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The Almanac

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Voting snarls trouble Belle Haven

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

Thousands voted in Menlo Park on Nov. 6. But not without facing crowds and confusing directions that left some Belle Haven voters heading home without casting a ballot.

The Boys & Girls Club served as a voting station for residents from precincts 4403 and 4404, according to observers. Councilwoman Kelly Fergusson, out in Belle Haven encouraging people to vote, was troubled enough by what she saw while at the polling station from about 4:30 to 6:10 p.m. to file complaints with both San Mateo County and the California Secretary of State.

"There were long lines like many places, but the level of disorganization really exacerbated the situation," Ms. Fergusson said. "In the line outside the building, there was no way for people to know there was a shorter line inside for the 4403 precinct. People arriving with completed ballots had no way of knowing they could drop them off inside without waiting in line. Instead of helping people determine their precinct, a poll worker, when he did briefly come outside, scorned people for not knowing their precinct number.

"Worse, there were two disabled people that clearly could not stand in line, but were not being accommodated."

Ms. Fergusson said she approached the chief poll worker, only to be told, "This is normal."

"In addition, I personally found it confusing that there were only two voting lists outside the building to look up which voters had voted — for 4403 and 4404. However, the 4404 list seemed to contain the 4405 voters. Why wasn't there a separate list for each precinct?"

Belle Haven resident Eva Cuffy agreed, saying that set off "a

'There were long lines like many places, but the level of disorganization really exacerbated the situation.'

COUNCILWOMAN KELLY FERGUSSON

long tedious process of finding one's address off of two different precinct lists by street name, then number. Many committed voters went home rather than stay in the long line."

Ms. Cuffy described a scene of chaos. Volunteers arriving to assist voters were thrown out of the building, she said. "I personally saw them disrespected for the service they were trying to supply. The voter manager was ill equipped to deal with two precincts. He didn't even know the boundar-

ies of the precincts."

But the scene looked different from the county's perspective. Deputy Assessor-County Clerk-Recorder David Tom was on the scene during the early afternoon. When asked about reports that voters were sent away from the Boys & Girls Club to a station on the other side of U.S. 101, he said he didn't witness any of that, and the confusion may have stemmed from inexperienced voters going to the wrong precinct. "The poll workers are very knowledgeable; they live in their neighborhood, know their precinct and who should be voting in their precinct."

He thought the longest wait was about half an hour. "Belle Haven was busy, certainly, but not busier than other places."

As for disabled voters, Mr. Tom said voter machines designed for their easy use were available, but not set aside the way handicapped parking spots are. "So that may be an issue ... to tell you the truth this is the first time we've ever heard of this; we may need to revise the policy."

Most counties report only four to five voters using the handicapped-accessible machine, according to Mr. Tom, as many disabled citizens prefer to vote by mail.

By 6:50 p.m. on election night, according to the county's records, field technicians were on site in Belle Haven and reported "things are moving smoothly." ■



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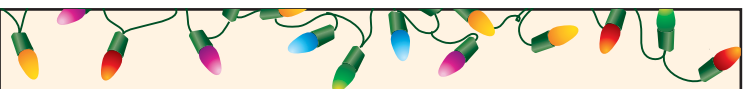
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The Almanac

Menlo Charity Horse Show earns accolades

The Menlo Charity Horse Show has received a Heritage Competition award from the U.S. Equestrian Federation, the governing body for all equestrian competition in the United States.

The Menlo show is one of only 12 horse shows in the United States to receive the honor. "Since there are approximately 2,600 sanctioned horse shows held annually in this country, this award is really special and something to be proud of," says show

spokesperson Nan Chapman.

To receive the designation, an event had to be in continuous operation for a minimum of 25 consecutive years, have significant involvement and support from the community, contribute to the promotion of equestrian sports, and be "widely recognized as being a Regional, National, or International level of competition."

Betsy Glikbarg, horse show founder and co-chair, says: "We

are really honored to receive this designation, but if I can boast for just a minute, we and the community have really earned it. In its 42 years, the show has raised millions of dollars for Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired and other nonprofit agencies. Because so many of its competitors have gone on to national competitions, as well as the Olympics, the show is widely recognized at all levels of competition."

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

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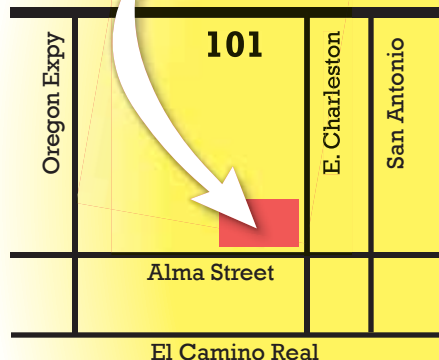
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Mending Atherton's rifts a top priority

Victors Elizabeth Lewis and Cary Wiest discuss their visions for new Atherton council term

By Barbara Wood

Special to the Almanac

Now that the election is over, locating a new library in the park defeated, and a new council member on board, what's next for Atherton?

In interviews with new council member Cary Wiest and incumbent Elizabeth Lewis, who was elected to a second four-year on the City Council, the emphasis was on mending the rifts that have divided the town.

"Now is the time for healing the town from the conflict that we've had," said Ms. Lewis, who is vice mayor and expected to

ATHERTON

become mayor in December.

Mr. Wiest said he hopes to help set a new tone for town discussions. "I am going to try to make sure that I stay out of the sound bites," he said. Past behavior and the way people treat each other is "shocking to me," he said. "It doesn't belong here and it doesn't belong in our leadership."

The City Council "should set the example," he said. "I hope I will be an addition to making it better."

One point Ms. Lewis said

she believes all Atherton residents already agree on is that "we do need to rebuild or at least renovate our library and make it more modern, make it safer — make it better for future generations."

"That's what I really want to do," she said.

Ms. Lewis said she believes the town will need to go back and do what residents had asked for a year ago: create a master plan



Incumbent **Elizabeth Lewis** was re-elected and newcomer **Cary Wiest** was elected to four-year terms on the Atherton City Council.



for the town's facilities.

"What I would like to see happen is a true, objective, professionally done master plan, considering all of our civic infrastructure building

needs," Ms. Lewis said. That would include the police, public works, administration, library and use of the park. "This is something that we need to kind of envision for the future," she said.

She warned, however, that a master plan is "what I would like to see happen. What council votes on is another thing."

Mr. Wiest, for one, said he will support a master plan. "The voters clearly said we want you to go in this direction and please respect our wishes," he said. A master plan is "a proper way to get a good direction in a town like ours."

He hopes to involve citizens with different points of view in the process, he said, and "get opinions from all sides." Mr. Wiest said he hopes for "better

See **NEXT**, page 8

Atherton gives loud 'no' to library in park

By Barbara Wood

Special to the Almanac

After more than a year spent squabbling about a divided City Council's decision to make Atherton's Holbrook-Palmer Park the site of a new library, the town's residents finally had their chance to have their say on Nov. 6 — and what they said was a resounding "No."

The vote on whether to put a new library in the park was 2,038 to 928 in the latest count. Sixty-nine percent voted no.

Voters — also by large margins — approved two other measures. Measure M, which asked whether the Menlo-Atherton Little League should improve the existing ball field and surrounding areas in the park using private funds and Measure L, which asked residents whether funding to build a new Town Center should be restricted primarily to private donations, were each approved by more than 70 percent of the voters.

The ball field improvements would include building a permanent spectator stand and restrooms, and the resurfacing of the nearby tennis courts.

The vote on the ball field was 2,233 to 738. On the Town Center, the vote was 2,115 to 755.

ELECTION 2012

Library site

The contention over the library site began a little over a year ago when, following the recommendation of the Atherton Library Building Steering Committee, the City Council voted 3-2 vote in October 2011 to choose town-owned Holbrook-Palmer Park as the "preferred site" for a new library. Council members James Dobbie, Bill Widmer and Kathy McKeithen, who was on the task force that recommend the park

site for the library, voted for the park site. Council members Elizabeth Lewis and Jerry Carlson voted against it.

Town residents immediately spoke up, asking for a survey to determine if there was support for the library and for a master plan of all town facilities before deciding where to put the library.

The council held a meeting to discuss a master plan, but did not approve going ahead with a plan. After the council twice turned down the request for a survey, those opposing the park site put their own survey online and started a petition asking for an election on the issue.

By June, as the debate continued

Voters approved Little League and Town Center measures.

See **LIBRARY**, page 8



Photo by James Tensuan/The Almanac

Menlo Park council candidates Ray Mueller and Catherine Carlton chat at an election night watch party at Trellis Restaurant in Menlo Park.

Mueller, Carlton likely elected to council

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

Ray Mueller and Catherine Carlton will join the Menlo Park City Council next year, unless there's a surprising twist as the final vote counts trickle in.

The streets of downtown Menlo Park were nearly empty on election day — perhaps people were still waiting in line to vote; some residents reported what seemed like

record turnout at the polls.

A lone woman on a corner of Alameda de las Pulgas waved a sign for Romney 2012/Catherine Carlton/Yes on Prop 32. She got to celebrate only one of those outcomes.

With 4,303 votes for Mr. Mueller, and 4,163 for Ms. Carlton, the newcomers topped incumbent Kelly Fergusson, who had 3,910 votes, according to the county.

"I'm excited but cautiously optimistic," Mr. Mueller had

said earlier in the evening as he headed for an election night party at Trellis. "If things stay the way they're trending, I'm really excited."

Asked about the high point and low point of campaigning, Mr. Mueller said he'd reached both in the space of 24 hours, when he received an email from someone who had voted for him, but told him she regretted it after hearing

See **COUNCIL**, page 8

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Menlo Park voters OK hike in hotel tax to 12%

ELECTION 2012

The fate of Measure K, the city of Menlo Park's proposal to raise the hotel tax from 10 percent to 12 percent, was easier to call than the council race — the yes votes remained about 73.63 percent of the total from start to finish.

Otherwise known as the transient occupancy tax (TOT), the new rate will match that of Redwood City, East Palo Alto and Palo Alto, while adding approximate-

ly \$600,000 in revenue for Menlo Park annually.

According to city officials, the revenue boost will help maintain city services such as code enforcement and infrastructure maintenance — services that used to receive funding from the redevelopment agency, which the state dissolved earlier this year.

Warren Slocum elected as county supervisor

Warren Slocum, San Mateo County's chief elections officer for 24 years until his retirement in 2010, is back in elected office. Fifty-six percent of voters chose Mr. Slocum over Redwood City School District board member Shelly Masur to serve a four-year term as county supervisor representing District 4.

Mr. Slocum received 100,411 votes compared to 80,294 for Ms. Masur, according to the latest count. He will represent East Palo Alto, Redwood City, much of Menlo Park, and the unincorporated communities of North Fair Oaks and Oak Knoll.

In his campaign, Mr. Slocum emphasized the importance of fiscal discipline, government transparency, sustainability, and

fully representing unincorporated residents.

His other stated priorities include further employee pension reform, "line-by-line" monitoring of the budget, safe yet productive investment policies, and innovative thinking. He has talked about the importance of living-wage jobs in the county and a government considerate of business, as well as an economic-vitality unit within the county manager's office and more online county services. He spoke of putting the county's "checkbook" online so citizens could track expenses in real time.



Warren Slocum

No 'clear mandate' for closing Sequoia Healthcare district

Griffin and Kane collect most votes.

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

Jack Hickey didn't get his "clear mandate for dissolution" of the Sequoia Healthcare District, coming in third in the Nov. 6 election behind two fellow incumbents for two open seats on the board of directors.

Fellow incumbents Kim Griffin and Kathleen Kane showed a comfortable lead with 33,459 and 31,346 votes respectively, compared to 24,415 for Mr. Hickey.

He will retain his seat on the board, however, as his term does not expire until 2014. Mr. Hickey said he forced an election to give voters the opportunity to indicate a desire to dissolve the district by giving him a majority vote. However, this won't dampen his long-standing drive to dissolve the district — he has

indicated that a last resort may be collecting signatures to get the issue on the ballot.

On Wednesday morning Mr. Hickey told the Almanac that although he was disappointed, his tally had improved from the 2008 election. "I am grateful to those who supported my dissolution effort, and invite them to join me in pursuing that goal."

He attributed union support for his opponents as a major factor, along with the release of a pre-election mailing extolling the virtues of the district.

"I am pursuing (public record act) requests to determine the facts behind these mailings, which, in my opinion, were clearly intended to influence the outcome of the election," Mr. Hickey said. The gathered information will help determine the direction of his future efforts. ■

County voters hike sales tax, change supes election method

By Dave Boyce
Almanac staff writer

■ ELECTION 2012

By wide margins on election day, San Mateo County voters approved two ballot proposals: Measure A, which raises the sales tax by a half-cent for 10 years, and Measure B, which changes how county supervisors are elected — by district, not countywide.

Voters vigorously rejected Measure C, which would have had ended the requirement that the county's chief accountant run for election.

Measure A

The latest count shows 65 percent of voters approved Measure A, the tax increase, with 125,779 for it and 68,610 opposed. Since the tax revenues go directly into the county's general fund, the measure required only a simple majority to pass.

(Since California voters approved Proposition 30, the sales tax will rise by an additional quarter cent.)

Financial resources were not a problem for the Measure A campaign. Contributions totaled \$997,000 as of Oct. 23, according to finance reports. The biggest donation: \$893,000 from the Los Altos-based Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, which manages the Seton Medical Center. The donations includes \$50,200 in non-monetary contributions of consultant work and staff time.

Along with being a key donor, the hospital is a key beneficiary in connection with its major role in the county's public health services. Seton Medical Center in Daly City cares for 40 percent of the county's state Medi-Cal patients, many from the north part of the county where the need is great. Seton also runs the only emergency room and skilled nursing facility on the Coastsides.

National healthcare reform is expected to increase the public health burden in San Mateo County by about 50,000 people, Supervisor Don Horsley told the Almanac. If the hospital closed, the county would inherit an obligation of \$30 million to \$50 million to replace sub-acute care services alone, he said.

"They're losing money so we want to make sure that Seton Hospital continues to be viable," Mr. Horsley said. "If Seton were to close ... it would be devastating to our health plan."

County officials expect Measure A to bring in \$60 million annually.

Measure B

In approving Measure B, voters have thrown out countywide elections of county supervisors, which forces serious candidates to incur the costs and complexities of running a countywide campaign. By switching to by-district elections, San Mateo County adopts the system used in the state's 57 other counties and reduces the number of registered voters involved in an election by 80 percent. Outreach to fewer voters will likely

In approving Measure B, voters have thrown out countywide elections of county supervisors.

reduce the costs of running a campaign, opening the door to a more diverse selection of candidates.

Measure B was approved by 59 percent of the voters, with 106,655 in favor and 75,624 opposed, according to the latest count.

"I'm stunned that it's winning 60/40," Measure B advocate and county supervisor Dave Pine told the Almanac in an election night interview. "I would speculate that's just a reflection of how much the county has changed since the last time (this question) was put on the ballot. ... I do think this election will make a fundamental change in the landscape of San Mateo County. This is a historic change."

"It's a resounding victory," said Carlos Romero, an East Palo Alto resident, unsuccessful candidate for supervisor in 2012 and active backer of Measure B. "I think it was time, after 30, 35 years of not addressing this issue."

"I think that passage of Measure B is indeed going to encourage and embolden candidates that have different perspectives to enter into races," Mr. Romero added. A successful candidacy will no longer be limited to those "able to amass a couple hundred thousand dollars and blanket the county."

The question in Measure B had been put to voters in 1978 and again in 1980, but they rejected it on both occasions. In 1980, San Mateo County's white population stood at almost 71 percent, according to data from a lawsuit filed by the Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights. The Asian and Latino populations in 1980 were about 10 percent and 12 percent.

Today, those numbers have grown to about 25 percent each, Mr. Romero told the Almanac. By adding African Americans, Pacific Islanders, Native Americans and others, the county is now minority-majority.

The Lawyers' Committee sued the county Board of Supervisors in April 2011, alleging violation of the California Voting Rights Act of 2001 and seeking the adoption of by-district elections to address "racially polarized voting" in at-large elections. "The at-large method of election, together with a racially polarized electorate, has for years diluted and abridged the voting rights of Latinos and Asians within San Mateo County," the complaint says.

Attorneys representing the county, including from the San Mateo County Counsel's office and private firms in San Francisco and Burlingame, argue that the allegations have no merit, referring to sections of the county charter and the state constitution.

Measure C

Voters rejected the idea of having the county manager appoint the county's chief accountant — the county controller — thereby maintaining the current system of having the controller run for election. The Board of Supervisors put Measure C on the ballot.

Sixty percent of voters rejected the measure, with 106,157 opposed and 72,054 in favor.

The measure would have raised eligibility standards for the position and restricted the appointment to a maximum of two consecutive six-year terms.

"These are particularly challenging and confusing economic times," the supporting ballot argument said. "Now more than ever we need an experienced professional overseeing taxpayer funds."

No one submitted a ballot argument opposing the measure. ■

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Gloria Darke



Title Company

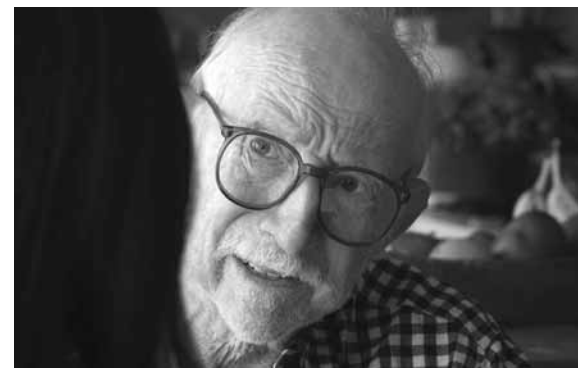
Q: I have found that different realtors try to get us to use different title companies. Is there a special relationship that you have with title companies? Are their charges different?

A: As realtors, we do develop relationships with particular escrow officers, not necessarily the title companies. There are times when we need someone in the title company to go that extra mile to get something out of the ordinary done. For example, I had a situation the year the tax law changed and we absolutely had to get on record by Dec. 31st or it would have had a huge implications for the seller. My escrow officer stayed

until 6:00 pm on New Year Eve until we were able to go on record at the county recorders office. He did that for my client because of a long term relationship and he knew how important it was. I recently had a transaction with a title company where I had never met them before and before the escrow closed, we had 4 different people working on it and many things fell through the cracks. The title companies are quite comparable with their fees. We also recommend vendors who will do a good job for us, often in a pinch at reasonable rates, be it home inspectors, painters, roofers, etc. We remain loyal to them and they always come through for our clients — and that's what is important.

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

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Photo by James Tensuan/The Almanac

Menlo Park council incumbent Kelly Fergusson is greeted by a supporter as she waits for election night results at her Menlo Park home.

Mueller, Carlton likely elected to council

COUNCIL

continued from page 5

about some of his comments on issues facing the city.

He said that left him feeling sad. "There's one thing, when you're campaigning you start to realize that the issues facing the city can be so complex, that people really want to reduce them down to sound bites and they're not."

After sending an email in response and then talking to the voter this morning, Mr. Mueller said the two found accord. "That was the high point, because it confirmed for me that I'll have the patience to listen to people and work through the issues."

He praised the campaign for staying civil. Unlike past elections, no hit pieces turned up in the mail and if there were shenanigans, most did not reach the ears of the Almanac.

Also celebrating at Trellis was Ms. Carlton. "Well, I think it's too early to tell. ... I feel like I can't get too excited yet. Like they say, it's not over until the fat lady sings."

She too enjoyed her time campaigning. "It's very exciting to me to talk to someone about ideas and have that person get so excited that they start donating their time to help out, knocking on doors and walking." Ms. Carlton said she also appreciated what she learned about the city, which presented an orientation for candidates that introduced the role of each department, an experience she'd like to bring to all residents of Menlo Park.

Ms. Fergusson, who was seeking a third term on the council, said she had called the winners on Nov. 7 to congratulate them.

"I really appreciate their vision for the future of Menlo Park," she said. "I feel like I'm leaving the city in very good hands, and I've had 10 great years of community service and have really enjoyed working with the public."

When asked whether she would manage the campaign differently in retrospect, Ms. Fergusson said she has no regrets. "I have a full-time job. I ran the campaign on my evenings and weekends — I wish

I could have knocked on 200 more doors."

Belle Haven resident and Housing Commissioner Carolyn Clarke was in fourth with 2,525 votes, leaving firefighter Dave Bragg in fifth place with 2,115.

Ms. Clarke took a break from pizza at High 5 Star in Belle Haven to share her perspective from the campaign trail. "I was in training, right?" she said with a laugh. "My biggest lesson is if you fail to plan, you plan to fail."

Look for her to return to the ballot, this time starting to plan a campaign 12 months ahead and making sure to line up enough donations to get the word out about her candidacy. Still, she said, it was a "first step towards unifying Menlo Park. But the work is just beginning."

Dave Bragg sent out a short announcement following the election to thank his supporters; he described getting more than 2,000 votes "a great feeling. My family, my employees, and my friends are probably thankful that I will have more time to spend with them." ■

Mending Atherton's rifts top priority for victors

NEXT

continued from page 5

planning, better participation, (and) better diversity in the groups we establish."

Another issue that will face the council is the joint powers agreement that governs the library. The council at a previous meeting had asked the city attorney to research the JPA issue and report back to the council. Ms. Lewis said she does not know if that issue will come up in November or December, and she is waiting to see the attorney's report.

Some residents have expressed concern over the pre-election endorsement by the Atherton Police Officers Association of Ms. Lewis and Mr. Wiest, and the union's campaigning for the two with signs, fliers, and phone calls.

Both say that the endorsement should have no effect on the upcoming negotiations over the contract with the union. "In my mind, absolutely none at all," Ms. Lewis said.

"My responsibility is to the health and well-being of the town and the economic well-being of the town," she said. What will matter in the negotia-

tions, she said, is "whether we can pay for the services we're wanting to have."

The negotiations, she said, are "not going to be easy, but it never is when you talk about people's livelihoods." The town will probably have to do an analysis "of our top police services, what we can't live without," she said.

Mr. Wiest said he believes the police union members "just want to have a fair sit-down" when it comes time for negotiations. "I think they're just looking to be treated fairly."

However, "the bottom line is as a council member you're representing the interests of Atherton," he said.

Another issue that may come up soon in Atherton is the renewal of the town's parcel tax. "I am a big proponent of our parcel tax," Ms. Lewis said. She has twice in the past worked on successful campaigns to renew the tax.

Mr. Wiest said, "I think that the parcel tax has been something that has been very beneficial both to the police department and to the public works department." Without sales taxes, and with lots of non-residents using the city's streets and schools, the tax is needed, he said. ■

LIBRARY

continued from page 5

to escalate, the council members finally agreed to put the measure on the ballot. At the same time, they agreed to put the other two other measures on the ballot.

The library committee, headed by Denise Kupperman, made its recommendation for the park site after more than two years of work. The committee came up with a plan for replacing the town's current library, located

near the Town Center in an 82-year-old, 4,790-square-foot building that does not meet current seismic safety standards.

The town had projected it would have about \$8.3 million in a fund that must be spent on the library by 2013.

The ballot measure asked voters whether the town should build the library in Holbrook-Palmer Park, razing the existing Main House to make way for the new building, using the library-designated funds. ■

Symphony performs in Menlo Park

The Silicon Valley Symphony will present "My Sun, My Stars" at 7:30 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 17, at Holy Trinity Episcopal Church, 330 Ravenswood Ave. in Menlo Park.

A second performance of the concert will be held at 4 p.m. Sunday, Nov. 18, at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 600 Colorado Ave. in Palo Alto.

Opera tenor Christopher Bengochea will sing and lead an audience sing-along that will include guests from the Menlo Park Chorus, directed by April McNeely.

Concertmaster Julian Brown will perform a violin solo. Maestro Michael Gibson will conduct the two performances.

The symphony will perform works by Brahms, Ravel, and others. Mr. Bengochea will sing selections by Tosti, Verdi and Faure, in addition to popular Italian tunes such as "O Sole Mio."

Tickets are \$20 general, and \$15 for seniors/student; children 12 and under free with adult. Tickets are available online at siliconvalleysymphony.net or at the door up to 30 minutes prior to the performance.

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Elizabeth Lewis, Cary Wiest elected to Atherton council

By Barbara Wood
Special to the Almanac

■ ELECTION 2012

Elizabeth Lewis swept to a second term on Atherton's City Council on Nov. 6, winning 1,732 votes, with the second council seat going to newcomer Cary Wiest, with 1,230 votes, according to the latest count.

They prevailed over challengers Greg Conlon, who received 1,019 votes, and Denise Kupperman, who received 848 votes. The county is still counting mail-in ballots returned on election day and provisional ballots.

Ms. Lewis and Mr. Wiest had both been endorsed by the Atherton Police Officers Association, which campaigned in their behalf.

Ms. Kupperman may have been hurt by her association with another ballot choice facing Atherton voters: whether to site a new library in Holbrook-Palmer Park. Ms. Kupperman led the committee that had, after years of public meetings and study, recommended that a new library be put in the park.

The library ballot proposal, Measure F, went down to resounding defeat, with nearly 69 percent of voters saying no. Ms. Kupperman garnered about 80 votes fewer than the library measure did.

Ms. Lewis said the election showed that voters "want their voices to be heard." She said she believed that the election of

Mr. Wiest would help to form a "collaborative council."

Colleen Anderson, a supporter of Ms. Lewis, said on election night: "This is awesome. This is so well-deserved." Ms. Anderson said she thinks "Atherton needs change. I think Elizabeth will

The victors had both been endorsed by the Atherton Police Officers Association, which campaigned in their behalf.

bring balance to the town."

Mr. Wiest, Ms. Anderson said, will also serve the town well because, as a relative newcomer, "he doesn't owe anyone any favors."

At Ms. Kupperman's home on election night, the mood was bit more somber. "I just feel very sad," she said. "It seems like people were responding to this fear of losing their police force."

Political mailers and recorded phone calls from the police officers' association had warned Atherton residents that their police force could be outsourced, and pointed out the APOA's support for Ms. Lewis and Mr. Wiest.

All candidates, however, said they oppose outsourcing Atherton's police force.

Ms. Kupperman said she plans to become more involved with projects outside Atherton town government, including expanding the volunteer work she already does at Redwood High School, where she works with students on their garden and on environmental issues.

"I'll be involved in my community," she said.

Greg Conlon said he will also remain involved, continuing to serve on the Atherton Rail Committee, which is closely monitoring the high-speed rail proposals, and on the town's Finance Committee.

After the election, Mr. Conlon called himself "a recovering politician." The longtime Atherton resident said, "I always like a good fight ... as long as it's fair and square."

The campaign he had just been through may not have been entirely that, but "we survive in spite of ourselves," he said.

He is confident, Mr. Conlon said, that the new council, will work to get along better. "I think everybody's embarrassed by the lack of civility," he said.

He was hoping that last-minute absentee ballots that had yet to be counted would bring him closer to Mr. Wiest, but he did not anticipate any change in the overall results. ■

Gordon to serve a second Assembly term

Assemblyman Rich Gordon cruised to an easy victory Nov. 6 against Republican challenger Chengzhi "George" Yang, taking 70 percent of the vote in the race for the newly drawn Assembly District 24.

Mr. Gordon, a Menlo Park resident, now represents District 21, which includes Menlo Park, Atherton, Woodside, Portola Valley, East Palo Alto, and Palo Alto. With redistricting, the same area will become part of District 24.

The district has been reshaped to encompass areas including Mountain View, Sunnyvale, and most of the San Mateo County coastside from El Granada south.

Mr. Gordon was first elected to the Assembly two years ago. Before going to Sacramento, the Menlo Park resident had served on the San Mateo County Board

■ ELECTION 2012

of Supervisors.

Mr. Gordon, who chairs the California Legislative Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Caucus, had plenty to celebrate election night. In addition to his own re-election, he was

Other election results

■ San Mateo County Board of Education, Trustee Area 7 (one to be elected): Joe Ross, 93,568; Jo-Ann "Sokolov" Byrne, 67,234.

■ San Mateo County Harbor District, members, Board of Commissioners (three to be elected): Sabrina Brennan, 90,950; Leo Padreddii, 74,644; Pietro Parravano, 69,170; Will Holsinger, 64,819; Neil Merrilees, 47,314; Brandon Kwan, 23,208.

pleased to see voters in Maine and Maryland legalize gay marriage.

In a statement, he also cited the decision by Wisconsin voters to elect Tammy Baldwin to the U.S. Senate, where she is now the first openly gay member.

"From coast to coast, voters exercised their civic duty and voted with their minds and their hearts," he wrote. "Unswayed by the torrent of money and spread of misinformation, voters did not bow down to incredible intimidation and pressure to dismantle all the progress we have accomplished so far."

— Palo Alto Weekly staff



Rich Gordon

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PhD, DABR



Joseph Shrager, MD



Daya Upadhyay, MD



Heather Wakelee, MD

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Hill cruises to victory in state Senate race

By Eric Van Susteren
and Gennady Sheyner

Palo Alto Weekly

■ ELECTION 2012

Jerry Hill continued his climb up California's political ladder Nov. 6 when he convincingly defeated Sally Lieber in the race to represent the Peninsula in the state Senate.

Mr. Hill garnered 166,145 votes, or 67 percent, more than double his challenger's 82,805 votes, according to the latest count.

A former San Mateo County supervisor who has been serving in the State Assembly since 2008, he cruised to victory despite fierce opposition from Ms. Lieber, a former assemblywoman whose campaign focused on education and the environment. The Mountain View resident had hoped that grassroots support from northern Santa Clara County would give her the edge despite Mr. Hill's overwhelming advantage in endorsements and campaign funds.

He had received more than \$1 million in contributions this year for his campaign, and his list of supporters includes a laundry list of elected city, county and state officials, including prominent Democrats such as Gov. Jerry Brown and Lt. Gov. Gavin Newsom. And while most of her support came from individuals in her home district, he received sizeable checks from dozens of unions, trade groups and corporations.

Ms. Lieber, who raised \$260,000 according to campaign-finance records, drew 54 percent of the votes in Santa Clara County, compared to Mr. Hill's 46 percent. But it was his overwhelming advantage in his home county of San Mateo that sealed the deal and padded his margin of victory. There, he was favored by 73 percent of the voters.

The results were far from surprising given his convincing win in June's primary election, when he snagged 55 percent of the votes to her 22 percent. Ms. Lieber, who had portrayed herself throughout the campaign as an underdog and as the more independent candidate, chalked up her underwhelming primary performance to his huge financial advantage and to her campaign's decision to reserve most of its spending for the general election.

"We were outgunned 10 to 1 in money, but we weren't outvoted 10 to 1," she said in an election night interview. "I think our ideas gained some traction with the voters."

She said the campaign showed the immense role that independent political contributions play in elections. "One of the big messages of the campaign is the overall dominance of money



Jerry Hill

in politics," she said. "It's definitely something that needs to be looked at."

With his victory, Mr. Hill will represent a newly formed 13th state Senate district that includes most of San Mateo County

and northern Santa Clara County and that stretches from Brisbane in the north to Sunnyvale in the south. Much of the district is currently represented by Sen. Joe Simitian, D-Palo Alto, who is concluding his final Senate term this year. The new district includes Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley, Woodside, Palo Alto, East Palo Alto, Mountain View, Redwood City, San Mateo, Los Altos and Los Altos Hills.

Mr. Hill said on election night that the results were "an opportunity to re-engage and make major changes."

"With success in sustaining our innovation economy, we can provide resources to improve the quality of life for people in the Valley and the Peninsula and protect our natural resources because once we lose those, they're gone for good," he said.

Referring to himself in his acceptance speech as an amateur magician, he said it had been a "magic" campaign, mentioning the fortuitous redistricting, generous donations and support from volunteers as boons to his campaign.

Quoting American poet Carl Sandberg, he said: "Every politician needs three hats: one to throw in the ring, one to talk through and one to pull a rabbit out of. We're going to make magic in Sacramento for four years." ■

'We were outgunned 10 to 1 in money, but we weren't outvoted 10 to 1.'

CANDIDATE SALLY LIEBER

Hamilton Avenue land sold for \$8 million

By Sandy Brundage
Almanac Staff Writer

Greenheart Land Company came away as the top bidder for the city's seven lots on Hamilton Avenue.

The council is set to review the proposal for 777-821 Hamilton Ave. at its Tuesday, Nov. 13, meeting. According to the staff report, the \$8 million purchase price will be forwarded to San Mateo County for redistribution to Menlo Park and other agencies as part of the city's disposal of assets formerly owned by the redevelopment agency.

Housing would likely be built on the 2.1 acres, the staff report said. Six owners of properties bordering the lots are also ready to sell to Greenheart to expand the project to 7.1 acres, with the possible exception of a seventh, Jim Calhoun, who owns Calhoun's Country Corner, a woodworking shop at 771 Hamilton Ave.

Go to tinyurl.com/d6y2r7l to review the staff report and rest of the council's Tuesday agenda. The meeting starts at 7 p.m. in council chambers at the Civic Center at 701 Laurel St.

Menlo Park grants for performing arts

Calling all performing arts groups. Menlo Park has officially launched its new grant program, and the Dec. 1 deadline is right around the corner.

In an effort to boost the city's use of the Menlo-Atherton Performing Arts Center, five community groups will be awarded \$500 to \$1,000 to subsidize rental of the theater.

The city chipped in \$2.6 million to build the performing arts center, sharing the cost with Menlo-Atherton High School. In exchange Menlo Park is supposed to get 55 days of rent-free use during the school year, and unlimited access during school vacations.

But as the Almanac reported in June, it hasn't worked out that way. So far the city use has averaged between 11 and 36 days each year since the theater opened in 2009.

Scheduling presents one obstacle, as school events take priority over community use. Another factor is cost. Community groups failed to flock to

BRIEFS

the theater because of the rental expense.

That's where the new grant program comes in. No applications will be accepted after Dec. 1, according to the city's announcement. The grants expire after one year. Organizations are welcome to reapply during the next cycle.

Contact the Community Services Department at 330-2223 for more information about the grants.

Two Menlo Park homes hit by gunfire

Police followed the echoes of gunfire to two bullet-pocked houses in Menlo Park early Monday morning, Nov. 12.

Menlo Park and East Palo Alto officers searched the residences, both located in the 1200 block of Madera Avenue, around 4:30 a.m. They did not come away empty-handed. Inside: two high-capacity assault rifles, a 9mm semi-automatic handgun, and about 10 ounces of marijuana.

They arrested Kennetha Hahn, 28; Deangelo Williams, 22; Jerry Coneal, 18; and Chariece Chew, 19, all of Menlo Park. The quartet was booked for weapons-related charges, drug possession, marijuana sales, negligent discharge of firearms, and conspiracy, with criminal street gang enhancements.

Wheelchairs-adapted vehicles recovered

Two stolen vehicles adapted for wheelchairs vanished from a Menlo Park woman's home on Nov. 7, but returned three days later, thanks to the police.

Annette "Nettie" Wijsman, a 55-year-old ergonomics consultant, has been confined to a wheelchair since 2007 and relies on the vehicles for work. Theft insurance covered a 2000 black Honda CRV, but not a 1999 gold Dodge van.

Ms. Wijsman told the Almanac she forgot that she left her keys in one vehicle after unloading it. When she realized the keys were missing the next day, she went to get them and found both vehicles had disappeared from her home near Flood Park. ■

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Advanced Lung Cancer Can Yield to Treatment

Tony Ricciardi remembers precisely when he quit smoking. It was 1 a.m., on Martin Luther King Jr. Day in 2001. A late night trip to buy cigarettes left him feeling so disgusted by his need for nicotine that it became the last trip he ever made to support behavior he knew was bad for his health.

But he has no idea when his lung cancer began to grow inside him. It might have already been there, starting a journey Ricciardi didn't notice until several years later, when he happened to notice a lump on his neck, just above his collar bone. "It felt like a bug bite," he said, "and it didn't hurt." But he mentioned it to an acquaintance who was a retired physician. He recommended that Ricciardi have it examined by a doctor.

This doctor "did some kind of X-ray and then called me back to his conference room," Ricciardi said. The man looked so serious that Ricciardi tried a joke. "Could I buy green bananas?" he asked. The answer was not what Ricciardi expected. That tiny, bug-bite-like growth near his collarbone was actually the tip of a cancerous tumor that had expanded out of his lungs up into his neck. If Ricciardi responded to treatment, he might have a year left. Ricciardi, stunned at this verdict, talked to another doctor acquaintance who

sent him to see Heather Wakelee, MD, at Stanford Hospital & Clinics. Her special focus is lung cancer, and she is the lead medical oncologist of the Stanford Cancer Institute's Thoracic Oncology group.

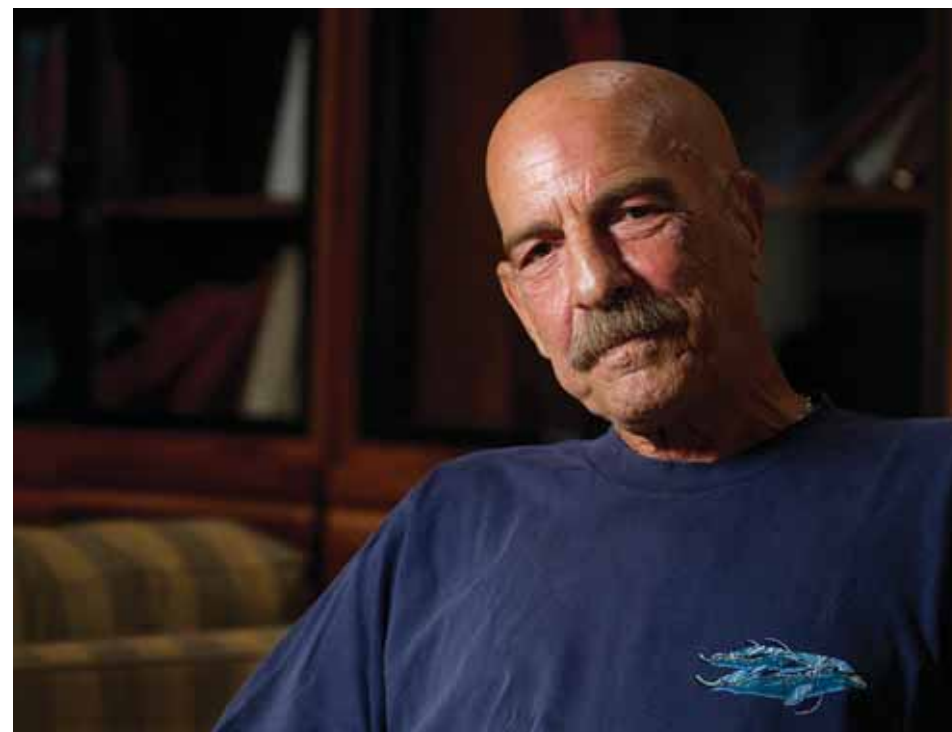
Wakelee ordered more detailed images to be taken of Ricciardi's chest and then told him what she thought. "She just handled it like I had a runny nose," Ricciardi said. He remembers her saying, "We cure people like you all the time. I was confused a little bit — this other person was saying, 'Curtains'— but I liked her and I liked her manner and I just kind of surrendered myself to her. What did I have to lose?'"

Options Still Open

Each year, 225,000 Americans are diagnosed with lung cancer. Eighty-five to 90 percent of them has a history of smoking, although the number of lung cancer patients with no such history is growing. The disease is the leading cause of cancer deaths, in large part because the vast majority of patients are not diagnosed until the cancer has reached its later stages.

"When Tony came to us, he had a large mass of cancer in his chest and in his lymph nodes," Wakelee said. "Many believe that when it's spread like that there's no hope. We work hard to overcome that, to let people know that there is hope, even within the reality that this is a hard disease to treat. There are patients who get through it, who survive to tell about it."

Ricciardi's cancer had spread to his lymph nodes, making surgery no longer an option. In such cases, "we look to other treatment modalities," Wakelee said. "Radiation is critical,



Tony Ricciardi quit smoking in 2001, but apart from a small lump that he noticed just above his collarbone several years later, he had no symptoms of the lung cancer that had grown to an advanced stage.

but we know from many studies that adding chemotherapy to the radiation is far more effective than doing either radiation alone or doing radiation after chemotherapy or vice versa."

The big advantage of the combination treatment is that chemotherapy is a radiation sensitizer, Wakelee said. "It improves the effectiveness of radiation, and unlike focused radiation, it reaches throughout the body. When someone comes in with cancer as developed as Tony's, the likelihood is that cancer cells have escaped to other areas of the body. That's why we do both therapies and why we do them together."

"Many believe that when it's spread like that there's no hope. We work hard to overcome that, to let people know that there is hope, even within the reality that this is a hard disease to treat."

— Heather Wakelee, MD, lead medical oncologist of the Stanford Cancer Institute's Thoracic Oncology group

Both the chemotherapy and the radiation alter the DNA of cancer cells so they are less able to divide and grow. Patients can experience side effects from both types of treatment. "We chose to go through an aggressive course of treatment for him because he was relatively young—62 and otherwise healthy," Wakelee said. "The

prognosis of advanced lung cancer is poor, and in the minds of many people, even physicians, what often gets overlooked is that there are patients who are cured with aggressive therapy and we don't want to take away hope."

Taking Precise Aim

The radiation Ricciardi received was delivered by technology that has advanced so rapidly that the physician in charge of Ricciardi's care, Billy W. Loo Jr., MD, PhD, has learned a completely new set of skills from those he acquired during his radiation oncology residency training at Stanford. "The change of pace has been really impressive," said Loo, Stanford's program leader in thoracic radiation oncology

Screening for Lung Cancer

- A panel of Stanford lung cancer experts will discuss the newest approaches to lung cancer treatment and lung cancer screening at 7 p.m., Thursday, Nov. 15, at the Francis C. Arrillaga Alumni Center, 326 Galvez St., on the Stanford campus. Seating is limited; pre-registration is encouraged. To register, call (650) 498-7826.
- The leading cause of cancer death, lung cancer kills about 160,000 people in America each year, and 1.3 million worldwide. An estimated 225,000 Americans will be diagnosed with the disease this year. Eighty-five to 90 percent will have a history of smoking. Unfortunately, lung cancer is most often not diagnosed until its later stages, which increases the difficulty of successful treatment.
- This spring, the American College of Chest Physicians and the American Society for Clinical Oncology endorsed new CT lung cancer screening guidelines. Screening is recommended for people age 50 and over with a 20-pack year history of smoking and one additional risk factor. Those risk factors include exposure to radon and several other carcinogenic chemicals, family history of lung cancer, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease or previous personal history of cancer.

For more information about lung cancer screening, diagnosis and treatment, visit stanfordhospital.org/lungcancermonth or phone (650) 498-6000.

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

and an expert in image-guided focused radiation therapy. "The main changes have been in the way we can focus the radiation from many different directions. We can focus so precisely that we minimize the spillover radiation to healthy surrounding organs."

"We can make three-dimensional moving pictures so we can adjust the radiation beams to turn on only at a certain portion of the breathing cycle, and we can track tumors as they move."

— Billy W. Loo Jr., MD, PhD, Stanford Cancer Institute program leader in thoracic radiation oncology

Keeping the radiation contained just to cancerous areas means fewer side effects; in the past, many patients who hain the past, many patients who received radiation to the chest experienced such damage to the esophagus

that they could not swallow without difficulty and needed temporary feeding tubes. "Since implementing focused radiation techniques for lung cancer at Stanford I've never had to place a feeding tube in a patient," Loo said. "That's a dramatic change from the past."

The newer radiation machines can also deliver more radiation in a short period of time, which reduces the number of dosage sessions. But that intensity of dose makes it all the more important that the target is hit accurately. "In the lungs we're aiming at moving targets," Loo said. "That's a technical challenge. We have to be able to see how the tumors are moving—and advances in imaging technology allow us to do that. We can make three-dimensional moving pictures so we can adjust the radiation beams to turn on only at a certain portion of the breathing cycle, and we can track tumors as they move."

- The screening criteria match those followed in a single large study known as the National Lung Screening Trial, published in 2011 in the New England Journal of Medicine, which found a 20 percent lower risk of death from lung cancer among more than 26,000 people screened with low-dose CT annually for three years, compared to those who were tested with chest radiographs instead.

Symptoms of Lung Cancer

Lung cancer usually does not cause symptoms when it first develops. A cough is the most common symptom of lung cancer. The following are the common symptoms for lung cancer; however each individual may experience them differently.

- Bloody or rust colored sputum
- Shortness of breath
- Wheezing
- Chest pain
- Recurring lung infections such as pneumonia or bronchitis
- Hoarseness
- Fever for unknown reason

"I did get a reprieve for however long that might be—and it's given me so much."

— Tony Ricciardi, patient, Stanford Hospital & Clinics

In the past, Ricciardi might have received just radiation or just chemotherapy; by treating him with both at the same time, he became someone who represents "the best outcomes we've seen to date," Loo said.

A Solid Future

Even in the short time since Ricciardi's treatment was completed, new advances have become available. If he arrived at Stanford now, his cancer cells would be analyzed with greater molecular detail and typed for their response to chemotherapies designed to attack certain gene mutations or cellular growth factors. "We now know that almost every tumor is going to have one of these specific molecular changes," Wakelee said, "and as we get smarter, and add more knowledge, we're able to define that in more and more patients."

Ricciardi is still rather amazed at his survival, now four years since complet-



"I haven't done any victory dances," Ricciardi said, "but I did get a reprieve for however long that might be—and it's given me so much."

ing radiation and chemotherapy. "The echo of that guy's voice still rings in my ears," he said. "I haven't done any victory dances, but I did get a reprieve for however long that might be—and it's given me so much."



Medical oncologist Heather Wakelee, MD, who leads the Stanford Cancer Institute's Thoracic Oncology group, and Billy W. Loo, Jr., MD, PhD, program leader of thoracic radiation oncology, compare images of Ricciardi's chest, before and after his combined treatment with chemotherapy and radiation. Four years after he was diagnosed with advanced lung cancer, Ricciardi is free of that cancer.



Every day for three months, Ricciardi came to Stanford Hospital & Clinics for an aggressive treatment that combined chemotherapy with radiation, an approach that studies have shown improves outcome. Ricciardi formed strong bonds with his medical oncologist, Heather Wakelee (center photo), Cancer Center clinic assistants Cornelius Smith (left) and Mary Arroyo (right).



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Gifts of experience give more

Pilot Steve Blonstein, general manager of the West Valley Flying Club, takes a passenger up in the air over the Peninsula.



Veronica Weber

Giving non-tangible goods for the holidays

By Lisa Kellman



Veronica Weber

Guitar teacher Carol McComb helps Jan Maarse tune his guitar before leading the beginning-intermediate lesson at Gryphon Stringed Instruments in Palo Alto.



Veronica Weber

Sylvia Wuensche-Wienands works on her abstract painting during class at the Pacific Art League in downtown Palo Alto.



Veronica Weber

From left, Ramona Barrantes, Lesley Wiley, Shari L., and Michelle Baran laugh while preparing pan roasted chicken with chasseur sauce during a cooking class at Sur La Table in Palo Alto.

Buying gifts for friends on the Peninsula can be like buying gifts for the Little Mermaid. They already have “gadgets and gizmos aplenty” and “whosits and whatsits galore.” When everyone is already carrying the latest gadget and wearing the best the season has to offer, it can be a struggle to pick out gifts that won’t turn up in the back of a closet.

One gift that takes up no physical space is knowledge. Gifts of experience are not only enjoyable but can be social and educational. As Peninsula cooking teacher Rashmi Rustagi said: “Knowledge empowers people and inspires them to do something different. It brings people together.”

Cheese plates, scarves, iPods and video games will always be in stores. Experiences that expand one’s skills and strengthen



connections don’t come around every day. A gift can teach participants how to cook, do yoga, paint, ride a horse and even fly a plane.

Locally, for those interested in expanding their creativity and improving brushstrokes, the Palo Alto Art Center, Create It, Griffon School, the Pacific Art League and other organizations provide art classes for all ages.

“It is a great gift to enable somebody to express themselves,” said Robin Scholl of the Pacific Art League.

Students can dabble in ceramics, watercolor, acrylic painting, glass fusing, drawing, jewelry making and photography. Many of these classes also provide studio space and art supplies, so students don’t need to use additional space in their homes. Instead of receiving a home-decor item as a gift, friends can furnish their home with their own artwork and awaken a new passion.



Continued on next page

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Shopping with a heart

Boutiques and fairs benefit local nonprofits

by Lisa Kellman

Through boutiques, bazaars, fairs and festivals, local nonprofits will be offering unusual and handmade crafts as gifts for the holiday season. Expect to find everything from fresh flower arrangements to a magic show or pet adoption at the wide variety of events.

3rd Annual Holiday Boutique: A variety of boutique vendors will be at Allied Arts Guild in Menlo Park on Nov. 15, with champagne and shopping from 6 p.m.-9 p.m. and on Nov. 16, with boutique shopping from 8:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. at 75 Arbor Road (at Cambridge Avenue), Menlo Park. The boutique benefits the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation.

St. Peter's Holiday Bazaar: Vendors will sell goods and all the proceeds will be donated to nonprofits on Nov. 17, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at 178 Clinton St., Redwood City.

2012 Holiday Bazaar: Attendees can find homemade crafts, an ornament contest, a do-it-yourself craft table and a raffle Nov. 17, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the City of Mountain View Senior Center, 266 Escuela Ave., Mountain View.

Fair Trade Holiday Gift Fair: Open Door Church of Mountain View will be teaming up with Trade as One to sell a variety of fair-trade items on Nov. 17 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. and Nov. 18 from noon-3 p.m., Open Door Church, 1667 Miramonte Ave., Mountain View.

Woodside High School Harvest Festival and Craft Faire: Holiday gift ideas, jewelry, clothing, crafts and more will be sold. Admission is \$1. The faire is Nov. 19, from 10 a.m.-3 p.m. at 199 Churchill Ave., Woodside.

Garden Club of Palo Alto's Holiday Affaire: This winter marketplace will have fresh flower arrangements, wreaths, jams, marmalades and birch products. All goods are made by Garden Club members. It will occur Dec. 1, 10 a.m.-3 p.m., at the First Presbyterian Church, 1140 Cowper St., Palo Alto.

Holiday Bazaar at Deborah's Palm: Hand-crafted gifts and unique goods, including toffee, jewelry, knitted goods, wreaths and more will all be sold on Dec. 1 from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at 555 Lytton Ave., Palo Alto.

Christmas Market at Allied Arts: Carolers, Santa and his Elf plus handcrafted pieces from local artists and the Palo Alto Auxiliary will be available on Dec. 1, from 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at 75 Arbor Road (at Cambridge Avenue), Menlo Park.

Holiday Craft Fair at First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto: This annual fair, co-sponsored by the Peninsula Peace

and Justice Center, will sell gifts from all over the world. The Mikaboo Bird rescue will also be there for pet adoption. The fair is Dec. 11, 11 a.m.-2:40 p.m., at the First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto, 1140 Cowper St., Palo Alto.

Chanukah Festival: This festival features games, food (latkes and more), a magician, jumpy house and vendors selling Chanukah candles, gift items, jewelry, olive oil and more. Proceeds benefit the Beth Jacob Preschool. The festival is Dec. 11, from 11:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at 1550 Alameda de las Pulgas, Redwood City. ■

Editorial Intern Lisa Kellman can be emailed at lkellman@pawekly.com



Continued from previous page

Cooking classes are another creative outlet and can be a clever way to tell a friend "I care about what you feed me." In a single class, students of all abilities can learn how to saute, grill, chop and bake, and thereby improve their own cooking repertoire.

Kara Rosenburg, principal of the Palo Alto Adult School, recommends cooking classes as gifts. "Since they are one evening, they don't commit the receivers to too much time, and they get dinner to boot," she said.

Cooking-class participants can learn to make Indian delicacies at iheartcurry.com and on Rashmi Rustagi's blog; a Moroccan feast at CasablancaMarket.com; or a cornucopia of cuisines at Draeger's markets, Sur La Table, Whole Foods, Williams-Sonoma, and the Palo Alto Adult School.

Instead of learning how to stuff their stomachs, friends may appreciate the opportunity to work their abs. Yoga and pilates studios can be found all around Palo Alto, Mountain View, and

Menlo Park. These presents can help people improve flexibility, relaxation and health.

Lisa Haley of Be Yoga in Palo Alto said that a gift of yoga can help people "explore personal growth, relieve stress and empower themselves."

Talei Morgan, a yoga instructor at Palo Alto's Loma Living, added, "It is the gift of presence rather than presents."

Along with yoga, gifts of group-exercise and martial-arts classes, or of personal trainers, can help fulfill someone's New Year's resolution. These exercise classes give participants a taste of the various ways to get in shape. Personal trainers fulfill specific exercise and body goals, while classes come in many flavors, including kickboxing, zumba, step, karate, taekwondo and judo.

Those seeking more adventure outdoors need not go far. The California Riding Academy in Menlo Park teaches English, hunter/jumper and dressage horseback-riding lessons to people who have never touched

a horse, those who have not ridden in a while, and experienced riders. In addition, many local flying clubs offer flying lessons and simulation sessions out of the Palo Alto Airport.

"It gives them their first opportunity to go flying and see if they want to continue or not," said Carl Honaker, the director of county airports.

Finally, for the friend too tired of working his or her brain, massages, manicures/pedicures, facials, spa days and a night at a hotel or bed and breakfast can help them forget the stresses of the world.

Just as The Little Mermaid gets to be "part of that world," with a little creativity, a gift can send loved ones into the world of a master chef, a professional horseback rider, a pampered socialite or even a pilot.

As Rustagi put it: "Physical gifts are short-lived. A class is a gift that keeps on giving; it never gets used up." ■

Editorial intern Lisa Kellman can be emailed at lkellman@embarcaderopublishing.com.

Man robbed at knifepoint in park

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

If you go walking after midnight, keep an eye out. Late Wednesday night, Nov. 7, two men robbed a third who was strolling through Jack Lyle Park in Menlo Park.

Brandishing a knife, the two men demanded the 24-year-old victim hand over his property. They escaped with cash and an iPhone.

Police were called to the park at 1060 Middle Ave. shortly after midnight. They described the suspects as two white men in their 20s. One stood about 6 feet tall, with a thin build and brown hair. He wore a long, baggy black winter jacket with dark pants. The other, described as a heavy-set man with brown hair, wore a dirty beige T-shirt with a graphic design and jeans.

■ CRIME NEWS

Anyone with information on the robbery may call Officer Jeff Vasquez at 330-6300 or call the anonymous tip line at 330-6395.

Kidnap attempt?

That's not the only crime keeping investigators busy investigating. Police are still working on a possible attempted kidnapping.

A woman pulled up to a West Menlo Park home on Nov. 3 and asked a 5-year-old boy to get in a minivan to go to her house for Halloween candy, the boy's mother told police.

Saying no, the boy backed away from the car, according to his mother. The stranger drove off as the mother walked out of the Oakley Avenue house.

The van, described as a very old

faded light blue, headed towards Cloud Avenue. Witnesses said a car seat possibly holding a toddler was also in the van.

The parent called police around 10:17 a.m., within minutes after the van drove away, and also told neighbors about the incident. The Sheriff's Office, which turned out to have jurisdiction over the area, described the suspect as a middle-age Hispanic or Asian woman with short black hair and wearing a gray shirt.

Some Menlo Park schools were on alert, according to Menlo Park City School District Superintendent Maurice Ghysels, since the incident happened near several campuses.

Anyone with information about this case is asked to contact the Sheriff's Office at 363-4911 or leave an anonymous tip at 1-800-547-2700. ■

Woodland School names new members to board

Woodland School in Portola Valley has announced new members to its board of trustees.

Several of the trustees are local residents:

■ Beth Carr of Menlo Park, a partner in international tax services with Ernst & Young, holds a bachelor's degree in accounting from the Wharton School of Business at the University of Pennsylvania.

■ Michelle Morcos Smith of Menlo Park is a senior counsel at Metropolitan Life Insurance. She is a graduate of Brooklyn Law School with a bachelor's degree from Columbia University.

■ Matt Orban of Woodside

is CEO of Kurt Orban Partners, president and founding partner of Orban Properties, and president of Vegware Financial. He is a graduate of UC Santa Cruz.

■ Dave Girouard of Emerald Hills is a founder and CEO at Upstart, a crowd-funding platform that lets soon-to-be college graduates raise funds in exchange for a small share of future income. He holds an MBA from University of Michigan and a bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College.

Woodland School is a co-educational day school, serving 260 students preschool through eighth grade.

Building green and why it matters

Saving natural resources in home construction is an important consideration for "organic architect" and author Eric Corey Freed, who will talk about the topic at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 13, at the Portola Valley Community Center, 765 Portola Road.

The public is invited to the free talk, entitled "We Can't Afford NOT to Build Green Buildings," will "explore a new paradigm" on building sustainably, and address the politics and pessimism around this topic, according to a town announcement.

Mr. Freed is the author of four books, including "Green Building & Remodeling For Dummies," 2008, by Wiley Publishing Inc., and is a principal at the San Francisco-based firm organicARCHITECT. Among the catch phrases on the firm's website: "Architecture, meet biology."

The program is part of the Tuesday Harvest series of environmental talks. The town of Portola Valley does not endorse speakers in the series or the information they disclose.

For more information, contact Brandi de Garmeaux at 851-1700, ext. 222, or bde-garmeaux@portolavalley.net.



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Portola Valley may set public hearing on affordable housing plan

By Dave Boyce

Almanac staff writer

The Portola Valley Town Council on Wednesday, Nov. 14, is set to discuss, perhaps briefly, a go-ahead from the Planning Commission to proceed with a complex contingency-laden plan meant to create housing affordable for people of moderate incomes in a town where homes typically sell for seven-figure prices.

Town Planner Tom Vlastic rec-

ommends the council “briefly review the matter” and schedule a public hearing for the Dec. 12 council meeting.

The council meets at the Historic Schoolhouse at 765 Portola Road. The council will likely emerge from a 6:45 p.m. closed session and meet in open session at its regular time of 7:30 p.m. A staff report recommends that the council review the commission’s recent decision approving proposals to reconfigure lot lines and building envelopes

at town-owned properties in the Blue Oaks neighborhood originally intended for below-market-rate housing.

The complicated topography of this 2.5-acre property mitigated against such housing, so the council is hoping to sell it at a market rate and use the proceeds to purchase a more amenable property. The council is looking at 900 Portola Road, a flat 1.68-acre site for an as yet undetermined number of small homes for people with moder-

ate incomes who live or work in Portola Valley.

In San Mateo County, according to the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), a moderate income is around \$86,500 for an individual and \$123,600 for a family of four.

Though the plan is opposed by “Keep PV Rural,” a group of about 21 households from single-family homes just behind 900 Portola Road, the council is pressing ahead to comply with a state mandate that requires cities and towns to accommodate residents of very low, low and moderate incomes.

Single-family homes are a

Portola Valley tradition and the homeowners argue that the proposal would lower their property values. In recent letters made public, the group says it is unopposed to affordable housing, but claims the process has not been “democratic and open” and that the state obligation could be met with a “creative approach that emphasizes second units.”

Many towns use second units to address mandates for very-low and low income housing, but the state requires zoning for “a variety of housing types, including multi-family,” HCD spokesman Colin Parent told the Almanac. ■

Residents want lower speed limits in Woodside Glens

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

■ WOODSIDE

Vehicles should slow down for the sake of pedestrians on the streets of the Woodside Glens neighborhood, residents say. The narrow, curving streets have no sidewalks, the line-of-sight distances are inadequate, and pedestrians have few options for escape in a confrontation with a moving vehicle, according to a 2011 traffic study. The Town Council meets at 7:30 p.m. Tuesday, Nov. 13, and will consider a staff report proposing a lower speed limit: 20 mph, down from the current 25 mph.

The streets affected would be Alta Mesa Road, Glenwood Avenue, Highland Terrace, Hillside Drive, Otis Avenue, Ridge Court and Toyon Court. The discussion is the first item of new business on the agenda, but follows two public hearings. The

council meets at Independence Hall near the corner of Whiskey Hill and Woodside roads.

The state vehicle code gives town councils the authority to lower a 25 mph limit if the street is no wider than 25 feet. The traffic study also recommends adding several signs — “Yield,” “Stop,” “Share the Road” and the pedestrian icon — at appropriate places, as well as 20-mph speed limit signs and a solar-powered speed detection device on Glenwood Avenue near the intersection with Canada Road.

Also on the council’s agenda: a discussion of bridge repair and replacement on Kings Mountain, Mountain Home and Portola roads, and a continued discussion of the town’s climate action plan to reduce greenhouse gases. ■

M-A athlete Alex Aguiar honored

Alex Aguiar, a senior and a baseball and basketball player at Menlo-Atherton High School, is one of 10 high school student athletes from the Bay Area and Sacramento recently awarded \$2,000 scholarships as part of the Positive Coaching Alliance’s Triple-Impact Competitor scholarship program.

The scholarships recognize the athletes efforts to better themselves and their teams,

according to the the Positive Coaching Alliance, a sponsor of the program along with the accounting firm Deloitte LLP and the Thrive Foundation for Youth, based in Menlo Park.

Alliance founder Jim Thompson noted that the scholarship winners “are the types of student-athletes who will remain leaders throughout their lives and have the potential to greatly impact our society.”

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'The Three Musketeers'

Brian DiGiorgio and Molly Schreiner are among those in the cast of the Woodside Priory School's production of "The Three Musketeers," opening at 7 p.m. Thursday, Nov. 15, in Rothrock Performance Hall at the Portola Valley school. There will be additional performances at 7 p.m. on Nov. 16 and 17, and 2 p.m. on Nov. 18. Tickets are \$5 for students and \$15 for adults at the door. Woodside Priory is located at 302 Portola Road in Portola Valley.



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Photo: Marc Silber

WEDDING



Juliana Mancini and Samuel Hudoba

Mancini-Hudoba

Ron and Sally Mancini of Menlo Park announce the marriage of their daughter, Juliana Mancini, to Samuel Hudoba in a private ceremony and reception Sept. 18 at the Stanford Park Hotel in Menlo Park.

The bride attended both Encinal and Hillview schools and graduated from Foothill College in August with an associate of arts degree in anthropology.

The bridegroom is the son of Greg and Meri Hudoba of Apple Valley, Minnesota. He graduated from Apple Valley High School in 2007 and attended Dakota Tech College. He is a department specialist at the Home Depot in East Palo Alto.

The newlyweds will be relocating to Minneapolis, Minnesota, with their 2-year-old daughter, Virginia.



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Audrey Avis Aasen-Hull

Audrey Avis Aasen-Hull died peacefully at her home on Oct. 31, 2012. She was born in Coquille, Oregon, on July 9, 1916. Audrey Avis was the beneficiary of scholarships at the University of Oregon, graduating with a degree in music in 1939. She felt most fortunate to have studied violin with Rex Underwood at the University and with Joseph Roisman of the Budapest String Quartet at Mills College during several summers in the 1930s. She received her Master's Degree in Musicology from Stanford University in 1946.

Audrey Avis was a music teacher in the San Francisco school system before becoming a private music teacher in Menlo Park. She was a professional in both piano and violin and was very involved with the Music Teachers' Association of California. Her many students will remember her for her teaching excellence, not just her technical proficiency in both piano and violin but also her ability to teach music appreciation, theory, harmony, and history. In addition to her professional status as a teacher she performed regularly during her entire life. Her devotion to music, music education and fellow music-lovers has benefited all those who knew her.

In 1962 she married James Byrne Hull. They loved to travel, especially to Paris and New York. She loved her gardens and for many years had a beautiful rose garden. Friends will remember her for her love too for her poodles and cats, French champagne, and trips to San Francisco for the musical events there.

Audrey Avis made very important contributions to the community not only personally, but also through her gift-giving. Some of the organizations which she loved and made contributions to include the San Francisco Symphony, San Francisco Performances, Music@Menlo, California Institute of Technology's music program, California Summer Chamber Music, Lively Arts at Stanford, the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, and the Music Academy of the West.

Audrey Avis is survived by her husband Byrne who took wonderful care of her in her last years.

Special thanks go to those who helped her during her last years: Sally Young, Deon Hilger, Suzanne Koonce, Dr. Rebecca Leon, Hazelle Milradovitch, Paul Eisenman, and John Wells, and special recognition and thanks go to Senior Helpers, Pathways Hospice, and Home Care Assistance for their help in caring for Audrey Avis in her last years. A gathering of friends will take place at her home on Nov. 18 from 5:00 - 7:00. In lieu of flowers, please give in her memory to the musical organization of your choice.

PAID OBITUARY

Woodside wins national award

By Barbara Wood

Special to the Almanac

Woodside Elementary School District Superintendent Beth Polito and second-grade teacher Brian Myrtetus will be in Washington, D.C., this week to accept a National Blue Ribbon School award for their school.

While it is not the first such award for Woodside, the last time it received the Blue Ribbon honor was 1993, Ms. Polito said.

Woodside is one of 27 schools in California and 257 public and 50 private schools in the country to be named a National Blue Ribbon School by the U.S. Department of Education this year. Other Midpeninsula schools honored this year include North Star Academy in Redwood City and Oak Avenue Elementary School in Los Altos.

To be eligible for the award, schools must be in at least the top 15 percent in the state on state assessments of reading and mathematics, with results for students from disadvantaged backgrounds similar to the results for all students.

SCHOOLS

Woodside School students far exceed those requirements. According to their application for the Blue Ribbon award, the state Academic Performance Index for the school was 942 (out of a possible 1000) in 2007, 956 in 2008, 933 in 2009, 937 in 2010 and 968 in 2011.

Socio-economically disadvantaged students, English learners and students with disabilities made major gains

'The vision of Woodside School is Woodside children are the town's greatest treasure.'

(129 points, 192 and 190 points respectively) in performance on the STAR exam between 2010 and 2011, the application says.

Woodside School is also proud of its place in the community, according to the application. "The vision of Woodside School is Woodside children are the town's greatest treasure," it says. "Educating and nurturing them is our contribution to the future."

The school's stated mission is, in part, to provide "a nurturing yet challenging school environment consistent with Woodside's cohesive, small

town character. In collaboration with parents, we will instill in our students a love of learning, respect and compassion for others, and a global, multicultural awareness."

At the time of the application for the award, in 2011, Woodside had 446 students, with an ethnic breakdown of 72 percent white, 11 percent Hispanic or Latino, 6 percent American Indian or Alaska native, 2 percent black, 3 percent Asian and 1 percent Pacific islander. It had 29 students, or 7 percent, who were English language learners with four languages — Spanish, Russian, Tongan and Urdu — represented; while 40 students, or 9 percent, were eligible for reduced price meals and 58 students, or 13 percent, received special education services.

The school spent \$18,647 per child and had a ratio of students to classroom teachers of 12 to 1, the application says.

Local winners of the National Blue Ribbon School award in the recent past include Corte Madera School, in Portola Valley and La Entrada Middle School in Menlo Park in 2008; Encinal Elementary School in Atherton in 2007; and Las Lomas Elementary School in Atherton in 2003.

According to the Department of Education website, "National Blue Ribbon Schools serve as models for other schools throughout the nation, and school personnel are often sought out as mentors." ■

Paul Morrison Wythes

Paul Morrison Wythes was born on June 23, 1933 in Camden, New Jersey, to Marion and William Wythes. He was the youngest of three boys, all of whom were raised in Haddonfield, New Jersey. Paul graduated from Haddonfield Memorial High School in 1951 and matriculated to Princeton University that fall. He graduated from Princeton in 1955 with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. Following graduation, he entered the Navy where he served as a Lieutenant Junior Grade in the Navy Supply Corps stationed at Clarksville Base in Tennessee.

Following two years in the Navy, Paul graduated from Stanford Business School in 1959 and took a job in San Francisco with Minneapolis Honeywell. While living in San Francisco, Paul met Marcia Reed and the two were married in 1961 in Honolulu, Hawaii. They

spent several years in San Francisco before moving to Fullerton, California where Paul took a job with Beckman Instruments. While in Fullerton, their first child Jennifer was born in 1964.

That same year Paul was offered the opportunity to start a venture capital firm in Palo Alto, California. Sutter Hill Ventures would become one of Silicon Valley's first venture capital firms. Their second child, Paul Jr. was born in 1967 and their third child Linda was born in 1970.

Paul spent the next 48 years in venture capital with Sutter Hill Ventures, leading investments in a number of companies, including Tellabs, Xidex, Linear Technology, Qume and Ameri-

Group. In addition to his venture capital work, Paul served on the Board of Trustees at Princeton University for 14 years, culminating as Vice-Chairman of the Board. Paul won the National Venture Capital Association's Lifetime Achievement Award, the U.S. Naval Supply Corps Distinguished Alumnus Award and accepted the

Dow Jones Equity Hall of Fame Award given to Sutter Hill as the Outstanding Venture Capital Firm for 2006. He was president and director of the Western Association of Venture Capitalists, spent 12 years as an Overseer Board member of the Hoover Institution at Stanford and a 22-year board member of the T. Rowe Price Mutual Fund Complex in Baltimore, Maryland. Paul was also a board member of the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco.

In his spare time, Paul was an avid baseball fan and served as a minority owner of the San Francisco Giants baseball organization. He enjoyed playing golf and spent his retirement traveling the world with Marcia.

Paul is survived by his wife, his three children, daughter-in-law Mai Mai Wythes, son-in-law John Knoll, and eight grandchildren, Maggie, Reed and Whit Vettel, Alexandra and Thomas Wythes and Henry, Charlie and Ellie Knoll.

A memorial service will be held at The Menlo Park Presbyterian Church on November 13, 2012 at 3pm. Donations may be made to Eastside College Preparatory School, 1041 Myrtle Street, East Palo Alto, CA 94303.



PAID OBITUARY

Carly Ianson

Nov. 14, 1974 – Oct. 27, 2012

Carly Ianson peacefully entered into Heaven Oct. 27, 2012. With her family by her side, after a prolonged battle with Lupus. She was a resident of Chico, CA at the time. She was predeceased by her mother Nancy Ianson. Survived by loving father Rexford Ianson and his wife Cece, aunts Janet Bechtold (George), Karen Skogstrom (Michael), Laurie Fleck (David) and her uncle Edward Finney Jr., and many cousins. Carly loved her family, friends and animals and was loved in return. She attended Nativity School in Menlo Park and graduated from Notre Dame High School in Belmont, CA, she went on to attend the University of Portland in Portland, OR. While in High School she actively supported and participated in community program sponsored by the Menlo Park Fire District, including the Christmas toy drive, Christmas Bear Tree for Stanford Children's Hospital, annual Easter Egg Hunt and Fire Prevention Week Open House. She considered the firefighters in Menlo Park her extended family. Her inquisitive nature and sense of humor will be missed by all whose lives she touched.

A memorial service will be held Friday, Nov. 16, 2012 11:00, Church of the Nativity, 210 Oak Grove Ave., Menlo Park, CA

PAID OBITUARY

Fire trucks go paperless

By Dave Boyce
Almanac staff writer

Firefighters often have reading to do as they're heading to a situation. It could be a hazardous materials spill or a fire safety inspection of a building or a traffic accident involving a Prius, which may present an electrical hazard when trying to extract a victim. To review procedures for these situations, the cabs of fire trucks have long been equipped with informational binders and books, but that's changing.

Seven fire engines in the Menlo Park Fire Protection District now have Apple iPads installed, Fire Chief Harold Schapelhouman said in a statement. The point is to continue to improve firefighters' "situational awareness," but in a paperless way.

The district presented the new technology at fire district headquarters at 300 Middlefield Road on Nov. 8. The \$10,390 used to fund this pilot project was a gift from Heffernan Insurance Brokers, based in Walnut

Creek but with offices in Menlo Park, and Fireman's Fund Insurance Company, based in Novato, Chief Schapelhouman said.

The Menlo Park district's ladder truck and its battalion command vehicle will be similarly equipped, but financed with public funds. The fire district serves Menlo Park, Atherton, East Palo Alto and nearby unincorporated areas.

"The rapid growth of mobile technology and ongoing need to evolve emergency

services has inspired the Fire District to re-evaluate its operational efficiencies and the ways in which it conducts its day to day business," Emergency Services Manager Ryan Zollicoffer said in the the district's announcement.

The district converted its existing paper documents into a format compatible with iPads and now uses them to review floor plans ahead of building inspections. The new technology saves money by reducing administrative overhead. Other possible applications include hydrant and vehicle inspections and patient care. ■

Seven fire engines in the Menlo Park Fire Protection District now have Apple iPads on board.

Judges: Budget cuts could close courtrooms

San Mateo County Superior Court judges have announced a plan to close up to six courtrooms, and suspend court services in the north county and consolidate them in Redwood City, if the state does not restore funding by July 2013 after "unprecedented" budget cuts to the Superior Court budget.

Trial court budgets across the state have been cut more than \$1 billion over five years, Superior Court Presiding Judge Beth Labson Freeman said.

Reductions in force, mostly through attrition, have already reduced the San Mateo County Superior Court workforce by 30 percent, the judge said. Management has consolidated traffic and small claims courts and cut the court clerk's availability to the public, she said.

"Trial Courts should not be dismantled, justice should not be rationed and communities should not be denied a rational, accessible and credible means to resolve disputes," she said.

The judges are going public with these warnings "well in advance so that the court can work with its justice partners and community leaders to restore funding and minimize these actions, if at all possible," the statement said.

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This class for children two years of age and older will help prepare siblings for the emotional and physical realities of the arrival of a newborn.

- Sunday, December 16: 10:30 am – 12:00 pm

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3525 Alameda De Las Pulgas,
Menlo Park, CA 94025

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The Almanac, established in October 1065, is delivered each week to residents of Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside and adjacent unincorporated areas of southern San Mateo County. The Almanac is qualified by decree of the Superior Court of San Mateo County to publish public notices of a governmental and legal nature, as stated in Decree No. 147530, issued December 21, 1969.

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



WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

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

TOWN SQUARE FORUM

Post your views on the Town Square forum at www.TheAlmanacOnline.com

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letters@almanacnews.com and note this it is a letter to the editor in the subject line.

MAIL or deliver to:

Editor at the Almanac, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

CALL the Viewpoint desk at 223-6507.

Change of direction in Atherton

Elections can scuttle the best-laid plans of a ruling majority, and that is what happened in Atherton on Nov. 6, when Mayor Bill Widmer, Kathy McKeithen, who chose not to run for re-election, and Jim Dobbie lost their clout on the five-member body. Voters overwhelmingly re-elected Vice Mayor Elizabeth Lewis, and turned Ms. McKeithen's seat over to newcomer Cary Wiest, who with Jerry Carlson are likely to form a new majority.

Now Ms. Lewis and Mr. Carlson, who often were at odds with Mr. Widmer and his allies, have prevailed in the long-running dispute over whether to build a new library in Holbrook-Palmer Park. By a healthy 2-1 majority, Atherton residents voted a resounding "no" on ballot Measure F, which would have authorized the new library.

With the library dispute settled, the council can move on to approve an earthquake retrofit and upgrade of the existing library at Town Center, using funds put aside by a county joint powers authority for exclusive use on an Atherton library. In a year or two, there will be \$8 million in the fund, which some residents had hoped would be used to build a new library. But strong opposition not only knocked the new library out of the picture, it also ended the council hopes of strong library supporter Denise Kupperman, who along with Greg Conlon lost her bid for a four-year term.

Now it will be up to Ms. Lewis and her allies to set the town's agenda for the next two years. In an interview last week, she said she aims to bring harmony to the council following the bitter disputes that characterized much of the discourse over the last four years. It is encouraging to hear that she is committed to renovating or replacing the old library at Town Center, and

intends to push for beginning work on a master plan to identify the location and plans for all the town's public buildings.

In addition, the upcoming contract talks with the police officers union will not be easy, especially after the APOA inserted itself in the council campaign. The group spent more than \$10,000 in support of Ms. Lewis and Mr. Wiest, paying for yard signs, advertising and a controversial robocall that some council members and residents felt was inappropriate and threatening. In response, the full council authorized Mr. Widmer to send out a press release to, among other things, counter the charge raised by the phone call that the current council was considering outsourcing police services to the county Sheriff's Office.

Ms. Lewis admits that the negotiations with the police union are "not going to be easy," and that what will matter is "whether we can pay for the services we are wanting to have."

The town dedicates 60 percent of a \$750-per-household parcel tax to help pay for the police department, a position the union is banking on as negotiations grow near. Except on one occasion, Atherton residents have approved the parcel tax, which is renewed every four years.

Given the town's other financial challenges, it is virtually a given that without income from a parcel tax, the council will have to bring down costs in the police department, either by reducing staff or outsourcing the department to the county. It may be past the time when Atherton taxpayers will continue to support one of the costliest police departments per capita on the Peninsula. But it will take a courageous council to pull the plug on what has been a hallmark of Atherton for many years.

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

LETTERS

Our readers write

More outreach needed on BMR housing plan

Editor:

The issue of BMR (below market rate) housing in Portola Valley is not being treated as an important topic which has potential impact on the entire community.

Many of the residents may not know or understand what is required. In the past efforts that had an impact on the community such as the effort to develop Portola Valley Ranch and define standards to build near the fault were the subject of outreach and education programs by the Town Council and Planning Commission. Such a program has yet to be developed for BMR housing yet variances are being granted and actions initiated.

BMR deserves to be explained and alternatives and consequences described. Given the publicity of the topic in Menlo Park and elsewhere it should be treated in another manner in Portola Valley.

Ray Williams
Wyndham Drive,
Portola Valley



Woodside Historical Association

Our Regional Heritage

Passengers wave from the top of a Knights Stagecoach, which operated between Redwood City and La Honda via Woodside from 1866 to 1906. This coach is parked behind Simon Knights' home, which still stands today on the northeast corner of Albion Avenue and Woodside Road. Knights owned the stage line for 40 years until it was replaced by Pierce Arrow motorized stages.

Use of vans could enhance (old) library use

Editor:

Now that Measure F is defeated, let me rephrase my input to the environmental impact

report (EIR) draft on the project:

Our library can be enhanced without impact on our park and to the benefit of Atherton residents whose funds are now

saved.

I suggest we equip our library with one or more vans, dedicated to ebooks, and staffed by trained librarians who on

Continued on next page

LETTERS

Our readers write

Continued from previous page

request drive to homes of Atherton residents who want access to ebooks on their gadgets.

Some librarians are already savvy. Use some of the \$6 million saved to make the present library earthquake-proof and to buy and equip the van or vans. Nearby towns may feel excluded but they will benefit from Atherton's innovation, if they want vans.

Why this letter? Many times each week, I walk the path at our park using CDs from our library to avoid boredom. At my request a librarian off duty came to our Atherton home to solve a PC problem, after teaching us while on duty how to get ebooks from the library.

The Almanac, despite publishing editorials favoring passage of Measure F, graciously printed my letters against F. I took out papers to run for the town council but never carried through because of the high cost, risk of bias such as Denise Kupperman has suffered, and lack of any income.

Now it is clear why our council is made up of those who profit from the podium, such as lawyers, developers, and so on. Our council is not representative.

The EIR draft invited us to submit ideas. I submitted this one. The EIR authors said their task was only for the library in the park, so my idea was not relevant. Now it is.

Tom Croft
Moulton Drive, Atherton

Local Republican assesses party's loss

By George Yang

Election night was tough for Republicans, doubly so if you are in California. Statewide and nationally, we took quite a beating. For my own race in the 24th state Assembly district, against incumbent Rich Gordon, I had my head handed to me, as a friend of mine accurately predicted months ago.

Many of my friends in the district have even privately urged me to switch party affiliation. I respectfully decline. Maybe it's because I've always had a weakness for lost causes, or, coming from China, I am always wary of a government that pretends to offer answers and moral guidance in every aspect of civil life.

More importantly, I believe a healthy democracy requires a vigorous and vigilant opposition. Here in California, where Democrats appear to have won a supermajority in both houses, the Legislature could become a stale pot, unless a spirited challenge once in a while from the other party makes sure worthy candidates are fielded, even in safe districts. Mr. Gordon definitely tops that list.

But that alone is not sufficient for the Republican Party. It is also time for us to step up and offer solutions. If we want to make changes on important issues such as

pension reform, education, and reducing the systematic impediments for economic growth, we must work with the Democratic majority on issues higher on their priority list, such as the environment, social services, and health care reform. For the good of our constituents and California, we must play hard ball when we can, compromise when we should, and participate always.

For education, school choice is good; but by itself cannot solve all problems in K-12 education. We need to work with teachers and offer pragmatic solutions to improve our public schools now because not every kid has parents who have the knowledge or resources to take them out of public schools. We also need to stop pretending that a rising tide will necessarily lift all boats, and be ready to support robust and tangible solutions to assist the less fortunate among us.

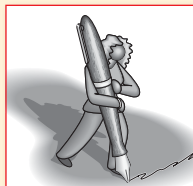
On the environment, we must be part of a constructive dialogue. For example, if California is serious about reducing carbon emissions, solar panels alone are not going to do it. Let's consider nuclear power. Let's build a number of them, in Nevada (with an even worse unemployment rate than us), perhaps, as part of a western states energy grid compact. On health care reform,

improving access and reducing costs are worthy objectives. We will advance our effective proposals that achieve these objectives not by cumbersome committees but through harnessing the competitive and innovative spirits of our industries.

At the same time, we must not shy away from our principles. We must work towards comprehensive and long-term reform of the government pension systems. We must reduce the size and improve the cost-effectiveness of government to ease the tax burdens on the backs of Californians. We must champion effective tort reform that will reduce cost to small and local businesses and defend religious freedom from malicious lawsuits that aim to drive religion out of every aspect of public life wherever the government steps into an area to "help."

At heart, the American people are optimistic, especially here in California. It is disheartening that turn-out in this presidential election fell below 60 percent locally. For those too disillusioned or disgusted by the status quo, the California Republican Party must present a vision and a plan for renewed vibrancy and upward mobility.

George Yang, a Republican from Menlo Park, was defeated by Democrat Rich Gordon for the District 24 seat in the state Assembly.



GUEST
OPINION

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