



**Two years in state prison**  
for former superintendent | Page 5

# The Almanac

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

OCTOBER 24, 2012 | VOL. 48 NO. 8



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## The Irish Connection

The historic Menlo Park gateway is gone, but a new gate is opening to establish sister-city relations with city's founders' hometown

SECTION 2



# Chasing kids, not medical records



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## Facebook launches local community fund

■ Grants available for East Palo Alto and Belle Haven nonprofit services.

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

Here comes the best news local nonprofits might hear during a time of gutted budgets: Facebook wants to give them money.

Nonprofits serving Belle Haven and East Palo Alto may now apply for grants from Facebook's new local community fund. With \$500,000 in seed funding from the social networking company, the fund will award \$3,000 to \$5,000 to 501c3 nonprofits providing services to Belle Haven in Menlo Park, and to East Palo Alto.

With administrative help from the Philanthropic Ventures Foundation, a community board of directors will review applications and make the final grant decisions. Serving on the board are Susan Gonzales, head of community engagement at Facebook; Sara Sperling, Facebook; Annette Reavis, Facebook; Menlo Park Mayor Kirsten Keith; and Laura Martinez, mayor of East Palo Alto. City attorneys selected the city representatives to serve two-year terms.

Ms. Gonzales said that while nonprofits don't have to be

located within either community, they must provide services there. "From our perspective, this is a local community fund designed to further develop our relationships with our neighbors. Feeding this fund with \$500,000 will allow us to begin the process of working towards an understanding of what the needs are in the community. We will evaluate its success and impact and then determine future funding."

She emphasized that the fund is designed specifically for the two immediate neighbors of Facebook's headquarters — Belle Haven and East Palo Alto.

The two cities have slightly different emphases for their grant programs. For East Palo Alto, the grants will support nonprofits that provide computer and social media training, organizations that provide evening and weekend programs for 13- to 18-year-old kids, and

groups that provide scholarships to college-bound students.

"We're looking for nonprofits who serve East Palo Alto residents, nonprofits who may be located here and with good track records, who might be willing to collaborate with other nonprofits," said Mayor Martinez.

Menlo Park, on the other hand, hopes to fund all types of services to Belle Haven. "I'm excited to see what kind of response we get, and excited to see the benefits to nonprofits in our area who are already helping out in Belle Haven," said Mayor Keith. "They're suffering so much because of the economy. We're just hoping to help these nonprofits continue to function and keep doing their work."

Applying is meant to be as easy as possible, according to Ms. Gonzales. Public agencies are not eligible. Applicants should describe the program, including details about what the funding would support, and include a history of the nonprofit and its programs. The first round of grants will be awarded by Dec. 31. Contact the Philanthropic Ventures Foundation for more information. ■

### ■ INFORMATION

Contact the Philanthropic Ventures Foundation to apply:  
www.venturesfoundation.org  
info@venturesfoundation.org

## Doug Dupen, former Menlo Park mayor, dies

Douglas William Dupen, a former Menlo Park City Council member who served as mayor from 1978 to 1980, died Oct. 7 at his Stanford home after struggling with the effects of a series of strokes. He was 84.

Born in Sacramento, Mr. Dupen studied theater at Sacramento Junior College and College of the Pacific. After earning his pilot's license at his father's flying school, he moved to Arcata to finish his education and work as a radio announcer.

In 1950 he entered the U.S. Navy, where he studied electronics and sailed the Pacific

aboard the USS Cronin, a destroyer escort. In 1953, he married Joanne Zeigler, and began a career as an engineer and technical writer while studying physics at UC Berkeley and Stanford University.

The couple settled in Menlo Park, and he began a new career as an administrator at the Stanford Linear Accelerator, a position he would keep until his retirement.



Doug Dupen

Among the early residents of Sharon Heights in Menlo Park, Mr. Dupen served as president of the Sharon Heights Homeowners Association. Years later, the Dupens moved to Stanford.

Mr. Dupen loved to travel, read old comic books, and listen to operetta, say family members.

He is survived by his children, Kim Kehres, Keith Dupen and Kyle Dupen; six grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren. His wife, Joanne, died in 2004.

His sense of humor and steady presence will be missed by all, say family members.



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## Hanretty sentenced to two years in state prison

■ Former Portola Valley schools superintendent expresses 'extreme remorse' for wrongdoing.

By Barbara Wood

Special to the Almanac

Tim Hanretty, former Portola Valley School District superintendent and Woodside Elementary School District finance officer, was handcuffed and taken into custody directly from the Redwood City Superior Court courtroom after being sentenced to two years in state prison on Oct. 22 for embezzlement and other crimes committed while working for the schools.

Looking on from the court-



Tim Hanretty

room were officials from both districts who appeared somber, and in some cases close to tears, at the resolution to the case.

"This is a very difficult sentencing decision," Judge Mark Forcum said. He alluded to Mr. Hanretty's motive in the case. "Because you were angry at the school district for not better compensating

you," Judge Forcum said, "you decided to take it upon yourself to embezzle" the money.

After the sentencing, Mr. Hanretty's attorney, Michael Markowitz of Danville, elaborated. He said Mr. Hanretty had asked for a loan of \$100,000 from the Portola Valley district "and

they turned him down." Faced with debts on a home remodeling project, "he very, very foolishly took things into his own hands," Mr. Markowitz said.

The judge ordered Mr. Hanretty to pay the full amount of restitution that the Portola Valley district has requested — more than

\$180,000, including \$100,926 he admitted embezzling from the district plus its attorney, auditor and staff overtime costs. Still to be determined is exactly how much restitution Mr. Hanretty will be required to pay to the Woodside district.

Woodside has asked to be reimbursed \$1,556,446 in loan interest and \$1,968,000 in loan

See HANRETTY, page 6

## First look at Arrillaga plan for Menlo Park development

■ Medical offices, offices, retail and housing planned for Stanford lots.

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

An eight-acre span of car lots on El Camino Real will turn into a mixed-use complex of medical offices, offices, retail and housing, if developer John Arrillaga goes forward with his plan for Stanford University properties in Menlo Park.

The lots stretch from 300 to 500 El Camino Real; Stanford confirmed that existing tenants — including Tesla — would move out as their leases expire on March 31, 2013. "We are incorporating retail space in our redevelopment project, and Tesla would be a tenant that we would be interested in locating in the new project," said Steve Elliott, managing director for development, land, buildings and real estate at Stanford.

Tesla's possible departure from the city may not make officials happy; Menlo Park Finance Director Carol Augustine said Tesla ranked as one of the city's top 25 sales and user tax contributors for fiscal year 2011-12.

The informal architectural plans remain under copyright, according to city staff, so the Almanac was able to review but not duplicate the renditions. The centerpiece of the project includes 76,500 square feet of office space and 153,000 square feet of medical offices in two four-story buildings, designed to look straight at street level, curved like the bottom half of an "S" in back. The buildings

would sit between College and Cambridge avenues, with Partridge Avenue separating the two structures. Parking for the entire project would be mainly underground, with some surface-level spaces planned at the rear of the development for an estimated total of 1,190 spaces.

The final ratio of office to medical office space remains to be seen. Also unknown is whether the medical offices are meant for private practitioners or would be incorporated with Stanford's medical center.

"We do not know and have not determined who the potential tenants, including any medical office tenants, in the new project might be," Mr. Elliott said. "While the specific plan allows for up to 153,000 square feet of medical office on this site, we anticipate that the project may include significantly less than this amount."

A third building next to Cambridge Avenue would have 17,800 square feet of office space spread over two floors.

### Housing

Next to Middle Avenue, 36 units of rental apartments, with 8,000 square feet set aside for retail, would be built. Next door, bordering College Avenue, the preliminary plan calls for 112 units of rental housing and 4,000 square feet of retail.

Mr. Elliott said the residential portion of the project

See ARRILLAGA, page 6



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

## Friendly reading

The grand return of Kepler's Books had something for everyone. Tess, left, and Isabel read "Let's Go for a Drive!" by Mo Willems. The Oct. 16 party celebrated the landmark store's rebirth as a gathering spot for radical ideas, events and, of course, good books. Renovations focused on echoing the look and feel of the original store, which opened 57 years ago. Author Michael Chabon will appear at the store on Thursday, Oct. 25, at 7 p.m. to discuss "Telegraph Avenue." Tickets start at \$10. Kepler's Books, 1010 El Camino Real.

## Draft housing plan headed to council

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

It's the sort of process likely to leave everyone unhappy in the end, aside from the three housing nonprofits that won a settlement from Menlo Park. The Planning Commission had much to say, as did the public, during its recent consideration of the draft housing plan update.

Residents are not letting higher density zoning into their neighborhoods without a fight. Sharon Heights residents were able to get Sharon Park off the site list; now those living near Rural Lane and the Linfield Oaks neighborhood have filed petitions in protest, signed by

hundreds. Even if the sites are rezoned, that may not be the end of the argument — numerous public comments indicated that lawsuits were being considered.

Some residents spoke "to put a face on the emails you're getting" from those living in Stanford Weekend Acres and other areas near Rural Lane.

Janet Davis has been one of those leading the charge against rezoning Rural Lane. Her concerns include the potential burden on Las Lomas School District, increased traffic hazards along Alpine Road and the lack of any public transportation nearby.

School officials echoed the concerns for their own districts. "As a superintendent I'm nervous. Every classroom is full," Menlo Park City School District Superintendent Maurice Ghysels told the Planning Commission. With facilities over capacity exacerbated severe cutbacks in state funding, local schools may struggle to expand even without a greater influx of students.

Some proposed answers rather than problems. One speaker referred to secondary units as "the invisible solution." If granted amnesty, enough currently illegal granny units may already exist in Menlo Park

See HOUSING, page 9

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**HANRETTY**

continued from page 5

principal, plus \$67,783 in attorney fees and \$35,173 for an accountant. A hearing on Nov. 15 will determine the restitution to be paid to Woodside.

"I will be glad when the restitution is ironed out," Woodside Superintendent Beth Polito said. "We are also pursuing other venues to make us whole. We have an insurance claim and are negotiating with the lender."

After the sentencing, Portola Valley Superintendent Carol Piraino said she appreciates "the work that county counsel, the forensic auditors, and the District Attorney's Office did on behalf of the Portola Valley School District."

To date, Mr. Hanretty has repaid the Portola Valley district \$120,926, and repaid the Woodside district \$20,000. Mr. Markowitz, his attorney, said the amount was "all he can come up with at this time" and that he had borrowed it from family and other supporters.

Mr. Hanretty appeared grim during the hearing, but addressed the court calmly. "I stand before you today with extreme remorse for my acts of wrongdoing," he said, reading from a prepared statement. "I profusely apologize to everyone who has been harmed by my actions."

On July 31, Mr. Hanretty pleaded "no contest" to charges of felony misappropriation of public funds in Woodside and Portola Valley.

In Woodside he was accused of forging documents that allowed a loan of up to \$3 million to be made to the district, despite the fact that the school's board had approved borrowing

only \$632,000. He eventually obtained a loan of \$2.6 million, which district officials say was spent on school projects.

In Portola Valley further investigation found that Mr. Hanretty had turned in \$100,926 in invoices for work on his own home, to be paid by the district's solar panel fund.

In return for the plea, the DA's office had agreed that Mr. Hanretty would serve no more than four years in state prison.

The misappropriation of public money was first discovered about a year ago when a Woodside school board member questioned the amount of debt service the district was paying. After an investigation uncovered the dubious loan, Mr. Hanretty resigned in January as the Portola Valley district superintendent, a job he began in August 2010. Before that, he had served as chief business officer of both districts.

Mr. Hanretty's attorney had asked that he be given only probation, while the DA's office had asked that he be sentenced to the full four years in prison.

Mr. Markowitz offered one explanation for Mr. Hanretty's misdeeds. "A gay man who's in the position he's in," and who has spent much of his life hiding his sexual orientation "has a very difficult time being forthright with the people he's involved with, he said.

"I am not a quitter. I never have been," Mr. Hanretty told the court before the sentencing, saying he planned to use his plumbing, electrical and other skills to start a home improvement business to earn money to pay back the districts.

That goal, it appears, will have to be put off for now. ■

**ARRILLAGA**

continued from page 5

would include below-market-rate (BMR) housing, with the actual number of BMR units waiting for the "determination of the final mixed-use design and allocation of square footage, as well as discussion with the city regarding its affordable requirements for the site."

There won't be much for Menlo Park to negotiate apart from the number of BMR homes. According to Thomas Rogers, associate planner for the city, the plans appear to meet baseline requirements for development within the downtown/El Camino Real specific plan, meaning that the project would not trigger any negotiations for public benefits. It also won't require approval beyond the Planning Commission's signing off on the architectural details.

"We anticipate starting construction of the new project in the summer or fall of next year. Demolition of the existing buildings would need to occur before this, and this cannot begin until all of the leases have expired," Mr. Elliott said.

Stanford and Mr. Arrillaga are working together closely, but whether the developer plans to donate the buildings to the university has not yet been decided, according to Mr. Elliott. "Mr. Arrillaga is a very generous philanthropist who has provided great benefits to the university, as well as to the city of Menlo Park and other local community projects."

Those benefits include Menlo Park's new multi-million-dollar gymnasium, gymnastics center and recreation center.

Mr. Rogers said the city expected formal submission of the plans within the next two weeks. ■

# Issues and emphasis may distinguish candidates for county supervisor seat

By Dave Boyce

Almanac staff writer

There is much that the two candidates agree on in their contest for a seat on the county Board of Supervisors. In the Nov. 6 election, Shelly Masur and Warren Slocum are seeking to represent District 4, which includes East Palo Alto, Redwood City, much of Menlo Park and the unincorporated communities of North Fair Oaks and Oak Knoll.

In interviews with the Almanac and on their websites, Ms. Masur and Mr. Slocum emphasize the importance of fiscal discipline, transparency in government, moving assertively toward greener practices at home and at work, and the need to speak up for District 4's unincorporated residents. (The Board of Supervisors acts as the town council for North Fair Oaks, Oak Knoll and the county's other unincorporated communities.)

Both candidates also talk about keeping tabs on realignment, the state's economizing measure to gradually transfer prison inmates convicted of certain nonviolent crimes to county jails to complete their sentences.

A closer look at their priorities, as each candidate has described them, may give hints as to how they would differ in their approaches to governing.

## The budget

On their websites, both candidates discuss the \$1.8 billion county budget, an important topic given its structural deficit and what has become an annual drawing down of reserves. The current budget projects a deficit of \$50 million for the 2016-17 fiscal year. The county has held annual "structural deficit" workshops since 2007, and they will continue until the deficit is "eliminated," the budget states.

Ms. Masur writes that she would support an annual review of the activities of county employees and consultants making \$100,000 or more "to ensure taxpayer dollars are spent wisely." She advocates collaboration among the public, private and nonprofit sectors and among cities and schools (which are separate jurisdictions) to "eliminate duplicate services." She would increase government efficiency and make the necessary budget cuts while "protecting vital services."

Mr. Slocum has those priorities as well, and advocates further pension reforms, including a ban on spiking — the use of accumulated vacation time and



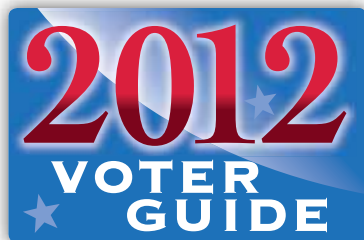
**Shelly Masur**  
**Town of residence:**  
 Redwood City  
**Age:** 47  
**Education:** Bachelor's degree from Macalester College; master's degree in public health from Hunter College/City University of New York  
**Occupation:** Nonprofit executive director  
**Public Service:** Seven years on elementary and middle school board; member of hospital community advisory committee, county public health task force, Peninsula leadership groups



**Warren Slocum**  
**Town of residence:**  
 Redwood City  
**Age:** 64  
**Education:** Bachelor's degree in U.S. history, San Diego State University  
**Occupation:** Retired chief elections officer & assessor-county clerk-recorder for San Mateo County  
**Public Service:** Twenty-four years as countywide elected official and, earlier, appointed to positions in government

strategic raises to drive up an employee's compensation during the years used to determine the annual retirement payout.

He would keep a "line by line" eye on the budget, modify investment policies to be safe and yet "earn a fair return," and encourage innovative thinking on a countywide and regional



basis. "The county has weathered the current economic challenges relatively well through the vision and experience of its leadership, past and present," he writes. "However, vigilance remains the keystone in such an effort."

## The economy

On the issue of revitalizing San Mateo County's economy, Mr. Slocum notes the importance of tourism to the county economy, the need for "quality, living wage" jobs in the county, and less red tape so as to improve the climate for businesses and their employees. One example: Shuttles to and from public transit. How would he pay for that? The federal government frequently helps fund local transportation initiatives, and "that's where the county can come in and provide leadership and sort of be the mother ship."

Urban renewal is a possibility he explores on his website, noting successes in downtown Half

Moon Bay and Redwood City and AT&T Park in San Francisco. He endorses a recent supervisors' discussion on creating an economic-vitality unit within the county manager's office. Such an agency, he writes, could be particularly useful in North Fair Oaks, where there is a yet-to-be implemented community plan.

Ms. Masur is less specific. The board "must focus on creating local jobs and building our local economy, for today and our future. San Mateo County needs great jobs that allow people to live and work here — jobs for people of all skills and backgrounds." She would work to "stimulate the economy by attracting small business, including biotech and green companies." The county needs to figure out ways to "attract and retain start-up industries that will set up shop, grow and stay," she writes.

Ms. Masur, a member of the Redwood City School Board since 2005, also cites the importance of "a well-prepared workforce, equipped with quality education at all levels" in the pursuit of a healthy economy. She includes education as a major priority should she be elected.

The supervisors and the county Office of Education have no formal ties, but there are apparently already opportunities for collaboration. Nancy Magee of the county office said that while county education representatives do not encounter supervisors in a formal setting, they do meet through organizations such as the Peninsula Partner-

See **SUPERVISOR SEAT**, page 10

## REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



### What Is Happening in the Rental Market?

**Dear Monica:** I have been a renter for the past few years and have seen rental prices increase substantially during that time. I would like to move but don't want to pay more for a rental that is not much better than my current one. What is the current rental market in this area? Jackie S.


**Dear Jackie:** Rents have risen dramatically in this area during the past few years. They are still strong but there are signs they may be easing. Reasons for this easing may be that more renters are confident in their jobs and futures and want to buy a home instead of rent. With interest rates so low these former renters are deciding

to take advantage of this and settle into more secure long term housing. They may want to be in a particular school district and don't want to have to move if the rental is sold.

Some former renters were not buying because they were not sure the real estate market had hit bottom yet. Now that home prices in this area have been rising for months, these people have decided it is a good time to stop renting and buy.

Whatever the reason, rental prices have stabilized and have even moved down a bit in certain areas. It is likely we are seeing a return to a more normal rental market.

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**Mark Schmidt**  
 Licensed Optician

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



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# Atherton: Incumbent, three challengers vie for two council seats

By Renee Batti  
Almanac News Editor

The last two years have brought big changes to the town of Atherton, from the people who manage it and provide its public services, to the state of its fiscal health.

For two years, Atherton was without a permanent town manager, overseen instead by two interim managers. Last year, with unanimous council approval, interim manager John Danielson privatized building and public works services, laying off most of the town's non-police employees — a move that appears to have helped eliminate a structural deficit that town officials predicted would exceed \$1 million in the near future.

Turning a corner, the council earlier this month named George Rodericks the town's permanent manager after a nine-month search.

Voters are in charge of the next big change in town: They will decide next month who will fill two council seats, with one incumbent in the running and three challengers asking for a shot at a four-year term.

Voters also will decide on three ballot measures concerning construction of a new library, funding for a new Town Center, and a plan to improve the ball field in the town's only park. The library issue is by far the most contentious, with a plan to build the new facility in Holbrook-Palmer Park winning approval a year ago by a divided council, and dividing residents in the bargain.

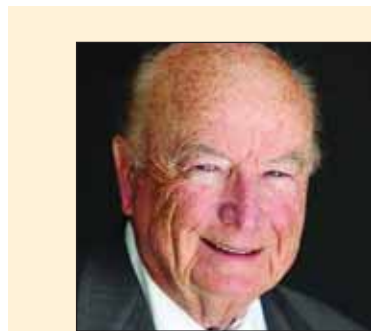
Although ballot Measure F has placed the decision of whether to build the library in the park in the voters' court, the issue remains a hot button in the council race, with one candidate, Denise Kupperman, as one of the chief proponents of the plan and candidate Elizabeth Lewis, the incumbent, an ardent foe who pushed for putting the question on the ballot months before the council majority agreed to do so.

The following summaries are based on candidate interviews with the Almanac, a recent candidate forum, and the candidates' website information.

## Greg Conlon

A former member and president of the California Public Utilities Commission, Greg Conlon has been active locally on the town's volunteer Rail Committee and bodies reviewing the town's finances.

His No. 1 issue: To make sure that if a high-speed rail is built, "they do it right." That means "they put it in a trench, without excessive noise and without



**Greg Conlon**

**Years in Atherton:** Over 35

**Age:** Not provided

**Occupation:** Businessman/CPA

**Civic experience:** Atherton Rail Committee, 8 years; town's Finance and Audit Committee, over 2 years.

**Education:** Bachelor's degree, business/Accounting University of Utah; law degree/University of San Francisco.

**Website:** gregconlon.com



**Denise Kupperman**

**Years in Atherton:** 16

**Age:** 55

**Occupation:** Small business owner, landscape and environmental design and planning firm

**Civic experience:** Atherton Tree Committee, 12 years; Holbrook-Palmer Park Foundation/Atherton Dames board member; co-creator, Holbrook-Palmer Park Landscape Master Plan; town's ad-hoc Grading and Drainage Committee member; Atherton Library Building Steering Committee chair; San Mateo/San Francisco County Master Gardener.

**Education:** Master's degree, landscape architecture/UC Berkeley; bachelor's degree, business administration/Menlo College

**Website:** denisekupperman.com



**Elizabeth Lewis**

**Years in Atherton:** 14

**Age:** 62

**Occupation:** Atherton City Council member

**Civic experience:** Atherton General Plan Committee, beginning 2006; during council term, member of General Plan, Transportation, Environmental, Rail committees; chair of town's ad-hoc legal selection committee; chair, Town Center Task Force; member, Peninsula Traffic Congestion Relief Alliance, Regional Housing Needs Assessment board, HEART of San Mateo board.

**Education:** Attended San Jose State University, San Francisco State University; licensed real estate agent; certified registered property manager.

**Website:** elizabethlewis.org



**Cary Wiest**

**Years in Atherton:** 3

**Age:** 48

**Occupation:** Business owner

**Civic experience:** Member, Vision 2025 Committee, San Mateo County; member, Jail Planning Advisory Committee, San Mateo County; member, 2010 Charter Review Committee, San Mateo County; member, Crystal Springs County Sanitation District Review Committee; president, Highlands Community Association, 5 years, vice president, 4 years.

**Education:** Attended DeAnza, West Valley, College of San Mateo community colleges; San Francisco State University College of Extended Learning; Coast Federal Savings appraisal training program.

**Website:** carywiest.com

ruining our Town Center," he said. The town must work with neighboring cities, Caltrain and the High-Speed Rail Authority, he said, to ensure that the train traverses the Peninsula in open trenches that would be covered in residential areas such as Atherton and in downtown areas of other communities.

Other key issues include protecting police services from being outsourced, and ensuring that a new Town Center is built in the best location — not a cut-and-dried decision, given the uncertainty of how the high-



speed rail project will impact the area the Town Center is now located in, he said.

If the rail project is built to minimize the noise and other impacts to Atherton, he wants the Town Center to remain where it is, and if that is feasible, he prefers to keep the library in the center with other town facilities, he said. But the voters will have the final say about that, and he will respect their decision, he added.

Another issue he wants to focus on is increased traffic through the town, he said, adding that he will push to have long-standing Marsh Road problems fixed.

Mr. Conlon said he supports renewal of the parcel tax when

it expires in 2014. "Without the parcel tax, (the town) will really have a financial crisis," he said.

Of the town's financial health, he said it's also crucial to address escalating costs related to pensions and employee health-care benefits.

## Denise Kupperman

As chair of the Atherton Library Building Steering Committee, Denise Kupperman has received public accolades for the hundreds of volunteer hours she has contributed to the two-year process of studying the issue and shaping the recommendation to build in the park.

But she's also faced fierce criticism by residents who oppose the park location, some of whom accuse the steering committee of leaving the public out of the process. In her defense, Ms. Kupperman points to the number of public meetings — more than 100 — held during the long process of studying options for a new library.

"The question was handled fairly and properly," Ms. Kupperman said of the 3-2 council decision to follow the steering committee's recommendation to build the library in the park. But in light of the subsequent public outcry, "it was a good decision to put (the question) on the ballot," she said.

A longtime volunteer advocate for the park through her work with the park foundation and Atherton Dames, Ms. Kupperman said she believes that "a well-designed, 10,000-square-foot ... library can fit quite nicely

in the park," complementing existing uses.

"But no matter where the library goes, it's important that it meet the needs of the community — not only now, but in the future."

A longtime attendee at council meetings, Ms. Kupperman said her financial expertise puts her in a good position to help the council oversee financial challenges faced by the town. She said the town was in a dire situation when the council was faced with the option of outsourcing public services, but "it takes a long time to get (to such a financial situation), and addressing it in a positive managerial way should have been done years ago," she said, concluding that the financial crisis reflected "a failure of management."

Other key goals for Ms. Kupperman include developing traffic management strategies and safe routes to school, improving communications with residents, and maintaining the "quality of our public safety." She supports having an in-town police force rather than outsourcing the services, and supports renewal of the town's parcel tax, adding that without the tax, police services run by the town would be difficult to maintain.

## Elizabeth Lewis

Elected to the council in 2008, Elizabeth Lewis has often cast one of the minority votes, with Jerry Carlson, in 3-2 council decisions. She's also been the target of intense criticism over a home renovation project, completed

before her council tenure. Critics charged that the house was bigger than was legally permitted, and that the construction project involved other code violations.

The town attorney at the time, Wynne Furth, conducted an 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 lay with the former building official, so no action by the town should be taken in the matter.

Ms. Lewis is now vice mayor, making it likely that she will serve as mayor in 2013 if re-elected.

She has been a leader in the effort to plan and raise private funds for a new Town Center, and is running on a platform that includes greater transparency. "Residents deserve to know what's going on in their town," she said. "We need to use technology that's right on our doorstep," she added, citing the need for an email notification system to let residents know about meetings and other town activities, among other technological opportunities.

Her support of term limits — two four-year terms — is based on a belief that it will lead to "a broader base of people getting involved."

Another key concern is traffic, and she has been involved in

See **COUNCIL SEATS**, page 12

## Belle Haven pool adds hours for water polo

Although his contract with Menlo Park required operating the city's Belle Haven pool for only three months a year, Tim Sheeper of Menlo Swim and Sport will open the facility six days a week starting in November for water polo season, according to city staff.

His organization has been operating the pool on Saturdays from September through October by offering swim lessons as well as renting the pool to a local water polo organization. Due to limited space at Burgess Pool, Menlo Swim and Sport plans to provide practice space at Belle Haven from 4 to 7 p.m. Monday through Friday and continue with swim lessons and rentals on Saturdays, staff said.

### Search for Walgreens robber continues

It's not Halloween yet, but that

#### ■ MENLO BRIEFS

didn't stop a man from donning a fake moustache before robbing a Walgreens in Menlo Park.

The man walked into the Santa Cruz Avenue store around 7:45 p.m. on Friday night and demanded money from a manager, according to police. After stuffing cash into a paper bag, he fled through the rear door. The robbery involved no weapon, witnesses said, and no one was hurt.

Police have yet to identify the suspect, described as a white male in his 40s with short dark hair, standing nearly 6 feet tall.

He wore a light hooded sweatshirt, green military-style jacket and dark pants. Completing the outfit were a blue baseball cap with multi-colored gloves, and of course, a moustache described in the report as "fake and costume like."

### Curious about "Curiosity"?

The Mars rover dubbed "Curiosity" landed on the red planet in August to start a 23-month mission of looking for signs of environmental conditions that could have supported life.

This Thursday, Oct. 25, the U.S. Geological Survey will feature geologist Ken Herkenhoff, a member of the rover's mission team, discussing what scientists have discovered so far. Learn how scientists use special instruments aboard Curiosity to analyze dust and rocks to learn what role water played in forming the Martian landscape.

The free event starts at 7 p.m. in the second-floor auditorium in U.S. Geological Survey Building 3 at 345 Middlefield Road in Menlo Park.

Go to [tinyurl.com/USGS-mars](http://tinyurl.com/USGS-mars) to watch the lecture live online.

### HOUSING

continued from page 5

to put significant dent in the housing capacity the city must add, provided they meet safety standards.

Overcrowded schools and rural lanes aside, Menlo Park has no choice about adding enough high-density housing zones to accommodate space for 1,000 to 1,975 units as part of a lawsuit settlement over its non-compliance with state law. While the city is not required to actually build the units, it must provide incentives for developers to do so, according to the settlement approved on May 22.

State law requires cities to assess and plan to meet their fair share of regional housing needs, which includes affordable housing, every seven years. Menlo Park hasn't met the state requirements since 1992, but now only has until Oct. 31 to send a draft update to the state's Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

The Planning Commission's suggestions in brief:

■ Tie any future development on Rural Lane to physical improvements to Alpine Road and avoid

minimum density requirements.

■ Count as many second units as possible.

■ Tie school capacity to types of residential units, such as senior versus workforce housing.

■ Zone for mixed use where appropriate, including incorporating existing viable commercial development on housing sites.

■ Re-evaluate the below-market-rate housing program to reduce the cost of providing affordable units and to encourage the building of new affordable units.

■ Work with nonprofits to process development proposals to fit with the financing needs for affordable housing.

■ Support the creation of the affordable housing overlay zoning district. The downtown/El Camino Real specific plan includes zoning for 680 units, but those aren't necessarily going to be below market rate. An overlay — a special zoning district — could increase the chance that some developer would find the incentives appealing enough to build below-market-rate units.

The City Council scheduled its review of the draft update for Monday, Oct. 22 at 6 p.m. and Tuesday, Oct. 23 at 7 p.m., both in council chambers at the Civic

Center at 701 Laurel St.

### Tentative future meeting and workshop schedule

According to Development Services Manager Justin Murphy, the update process will include an environmental assessment and fiscal impact analysis to evaluate how higher density zoning could affect service and school districts should units be built. To allow for some of that information to be available for public review, staff has recommended postponing a series of community workshops from November to January.

Several commissions would review the draft update in December:

■ Housing Commission: Wednesday, Dec. 5 at 5:30 p.m.

■ Environmental Quality Commission: Wednesday, Dec. 5 at 6:30 p.m. (to be heard later on the agenda to allow time for earlier Housing Commission meeting)

■ Bicycle Commission: Monday, Dec. 10 at 7 p.m.

■ Transportation Commission, Wednesday, Dec. 12 at 7 p.m.

■ Planning Commission: Monday, Dec. 17 at 7 p.m.

■ Parks & Recreation Commission: Wednesday, Dec. 19 at 6:30 p.m.

## Halloween parade takes safe route

Families and kids are invited to come in costume and take part in Menlo Park's annual Halloween parade Saturday, Oct. 27, starting at 11:45 a.m.

This year the parade originates from the parking lot behind Citibank, at Maloney Street and Santa Cruz Avenue,

instead of Burgess Park. This eliminates having hundreds of kids cross busy El Camino Real, as they did in past years.

The parade continues down Santa Cruz Avenue to Fremont Park at University Drive. Entertainment and arts and crafts will be available at Fre-

mont Park until around 3 p.m. After the parade, kids may trick-or-treat in downtown Menlo Park stores displaying trick-or-treat signs.

For more information, call the Burgess Recreation Center at 330-2200.



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Photo: Marc Silber



Mark graduated with a Bachelor in Communication Studies from Sonoma State University and his Masters in Education at University of San Francisco.

As Director of Athletics and Physical Education, Mark believes every student deserves the opportunity to participate in sports. He believes that "what's most important are the values of integrity and dedication" that student athletes learn from playing sports.

Mark encourages students from all skill levels to try out new sports, to challenge and stretch their expectations and most importantly, to have fun.

When Mark isn't coaching, he loves to go camping and spend time with his family.

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#### SUPERVISOR SEAT

continued from page 7

ship Leadership Council. “I think the same thing is accomplished with the level of collaboration there is,” she said.

#### Health, safety and technology

Ms. Masur, who has a public health degree and is on leave as executive director of Teen Talk — a nonprofit based in Redwood City and devoted to preventing teen pregnancies — said that, as supervisor, she would fight to “preserve health-care options” for low-income women, seniors and children, for whom she would also advocate for better public education and preschools.

She said she would work to prevent state raids on local funds that support public safety.

Ms. Masur supports Measure A, the half-cent sales tax increase that would generate some \$60 million annually for the county's general fund. But Measure A revenues may not be enough, she said. Service on the county's debt and operational expenses for the new jail could exhaust Measure A's revenues.

Mr. Slocum supports Measure A for its 10-year lifespan. “In that time, we don't have a day to lose” to get to fiscal stability, he said.

“In the end, this passes or there will be significant changes.”

He is voluble on public safety and technology. The paper-based communication between police departments, the Sheriff's Office and the courts and probation offices should be updated, he writes. Electronic case-management would be a step in that direction.

Mr. Slocum has a track record with technology during his 24 years as registrar of voters and county clerk-assessor-recorder. He was first in California, he writes, in allowing voters to track their mailed-in ballots. During his tenure, municipal officials acquired the capacity to track changes in property assessments.

“How can technology change our business and add to the bottom line? I've seen what it can do,” he said. It's an outlook he would add to a board that lacks it, he said.

Some of his other ideas: increase online county services, consider consolidating purchases for volume discounts, and put the county's “checkbook” online so citizens could track expenses in real time.

As for public health, he writes that efficiencies based on technology could recoup around \$10 million in health-care reimbursements. ■



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# Should county controller be appointed or elected?

■ Measure C allows voters to alter process of choosing county controller.

By Dave Boyce

Almanac staff writer

With San Mateo County government in its fifth year of annual workshops on the county's structural deficit, and with more workshops expected in coming years, Measure C on the Nov. 6 ballot offers voters an opportunity to weigh in on a related issue: Should the county's chief accountant be elected, as is currently the case, or appointed by the county manager, subject to approval by a super majority — four of the five members — of the Board of Supervisors?

The supervisors put Measure C on the ballot. They oppose the current system of electing this official, known formally as the county controller, and support an appointment process. The measure would also raise standards of eligibility for the position of controller and restrict the appointment to a maximum of two consecutive six-year terms.

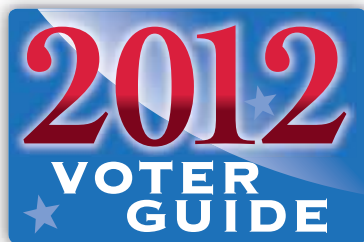
The Voter Information Pamphlet shows no opposition to Measure C. Signing the ballot argument in favor were the presidents of the county's League of Women Voters chapters, Jacqueline Jacobberger and Lisa Conrad; supervisors Don Horsley and Carole Groom; and Bob Adler, the current controller appointed by the board in March 2012 after longtime controller Tom Huening retired.

"These are particularly challenging and confusing economic times," the ballot argument says. "Now more than ever we need an experienced professional overseeing taxpayer funds. Please join us in supporting this measure."

The Almanac asked the two candidates running for an open seat on the Board of Supervisors where they stood.

The office might have improved efficiency and performance under an appointed controller, said candidate Warren Slocum. "(I)n these complex times, I don't think we should play politics with the county's checkbook," he added. "Countywide elections are expensive (and) going through that process doesn't guarantee the taxpayers would be served by the most financially qualified individual."

"While only four of 58 counties currently have an appointed controller, it is a technical position that should be hired based on qualifications and expertise rather than ability to run a cam-



paign," candidate Shelly Masur told the Almanac. "Controllers do not have voting, policy or budgeting authority; rather, they fill an important functional position that would benefit from the kind of careful vetting of qualifications that comes from an interview and hiring process." ■

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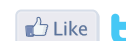
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**COUNCIL SEATS**

*continued from page 8*

regional transportation planning. “I’ve been advocating safe bike and pedestrian routes in town,” she said, noting that, with 10 schools within the town’s limits, “our population doubles every day school is in session.” She said the town needs to be working with Menlo Park and the schools to deal with the issue. “Our children can’t safely ride their bikes to school — that’s something I think needs to be addressed.”

Regarding the library, Ms. Lewis said, “I don’t think our

residents were allowed to provide input” on the choice of location. She opposes Measure F, saying that a library “will forever change the park.” But, she added, “whatever the residents want, I’ll get behind 100 percent.”

**Gary Wiest**

Cary Wiest ran unsuccessfully for a council seat in 2010 after living in Atherton for less than a year. He was criticized for not attending council meetings before filing papers, and not trying to be involved on a town committee or commission

before running for council.

Since then, in 2011, he applied for a seat on the Planning Commission and the General Plan Committee, but others won the council’s support for those appointments.

Regardless of his lack of participation in Atherton civic affairs, Mr. Wiest said his experience in regional and countywide matters, including the county’s Vision 2025 Committee and its Jail Planning Advisory Committee, has given him the necessary tools to serve on the council.

He criticizes the council for not listening to residents, citing

as one example the council’s vote to build the library in the park. Although a number of residents asked the council a year ago to put the question to the voters, the council failed to do so until months later, sending a message to the community that its voice was unimportant, he said.

As a council member, he said, he would listen to residents and, in doing so, would restore trust in town leaders and reassure residents “that their views matter.”

Mr. Wiest said he opposes outsourcing police services, saying that “residents have spoken loudly in support” of retaining

the town’s own police force. On his website, he said he will focus on the question of “why one of the top-five richest cities in the country is struggling to properly fund public safety.”

He supports renewal of the town’s parcel tax when it expires in 2014. The current City Council has allocated 60 percent of the \$1.8 million in parcel tax revenue to police services, with the remaining 40 percent spent on public works projects. Mr. Wiest has expressed doubt about how the tax revenue is actually spent, and said “the money needs to be monitored” carefully. ■



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## Fire slightly damages garage

Firefighters from the Menlo Park Fire Protection District quickly contained a one-alarm garage fire at a two-story home at 610 Central Ave. in Menlo Park on Sunday night, Oct. 21, Fire Chief Harold Schapelhouman told the Almanac.

No one was injured and damage was light: \$5,000 to the garage's contents, \$10,000 to its structure, and maybe slight smoke damage to the house, Chief Schapelhouman said. The

911 call came at 9:53 p.m.

The cause? Inspectors are looking at an unplugged printer in a cardboard box. "Why would an unplugged printer be a problem?" Chief Schapelhouman mused aloud during an interview. The inspector "is looking at it again to figure out, is it that or is it something else?" he said.

The homeowner called 911 when a second-floor smoke alarm went off, he said.

### ■ POLICE CALLS

*This information is from the Atherton and Menlo Park police departments. Under the law, people charged with offenses are considered innocent until convicted.*

#### MENLO PARK

##### Residential burglary reports:

■ Losses estimated at \$5,300 in entry through unlocked front door and theft of two laptop computers, two disk drives, Apple iPad, video game player and controller and watch, Sevier Ave., Oct. 12.

■ Losses estimated at \$1,400 in entry through rear sliding glass door and theft of laptop computer and two guitars, one of which was recovered, Crane St., Oct. 14.

■ Losses estimated at \$180 in break-in to garage through window and theft of two tennis rackets and tennis balls, Waverley St., Oct. 12.

■ Losses estimated at \$150 and arrest made in theft of watch from women's locker room, with watch later recovered, Burgess Pool on Laurel St., Oct. 17.

##### Auto burglary reports:

■ Losses estimated at \$10,408 in entry through smashed window and theft of backpack containing laptop computer, headphones, sunglasses, prescription glasses, medications and personal papers, 100 block of El Camino Real, Oct. 14.

■ Losses estimated at \$270 in entry through smashed window and theft of exercise bag with clothing, shoes and checkbook, Pope St., Oct. 18.

##### Theft reports:

■ Losses estimated at \$600 in theft of four packages (out of six) delivered to doorstep and containing blank checks and three components of new desk, Durham St., Oct. 12.

■ Losses estimated at \$390 in thefts from two unlocked vehicles of work gloves, \$80 in cash and keys in one incident and drawstring bag, two phone chargers, flashlight, headset, and tire pressure gauge in other, Oak Court, Oct. 12.

#### ATHERTON

##### Residential burglary report:

Unknown loss in break-in to garage and theft of bike, Tuscaloosa Ave., Oct. 16.

**Auto burglary report:** Unknown loss in theft of cell phone from vehicle, Loyola Ave., Oct. 15.

##### Theft reports:

■ Unknown losses in theft of Apple iPod from unlocked vehicle, Snowden Ave., Oct. 15.

■ Unknown losses in theft of Apple iPad from gym, Menlo School at 50 Valparaiso Ave., Oct. 15.



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**November 6, 2012**

**for Atherton Town Council**



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### Provide Good Governance

- Carefully evaluate and provide a public forum for major projects like the proposed new library.
- Incorporate the ideas and concerns of citizens in decision-making.
- Rebuild the public trust in our Town Council and reassure residents that their views matter by ensuring transparent, cooperative, respectful and open governing.
- Promote economically and environmentally sustainable approaches to all city projects.
- Preserve Atherton's small-town sense of community while delivering state-of-the-art services.
- Support renewal of Atherton's Parcel Tax for police emergency response services, street repair and maintenance, drainage facility repair and maintenance, and capital improvements.

### Ensure Public Safety

- Provide Atherton law enforcement with the staffing and resources to deliver the services our community expects.
- Improve pedestrian and bike safety throughout Atherton by working with public safety, public works, the schools and newspapers, to make Atherton a bicycle-friendly community where bicyclists, pedestrians and motorists safely share our roadways.

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# Viewpoint

IDEAS, THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS ABOUT LOCAL ISSUES FROM PEOPLE IN OUR COMMUNITY. EDITED BY TOM GIBBONEY

## 2012 ELECTION ENDORSEMENTS

### Lewis, Kupperman for Atherton council

Just as stability seemed to be returning to Atherton, the town has found itself in a nasty scrap over where to build a new library, which should be resolved by a Nov. 6 ballot measure.

The current City Council is hopelessly deadlocked in a 3-2 split over the library and many other issues, which could be resolved depending on who is elected to the council. Incumbent Elizabeth Lewis is seeking a second term and Denise Kupperman, Greg Conlon and Cary Wiest are hoping to win one of the two open seats. Council member Kathy McKeithen decided not to run for a fourth term.

This has not been a smooth year for the council, which is divided on some of the town's most critical issues. Mayor Bill Widmer, Jim Dobbie and the retiring McKeithen have been at odds with Ms. Lewis and Jerry Carlson, particularly on whether to build a library in Holbrook-Palmer Park, which was approved on one of the frequent 3-2 council votes.

The council dissension over the library, which will be financed by Atherton contributions to a county library fund that will reach \$8 million in a few years, and other issues have spilled into the town, and the uproar was helped along by the Athertonians website, which operates under a confusingly similar name used by the town for its newsletter, "The Athertonian." Growing controversy forced the three council members who support a library in the park to relent to opponents and put the library issue on the ballot, along with questions about improvements to the Little League field in the park and funding for a new town center.

Another issue was added to this already volatile mix when the Atherton Police Officers Association sent out a robocall endorsing Ms. Lewis and Mr. Weist, implying that the other candidates might favor outsourcing police services to the county sheriff. Some residents, including council member McKeithen, considered the actions threatening, and have denounced the association's intrusion into the council race.

In this contentious environment, it is important that the two open council seats are filled by members who can reach beyond the rhetoric of the moment. Going forward the town needs all council members to pull together to implement the voters' decision on the library and other measures, and support new City Manager George Rodericks as he attempts to set a course for the coming year.

We believe Elizabeth Lewis and Denise Kupperman are the best-qualified to bring Atherton into 2013 ready to work on stabilizing town government.

#### Elizabeth Lewis

Ms. Lewis gets high marks for leading the campaign to line up private funding for the new Town Center. We did not agree with her demand for a referendum on locating the library in Holbrook-Palmer Park, but she has promised she will work hard to implement whatever decision is made by the voters. We find that Ms. Lewis is a hard worker, but we hope in her second term she will make more of an effort to put petty disagreements aside and make more of an effort to find compromises with her council colleagues.

Ms. Lewis sensibly handled her endorsement by the police union by publicizing her answers to the APOA questionnaire, a good way to defuse the concerns of some town leaders about the union's intrusion into the campaign. And she joined all council members to approve outsourcing the public works and building departments last year, which has so far received good reviews.

Ms. Lewis would support installing a push-type email system so residents could be better informed about the town's business. The town can do better than just offer a website, she said. She supports limiting council members to two terms "to bring new people in," and also supports county efforts to improve transit, including providing shuttles from Caltrain to job sites.

The Almanac urges Atherton voters to return Elizabeth Lewis to the City Council.

See **COUNCIL**, next page

### Slocum for supervisor

After a primary battle among seven candidates, including Menlo Park Mayor Kirsten Keith and City Council member Andy Cohen, Warren Slocum, the former registrar of voters and county clerk-assessor-recorder, and Redwood City school board member Shelly Masur, rose to the top and are in a runoff to represent District 4 on the county Board of Supervisors. The district covers most of Menlo Park and East Palo Alto, as well as North Fair Oaks, Oak Knoll and other unincorporated areas in the south county.

How to address a persistent budget deficit is a top issue between the candidates, who agree that employee compensation is one of the reasons that millions in reserve funds will be needed to balance this year's budget. Other top issues are health care and how to improve the county's lagging economy. In many areas, the candidates have similar positions, but we are drawn to Mr. Slocum's many years of experience as a county executive, as well as his considerable skills in the digital world.

Ms. Masur also has many fine qualities, and she is certain to find her way to higher office in the years ahead.

#### Warren Slocum

In a down economy, we like Mr. Slocum's support of of an economic vitality unit in the county manager's office, as supervisors discussed at a recent meeting. Such a unit could help North Fair Oaks as it develops a community plan. He would support pension reforms, including new rules to eliminate "spiking," when an employee's retirement pay level is artificially inflated by using vacation and other special pay. He promises to scrutinize the county budget "line by line" to find other budget savings, an exercise we hope will pay off, and help businesses attract employees by providing shuttles to and from public transit.

He said he would bring his much-needed technology skills to the board, suggesting he would advocate adding to the services available online, including the county's checkbook, which could allow citizens to follow county expenses in real time.

We do not agree with Mr. Slocum's support of Measure A, a half-cent sales tax that is earmarked for public health and safety.

See **ENDORSEMENTS**, next page



Atherton Historical Association

### Our Regional Heritage

James T. Watkins IV, a founder of the Stanford Historical Society and an Atherton resident, was elected "Red Hot Professor" in 1959, giving him the honor of leading a cheer at the Big Game that year.

**COUNCIL**

*continued from previous page*

**Denise Kupperman**

After about 15 years of working in the financial industry, Denise Kupperman changed course and began a new career in landscape architecture, adding to her skills in management and environmental planning. For many years, she has immersed herself in the green side of Atherton, first with the Atherton Dames and the Tree Committee; she later took a leave of absence from her landscape architecture firm to write a new master plan for Holbrook-Palmer Park, which was adopted in 2005. She continues to work with the Dames to raise money for park improvements.

Despite her belief that the council's 3-2 vote to build a new library in the park was within its purview, Ms. Kupperman supports the right of residents to vote on the issue. Given her knowledge of park operations, she said she is not worried about the impact of a library in the park. "I feel that a library can fit quite nicely in the site," she said.

She supports the campaign to raise private funds for a new Town Center, agreeing that the town should replace the aging facilities there, but added that "...we have to prepare ourselves on what to do if private funding doesn't show up."

Ms. Kupperman supports the town's four-year parcel tax; the tax's short term is a good way to do business because it requires the town and its leaders to account for where the money went in the prior four years. From a budgeting perspective, "the town has to stay on point," she said, adding that she would be hesitant to support more than a four-year term for parcel tax approval.

The Almanac urges Atherton voters to support Denise Kupperman for the City Council. ▀

**ENDORSEMENTS**

*continued from previous page*

Although we know the county is desperate to find a way to cover its skyrocketing health care costs, we doubt if voters will approve Measure A. Supervisors, including Mr. Slocum if he wins, will then face the challenge of reducing costs elsewhere in the budget.

The Almanac urges voters to support Warren Slocum for the District 4 seat on the Board of Supervisors.

**Vote no on county Measure A**

Given the county's ongoing structural budget deficit, supervisors should be working overtime to reduce the cost of government. Instead, voters are being given the tough choice of either approving a half-cent sales tax increase for 10 years, or seeing massive cuts in public health programs for the poor and elderly.

But rather than cave in, we urge voters to reject this regressive tax, which hits poor families the hardest. County officials say the tax would produce \$60 million a year, but their claim that a like amount cannot be squeezed from the budget is specious, in our opinion.

Besides, in the same election, Gov. Jerry Brown's Proposition 30 asks voters to approve higher taxes on incomes of over \$250,000 a year along with a quarter-cent sales tax to help education. Competing Measure 38 would simply raise state income taxes on a sliding scale up to 2.2 percent on multi-million dollar incomes. Both promise to boost spending on education, which would be severely cut back if neither passes. In this environment, we just don't see county voters passing yet another tax, especially in a local economy that is struggling to recover.

We recommend a "no" vote on county Measure A.

**The Almanac also recommends:**

**Assembly District 24**

Vote for Rich Gordon, endorsed previously in the primary

**Senate District 13**

Vote for Jerry Hill, endorsed previously in the primary

**LETTERS**

Our readers write

**Not supporting ballot measures to raise taxes**

*Editor:*

There are many issues on the Nov. 6 ballot, and concerns in our hearts. Among them, our state legislators are asking us to pay more in taxes to cover another shortfall — but balancing a budget is not just about asking for more, even in better times.

It is frustrating that these legislators have less concern for our children's education than for their re-election campaign funders, and that most are unapologetic as they threaten to reduce education funding (remember, it's *their* choice each session to decide where the money goes) if we don't underwrite the lavish pensions they have promised themselves and their well-paid friends in government employment. Most of us will work into our 70s for these folks — as will our children.

Just 11 months ago Gov. Brown presented a 12-point, bipartisan plan to the Legislature to rein in pension costs, and warned that the voters will not easily pass a tax increase if Sacramento can't control the monster it created. But, as local and state media reported, the Legislature punted a dummy "reform" bill; but they do expect us to underwrite their plush retirements via Prop 30. Voters will always pay up if we say it will save education, right?

It's plain that, for years, each state measure to fund education — bonds, dedicated bills, the lottery — merely allowed the same amount in general funds to be diverted *out* of education. That's why we're always short. We've been playing this game (or have been played) for three decades.

It's a hard choice, but we are not going to back new taxes until Sacramento passes the specific pension reforms the governor asked for last November — not the white wash of last month. In turn, we make our own promise: We pledge to actively back a reasonable tax increase immediately following enactment of that reform.

We look forward to a responsible, sustainable effort in 2013.

*John Boyle and Henry Riggs*

*(John Boyle is a former Menlo Park City Council member and Henry Riggs is co-chair of Citizens for Fair and Responsible Pension Reform. Both live in Menlo Park.)*

**Intimidating tactics in Atherton council race**

*Editor:*

I give the Atherton police an "A" for their professional actions under the leadership of Chief Flint and Lieutenant Wade.

It was not always this way. Under previous councils, bad judgment was made in hiring officers. One chief was arrested, prosecuted and convicted of voter fraud. The next chief was sent to anger management counseling for altercations with citizens. The following chief, Glenn Nielsen, left after a short period with over \$300,000 in a pension after promising the town manager he would stay for a much longer period.

I give the APOA (Teamsters union) an "F" for its activities in this upcoming election. It is backing two candidates with signs and robo-calls in order to try to influence the town council in its favor when negotiations start on a new contract.

Some voters are afraid to place signs for other candidates in fear of retaliation by the police.

The APOA's lightly disguised threats at intimidation have no place in Atherton.

I feel very well-qualified to make these comments. I was a San Francisco police lieutenant for over 30 years in charge of up to 250 officers, and

also the past president of the San Francisco Veterans police officers association. I am still on its board of directors.

I am a 33-year resident of Atherton and, unlike one of the APOA candidates, I have worked on numerous town committees. I love this town and I hate to see this kind of behavior by the APOA. It degrades many of our young excellent police officers.

*John Ruggeiro  
Stockbridge Avenue, Atherton*

**Carlton, Mueller best for Menlo council**

*Editor:*

The Almanac endorsements last week for Menlo Park City Council got it partly right. Certainly the recommendation that Kelly Fergusson should not return to the council due to her ethical missteps and broken commitments to her constituents have disqualified her for that office.

The Almanac's recommendation to elect Ray Mueller is a good choice. He has wide support in the community and has been an effective member and chairman of the Transportation Commission.

I would like to see the second open council seat filled by Catherine Carlton. She has an impressive set of experience in business, volunteer work and public service, including service as vice chair of the Parks and Recreation Commission. Also, she and Mueller are the only candidates who did not oppose pension reform Measure L, which puts them in much better touch with the 70 percent majority who approved that important step to ensure the city's long-term fiscal stability.

*Frank Tucker  
Menlo Park*

**Dissolve Sequoia Healthcare District**

*Editor:*

Although I do not endorse everything Jack Hickey does, I do believe voters should support his call for the dissolution of the Sequoia Healthcare District.

The other board members justify the continuation of the district by spending tax money, originally assessed to build and operate a hospital (which is now privately owned), on what they decide are good and worthwhile programs and charities. The recipients of these donations and benefits become the foundation of appreciation that perpetuates those in favor of keeping this health-care district.

Voters established the hospital district in 1946. Property taxes were assessed for this purpose and Sequoia Hospital was built. The district sold Sequoia Hospital in 1996 and it is now wholly owned and maintained by Dignity Health. To continue collecting taxes — with board members now deciding whom that tax money should benefit — should simply not be their privilege.

Before you vote, you should be aware that just to maintain the district costs more than \$1 million a year, and the district receives more than \$10.6 million a year, which they publicize, and which is spent on programs and charities the board members have chosen without voter approval. This is more than \$11.6 million a year, according to the 2012-13 budget, which could be going directly to schools, fire districts, or other special districts.

This is where those tax revenues belong and are sorely needed. I will back health-care district board member Jack Hickey with a vote that indicates I want to dissolve the Sequoia Healthcare District. If you agree, vote only once for Jack Hickey, the one candidate supporting dissolution. A second vote is not required and would defeat the purpose of this election.

*Betty Seckler  
Menlo Park*

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