that speaks volumes about her real character."

"It is a challenge to bridge town bodies, volunteers, and residents," Planning Commissioner Leah Zaffaroni told the Almanac, "but she did so with grace and professionalism, and developed uniformly positive relationships. By doing so, she helped to oil the wheels of productivity and keep our mostly volunteer government running efficiently."

"Leslie has been my teacher, my mentor, and my friend from the moment I was hired over 13 years ago," Planning Technician Carol Borck said. "I am so grateful for Leslie and all the support she has given me over the years in so many ways. She is the kind of person who cannot be replaced ... and while I do dearly miss her, I celebrate her accomplishments and wish her much happiness in retirement and any future endeavors." ■

Menlo Park election papers go online

Menlo Park is moving the paperwork needed to run for City Council online. This year candidates will leave the city clerk's office with "just one sheet of paper — the nomination petition. All other information and materials will be provided on a flash drive, free of charge," City Clerk Margaret Roberts announced in a press release July 19.

The city says it will post information about each candidate, including campaign finance

statements, as it becomes available. A series of nine instructional videos on the election process will also go online.

Anyone without Internet access can view election documents at the city clerk's office at 701 Laurel St. and at the public libraries. Call Ms. Roberts at 330-6625 for more information about the election. This year, two seats will be open on the council, and at least five residents so far seem interested in running.



Almanac photo by Daniella Sanchez

How's this?

Nina Rice tries on one of designer Kirsten Schipper's hats at Menlo Park's Connoisseurs' Marketplace street festival on Saturday, July 21. Thousands turned out for the two-day event, experiencing hot weather on Saturday but pleasantly warm temperatures Sunday.

Council meets to decide ballot language

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

With an Aug. 10 deadline facing the town, the Atherton City Council will convene a special meeting at 4 p.m. Wednesday, July 25, to approve ballot language for three measures to be decided by voters in November — including whether a library should be built in Holbrook-Palmer Park

After months of rancor among residents on the issue, the council agreed late last month to put the question to voters, along with measures related to a proposal to build Little League facilities in the park, and a plan to rebuild the Town Center.

The council voted 3-2 last year, with council members Jerry Carlson and Elizabeth Lewis opposed, to build a library in the park to replace the existing, seismically unsound facility in the Town Center.

The issue has divided the community as well as the council, and after an attempt by Mayor Bill Widmer to win council approval of a telephone survey of residents failed, council members decided that an official vote would be the only way to proceed.

City Attorney Bill Connors is proposing language for two of the three measures, but is asking the council for clarification about what voters should be asked regarding the building of a new Town Center.

"While staff believes that the council has previously stated it is in favor of a new Town Center funded predominantly by public

ATHERTON

donations, it is unclear what direction the council seeks from the voters," Interim City Manager Theresa DellaSanta wrote in a report to the council.

Plans for construction projects in the town's only park have drawn criticism from people who live near Holbrook-Palmer, and those who use it for quiet space and low-impact recreation.

Ballot measures would deal with library and Little League facilities in the park, and a plan to rebuild the Town Center.

Opposition to the library plan also comes from people who want to keep the facility in the Town Center, and from a number of residents who think that building a larger facility with state-of-the-art features in the park would draw more people from out of town, crowding the park and worsening traffic.

The proposed ballot language for the library measure is: "Should the town of Atherton construct a new library in Holbrook-Palmer Park using funds dedicated for library purposes only, and not using any existing park open space for this purpose?"

The measure on the Little League question centers on a proposal by the youth organization brought before the council last year.

The proposed ballot language is: "Should the town permit

Little League to erect and maintain spectator bleachers in the existing area used by that organization for playing baseball in Holbrook-Palmer Park?"

The Little League plan, which includes full payment by the organization of all proposed amenities, is currently being reviewed by the town's Planning Commission.

The council voted on June 29, with Councilman Jim Dobbie absent, to place the three measures on the ballot.

In bringing the matter to the council, the Mayor Widmer and Councilwoman Kathy McKei then prepared a statement that restated their support for a library in the park, but noted: "... exchanges continue to be heated, misrepresentations abound and we are deeply saddened by the present state of affairs. ... We envision no other course of action that might begin the healing process we believe to be necessary at this time."

Although the vote was 4-0, Councilwoman Elizabeth Lewis argued against putting anything more on the ballot than the library issue, saying "the rest muddies the water." But after other council members indicated they would support the recommendation to put all three issues before voters, she said, "If this is the only way (residents) can have a voice (on the library), and we have to bundle them with other things, I'll vote yes."

The Wednesday meeting will be in the Council Chambers at 94 Ashfield Road, in the Town Center. ■

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Gloria Darke



Everything Is Negotiable

Dear Gloria,

We recently purchased a home at what I consider to be a very good price. However, we have since had several inspections including a termite, pool and two home inspections. I do not wish to go forward with the purchase of this home unless the seller will pay to have everything repaired as suggested by the reports. Is this common practice? How do buyers usually handle this?

Jeff B., Redwood City

Dear Jeff,

Everything is negotiable up to a point. I am making an assumption that you did not buy a brand new home; therefore, you should not expect that it would be in the condition of a brand new home. Inspectors come from the point of view of saying "if this house was perfect the wiring would be redone, there would be new plumbing, the windows should be dual pane, etc." However, you presumably did not pay for a

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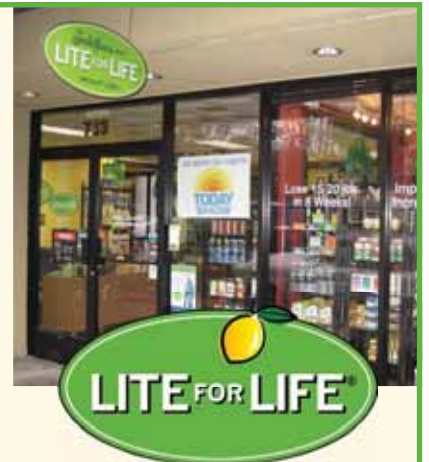


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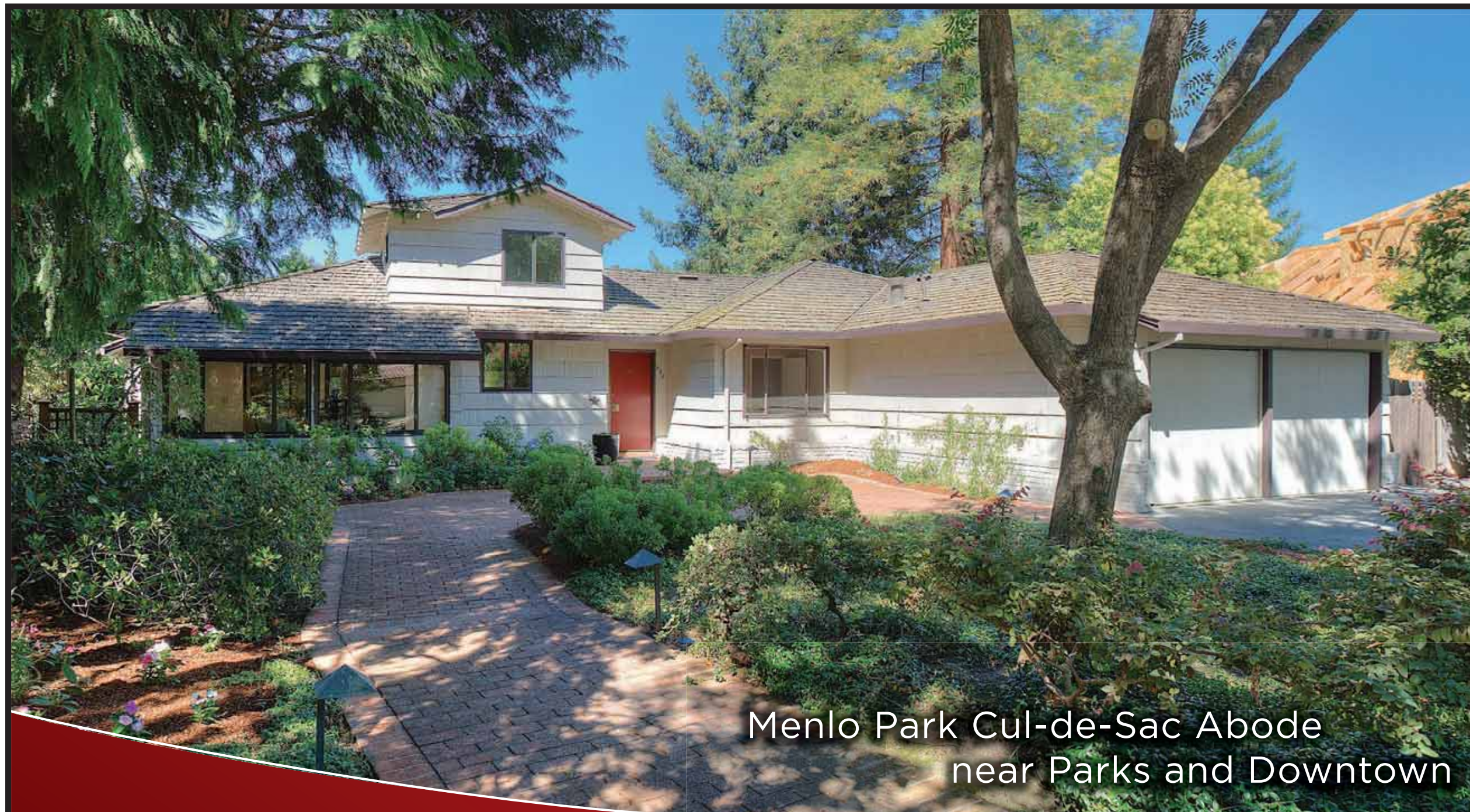
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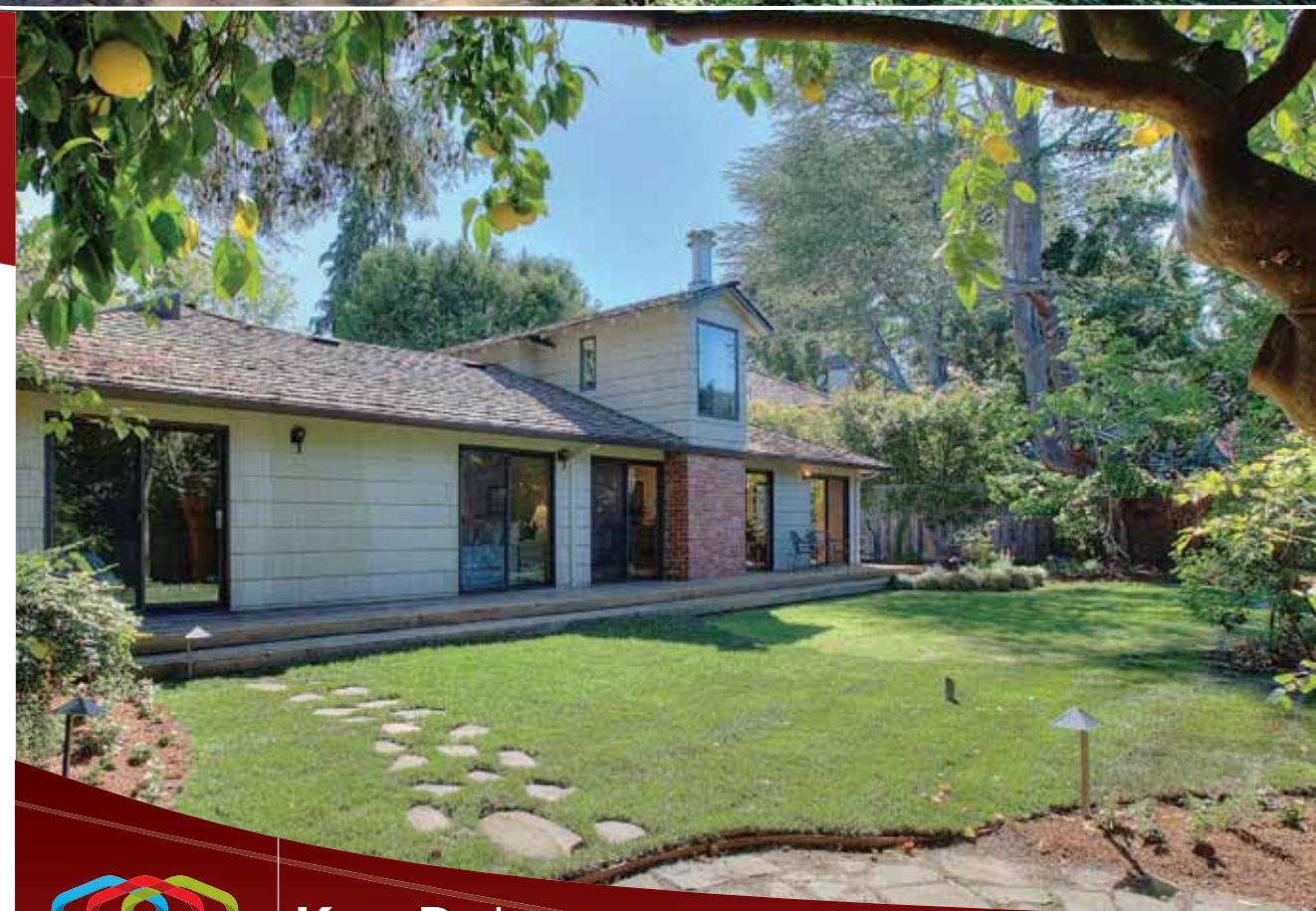
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Offered at \$1,798,000

Beating the drums for jazz

CHARGED

continued from page 5

awfully difficult to imagine doing music as a living with academics on the side.”

Mr. Krosnick went to Harvard University, where he fell in love with psychology. But he stayed active musically, playing with the Harvard Orchestra and the Bach Society Orchestra, and leading the percussion section of the MIT Symphony Orchestra.

After attending graduate school at the University of Michigan Ann Arbor he accepted a job teaching psychology and political science at Ohio State University in Columbus.

Although academics is what brought him there, the city was instrumental in the evolution of his parallel music life: It was the birthplace of Mr. Krosnick's first band, Charged Particles.

“The thing about Ohio was that it was a great place to start a band,” Mr. Krosnick explains. “The state of Ohio gave tax money to support the arts and would subsidize concerts for the performers who were good enough.”

With Mr. Krosnick joining forces with keyboardist Caleb Hutslar and bass player Mike Rack, Charged Particles became good enough — first playing concerts at theaters, festivals, jazz clubs and restaurants all over Ohio, then branching out

nationally and internationally. After a tour in Sweden, Mr. Hutslar fell in love and decided to move there.

Mr. Krosnick was left with the pieces of a band that he had to put back together. In 2002, keyboardist Kim Pensyl and bass player Andy Woodson became the second generation of Charged Particles. The group toured Ohio and surrounding states for about a year, until Mr. Krosnick got a call from Stanford University.

“The question was, would we go? One of the pulls to Ohio was the band. It was part of my life,” he says. “But when Stanford calls, you don't exactly say no.”

Mr. Krosnick's wife, Cathy Heaney, was also offered a position at Stanford, so they moved to Portola Valley in 2003. Mr. Krosnick's academic commitments range from teaching to research projects on survey design (he's currently working on a book called the “Handbook of Questionnaire Design”) and global warming (he worked on a recently released Stanford-Washington Post poll on the topic).

In his first years in the Bay Area, academic and family life consumed Mr. Krosnick, and band time was confined to intermittent flights back to Ohio when the group got gig offers.

But once his daughter, Alex, left for college at Stanford, “I knew I would have room in my



Photo by Chrisie Wendin

Record check

Students from Laurel, Encinal, Oak Knoll, and Hillview schools proudly display a \$3.35 million check from the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation that they helped present to the Menlo Park City School District at the June 4 school board meeting. District parents, teachers, local businesses, and community members together raised the record sum, which will make up more than 10 percent of the district's budget for the 2012-13 school year.

life” for music, he says. (Alex plays the cello — following in the footsteps of Mr. Krosnick's cousin, Joel Krosnick, the long-time cellist with the Juilliard String Quartet.)

Today, Charged Particles is in its third life, with the three musicians who now form the group finding chemistry “almost immediately, from the first note,” according to Mr. Muscat, the bassist

The music

The experience of listening

to Charged Particles play is a unique one, according to band members.

“The idea (is) that music is really a blend of genres — there are Latin rhythms, there are funky rhythms, there are swinging rhythms, and those elements coupled with classical musical elements all combine together,” Mr. Krosnick says.

Charged Particles performs original pieces, but it also plays modern interpretations of the classics.

And the band's name? Instead

of coming up with something on their own, the original Charged Particles players decided to look through Mr. Krosnick's thousands-large CD collection until they found a song name that felt right. They stopped at track number seven on a Chick Corea recording called “Beneath the Mask.”

It was decided on years ago in Ohio, but still rings true today. “We're electric, we're bouncing off each other — this is exactly the image we want of the band,” Mr. Krosnick says. ■

TAX

continued from page 5

sibly assisting county hospitals to stay in business. It lists Seton Medical Center as an example; the 357-bed Daly City facility must complete seismic safety improvements by 2020 to remain open. The memo states Seton handles 19 percent of admissions, 34 percent of doctor visits and contributes to long-term care for people on the county's

health plan and Medi-Cal.

“There is significant concern about other providers' capacity and ability to fill Seton's role in promoting the health of the community if Seton were to close,” the memo said.

The Board of Supervisors will decide on Tuesday, July 24, whether to place the tax increase on the November ballot. The meeting starts at 9 a.m. at 400 County Center in Redwood City. ■

Former superintendent offered plea bargain

HANRETTY

continued from page 5

Hanretty didn't use the additional money for personal gain — a conclusion they reaffirmed when, after the Portola Valley matter came to light in late April, another close look was taken at the Woodside books, Mr. Wagstaffe said. But that doesn't let Mr. Hanretty off the hook, he said.

“He exposed the Woodside district to (a large) indebtedness, and (the district) has to make good on that,” he said, explaining why Mr. Hanretty will be expected to pay restitution to the Woodside district as well as the Portola Valley district.

Mr. Hanretty pleaded not guilty on June 19 to six counts of embezzlement from the Portola Valley district. He

had resigned from his post in January, after the DA's office launched the investigation into his alleged misappropriation of funds in the Woodside district.

As a result of that investigation, he was charged in April

The DA says he would never agree to a deal to keep details of the case confidential.

with three felony counts of misappropriation of public funds. Both cases are being heard together in court.

Mr. Hanretty posted bail, and remains out of custody.

If he rejects the plea deal, he will be in court on Aug. 16 for a preliminary hearing on the

charges, Mr. Wagstaffe said.

If the plea deal is accepted, will the details uncovered in the two investigations be made public?

“Legally, because this case fell within the category of ... an investigation, it can be kept confidential forever — but that's not my policy,” Mr. Wagstaffe said.

The caveat, he added, is if there is something in the report that would unduly affect someone's privacy or endanger someone's safety, “but I don't know of anything in this case at all to make me think that it would fall into that category.”

If the defense asks for the report to be kept confidential as part of the plea deal, “we would never agree to that,” he said. “The public pays us. We work for them.” ■

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Kleiner Perkins to appeal denial of arbitration

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

The fight to move a discrimination lawsuit behind the closed doors of arbitration is not over, according to a spokesperson for venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers of Menlo Park.

A San Francisco Superior Court judge had given the firm's attorney two shots at convincing him that agreements signed by an employee — who is suing the company for gender discrimination — compelled arbitration, but ruled against the firm both times.

But that might not be the end of it. In court on Friday (July 20), Judge Harold Kahn reportedly told the firm's attorney, Lynne Hermle, that she was welcome to go down the street to the court of appeals if she still disagreed with the ruling. Her client appears ready to accept the suggestion.

Describing Kleiner Perkins as "disappointed with the judge's decision," a spokesperson said the company intends to file an appeal. "(Plaintiff Ellen Pao), like other partners, signed a variety of standard agreements and it is these agreements with the managing LLCs that govern her claims and require, among other things, that disputes be resolved through arbitration. We expect arbitration to be a more efficient and speedier dispute resolution process than trying a matter before a jury years down the line in the San Francisco Superior Court."

Ms. Pao, a junior investment partner at Kleiner Perkins, filed the lawsuit on May 10 after working at the venture capital firm for seven years. The suit alleges that the firm discriminates against women for promotions and compensation, and retaliated against her after she complained about sexual harassment.

Kleiner Perkins countered the allegations in its response by

citing Ms. Pao's performance reviews. "Based solely on repeated and widespread performance concerns" raised by colleagues inside and outside the company, "Plaintiff did not earn the necessary support of her male and female partners for promotion," the filing said.

Part of Ms. Pao's compensation derives from profits earned by companies Kleiner Perkins invested in under her direction. The venture capital firm has argued that the agreements determining that compensation, which were executed between its employee and the companies, require any disputes to be handled by arbitration.

Judge Kahn, however, stated that since Ms. Pao is suing the firm itself, those agreements had no bearing on the lawsuit.

Attorney Alan Exelrod, who represents the plaintiff, told reporters after the ruling that his client was pleased by the court's decision. ■

The case involves an employee's claim of gender discrimination.

Funds to speed up Hillview rebuild OK'd

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

■ SCHOOLS

With crews working overtime to complete the rebuilding of Hillview Middle School before the first day of school, the Menlo Park City School District board on July 16 unanimously approved spending up to an additional \$50,000 to "accelerate" the project.

Facilities director Ahmad Sheikholeslami told the board that \$70,000 of previously allocated contingency funds for speeding up the project was likely to run out soon, and that of the extra \$50,000 he was requesting, probably only about \$25,000 would be needed. The newly budgeted money, he said, would "provide us with additional flexibility" as the project is wrapped up before the Sept. 4 opening day of school.

The \$51.6 million project to rebuild the district's only middle school began in summer 2010. It was slowed along the way by change orders that involve "unforeseen conditions, district-initiated changes, and required clarification/changes made by the architect that result in added work," according to Mr. Sheikholeslami's written report.

The district has spent about \$1.74 million due to change orders for a range of work and additions. In an interview, Mr. Sheikholeslami said examples of the changes include addition of an audio-visual package to the performing arts center, and enlargement of the student lunch shelter — a canopy-style structure for outdoor eating.

Some changes involved adding extra structural framing,

electrical, and other costly work, he said.

Change orders, he added, "are a very common thing for projects of this complexity." Many times, though, a contract includes a built-in contingency fund that the contractor can tap into at will. But with the district's contract, all spending from the contingency fund must be approved by the board.

"There's more transparency in the process," Mr. Sheikholeslami said.

He said the project is coming in on budget, with "lots of eyes on it in terms of inspections" and the presence of the project manager.

Referring to often-heard criticism that public sector building projects typically are poorly managed and lacking in efficiencies, Mr. Sheikholeslami said, "This project and whole program (of oversight) prove that we can do it and can do it right." ■

Flood Park parking lot closed for paving

The parking lot at Flood Park will be closed for paving July 23 through July 26, and July 30 through Aug. 3, according

to county staff.

The pentaque court at the rear of the park will also be restored as part of the San Francisco Public

Utilities Commission water pipeline seismic improvement project.

The park, located at 215 Bay Road in Menlo Park, will remain open to pedestrians throughout the repaving.

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Lewis, Wiest take out papers for Atherton council race

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

Incumbent Elizabeth Lewis and Cary Wiest, who ran for a seat on the Atherton City Council in 2010, are the only two residents to take out papers for the November race for two council seats.

Although Ms. Lewis wouldn't say whether she will file the papers, making her an official candidate, Mr. Wiest said he definitely intends to run.

"I hope to bring in some fresh ideas, and also to go back

to the grass roots of what politics should be — to reach out and listen to more of what the public's concerns are," he told the Almanac.

A real estate consultant who has lived in Atherton for about three years, Mr. Wiest was one of four candidates for three council seats two years ago, when Jerry Carlson and Jim Dobbie won re-election and Bill Widmer was elected to his first term.

His civic experience has included membership on the county's Vision 2025 Commit-

tee, its Jail Planning Advisory Committee, and its Charter Review Committee.

Voters will choose two council members in November, with the seat of three-term member Kathy McKeithen also open. Ms. McKeithen has not publicly stated whether she will seek another term and could not be reached for comment.

Ms. Lewis is completing her first term on the council, and now serves as vice mayor, which makes it likely that she would be appointed for a one-year term as mayor in Decem-

ber if she wins re-election. She is also on the Town Center Task Force Committee.

She and Councilman Jerry Carlson are often on the short end of 3-2 council votes, and she has been publicly accused of representing the interests of the development community by residents unhappy with her vote to end road impact fees for builders, among other positions.

In 2010, the town launched an in-house investigation on long-simmering accusations that the house she and her husband built a few years earlier was bigger than legally allowed, and that the construction project involved other code violations.

The town attorney at the

time, Wynne Furth, conducted the investigation, and concluded that the house exceeds the town's zoning ordinance by about 129 square feet; that Ms. Lewis should not have been allowed to demolish and rebuild the portion of the house that was "nonconforming" because it was too close to the property lines under existing law; and that the blame for those violations of the ordinance lies with the former building official, so no action by the town should be taken in the matter.

The candidate filing period ends on Friday, Aug. 10. It will be extended to Aug. 15 for non-incumbents if either incumbent doesn't file papers by that time. ■

Woodside High principal named

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

Diane Burbank is the new principal of Woodside High School, according to James Lianides, superintendent of the Sequoia Union High School District. She comes from Prospect High School in Saratoga, where she was the principal since 2008.

Ms. Burbank takes the place of David Reilly, who left Woodside High in June after five years as principal to become the district's new assistant superintendent for human resources.

The district hired Ms. Burbank on May 30 for a salary of \$154,925, Mr. Reilly told the Almanac.

Before her time at Prospect High, Ms. Burbank spent five years as principal of Aptos High School in Aptos in Santa Cruz County. Prior to that, she worked at Cupertino High School, Gunn

High School and JLS Middle School in Palo Alto, and Newark Junior High School in Newark.

"Diane impressed the interview committee with her enthusiasm, experience, leadership, and knowledge of instruction," Mr. Lianides said. "We are looking forward to having Diane join our district and carry forward the many strong programs in place at Woodside High School."

The Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce named Ms. Burbank principal of the year in 2011, Mr. Lianides said.

Ms. Burbank has an undergraduate degree in English and education from the University of Denver, according to an online

bio at the Prospect High website. She has two master's degrees from Stanford University: in education and public policy.

She is married to Steven Burbank, a fifth-grade teacher at Rolling Hills Middle School in Los Gatos.

Ms. Burbank is listed as a Stanford Principal Fellow along with Menlo-Atherton High Principal Matthew Zito, former Woodside High Principal David Reilly and former Everest Public (Charter) High School Executive Director Jon Deane.

This program is "designed to challenge and strengthen exceptional, early career principals," according to the program's website. Among the characteristics sought in administrators nominated to it are leadership ability, curiosity, concern about social justice and ability as a coach, mentor and "critical friend." ■



Diane Burbank

Woodside may change fees it charges residents

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

The Woodside Town Council will hold a public hearing Tuesday, July 24, on a staff proposal to recover more of the town's costs for services provided residents who come to Town Hall with significant remodeling and rebuilding projects.

The council meets at 7:30 p.m. in Independence Hall at 2955 Woodside Road in the town center complex at the corner of Whiskey Hill and Woodside roads.

Based on a year-long analysis by staff and at the council's direction, the proposal would charge residents according to the cost of the service, instead

of charging a flat fee. Among those services: conditional use permits, extensions on development permits, variances, and analysis of significant projects by the Architectural and Site Review Board.

The year-long analysis of five projects and 10 fees showed that the town recovered only 40 percent of its costs, according to the report.

The introduction to the town's annual budget says services that "should be self-supporting" are "development services activities, recreation, maintenance and assessment districts, and enterprise funds."

Go to tinyurl.com/Policy-135 and to Page ii to view the policy. ■

Incumbent files for school board race

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

Incumbent Maria Hilton has filed papers for a second term on the Menlo Park City School District board, and incumbent Jeff Child said he intends to do so as the candidate filing period for the November election enters its second week.

Voters will fill two of the board's five seats.

Ms. Hilton was active on the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation before her successful 2008 run for the board. She has served as board president.

Mr. Child, who also was active

in the foundation, served a four-year term beginning in 2006, but chose not to run for re-election in 2010. When a board member resigned in mid-2011, however, he applied for the vacant seat and was appointed by a unanimous vote of the board.

District residents have until Friday, Aug. 10, to file candidacy papers for a board seat. If Mr. Child changes his mind and doesn't run, the deadline will be extended to Aug. 15.

There are also two spots on the Las Lomas school board on the November ballot. As of the Almanac's Monday press time, no one had taken out papers to run. ■

Pit bull shot by cop; Humane Society involved

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

The Peninsula Humane Society says it is "actively working" with the Menlo Park Police Department to determine next steps after a July 8 incident in which an officer shot and wounded a pit bull in the front yard of a house in the 1200 block of Carlton Avenue.

Two pit bulls had been occupying the yard after "aggressively chasing" the resident into her house at around 9 a.m., police said. The shooting happened when one of two officers on the scene tried to close a gate and the dogs responded by approaching the

gate and barking.

The dogs hesitated when the officers admonished them with "No! No!" but as the officers backed up, one dog resumed barking and lunged so both officers shot once, Commander Dave Bertini said.

One round hit the dog in the head. It went down for a few seconds, got back up, circled and then both dogs fled to a yard down the street, where they were contained, Mr. Bertini said.

The dogs' 20-year-old owner apologized and said the dogs get free "all the time" despite best efforts to contain them, Mr. Bertini said.

The Humane Society evaluated the injured dog, which the owners took to an animal hospi-

tal for treatment, police said.

The Humane Society "could have issued a License Required citation, but did not feel this was right considering the eight-month-old dog was just shot in the face and the owner was dealing with that," spokesman Scott Delucchi told the Almanac. "I think it's important to note that we have no prior history on these dogs."

Neighbors called the dogs a neighborhood problem, Mr. Bertini said. Police were asked why they didn't use electroshock weapons or batons to quell the dogs. Menlo Park police don't carry shock weapons, and using a baton would have meant getting too close to the dogs, Mr. Bertini said. ■

Menlo squirrel infected with West Nile virus

County says rodent carried chronic infection

By Sandy Brundage
Almanac Staff Writer

A gray squirrel trapped by the county in Menlo Park has tested positive for the West Nile virus, San Mateo County officials said on Monday.

"We are taking special precautions to determine whether this West Nile virus-positive squirrel is an indication of elevated disease risk," said Angie Nakano,

acting laboratory director for the county's mosquito and vector control district, in a press release.

The squirrel was trapped on July 3. Tests showed it carried a low, or "chronic," level of virus, which may indicate that it was infected last year, the press release said. But since tree squirrels don't travel far, the district believes the infection occurred in Menlo Park.

West Nile virus is transmitted through bites from infected mosquitoes. Technicians are setting traps and sending all

captured mosquitoes to state labs for testing, according to the release. If they test positive the district will then destroy mosquito breeding areas.

"Residents who are getting bitten by mosquitoes around their homes or workplaces should contact the district," Ms. Nakano said.

West Nile virus causes a range of symptoms, from a severe illness with nervous system malfunctions to a flu-like illness with high fever and excessive sleep, or possibly no signs of illness at all, according to the mosquito district. The district suggests limiting mosquito bites by eliminating standing water, staying covered or indoors dur-

ing dawn and dusk, and wearing mosquito repellent.

Call 344-8592 for help with a mosquito problem. The agency asks residents to report dead birds or tree squirrels, which may be an early indication that the virus is active in the environment, either online at westnile.ca.gov or by calling 877-968-2473.

Go to tinyurl.com/SMC-WNV to learn more about the virus.

The West Nile virus season arrives as the mosquito district attempts to regroup in the wake of embezzlement allegations that led the county to consider

shutting it down. The former finance director, Jo Ann Dearman (also known as Joanne Seeney), and accounting supervisor Vika Sinapata face trial on charges of stealing more than \$450,000 from the district. Both women have pleaded not guilty.

Ms. Dearman was already facing charges of embezzlement by a previous employer when she was hired by the district in 2009, according to the district attorney's office. She was subsequently convicted, and reportedly took medical leave from the district to serve time in prison. ■

Briefs: Truck runs off road in Woodside

Injuries were minor for the driver of the pickup truck that plunged 75 feet down an embankment on the west side of Skyline Boulevard, about a mile north of Highway 84, on Friday morning, July 20, authorities said.

Medics had to extract Boulder Creek resident Paul Rossi, 58, from his truck, which was resting against a tree, CHP officer Scott Niemeth told the Almanac. He was treated at Stanford Hospital for "a minor injury and a complaint of pain" and released, the CHP said.

The driver will not be charged with any vehicle code violations, the CHP said.

Mr. Rossi was traveling north on Skyline Boulevard and "for some unknown reason failed to negotiate the turn," Officer Niemeth said. Excessive speed

and substance abuse were not factors, the CHP said.

The accident, reported at 8:56 a.m., resulted in the closure of Skyline Boulevard. By 12:30 p.m., authorities reported it was open in both directions.

Andy Cohen takes out election papers

Fresh off a short-lived campaign for the county Board of Supervisors, Andy Cohen has taken out papers to run for reelection to the Menlo Park City Council, according to the city clerk's office.

The former judge, known for unpredictable voting and occasionally heated exchanges with city staff, finishes his second term on the council this year.

Current committee assignments include serving on the

housing element update steering committee. During his campaign for supervisor, Mr. Cohen championed the building of secondary units, also known as "granny units," as a way to add lower-cost housing to the city.

His entry brings the pool of candidates to five. Incumbent Kelly Fergusson intends to run, along with Housing Commissioner Carolyn Clarke, firefighter Dave Bragg, and Transportation Commissioner Ray Mueller.

Margaret "Peggy" Miller

July 25, 1956-July 7, 2012

Margaret "Peggy" Miller, 55, died unexpectedly at her home in Boise, Idaho on July 7, 2012. Peggy was a 1974 graduate of Menlo-Atherton High School and a 1978 graduate of UC Berkeley, where she was an active member of the Delta Delta Delta sorority.

She leaves behind her beloved son Cameron Fletcher, along with family, friends, and colleagues who will forever remember her intelligence, beauty, quick wit, infectious laugh and loyal love and friendship.

A memorial celebration will be held on July 25th at 6pm at The Alpine Inn in Portola Valley; please post remembrances to <http://www.facebook.com/groups/359817514091865/>.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that donations be sent to: ANSER Charter School, 202 E. 42nd St., Garden City, ID 83714. Please note "In memory of Peggy Miller."

PAID OBITUARY

Donald Timothy Oaks

June 10, 1949-July 7, 2012

Donald Timothy Oaks died peacefully at home with his life partner Jan Engel at his side, July 7, 2012. He was 63 years old.

Born and raised in the San Francisco Bay Area, Don grew up in Los Trancos Woods and Vista Verde, where he attended Portola School and Woodside High School. He loved hiking and exploring the local hills. Don was an acolyte at Christ Church in Portola Valley and was active in the Portola 4H club raising livestock and studying forestry.

Don got the opportunity to work in partnership with the California Forestry Service growing trees for their test plots. After high school, Don served in the Army stationed in Alaska as a chaplain's assistant and medic.

Following his early interest in forestry and plants, Don studied at San Luis Obispo State University earning a degree in horticulture. Don worked in Half Moon Bay and lived there with his partner Jan Engel.

He worked in several nurseries on the coast. In his free time, Don loved exploring wild areas and he and Jan took many trips to Mexico and the mountains and desert of the west.

Donald is preceded in death by his father Norman Oaks. He is survived by his mother Beverly Oaks, sisters Patricia (Bill) Naylor, Marilyn (David) Smith and Virginia Oaks, as well as his nieces and nephew and many wonderful friends.

Don's lively wit, intellect and great jokes will be remembered and cherished by his family and friends.

PAID OBITUARY

Gail Williams Young

(1935-2012)

Gail Williams Young, a resident of Atherton since 1969, passed away on July 15th surrounded by her adoring family. Although a non-smoker, she succumbed to lung cancer after a determined fight to extend the life she so fully enjoyed. She was 76 years old.

Gail was born in Oshkosh, WI and attended high school in Libertyville, IL. After graduating from Northwestern University in 1957, she and her identical twin sister, Gwen, were hired as "Toni Twins" and appeared in TV and radio commercials featuring hair and beauty products. Later that year, she married James Young, a Sales Engineer with General Electric. When they relocated to California in 1969 with Permag Corporation, Gail became active in the West Coast contemporary art world. She was an avid collector, generous patron and part-time consultant. Her art affiliations included charter membership in the Cantor Arts Center's Contemporary Collector's Circle, and board member of the Palm Springs Art Museum and La Quinta Arts Foundation. In recent years, she assisted the University of Michigan in making art acquisitions for its Ross School of Business.

Gail was a dedicated community volunteer. She had a keen interest in mental health and was president of the Mental Health Association of San Mateo County in the 1970s. In addition, she supported the Center for Research on Women at Stanford and Planned Parenthood, and served on the boards of

the Palo Alto Junior League and the Menlo Circus Club. A "hands-on" parent and grandparent, she had a passion for public education and was a reliable donor to local schools.

According to her children, Gail had a "joyful, inquisitive spirit." She traveled the world to learn about art, architecture and culture, and her beautiful homes reflected her impeccable taste and sense of whimsy. She often opened her home for art tours, even in her final days.

Known affectionately as "G.G." to her seven grandchildren, Gail was a gifted athlete who enjoyed golf, tennis and swimming. She is survived by her devoted husband of 55 years, Jim; her children Keith, Kim and Lynne; her son-in-law John Moragne and daughter-in-law Cheryl; her grandchildren Hutch, Tyler and Danielle Moragne; Chris, Tommy and Caroline Cummings; and Kori Young; her twin sister and brother-in-law Gwen and John Hibbard; many adoring nieces and nephews and step-grandchildren Zach, Kiley and Chase Betancourt. Contributions in her name may be made to The Addario Lung Cancer Medical Institute (ALCMI), 1100 Industrial Road, Suite 1 San Carlos, CA 94070. A private service will be held at a later date.



PAID OBITUARY



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Portola Valley council may OK bike lane plan

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

Portola Valley's Town Council may back a plan to create a bike lane on westbound Alpine Road as it passes under Interstate 280, where a cyclist was killed by a truck in 2010.

At its meeting on Wednesday, July 25, the council will consider approving a letter to the San Mateo County Transportation Authority supporting the county's request for \$175,000 to create the bike lane.

The council meets at 7:30 p.m. in the Historic Schoolhouse at 765 Portola Road in Portola Valley.

Other items before the council:

■ An initiative to discourage weekend overflow parking on Portola Road by visitors to the Windy Hill Open Space Preserve. The town's Bicycle, Pedestrian & Traffic Safety Committee is recommending two road signs to direct drivers to park at the Town Center, about 1,000 yards away.

■ Extra patrols by Sheriff's Office deputies to catch speeders in the vicinity of Arastradero and Alpine roads and the entrance to the Woodside Priory School at 301 Portola Road.

■ Contracting with an auditing firm to look into a "wide fluctuation" in the town's sales tax revenues over the past three years.

■ A letter to the Board of Supervisors asking for advance notice when the board considers development and public works projects within the town's sphere of influence, which includes Ladera, Los Trancos Woods and Vista Verde.

The county public works department recently asked supervisors to approve a request for \$500,000 from the Transportation Authority to install two traffic lights on Alpine Road in Ladera. The supervisors referred the matter to staff for further study after hearing complaints by Portola Valley officials over the lack of notification. ▴

■ 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 reports:

■ Losses estimated at \$1,050 in break-in through garage side door and locked bedroom door and theft of digital camera and miscellaneous jewelry, Oak Ave., July 15.

■ Losses estimated at \$600 in entry through open rear window and theft of two computers, Menalto Ave., July 17.

■ Losses estimated at \$250 in theft of cordless drill, battery charger and two batteries from garage left open all night, Lemon St., July 17.

■ Unknown losses in ransacking of home after forced entry through rear window, Woodland Ave., July 13.

■ Loss of padlock after lock removed from utility trailer and trailer ransacked, San Mateo Drive, July 17.

Fraud report: Loss of \$500 in unauthorized withdrawal from victim's bank

account, Cascade Drive, July 16.

Child abuse report: 800 block of College Ave., July 17.

WOODSIDE

Theft report: Tools and equipment stolen from vehicle, Park-N-Ride, July 17.

PORTOLA VALLEY

Auto burglary report: Loss estimated at \$500 after window smashed and three electronic device chargers stolen, Alpine Road and Willowbrook Drive, July 16.

ATHERTON

Auto burglary report: Losses estimated at \$910 in theft of Apple iPad, radar detector and about 20 pills of Oxycodone, Lloyd Drive, July 17.

Accident report: Driver abandoned vehicle after crashing it into tree, Isabella and Elena avenues, July 18.

Fraud report: Check in victim's name for \$918.43 passed fraudulently in Dallas, Texas; Selby Lane, July 16.

Theft report: Unknown losses in theft of three 18-packs of beer and various meats for barbecue, Adam Way, July 14.

Obituary: Donald Oaks dies at 63

Donald Timothy Oaks, a Coast Side horticulture professional who grew up in and around Portola Valley, died Saturday, July 7, in the company of his lifetime partner Jan Engel at his home in Half Moon Bay, relatives said. Mr. Oaks was 63.

Mr. Oaks lived in Los Trancos Woods and Vista Verde as a youth, attended Portola School and Woodside High School, served as an acolyte at Christ Episcopal Church, and pursued his interests in forestry and livestock through the local 4H Club and the California Forestry Service, relatives said.

He served in the U.S. Army as a chaplain's assistant in Alaska and later graduated with a degree in horticulture from San Luis Obispo State University.

When he wasn't working, Mr. Oaks enjoyed exploring wilderness areas in the mountains and deserts of Mexico and the West, the family said.

With Ms. Engel, Mr. Oaks is survived by his mother Beverly Oaks; and sisters Patricia Naylor, Marilyn Smith, and Virginia Oaks. His "lively wit, intellect and great jokes will be remembered and cherished by his family and friends," relatives said.

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www.luttickens.com

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541 Ramona Street, Palo Alto
www.oldpropana.com

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IDEAS, THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS

ABOUT LOCAL ISSUES FROM PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY. EDITED BY TOM GIBBONEY

Stoplights not best option for Ladera

County supervisors did the right thing July 10 when they put the brakes on a Department of Public Works recommendation to seek funding to install stoplights on Alpine Road at the two entrances to and exits from Ladera. Even one light is too much for this pair of rural intersections, which do occasionally get busy but for most of the day are quite quiet.

It is our understanding that the Ladera Homeowner's Association simply asked the public works department to improve safety for pedestrians crossing to the south side of Alpine Road, where there is a new trail into Portola Valley and the Ladera Tennis and Swim Club. The busy Ladera Shopper shopping center is also a big draw for pedestrians.

The public works department made its unfortunate choice without even informing the town government of Portola Valley, whose residents and employees may traverse the site several times a day. Town government, in emergency mode, persuaded the board to move the item to a section on the agenda that allowed further discussion. Public works suggested that the county seek \$500,000 from Measure A funds to pay for the lights, and \$175,000 to install a new bike lane at the Alpine Road underpass of Interstate 280.

During the discussion, five people testified against installing the

stoplights. Portola Valley resident and former mayor Jon Silver, also a former county planning commissioner, told the board that installing the signals on a traffic-light-free arterial road leading into Portola Valley would be a mistake. And the town government had not been notified, he added, having discovered the proposal only by reading about it in the Almanac.

We hope another way, short of a stoplight, can be found to improve pedestrian safety. Cautionary signs and lights could raise motorists' awareness to look for pedestrians wanting to cross Alpine Road.

Supervisor Dave Pine, with the board's consent, gave public works staff 60 to 90 days to study other options. Until then, the project is rightfully off the table.

Supervisors wisely had no issue with seeking funding to install a bike lane, as called for in the other Alpine Road project before them on July 10. Since cyclist Lauren Ward's death in November 2010, the county has been considering this easy and relatively inexpensive step to help protect cyclists moving through a very dangerous intersection. Most likely, the bike lane's wide, white stripes will straddle local traffic into Ladera and Portola Valley and traffic headed south on I-280, as is done on Sand Hill Road as it crosses Interstate 280.

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

LETTERS

Our readers write

A response to editorial on high-speed rail*Editor:*

This editorial brings up several issues.

I take great issue with the statement in the editorial: "Few Peninsula communities have been more staunchly opposed to the high-speed rail project than Menlo Park and Atherton." Atherton opposed, yes for sure. Palo Alto opposed, yes for sure. Belmont opposed, yes for sure. Burlingame opposed, yes for sure. Certainly not Menlo Park.

The Menlo Park City Council, although joining in the lawsuit, has really hardly been interested in high-speed rail. This is illustrated by not having a rail committee that meets regularly and would have agendas and staff assistance. Menlo Park's rail committee meetings, when they are held, have no substance and they result in poor, if any, reports back to the council, which results in poor actions by the council.

Allowing the city attorney to recuse himself from high-speed rail as well as the downtown plan because of the proximity of an office building in which he has a personal interest should be noted and is also of importance. Rather than insisting that Mr. McClure divest himself of that interest so that he could carry on his duties on these issues, as the city attorney, the city

went outside for legal advice — hardly a satisfactory solution.

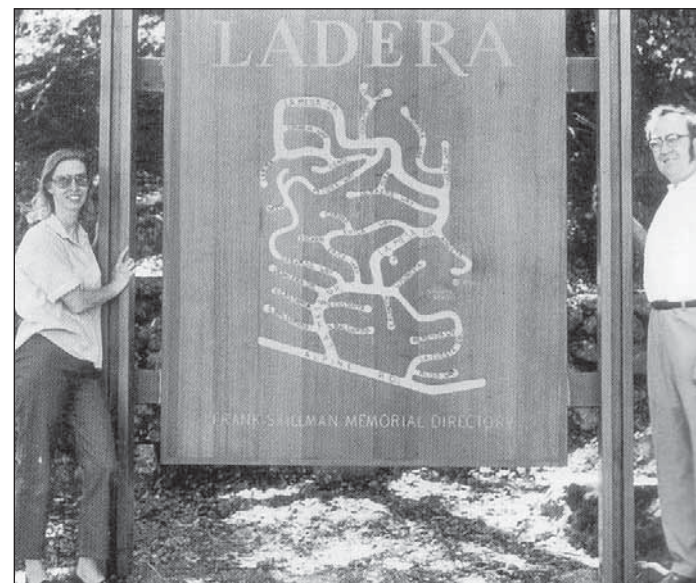
All the City Council's high-speed rail discussions are pushed back to the end of agendas at which time the public has vacated the chambers or turned off their viewing from home. It has been a very sad state of affairs.

Yet today, the city's official position on high-speed rail, is "we want high-speed rail done right." Well, there is no semblance now nor has there been any semblance for years that the rail authority's plan is "high-speed rail done right."

This description, first used by state Sen. Joe Simitian, has now been abandoned by him, as evidenced by his "no" vote for appropriating the funds to continue the project.

Menlo Park sends different staff personnel to various meetings, thus resulting in fragmented views and no consistency in where the project has been headed. Kelly Ferguson, the city's alternate on the Peninsula Cities Consortium, has hardly ever attended meetings, and when she has, she would leave after a couple of minutes. She was supposed to be the city's representative at the last PCC meeting since council member Rich Cline was out of town, but she didn't even show to represent the city.

All and all a miserable track record on high-speed rail. While Palo Alto and other cities have clearly stated they are against the high-speed rail project, Menlo Park refuses to change its position of "high-



Portola Valley Archives/Edith Durfey

Our Regional Heritage

Edith and George Durfey stand beside a new Ladera directory in 1971, which replaced an earlier version destroyed in an automobile accident. George rebuilt the sign from scratch, and the Durfey children helped him erect it.

speed rail done right."

Let us not kid ourselves. Assembly members Jerry Hill and Rich Gordon can say what they want, but the truth of the matter is they did exactly what the Democratic leadership in the Assembly ordered them to do, and that was to vote "yes" to appropriate \$8 billion for the project. They passed on the July 5 authorization bill, which they had not seen until late on July 3, and on which no committee nor staff had done any real scrutiny. Assemblyman Hill had sent staff to many meetings on high-speed rail and as

an ex-businessman had been exposed to understanding the unbearable debt service that was going to be created for the state with this project. A few months ago, he was certain to reject the project, but now claims it is wonderful, because it will bring funds to Caltrain. His vote is a perfect example of "give me the pork" you get my vote.

In any case, both Hill and Gordon have lost my trust and I certainly won't vote for either come November.

Morris Brown,
from a Town Square post

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