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# The Almanac

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

JUNE 19, 2013 | VOL. 48 NO. 42



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# Sacred Heart grad shot, killed

Aya Nakano, who graduated from Sacred Heart Preparatory in 2008, was fatally shot in North Oakland late Wednesday, June 12, an hour before his 23rd birthday, after getting into a confrontation with two suspects who had rear-ended his car, police said.

Oakland police spokeswoman Johnna Watson said Mr. Nakano, who graduated from the University of Oregon in 2012, was driving back to his Emeryville home after playing basketball with friends at a U.C. Berkeley gym when the collision occurred at

about 11 p.m.

He was driving west on Stanford Avenue near Market Street when he was rear-ended by the suspects' car, Ms. Watson said.

Mr. Nakano then "did the right thing" and turned left onto southbound Market Street, pulling over at a bus stop in the 5800 block of Market, near ASA Liquors, she said.

He was then confronted by the



Aya Nakano

two male suspects, and one of them shot him, she said. He was pronounced dead at the scene.

Police don't believe that Mr. Nakano, who would have turned 23 on June 13, knew the suspects prior to the collision, she said.

The suspects' vehicle is described as a newer-model four-door silver sedan.

According to the Register-Guard newspaper in Eugene, Oregon, Mr. Nakano majored in sociology and minored in communications studies at the University of Oregon.

Oakland police and a local Crimestoppers group are offering a reward of up to \$10,000 for information leading to an arrest.

Bryan Hickey told the Register-Guard that he played basketball with Mr. Nakano at the University of Oregon Student Recreation Center at least three times a week during their four years as undergraduates together.

## Celebration of life

■ A celebration of the life of Aya Nakano will be held at 7 p.m. Wednesday, June 19, at the Homer Center on the Sacred Heart Schools campus, 150 Valparaiso Ave. in Atherton.

■ Family and friends have established a reward fund with the goal of raising \$25,000 in the hope that a witness will step forward with information about the incident.

■ Visit [gofundme.com/39z06g](http://gofundme.com/39z06g) for more information.



## Joe Biden drops by Menlo Park

Sandie Timm of Menlo Park sent us this photo of Vice President Joe Biden with her son Ben, 7, at the Harvest furniture store at 639 Santa Cruz Ave. in Menlo Park on Saturday, June 15. Mr. Biden was in San Francisco Friday night for a fundraiser and then on the Peninsula for his niece's graduation from Stanford. "Apparently, he had just had lunch at Left Bank and then walked next door to Harvest furniture store, which is where we saw him," Ms. Timm said in an email. "VP Biden and I also had a great talk about marriage equality and his recent remarks at Senator Lautenberg's funeral."

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# Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

## Voters to face \$23 million school bond measure

By Renee Batti  
Almanac News Editor

School board members on June 11 agreed with Menlo Park City School District staff that district voters should be asked to approve a \$23 million bond measure in November to pay for the reopening of a fifth campus. A new school is needed, the board determined earlier this year, to address rapidly growing enrollment.

The district plans to reopen the former O'Connor school in the Willows neighborhood in Menlo Park, operating it beginning in 2016 as a school for third- to fifth-graders coming from the K-2 program at nearby Laurel School.

Final approval of placing the bond measure on the Nov. 5 ballot, and ballot language, was on the agenda for a special board meeting set for Monday,

June 17. (The meeting was held after the Almanac's press time; go to AlmanacNews.com for an updated report.)

At that meeting, the board was also expected to approve a lease extension for the German-American International School (GAIS), allowing it to remain at the site until May 15, 2015.

Approval of the bond measure will require a 55 percent vote of support. According to draft bond language and an overview by the district, the "best estimate" of the maximum tax rate levied to meet the debt service of a \$23 million bond would be \$8.70 per year per \$100,000 of assessed valuation of taxable property.

The board struggled with the specific amount of money voters will be asked to approve for the planned 16-classroom school, which will have a starting capacity for about 360 students. The school will be designed so that it could be

### Menlo Park district plans to reopen a campus and build a new school.

converted to a K-5 school, with capacity for classroom expansion, if the need arises.

Perhaps making the decision on the \$23 million figure a bit easier was a report by consultant Ruth Bernstein, who conducted two focus groups involving about 20 randomly selected probable voters. One conclusion she drew from the sessions: "District voters know their local schools are among the best, and that is the result of deliberate planning and smart decision-making by the district, in addition to the ongoing support and dedication of teachers, parents and community."

"They are committed to doing

what is needed to continue supporting the very high level of educational quality, and that includes classroom and facility improvements."

The board, staff, and consultants discussed the ballot language, and adjustments to the draft language presented on June 11 were made before the June 17 meeting.

### Existing campus, school

The German-American International School has leased the campus at 275 Elliot Drive since 1991. The site has only one permanent building, constructed in the 1950s. It has never been renovated, according to the district. GAIS uses that building and a large number of portable buildings for its 320 students.

The private school's lease had been set to expire in June 2016, but the district recently used a termination clause in the agree-

ment to end it in June 2014.

But the GAIS community pleaded with the district to allow it to stay a year beyond that, saying that the school needs more time to find a new home and that it would likely be forced to close if forced to move in 2014.

With the near-certain extension of the lease that will allow GAIS to stay put for its 2014-15 school year, "I think we will be successful" in remaining operational until a new location is found, renovated and ready for students, said Thomas Siegel, president of the GAIS board of directors.

Mr. Siegel said the school has identified four or five sites as potential locations, and "there are two we're particularly excited about. ... I'm more optimistic than I ever have been" that the school will remain open.

Although a lease extension was

See **BOND MEASURE**, page 8

## City sued over car's collision with train in Menlo Park

By Sandy Brundage  
Almanac Staff Writer

The aftershocks of a late April afternoon collision continue to ripple through Menlo Park a year later: Two women who had been traveling in a car struck by a train at the Ravenswood crossing are now suing the city, the county, Caltrain and the state.

Filed in San Mateo County Superior Court on June 3 by Menlo Park residents Sharon Geaghan, her husband David Breiner and her daughter, Meredith Geaghan Breiner, the lawsuit alleges the defendants "negligently failed to coordinate traffic signals with traffic flow and trains; properly design the roadway, intersection, and environs where the collision occurred; or provide notice to CalTrain or CalTrain's employees of the collision danger."

The court filing states that Ms. Geaghan on April 13, 2012, was driving west across the tracks when traffic suddenly stopped, boxing her car in on the tracks as the crossing gates came down.

A Caltrain "baby bullet" express train going approximately 80 mph ran into her car, leaving her and her daughter with severe injuries and permanent disabilities, according to the lawsuit.

On the day of the incident a Caltrain spokeswoman said that a 1996 Saab traveling west on Ravenswood Avenue in Menlo Park failed to clear the crossing and was struck by southbound train #264. The train struck the rear of the car. The spokeswoman described the driver's injuries as minor; the passenger also was taken to Stanford Hospital as a precaution. The train and its passengers were unscathed.

The plaintiffs are seeking damages and legal costs and have asked for a trial by jury.

Menlo Park City Attorney Bill McClure said the lawsuit didn't appear any different from a claim the family filed against the city, which was denied. "Menlo Park does not control the crossing nor the El Camino intersection, so there would appear to be no merit to including Menlo Park in the lawsuit," he told the Almanac. ■

### The mother and daughter were injured in the April 2012 incident.



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Portola Valley locals Cyndi, right, and her daughter Stella Rose purchase agapanthus flowers from Julia Harper at the Farmageddon booth during the first Portola Valley farmers' market on June 13 at Town Center.

## Farmers' market a hit in Portola Valley

By Dave Boyce  
Almanac Staff Writer

Late afternoon breezes in Portola Valley ruffled the flowers, set rows of delicate wire-wrapped jewelry to dancing, and caressed what fruits and vegetables were left at the town's first farmers' market on Thursday, June 13. The market had

opened at 3 p.m. in the Historic Schoolhouse parking lot at Town Center, and by 5:30, half the vendors were already gone, having sold out. The tables remaining were bare or nearly so.

Webb Ranch sold all of its cargo of olallieberries, as had Jelich Ranch of its cherries and One Ocean of its local king salmon, market manager Mag-

gie Foard said. At the table for Flour Chylde bakery of Novato, empty cake covers sat waiting to be wiped clean and packed, the gluten-free baked goods they had protected long gone.

"We've had a really great turnout," Ms. Foard said as she handed out the last of her

See **FARMERS' MARKET**, page 8

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**Menlo Park decides to sell below-market-rate house**

By Sandy Brundage  
Almanac Staff Writer

In March, when the Menlo Park council last discussed the below-market-rate house at 25 Riordan Place, members worried about what condition the property would be in once the city finished buying it back from the two owners, who had illegally taken out more than \$1 million in loans against the property before defaulting on payments. Reclaiming the house cost Menlo Park an estimated \$527,500 after a four-year legal battle.

Those worries eased, however, after city representatives toured the property once the owners vacated.

"I was pleasantly surprised," Councilwoman Kirsten Keith announced during the June 11 council meeting.

The carpet and paint need freshening, but Ms. Keith estimated that about \$40,000 should get the property ready for sale at market value, an option she preferred over staff's recommendation of keeping the house in Menlo Park's affordable housing inventory. She said she felt "like we got burned on this," and so found it hard to recommend retaining the home.

Realtors consulted by city staff estimated that selling the property "as is" would net Menlo Park approximately \$400,000 to \$500,000, in light of the home's lot size, shared wall and condition. Staff noted that with 87 families on the wait list for below-market-rate housing, many for up to five years, and the minimum \$1 million expense of purchasing another

property on the west side of Menlo Park, keeping the house might be a better idea.

Councilwoman Catherine Carlton also favored selling it after renovation, and proposed using the estimated \$651,000 proceeds from a sale to help fund an amnesty program for owners of existing secondary units, aka in-law or granny units, in Menlo Park.

Earlier in the meeting the council had finalized approval for construction of new secondary units to boost the city's affordable housing supply, but had yet to address how

**Funds from a market-rate sale may support amnesty program for granny units.**

to ensure existing units would be incorporated into the program. Citing concerns about safety arising from non-compliance with building codes, Ms. Carlton suggested that \$651,000 could

create a program to help owners bring their units up to code and possibly have enough left to build 10 to 11 more units.

While intrigued, the rest of the council along with City Attorney Bill McClure noted that the devil could be in the details.

Councilman Rich Cline noted that 25 Riordan Place lies to the west of Menlo Park, saying the city needed to keep its promise to spread affordable housing across all neighborhoods.

Ms. Keith agreed, but said she reluctantly favored the sale. The council voted 4-1, with Mr. Cline dissenting, to sell the house at market rate after spending up to \$40,000 on minor renovations. The house should go on sale in September, according to staff. ■

**News of local college graduates**

■ **David Sun** of Menlo Park was among the 1,165 graduates to receive degrees May 14 at the 145th commencement of Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Worcester, Massachusetts. Mr. Sun was awarded a bachelor of science degree in chemical engineering with distinction.

■ **Jakari Perry** of Menlo Park graduated from St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, with a degree in sociology/anthropology. He is a graduate of Eastside College Prep in East Palo Alto.

■ **Austin Stern** of Menlo

Park graduated from Emporia State University in Emporia, Kansas, May 18 with a bachelor of fine arts degree in art. More than 600 students were candidates for undergraduate degree.

■ **Thomas Durant Rossi** of Woodside and Morgan Matthew Schwanke of Menlo Park graduated from the University of San Diego on May 26. Mr. Rossi earned a bachelor's degree in music; Mr. Schwanke, who graduated magna cum laude, earned a bachelor's degree in interdisciplinary humanities.



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

**Firefighters** work to put out a fire in the 100 block of Almedral Avenue in Atherton.

## Fire damages home in Atherton

A three-alarm fire damaged a pool house, a storage shed, a carport-like shed and about 25 percent of a house in the 100 block of Almedral Avenue in Atherton on June 13, a firefighter said.

The fire appears to have

started outside the main house, in the carport/shed area, according to firefighter Andrew Murtagh of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District.

Embers from the fire also ignited a neighbor's roof and the crowns of some trees about

100 feet above ground, Mr. Murtagh said.

There were no injuries, he said.

The fire was reported at about 2 p.m. and was contained at about 3:45 p.m., firefighters said.

## Council OKs \$76 million budget

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

### ■ MENLO PARK

#### Red-light cameras

While Mr. McIntyre's initial budget proposal in May suggested that the council consider adding a fifth Redflex red-light camera, to be installed at the intersection of Bayfront Expressway and Chilco Street, the council instead decided to extend the contract for the city's current

#### Decisions on red-light cameras and staff salaries are postponed.

cameras for 60 days past its July 2 expiration date, postponing any other actions until staff completes an analysis that will include accident rates before and after the cameras were installed, cost recovery for the program, and changes to state law.

Councilwoman Catherine Carlton asked whether the city could just shut the cameras off pending the data review. City Attorney Bill McClure said that would necessitate running through months of public noticing again should Menlo Park decide to keep its red-light

camera program

Other local cities, such as Belmont, Redwood City, Hayward and San Carlos, have canceled their Redflex contracts entirely.

"I hope that when we review this, we also look at why these cities canceled," Ms. Carlton said.

#### Staff salaries

The budget approval process hit a snag when it came to Mr. McIntyre's request to implement new salary ranges for city staff.

The ranges, which are supposed to be updated annually, have not been adjusted since 2007. As a result the ranges don't reflect current market rates. Assistant City Manager Starla Jerome Robinson, for example, had been hired in late 2008 at approximately \$187,000, although the 2007 salary cap for that position is \$159,492.

However, council members thought the proposed changes were given to them too late to allow for public review and their own analysis.

"There's no way I'm voting on this tonight," Councilman Rich Cline said.

Mr. McIntyre agreed to bring the matter back to the council after taking some time to "better bake" the presentation of the request. ■

## REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



### Is This The End Of Low Interest Rates?

**Dear Monica: Does it seem that the amazing low interest rates that have existed for the past few years are slowly coming to an end? The rates have ticked up and there is talk and gossip that the end of the lowest rates in decades may be near. What does this mean for the real estate market? Bill T.**

Dear Bill: Rates have risen in the past two weeks and it is not yet clear whether the rise is the beginning of a slow, upward trend, or whether it is temporary, to be followed by up and down fluctuations for the next months. It is clear that interest rates will rise, but how soon and quickly is not yet known. If you are a buyer,

you will want to take advantage of the low rates as long as they are offered and you should not wait too long to buy or the cost of borrowing will add to the cost of your home.

If you are a homeowner looking to refinance your mortgage, you will want to watch carefully what happens in the next weeks. You don't want to wait too long if interest rates are headed permanently higher. Talk to your lender to get a better idea of what future rates will be. If you are a seller, you should be aware of rising rates because this will have an impact on the price you get for your home. It is important to watch carefully to see what happens in the next months.

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

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## Subcommittee gives update on Stanford-Arrillaga project

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

### ■ MENLO PARK

When last we heard from the Menlo Park council on the proposed eight-acre Stanford-Arrillaga project, a subcommittee had been appointed on April 16 in the hopes of guiding concerned residents and Stanford to a detente.

Since then, the subcommittee has met four times with city staff and representatives of Save Menlo, a grassroots coalition organized to oppose the eight-acre mixed-use development.

The latest version of the project proposed under the regulations implemented by the downtown/El Camino Real specific plan would replace mostly vacant car lots along 300 to 500 El Camino Real with 25,000 square feet of medical offices, 174,500 square feet of regular offices, 10,000 square feet of retail, up to 170 apartments, and a public plaza at Middle Avenue with two car lanes, along with a pedestrian and bicycle path from El Camino Real to a potential future bike tunnel.

Save Menlo has publicly stated that it wants zero medical office space and a smaller overall project. Given that, the council members appointed to the subcommittee — Kirsten Keith and Catherine Carlton — weren't expecting to have an easy time reconciling the project with the residents.

Still, the subcommittee has made some progress. In a report given during the June 11 council

meeting, Ms. Carlton said the panel directed staff to collect traffic data before the end of the school year and expand the scope, by including streets bounded by Middle Avenue, University Drive, Creek Drive and El Camino Real.

Save Menlo agreed to use that data as a baseline, Ms. Carlton said, since the city's previous data set was a few years old, particularly in regard to cut-through traffic on neighborhood streets, which the grassroots group believes will rise should Stanford build its complex.

Next on the subcommittee's "to do" list: figuring out who else should be participating in their meetings.

As for the council's review of the downtown/El Camino Real specific plan, that is slated to begin in September, according to city staff, giving the subcommittee time to finish its work.

Meanwhile Stanford is waiting to see how it all plays out. "We don't think it is appropriate to comment on the process at this time, while the subcommittee is doing their important work," said Steve Elliott, the university's managing director for development, land, buildings and real estate. "We appreciate the time they and staff have spent on this, and are confident the process will help highlight the many benefits the specific plan and our project will bring to Menlo Park." ■

## Con man busted in Las Vegas

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

Bad news: Convicted con man Simon Gann will be returning to the Bay Area. Good news: He should be doing so courtesy of law enforcement. Mr. Gann, wanted for jumping parole in San Mateo County, got busted by Las Vegas police responding to a battery call in early June, according to police.

Mr. Gann violated parole in 2012 by departing for areas unknown, staying under the radar until people who had the bad luck to encounter the man under one of his well-worn aliases used Google to uncover newspaper stories about his past activities.

Menlo Park police said that after the Las Vegas case is completed, Mr. Gann will face extradition to San Mateo County for the parole violation.

Since fleeing the Bay Area he'd

been sighted in Arizona, Oregon, Washington and Nevada, allegedly up to "the exact same thing," police said.

"The exact same thing" usually involves Mr. Gann posing as a math savant and business tycoon who just needs a little help to recover from losing his passport and wallet.

In December 2010 he admitted sweet-talking a Menlo Park woman into a relationship and out of approximately \$1,900 by pretending to be a millionaire MIT graduate named "Saleem Dutante" who could count cards "like Rainman." He pleaded no contest to multiple felony charges in San Mateo County Superior Court and was sentenced to 16 months in state prison.

Prison didn't slow him down. From behind bars Mr. Gann wrote two letters to his Menlo

See **CON MAN**, page 9

Photo by Laura Hamilton  
**Students** from Laurel, Encinal, Oak Knoll and Hillview schools recently presented a ceremonial check for \$3.6 million to the board of the Menlo Park City School District and Superintendent Maurice Ghysels.



## \$3.6 million gift for school district

The Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation is giving \$3.6 million to the Menlo Park City School District to help fund teachers and educational programs, the foundation announced June 11.

The gift is \$250,000 higher than last year's grant, said foundation co-president Scott Hinshaw, who added that 85 percent of district families participated in the fundraising effort.

The money will make up

about 10 percent of the district's operating budget for the next school year, said Superintendent Maurice Ghysels. The grant "will fully fund 24 teachers and certificated employees, as well as four and one-quarter classified employees," said school board president Terry Thygesen in a press release issued by the foundation.

"The grant helps fund the best classroom teachers and specialists, as well as library,

art, music, and teaching innovation grants," said foundation co-president Clint Chao.

In the past 10 years, the foundation has granted about \$22 million to the district, said foundation executive director Lynne Van Tilburg. The district has four public schools: Laurel, Encinal, Oak Knoll and Hillview. It plans to reopen a fifth campus, the former O'Connor School in the Willows neighborhood of Menlo Park, in 2016.

### BOND MEASURE

continued from page 5

yet to be signed by the Almanac's press time, the school board "has given direction to staff to finalize it. I don't see any hiccups (in the process). I'm convinced that this will happen."

Mr. Siegel said the district staff and board members have been "very cordial and accommodating" in working out a solution with

GAIS, and prior concern about the early termination of the lease "has given way to appreciation."

### What kind of bond?

At last week's meeting, board member Jeff Child indicated that he favors traditional current-interest bonds rather than the increasingly controversial capital-appreciation bonds (CAB). (With a CAB, the public agency pays no interest until the

bond term ends, but the interest rate is higher, as is the ultimate cost to the public.)

Mr. Child asked the district's bond consultant whether it would be possible, if the entire board agrees, to signal an intent in the ballot language to issue the less-costly current-interest bonds. The consultant said the board could consider including that intent when it approves the ballot language on June 17. ■

### FARMERS' MARKET

continued from page 5

samples of goat's milk chocolate. "The people were just delightful. ... It was a complete deluge of customers."

Portola Valley resident Kim Zamboldi got there after the rush. "We love having a local market," she said. With her sons Luke, 6, and Nicholas, 8, Ms. Zamboldi was sampling dark chocolate from Kidding Around with Chocolate, Ms. Foard's La Honda-based goat's milk chocolate operation. She had been driving to the Menlo Park market on Sundays, she said, but that will change.

"We'll come (here) and picnic and meet with friends in the community and go to the library," she said.

The Portola Valley library had come to them on this day. At the library's table, Kathryn

Wisowaty offered cookbooks to read; a recipe for red pepper, button mushroom and blue potato salad; and a sign-up list for summer reading that gathered 33 signatures, she said.

Eric Foard, 21 and Ms. Foard's son, sold out One Ocean's stock of salmon, bought that morning at Pier 45 in San Francisco. He is in graduate school for computer science in British Columbia, building on his bachelor's degree in rhetoric from the University of California at Berkeley. "I never considered (selling fish) as a career, but I definitely enjoy doing it," he said. "Occasionally my car smells a little like fish, but it's rare."

A woman bought a necklace of silver spoons and a turquoise flower from the neck of Jolan Bogdan, a textile designer and the owner of Penelope's Den in Skylonda. "It was really great. I had a wonderful

day," Ms. Bogdan said.

Her jewelry is distinctive because she makes most of it, she said. "I wouldn't say it's easy," she added, when asked about running a business largely on her own creative efforts. She teaches textile making on "huge looms" in her shop, she said.

Under the shade one end of the market, James Worthington, aka the Mystic Cowboy, strummed his acoustic guitar. "An excellent crowd coming through here," he said. "I love farmers' markets because everybody's here for such a positive push."

*The Portola Valley farmers' market will be held each Thursday from 3 to 7 p.m. at the Historic Schoolhouse parking lot at Town Center, 765 Portola Road in Portola Valley. Parking is at Christ Episcopal Church just north of the Town Center. ■*

# Woodside seeks better handling of huge bike tours

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

Woodside Town Council members are upset about how deputies from the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office handled — or did not handle — a June 9 bike tour when hundreds of cyclists passed through town and reportedly jammed the intersection of Woodside and Canada roads for hours.

Woodside is frequently inundated by masses of bicyclists, and while the town cannot stop tours from passing through, it can set conditions. Town Councilman Peter Mason suggested that tours of a certain size, perhaps 1,000 riders or more, be required to pay for officers to direct traffic. Mr. Mason asked Town Manager Kevin Bryant to work on the issue.

Noontime traffic downtown

on June 9 “was just a zoo,” Mr. Mason said at the council's June 11 meeting. The event was a “Tour de Cure” fundraiser for the American Diabetes Association. Contingents of the 1,500 participating cyclists left periodically from their Palo Alto starting point, said Richard Alejandro, the executive director of a local ADA chapter.

Three council members happened by — Mr. Mason, Dave Tanner and Deborah Gordon — and described masses of westbound cyclists negotiating the intersection, and stop-and-go traffic on Woodside Road backed up past Interstate 280.

Two council members said they saw deputies in front of Roberts Market observing, not directing, traffic. “It was really obvious that somebody was not doing their jobs there,” Mr. Tanner said. In an interview, he said the intersection was jammed at 10:30 a.m.,

## Council members say deputies were observing, not directing, traffic.

at noon and at 3 p.m. He saw the deputies observing on the afternoon occasions, he said.

The Sheriff's Office hadn't known of the event “until our personnel were inundated with bicyclists,” Deputy Rebecca Rosenblatt said via email. Deputies “spent almost half their shift handling traffic violations and accidents” and responded to five tour-related collisions that involved trips to the hospital, she said. “Those same deputies were the ones who were momentarily observing the flow of bicycle traffic from their position at Roberts Market, having just conducted

intermittent traffic enforcement,” including issuing some 200 warnings to cyclists for minor traffic violations, Ms. Rosenblatt said.

Mr. Mason's recollection echoed Mr. Tanner's. Three deputies “were standing there observing instead of standing out in the intersection waving people through,” he said. Cyclists ignored the stop sign and weaved all over the road, he said. “They didn't know how to behave.”

Ms. Gordon said she saw unsafe U-turns happening all along Woodside Road. Why weren't deputies directing traffic, she asked.

As a result of what the deputies saw, Ms. Rosenblatt said, “they contacted race officials to request race personnel and volunteers be sent to the area to assist with traffic, and immediately after were dispatched

to assist the CHP with closing down traffic in the Ladera area of Alpine Road for a major-injury accident.” (A bicyclist collided with a car around 11:50 a.m. on Alpine Road.)

Mr. Alejandro of the ADA said tour organizers talked with the Sheriff's Office about this tour. “It's possible that the person you talked to was not aware (of this advance notice),” he said.

Cyclists are told to ride single file and obey traffic regulations, he said, adding: “Some riders have attitudes.” The ADA will be engaging with Woodside officials, he said, because the concerns of Woodside residents are “very important.”

If Highway 92 is closed on a hot day, Woodside feels the brunt of traffic to the beach, Ms. Gordon said. “It would be good for the town and the Sheriff's Office to be more (involved).” ■

## Block party features bands, diaper derby

Bands, a pie-eating contest and a diaper derby are some of the highlights of the 7th annual Menlo Park summer block party, set for Wednesday, June 19, from 5 to 9 p.m. on downtown Santa Cruz Avenue. The street will be closed to traffic from El Camino Real to University Drive.

Livewire Band, a group that plays rock and pop music, will perform at Fremont Park (at the corner of University Drive and

Santa Cruz Avenue) from 6:30 to 8 p.m. The concert kicks off Menlo Park's concert-in-the-park series that involves eight bands performing on Wednesdays in Fremont Park from June 19 through Aug. 14 (no concert on July 3).

The music varies from classic rock to jazz, and the series closes with a Beatles Tribute band, the Sun Kings. Families are encouraged to bring blankets and picnic baskets to the concerts.

At the June 19 block party, there will be five other bands, a kids' area, a Facebook community stage, and plaza-style dining at restaurants. Local businesses and nonprofits will line Santa Cruz Avenue. There will be comedic contests, such as a pie-eating competition between city staff and council members, and a crawling race by children under the age of 1. Race time for this diaper derby is 5:45 p.m.

## Woodside may revisit ballot measure on farmers' market

There is still a chance for a November 2013 ballot measure asking Woodside voters whether to amend zoning rules to allow a farmers' market in a parking lot downtown, where parking is scarce.

The market is temporarily being held on Sundays at Woodside Elementary School. The public parking lot between Town Hall and the Woodside Community Museum is the location under consideration

for a farmers' market.

The ballot measure was rejected by a Town Council majority on May 28, citing bad timing. Councilman Dave Burow, who voted with the majority, asked the town attorney how to revisit the question.

The answer: any member of that majority may move to reconsider, and the council would vote on that motion. The council meets Tuesday, June 25.

## Cyclist injured in collision

A 58-year-old Palo Alto bicyclist was thrown 8 to 10 feet in the air and was injured in a collision with a vehicle on Alpine Road near Interstate 280 on Sunday morning, June 9, according to the California Highway Patrol and the Woodside Fire Protection District.

Guido Arnout, who was wearing a helmet, was heading east on Alpine Road at about 11:50 a.m., about one-tenth of a mile west of Interstate 280, when he turned left into the traffic lane near the crosswalk at the entrance to Webb Ranch, and was struck by an eastbound vehicle, a late model Honda Accord, said Office Art Montiel of the CHP.

The driver was Menlo Park resident Erika Bailey, who is in her early 70s, Mr. Montiel said. “It does not appear that the vehicle was speeding,” he said. A witness to the accident agreed with that statement, Woodside

fire district Battalion Chief Kevin Butler told the Almanac. Several cyclists and pedestrians had gathered at the scene, Mr. Montiel said.

Mr. Arnout was found lying in the center of the road and was “barely conscious” as medics tended to him, Mr. Butler said. By the time he arrived at Stanford Hospital, Mr. Arnout had recovered to the point that he was able to communicate with medical personnel, Mr. Butler said, adding that he did not have further information on his medical condition.

The CHP closed Alpine Road for about an hour in both directions, Mr. Montiel said.

Ms. Bailey's vehicle sustained damage to the right side of the windshield, the passenger side mirror, and the right front of the vehicle. The bike could not be ridden, but was not heavily damaged, Mr. Butler said.

## CON MAN

continued from page 8

lo Park victim threatening to broadcast her sexual history unless she refused to testify and also offering to pay her off, the district attorney's office said.

That racked up charges of witness tampering on top of grand theft.

Authorities had tripled his initial bail to \$100,000 after discovering Mr. Gann's multiple convictions for fraud in Canada in 2009.

His twin brother, Jordan, not only shares identical looks but also identical M.O. — Jordan Gann recently served five years in Florida prison for conning a woman out of thousands of dollars by posing as an Ivy League oncologist and real estate mogul in 2008. ■

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June 17

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# Webb Ranch denies claims Menlo Park market robbed at gunpoint

Attorneys for Webb Ranch have filed a response to a lawsuit by Dr. Jean W. Gillon that accuses the ranch of negligence in connection with an accident on Interstate 280 in the early morning darkness in December 2012.

In the court filing, Webb Ranch denies all allegations made by Dr. Gillon in the civil complaint filed May 10 in San Mateo County Superior Court.

The accident occurred at around 5 a.m. on Dec. 29, 2012, when the Mercedes Benz Dr. Gillon was driving collided with at least one of four Webb Ranch horses that had gotten loose and wandered onto the northbound lane of Interstate 280 just north of Alpine Road.

Dr. Gillon's attorney, Anthony

L. Label of San Francisco, said Dr. Gillon suffered "serious" personal injury and her losses included property damage, hospital and medical expenses, and the loss of income and earning capacity. She is seeking dam-

## A doctor's car struck at least one of four horses that wandered onto I-280.

ages in excess of \$25,000, according to the complaint.

In their June 6 court filing, the Webb Ranch attorneys John N. Carr and G. Noel Kidd claim that Dr. Gillon "did not exercise ordinary care for her own safety and well being," that her facts are insufficient for a cause of action against Webb Ranch, that statutes of limitations apply, and that if a dangerous condition existed at the time of the accident, Webb Ranch had no "actual or constructive knowledge" of it.

A masked man robbed La Michoacana Market at gunpoint on Saturday, according to Menlo Park police.

The suspect entered the store, located at 1305 Willow Road in Menlo Park, around a quarter to 6 p.m. on July 15. Pointing a

black handgun at the clerk, he demanded that she empty the cash drawer. The man grabbed some money and fled, running north on Ivy Drive, police said.

Police responded to a hold-up alarm from the store. Witnesses described the man as wearing a

black hooded sweatshirt, jeans, white T-shirt and black shoes, in addition to a mask covering his face.

Police ask anyone with information about the robbery to call the investigating officer at 330-6300.

### ■ POLICE CALLS

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

#### MENLO PARK

##### Residential burglary reports:

■ Someone went into an open garage on Siskyou Drive and stole two bicycles valued at \$9,000 for both, June 16.

■ Someone broke into a storage locker under an apartment carport on Oak Grove Avenue and stole a bike, a helmet and skis, June 11. Estimated loss: \$1,289.

##### Commercial burglary reports:

■ Jewelry, nail polish and \$100 in cash are missing and a back door is damaged from being forced open at Susan's Nails, a salon at 1285 El Camino Real, June 16. Total loss: about \$400.

■ At the headquarters of Sunset magazine at 80 Willow Road, someone threw a rock, broke a window in a glass door and entered the premises,

but police don't know if anything was taken, June 16.

**Auto burglary report:** Keys and \$10 in cash are missing after someone smashed a window on a vehicle parked in the 50 block of Laurel Street, June 16.

##### Theft reports:

■ Detectives are looking into a phone scam involving checks mailed to individuals and someone posing as a federal agent attempting to extract money from a resident of Maywood Lane, June 13.

■ Someone stole a package containing clothing worth \$600 from the doorstep of a residence on Doris Drive, June 10.

■ Locks were cut and change removed from a coin-operated washer and clothes dryer in a laundry room on Doris Drive, June 10.

**Accident report:** There were no injuries reported after a large white Ford pickup truck sideswiped a black 2007 Lexus at the corner of Middlefield Road and Survey Lane and left the scene of the incident, June 7.

#### WOODSIDE

**Fraud report:** Using the name of a resident on Lindenbrook Drive, someone obtained a Sally Mae student loan for about \$1,630, June 6.

##### Theft reports:

■ A surveillance video captured the image of an unidentified man leaving in a dark-colored vehicle with a \$500 painting stolen from the men's restroom at Alice's Restaurant at 17288 Skyline Blvd, June 9.

■ A teen is missing her cell phone, believed stolen at her eighth-grade graduation party. The phone reportedly was detected being used near the corner of Linden and Park avenues in Burlingame, June 9.

#### ATHERTON

**Auto burglary report:** Someone broke into a vehicle parked in the 100 block of Watkins Avenue and stole \$100 in cash and a set of Bose headphones, a brown purse, a black-and-purple wallet, a black-and-white Apple iPhone, black Kenneth Cole glasses, credit cards and a driver's license for losses totaling \$1,120, May 31.



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# Viewpoint

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

## Headmaster leaves a rich legacy

The local education community has lost a major player with the departure this month of Norman Colb, who has retired from his post as Menlo School headmaster after 20 years. Mr. Colb's tenure at the Atherton school, which serves students in middle through high school, began at a time when the school and Menlo College were ending their co-existence as a single entity; it continued through years of transformation.

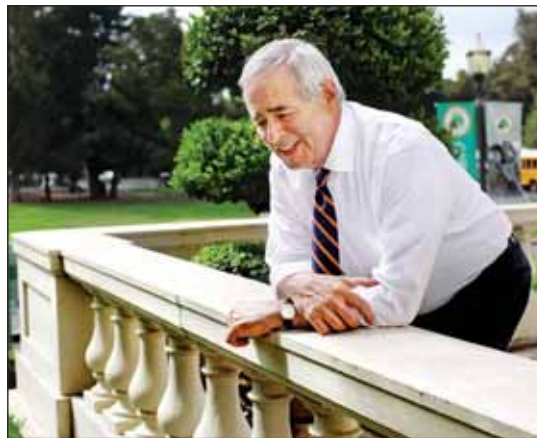
He led the private institution through significant developments including the construction of new middle school buildings and the addition of a sixth-grade level; the expansion of overall enrollment to nearly 800 students today; the renovation and expansion of the historic Douglass Hall, still the gem of the Valparaiso Avenue campus; and the nurturing of a dedicated and demonstrably effective teaching staff. "My primary goal has been to help build a school that is exceptionally attractive to the very best teachers. ... My theory has been: If you can attract and retain superb teachers, great teachers, everything would flow from that," he said in an interview with the Almanac last month.

Another of Mr. Colb's goals has been to spread an important — though, in this pressure-cooker area known for its wealth and entrepreneurial culture, often-ignored — message: Parents, let up a little. Let your kids be kids who embrace and retain a love of learning. The overemphasis on grades so typical of high-

achieving parents whose hearts are set on getting their children into the most prestigious universities doesn't promote genuine learning, Mr. Colb maintains. "Enjoying the use of one's mind and learning is what should be emphasized," he says, adding that too often, engagement with the life of the mind is extinguished by excessive parental pressure.

Such pressure also creates unhealthy stress for students as well, he says. In a talk earlier this year, Mr. Colb told parents: "If you worry about (children) incessantly, they'll worry about themselves. If you're calm and competent about them, you give them a gift that lasts a lifetime. What kids need from us is authentic, patient, loving, unloaded, unworried time."

When Mr. Colb announced his retirement in December 2011, he intended to "hang up the chalk," he told the Almanac. But as the date approached, he had second thoughts. As he leaves Menlo School, and his Menlo Park home, he and his wife, Susan, head for Reno, where Mr. Colb will head Sage Ridge School. He leaves a rich legacy at Menlo School, and beyond, as graduates make their varied impacts and imprints on the world. They are beneficiaries of an education that, in Mr. Colb's words, was intended to instill an understanding of "one's relationship with the wider world, and one's obligation to the wider world."



Michelle Le/The Almanac  
**Norman Colb** outside the headmaster's office in the renovated former Douglass Hall at Menlo School.

### LETTERS

Our readers write

#### Art — or a disgrace?

*Editor:*

Please take a moment to look at this photo. The "sculpture" in the photo is located on Willow Road and Coleman Avenue in Menlo Park.

This is a disgrace to a beautiful city that prides itself on beauty. How this came to be was a city mistake at a cost of over \$50,000.

This is the only entrance to Menlo Park on the north side coming off Highway 101. You would think the city fathers would want a sculpture or beautiful grove of flowering trees that would make a visitor or commuter smile. Instead, we have this mass of rocks made to look like ... couches? Makes one wonder, why and how did something like this happen?

Is there a "fix" for it? Tear it out, or as Reagan would say, "Take down this wall of rock"? We would like to hear the opinion of your readers.

*Tawny and Bob Barnett  
Willow Road, Menlo Park*



Michelle Le/The Almanac

"Convertibles," a city-commissioned sculpture by Brian Goggin, was created around 2000-01.



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