

90-year-old driver ordered to test for license after horrific crash | Page 3

The Almanac

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OCTOBER 23, 2013 | VOL. 49 NO. 7



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Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

The accident scene where a BMW SUV jumped a curb, trapping 6-year-old twins against a wall next to Walgreens on Santa Cruz Avenue in downtown Menlo Park on Thursday, Oct. 17.

90-year-old driver ordered to test for license after horrific crash

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

The 90-year-old driver whose car jumped a curb in downtown Menlo Park and pinned twin 6-year-old boys against a wall is without a license — at least for now.

One twin emerged from the crash with a broken arm, while his brother was reported Monday in serious but stable condition at Stanford Hospital, following several hours of surgery after the Oct. 17 accident. The brothers are first-graders at Oak Knoll School.

Menlo Park Police Cmdr. Dave Bertini said officers took the license and issued a priority re-examination notice. The driver “has five business days to contact the DMV office of driver safety to set up an appointment to be retested,” Cmdr. Bertini said. “If he does not do so his license would be suspended.”

The police department does not currently know if the driver has followed through, he said.

Police are refusing to identify the driver at this point, which is standard practice when someone has not been charged. Police would not confirm anything about his occupation.

The driver, a Woodside resident, was in a silver 2012 BMW SUV, according to witnesses.

Adam Creeger, 18, said he heard a noise behind him and turned around to see the car and one boy pinned against the wall. “Everyone was in a panic,” Mr. Creeger said.

Bystanders worked to get the car off the child for several minutes until Roy Thiele-Sardina, who witnessed the accident from a nearby restaurant, jumped into the BMW and put it in neutral to back it away.

Accident injured twin 6-year-old boys, leaving one fighting for life.

The SUV had an intact windshield and no airbag deployed, according to bystanders. The driver had blood on his hands.

Investigators closed the east-bound lane of the 600 block of Santa Cruz Avenue well into the evening as they continued to gather information following the accident, which occurred at 2:17 p.m.

The driver has not been charged at this point since he was licensed and not under the influence of alcohol or other drugs, according to Cmdr. Bertini.

In traffic collisions, absent any death associated with negligence or impaired driving, the only

crime that has occurred is an infraction, he explained, typically the result of violating a vehicle law. Police officers may not legally issue tickets for infractions that they did not witness; in those cases it will be up to the district attorney to decide whether to proceed with charges.

The driver could be charged with an infraction for driving on the sidewalk if he is found to be at fault, Cmdr. Bertini said. A misdemeanor vehicular manslaughter charge could also be brought in the case of a death.

“In any event, when the investigation is concluded we will be sending the report to the district attorney for review for the infraction violation, in which the punishment can only be a fine. But also be aware, if the driver is found at fault he would be civilly liable and could and would probably be sued in civil court,” Cmdr. Bertini said.

California does not have separate licensing standards for senior drivers, according to the Department of Motor Vehicles, but instead looks at every driver’s mental and physical ability to comply with traffic laws.

Police ask that witnesses call 330-6300. ■

Almanac staff writer Dave Boyce contributed to this report.

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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Four compete for Woodside school board seats

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

Two incumbents are asking voters to return them to the Woodside Elementary School District board, and two other parents are vying for a third open board seat in the Nov. 5 election.

Current board president Wendy Warren Roth and member Marc Tarpenning are on the ballot along with Claire Pollioni, the mother of four children attending Woodside Elementary School who has been active in the PTA; and Robert Hooper, a

★ VOTER GUIDE

This is one of a series of stories on measures and candidates on the Nov. 5 ballot.

former teacher with one child at WES and another who graduated last June.

Differences among the board candidates don't stand out; all parents, all focused on providing a school environment for their kids that will promote high achievement and strong character, they share much common ground, their responses to an Almanac questionnaire indicate.

The one-school district, which this year serves 451 students, moved into the 2013-14 school year with a continued push toward implementing teaching strategies aligned with the state's new Common Core standards, which replace standards in place in California for 15 years. The new standards strategy emphasizes critical thinking, creativity, collaboration and communications skills.

The district is also likely within the next few months to finalize plans to put a bond measure before voters in the spring to fund improvements to the

campus, including major safety, maintenance and modernization projects. The estimated cost of the construction project is about \$16 million, but an effort is already underway to raise a significant portion of the money through private donations.

Here's a summary of candidate responses to a questionnaire; candidates are listed in alphabetical order.

Robert Hooper

Mr. Hooper noted that he is the only candidate with extensive classroom experience,

having taught in the Montebello Unified School District in Southern California from 1989 to 2010. That experience, he said, would allow him to "bring an informed perspective to the current board."

One of the district's top challenges, he said, is improving communication. "Specifically, we need to improve teacher communication with parents on classroom performance issues and academic assignments weekly through the school year — not just on report card day,"

See page 8

Police arrest suspect in Woodside burglaries

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

Police have arrested Justin Ralph Mitchell, 26, of Redwood City in connection with a string of residential burglaries, including three in Woodside on Oct. 13 and 14.

Redwood City police arrested him on Oct. 16 after identifying a vehicle registered to Mr. Mitchell in a surveillance video as the vehicle was leaving a business in the vicinity of a recent auto burglary.



Justin Ralph Mitchell

That identification led police to Mr. Mitchell's home, which they searched — as allowed under the conditions of Mr. Mitchell's parole. Police said they found narcotics, items allegedly bought with stolen credit cards, and items allegedly taken in other burglaries.

Mr. Mitchell is a suspect in at least 13 burglaries in Redwood City and Woodside, police said. Of the Woodside burglaries, two occurred in the 200 block of Crest Road and one in the 100 block of Croyden Way, Detective Rebecca Rosenblatt of the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office said.

In one Crest Road case, the resident noted that a accessory door from the kitchen into the garage was slightly ajar and had been locked open, deputies said. The resident told deputies that he found the main garage door

open and drawers to his tool box open, as were doors to vehicles parked in the driveway. Inside the vehicles, the glove boxes and center consoles were found open and items strewn about the interiors. The estimate of loss is \$1,520, deputies said.

A resident in the other Crest Road incident found a side window smashed on one vehicle, the interior ransacked and several items missing, deputies said. Another vehicle had also been ransacked but it was unclear as to whether anything had been taken. The door to a bathroom intended for use by gardeners was also found ajar, deputies said. The estimated loss is \$720.

Residents in the Croyden Way incident found that both their vehicles had been ransacked overnight, deputies said. In the garage, the residents found that four tires and rims were missing as were several pieces of electronic gear from the kitchen, deputies said. The estimated losses amount to \$4,900.

The burglar entered the homes using garage door openers taken from unlocked vehicles, deputies said.

The Sheriff's Office is reminding residents to keep their cars locked and remove all valuables from view. Any suspicious activity should be reported to the Sheriff's Office by calling 911.

Deputies ask anyone with information on the Woodside burglaries to contact Detective Dan Hoss at (650) 363-4066 or the anonymous tip line at 1-800-547-2700. ■



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Menlo Park Mayor Peter Ohtaki, left, and Galway Mayor Padraig Conneely shake hands after signing a friendship agreement.

Galway, Menlo Park sign friendship pact

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

Despite the proliferation of social media these days, not all befriending happens on Facebook. The mayor of Galway, Ireland, flew 13 hours to come here to sign a friendship agreement with Menlo Park on Thursday night, Oct. 17, during the annual "state of the city" event at the Stanford Park Hotel.

"I suppose I'm following in the footsteps of two people who left Ireland in famine times with probably no more than the clothes they wore," Mayor Padraig Conneely said, referring to Dennis Oliver and his brother-in-law, D.C. McGlynn, who came to the

United States from the Menlo Park area in Galway, Ireland, during the 1850s and erected an arched gate here with the words "Menlo Park" on it. (When a railroad stop opened nearby in 1863, it was named after the words on the gate.)

Menlo Park Mayor Peter Ohtaki (dubbed with an honorary Irish surname "O'Taki") described the state of Menlo Park, California, as strong. Empty storefronts downtown are being replaced by businesses such as the Refuge restaurant and the LEGO store, Build It Again With Bricks. On a recent trip to the East Coast he was delighted to find that people no longer confuse Menlo Park, California, with

the eponymous community near Edison, New Jersey.

The progress comes at a price, with traffic and economic vibrancy clashing with village character, Mayor Ohtaki said. "We must solve the bottleneck of El Camino Real." Compromises with the proposed Stanford-Arrillaga development will continue to be worked out, as will any revisions to the downtown/El Camino Real specific plan.

The friendship agreement is a symbolic gesture indicating the two cities aspire to build a connection without committing either city to fund programs such as cultural exchanges, Mayor Ohtaki told the Almanac. ■

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**Town cuts some slack
on nonconforming homes**

By **Dave Boyce**
Almanac Staff Writer

■ **WOODSIDE**

The Woodside Town Council has asked the Planning Commission to slightly relax town regulations on the footprints of buildings, including homes, that are technically out of compliance with the standards of the town's land-use rules. Regulations tend to allow such structures to continue in their current form, but without much opportunity for modification.

Todd Alamin, a physician and the owner of a nonconforming house on Eleanor Drive, said he was thinking about remodeling his kitchen and had asked town staff about making a slight change to the shape of the house's footprint — adding a 181-square-foot mud room in exchange for deconstructing an equal amount of floor area from another part of the kitchen.

Citing a longstanding interpretation of town regulations, town staff, later backed by a unanimous Planning Commission, informed Dr. Alamin

that "Municipal Code Section 153.301(A)(2) does not permit the actual existing footprint to be increased in an area where the building does not currently exist, even if no increase in floor area is proposed," according to a staff report.

Dr. Alamin appealed the decision to the council and on Oct. 15, after more than an hour of deliberation on the consequences of changing a policy and setting a new precedent, the council voted 4-3 to uphold his appeal. Voting in the majority were council members Tom Shanahan, Dave Tanner, Deborah Gordon and Mayor Anne Kasten.

The discussion touched on planning officials' interpretation of the word "footprint" and what the regulation meant by disallowing "increases" to footprints. The department has been interpreting "increase" to refer to changes to a footprint's shape,

See **NONCONFORMING**, page 14



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Three take shot at council seat

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

Three Atherton residents were undeterred last summer by the City Council's inability to agree on whom to appoint to a vacant council seat, and are now asking voters to make that decision on Nov. 5.

Greg Conlon, a longtime town committee member who lost his race for a council seat last November by about 200 votes; Rick DeGolia, a member of the town's Civic Center Advisory Committee; and Diane Sandhu, a member of the town's Audit and Finance Committee are in the race for a one-year term on the council.

Whoever wins the race will fill the seat left vacant by the July resignation of Jerry Carlson. The four remaining council members had hoped to avoid an election, given that Mr. Carlson had only 16 months left to his term, but the council deadlocked, with Mayor Elizabeth Lewis and Councilman Cary Wiest supporting Mr. DeGolia and councilmen Bill Widmer and Jim Dobbie supporting John Rugeiro, another of the seven applicants.

The current council has been criticized for its divisiveness, with some members perceived as too focused on politics, with the public left shortchanged. Before the departure from the council last December of longtime councilwoman Kathy McKeithen, votes on contentious issues often had Ms. McKeithen, Mr. Dobbie and Mr. Widmer on one side, and Ms. Lewis and Mr. Carlson on the other.

Mr. Wiest is now perceived as an ally of current Mayor Lewis, and one question in some voters' minds is whether the winner of the November election will be part of an alliance, or will instead be able to help bridge

★ VOTER GUIDE

This story on the Atherton City Council race is one of a series on the Nov. 5 election. A related story, on the Atherton parcel tax measure, is on Page 23.

differences.

Residents are also voting on whether to renew the town's parcel tax, a question rousing more debate this year than it did when it was renewed four years ago. (See story on Page 23.)

A summary of candidates' positions on some key issues and their vision for the town's future follows; candidates are listed in alphabetical order.

Greg Conlon

Of the three candidates, Mr. Conlon tops the list in terms of experience in Atherton civic affairs, with 10 years of involvement and more than five years of service on volunteer committees. He's been on the town's Audit and Finance Committee for two years, and now serves as its chair. He's also been on the Rail Committee for five years.

Mr. Conlon's resume also includes six years on the California Public Utilities Commission, with two years as president, and more than two years on the state's Transportation Commission. He is retired from a career as a senior partner in a major accounting firm.

Among his priorities, he said, is safety, including protecting the town from impacts of high-speed rail; making local streets safer, particularly around the Caltrain tracks; and retaining the town's in-house police services.

He also wants to continue his focus on the town's finances, which includes controlling pension and other post-retirement employee costs, he said, adding that as a council member he can

increase his effectiveness.

Mr. Conlon supports renewing the town's parcel tax for four years, noting that the council has the ability every year to suspend the tax or lower its rate if the revenue isn't needed.

If elected, he said, he would work to increase civility among council members. At a recent candidate forum, he called what he sees as a lack of civility "pretty pathetic at times."

Mr. Conlon pointed to his decades of volunteer work — the result, he said, of a deep commitment to giving back to his community and society in general. Although he's already contributing to the town through his committee work, being elected to the council would allow him "to elevate it to a new level and make a bigger impact," he said. "If I'm elected, I'll give it everything I've got — I don't do things halfway."

Rick DeGolia

Unlike Mr. Conlon, "I hadn't been involved in town politics at all until the last election," Mr. DeGolia said. Prior to being appointed to the town's Community Center Advisory Committee in January and his subsequent appointment as chair of that group's library subcommittee, he had focused primarily on family, work, and service on nonprofit boards, he said.

Mr. DeGolia worked for 11 years as a partner in the law firm Wilson, Sonsini, Goodrich & Rosati. He currently serves as a board member and governance committee chair of the Cleantech Open, which supports "clean technology" startups; and as an advisory board member of the nonprofit Clean Coalition.

His work on the Community Center Advisory Committee,

See **COUNCIL**, page 12

★ CANDIDATE BIOS

Greg Conlon, 80, longtime Atherton civic volunteer, with five years on the Rail Committee and two years on the Audit and Finance Committee, now serving as chair. Ran for one of two open council seats in November 2012, coming in a close third. Retired corporate accountant; former member and president of the California Public Utilities Commission, six years; former member, California Transportation Commission, two years. Education: bachelor's degree, business and accounting, University of Utah; Executive Education Program at the Haas School of Business, UC Berkeley; law degree, University of San Francisco.



Rick DeGolia, 63, vice chair of Atherton's Community Center Advisory Committee since January, chair of the CCAC's library subcommittee. Former law partner, Wilson, Sonsini, Goodrich & Rosati; former executive of several high-tech Silicon Valley companies. Current board member and governance committee chair, The Cleantech Open, since 2010; advisory board member, Clean Coalition, since 2010. Education: bachelor's degree, UC Berkeley; law degree, Harvard Law School.



Diane Sandhu, 51, member since September 2012 of Atherton's Audit and Finance Committee, now serving as vice chair. Businesswoman, owner and operator of a software company and staff-augmentation service. Education: bachelor's degree, finance, Haas School of Business, UC Berkeley.



REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Do Built-in TVs Stay With The Property?

Dear Monica: I am selling my home and am wondering whether my flat screen TV is included in the sale or whether I can remove it. I don't want the buyer to be upset if I remove it but if it is not included I would like to take it with me. Please advise. Jennifer B.

Dear Jennifer:

The contract widely used in our area is the Peninsula Regional Data Service (PRDS) contract. According to this contract the items included in the sale are satellite dishes and related equipment and all audio/video and technology wiring. In addition a buyer may request other items to be included in the sale, such as a washer

and dryer, microwave, TVs affixed to wall or built in, TV mounting brackets, speakers affixed to wall or built in, and speaker mounting brackets.

If buyer has stipulated that TVs mounted on the wall should stay, then seller must leave them. Sometimes sellers leave them even if they are not specifically included in the contract because removing them may leave holes in the wall that must be repaired. Also the price of flat screen TVs has come down and sellers don't feel as compelled to take them to their next residence.

Look at your contract and determine if the TV is included. If not, you may remove it or ask your buyer if they would like you to leave it.

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

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For more information contact:
Menlo Park Community Services Department
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Four compete for seats on Woodside school board

continued from page 5

he said.

“Also, the board needs to increase its fiscal accountability and transparency with its current revenues and spending,” he said.

Mr. Hooper said fiscal accountability will be critical if the district hopes to make the case to the community for approval of a bond next year. At a candidate forum earlier this month, he said he’s inclined to support a bond measure, although he wants to see the financial details of the facilities plan.

In an earlier interview, Mr. Hooper said he is “not a regular attendee” of board meetings, but he noted that the mid-afternoon meeting schedule isn’t convenient for working parents. The remedy? “I firmly believe the board must schedule all meetings at times convenient for working and/or active parents and community members to attend,” he said. “I know meeting times will not be perfect for everyone, but we need to change the current practice to accommodate more public involvement.”

Mr. Hooper takes a positive view of the Common Core standards and the approach to learning the standards represent. “By focusing on effective implementation of these standards, we can improve the overall student performance,” he said.

Claire Pollioni

Ms. Pollioni said her years of experience as a parent volunteer in the district “have prepared me for the issues and challenges typically faced by the board.” A member of the PTA since 2005, she now is a vice president. She also participated on the district’s Facilities Committee as a liaison from the PTA board, she said.

The plan to upgrade the school campus, with funding from both private donations and a bond issue, is a key priority for the district, and “the challenge is to make sure the (campus) additions/changes reflect the needs

of the school thoroughly, and that they represent the desires of the community at large,” Ms. Pollioni said.

Another challenge for the district is attracting and enrolling “all eligible students within the district boundaries” and retaining them through middle school, she said. “This can be achieved,” she added, “by continuing to refine and update curriculum and by proactively offering enrichment and enhanced curriculum.”

The district’s recently approved strategic plan “includes increased focus on the middle school, which is a huge step in the right direction,” she said.

Regarding criticism by some that the school board’s afternoon meetings are inconvenient for working parents, Ms. Pollioni said she would be open to exploring alternatives, such as starting the meetings later in the afternoon.

Ms. Pollioni said district students “are now truly being prepared to be critical thinkers and good citizens” through the district’s emphasis on teacher development, the implementation of a program called Social Emotional Learning, and the shift to Common Core standards.

“The district has listened to past criticism of the math programs and is taking very positive steps toward improving and strengthening that curriculum,” she said. “It is very important that kids in our district graduate with strong writing and communication skills as well as math, and I would like to see additional emphasis placed on those areas going forward.”

Wendy Warren Roth

Ms. Warren Roth, who was an active member of the Woodside School Foundation for nine years before being elected to the board in 2009, said that she wants to see the “highly functioning board” she now leads “stay intact (and) continue on the path of our good work.”

She has served during a time when the board and district staff

Robert Hooper, 52, has lived in the district for three years. From 1989 to 2010, he taught primarily English at various grade levels in the Montebello Unified School District in Southern California. His wife, Mary, was also a teacher for more than 20 years. His son is a WES sixth-grader; his daughter graduated from WES last spring. He currently serves on the Woodside Arts and Culture Committee and is active in local Little League and other youth sports.

Claire Pollioni, 43, has lived in the district for nine years. She has volunteered with the Woodside School PTA since 2005, and has been on the board since 2010. She is now a vice president. She and her husband Parnell have four children at WES, the youngest a kindergartner. She worked in human resources and as a risk manager for the Wilbur-Ellis Co. from 1996 to 2001, and served on its board of directors from 1999 to 2009.

crafted a long-term strategic plan, and began the transition to Common Core standards, which has involved professional training for teachers.

Planning for campus modernization has been part of the board’s focus as well, and Ms. Warren Roth sees “balancing a building project that has two funding sources with staying focused on teaching and learning” as one of the key challenges facing the district for the next few years. District officials are “hoping to reduce the potential distraction by having in place a skilled and highly professional project manager for the building work,” she said.

Regarding criticism of the board’s afternoon meetings, Ms. Warren Roth said the board has tried evening meetings “to an empty room. However, I am willing to give it a go again.”

Ms. Warren Roth said WES students “are incredibly well prepared to be critical thinkers,” rather than merely good test-takers whose scores have put them among the highest-ranked students in the state. “Their participation in Science Fair, History Day, community service and a variety of other academic structures gives them this foundation that they take to high school and college. Our double block of language arts in the middle school provides the time it takes to develop strong writing skills, which incorpo-

★ CANDIDATE BIOS



Wendy Warren Roth, who declined to state her age, has lived in the district for 19 years. She was elected to the school board in 2009 and now serves as its president. She has three children, one a WES eighth-grader and the other two WES graduates. She has been involved in education as a volunteer for 20 years, including many years with the Woodside School Foundation, and prior to that worked in commercial banking.

Photo not available



Marc Tarpenning, 49, has lived in the district for 12 years. Elected to the board in 2009, he now serves as its vice president. He is married and has three children: a third-grader and a sixth-grader at WES, and a ninth-grader. An entrepreneur, investor and adviser, he is an advisory board member of the Science Learning Institute at Foothill College, and is a former board member of the San Francisco Bach Choir.



rates critical thinking and analytical thinking.”

Marc Tarpenning

First elected in 2009 and currently serving as the board’s vice president, Mr. Tarpenning has “seen the school through difficult budget years” and helped choose the district’s current superintendent, he noted.

“In these next two years, Woodside will implement large changes in curriculum based on Common Core State Standards, while also integrating the use of online design thinking, and other 21st century teaching techniques,” he said. “I feel I have the experience to be helpful during this exciting time in public education, and I want to continue being part of it.”

Mr. Tarpenning said that, although the district is “relatively well placed for Common Core implementation,” the transition is one of “the biggest challenges over the next couple of years because it touches nearly everything.” The board has supported increased professional development for teachers and experimentation with other strategies aligned with critical thinking and Common Core goals, he said.

“From the board level, making sure that our district has the community support, resources and tools needed to make these changes is a priority.”

Mr. Tarpenning supports putting a bond measure on the ballot, saying the school has “a variety of physical site needs, which include replacement roofing, improved safety, drainage, seismic, phones, replacing ‘temporary’ buildings, and creating new instructional space for project-based hands-on learning and performance.”

Regarding the scheduling of board meetings, “I support trying alternative times if that works better for parents and the community, although I am afraid that people are very busy and that no time will work especially well,” he said. The district, however, has attempted to improve online access to all board materials, and posts news of board actions and meeting minutes quickly, he added.

In addition to its rigorous academic program, the district has in recent years greatly expanded the Social Emotional Learning program in all grades “to give kids the tools to grow into the good people and good citizens they want to become,” Mr. Tarpenning said. The district continues “to monitor and modify the (community) service program to find (projects) that resonate with the students.”

“Moving forward, I would like to see additional opportunities to support and encourage students’ passions, whether in the arts, academics, design ... or service,” he added. ■

Services planned for teen killed by train

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

A memorial service for Walker Thompson Eberwein, 16, is planned for Wednesday, Oct. 23, at the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church.

The San Mateo County coroner has identified the teenager as

the Menlo Park resident killed by a train on Oct. 14.

Preliminary information indicates it may have been a suicide, but the investigation is ongoing, Deputy Coroner Roger Fielding said.

Train #258 struck the 16-year-old north of the Encinal Avenue crossing in Menlo Park around

4:22 p.m. on Oct. 14, according to Caltrain.

Loaded with commuters during the rush hour, trains resumed running along both tracks around 6:30 p.m., Caltrain spokesperson Jayme Ackemann said.

All trains were held in both directions while transit police

responded to the scene.

Caltrain said this was the agency’s 13th fatality this year. Last year, 12 people died on the tracks.

The memorial service starts at 2 p.m. at the church located at 950 Santa Cruz Ave.

Resources

The following resources are available for those in crisis: Adolescent Counseling Services, (650) 424-0852; KARA,

(650) 321-5272; Family and Children’s Service, (650) 326-6576; Center for Living with Dying, (408) 243-0222; Suicide and Crisis Hotline, (650) 494-8420; Teen Clinic, (650) 694-0600; Alcohol and Drug Hotline, (650) 573-3950; Parental Stress Hotline, (408) 279-8228; Teen Health Resource Line, (888) 711-8336; Santa Clara County Suicide & Crisis Hotline, (855) 278-4204. ■

Atherton police contract OK'd

By **Renee Batti**
Almanac News Editor

Atherton police officers are working under a new contract after the City Council on Oct. 16 unanimously approved the recently negotiated agreement, but the issue of retiree eligibility for health-care benefits remains unresolved.

The new contract represents significant savings for the town, according to City Manager George Rodericks, primarily because of a provision that requires current employees to pay their own share of their pension costs.

The contract also eliminates the requirement in previous contracts that the town pay its police department employees based on a survey of area police agencies. The new contract says the town will continue to make the annual survey but will no longer be required to pay employees at the 70th percentile of surveyed agencies.

The expense to employees because of the new pension contribution requirement — which represents about 7.6 percent of their salaries — will be partially offset by a 5 percent salary increase given incrementally over the three-year contract. The contribution requirement will also be phased in over the

duration of the contract, Mr. Rodericks said.

The town and the Atherton Police Officers' Association (APOA) will return to the table to try to resolve the post-retirement health-care benefit question, Mr. Rodericks said. The issue centers on the number of years an officer must work for the town before being eligible for the benefit — lifetime coverage of health insurance.

One issue remains unresolved.

A provision in the contract that expired on Sept. 30, and that the town wants to retain in the new agreement, requires an officer to work for Atherton for 20 years before the benefit applies. The union noted, however, that the provision hasn't been adhered to in at least three instances, and is arguing for a five-year vesting period instead, Mr. Rodericks said.

The contract also creates a two-tier pension plan for new hires. Pensions for officers hired under the new contract will be figured at a rate that starts at 2.7 percent (times the number of years served) of their highest salary over a three-year period, with retirement eligibility at age

57. Previously, pensions were figured on a formula that gave 3 percent (times number of years served) of the highest one-year salary, with officers eligible to retire at age 50.

New civilian police employees will receive 2 percent (times number of years served) of salary at age 62 instead of the previous 2 percent at age 55.

In a written statement issued Oct. 9 after the APOA agreed to the contract terms, Mr. Rodericks said: "In addition to short-term savings, the Town will realize cost savings and fiscal sustainability in the long term through reduced pension obligations, reduced post-employment obligations, reduced active employee health-care costs, and controlled salary costs."

A key factor in controlling those costs is elimination of the 70th percentile clause that had been in prior contracts. That provision resulted in an automatic ratcheting up of salaries when other police agencies gave raises to their employees, Mr. Rodericks noted at the council meeting.

"We wanted to get out of that ballgame," he said, adding that the town wants to pay employees what it believes is reasonable.

The APOA represents 22 police department employees, 17 of whom are sworn officers. ■

Green light may be ahead for vineyard

By **Dave Boyce**
Almanac Staff Writer

■ PORTOLA VALLEY

The outlines were sketched in a little more sharply at a recent meeting of the Portola Valley Planning Commission on what is looking increasingly like a split decision on November 20, but one that will allow the owners of a much admired "meadow preserve" at 555 Portola Road to put in a vineyard of up to 5.5 acres.

Ownership of the 24-acre field is divided. Dr. Kirk Neely and Holly Myers own the northern 17 acres as part of the couple's 229-acre property, and the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District owns the other seven. Grasses cover all of it and it is not uncommon to see deer grazing.

When viewed from Portola Road, the field appears to be an extension of the Windy Hill Open Space Preserve that rises spectacularly behind it. The town's general plan refers to it as a "meadow preserve" that is "visually important to the entire quality of the valley. This preserve should be kept in a natural condition and the existing agricultural character preserved."

What is meant by "natural condition" and "existing agricultural character"? What is a meadow preserve? On questions such as these has this matter turned since the fall of 2009, when Dr. Neely and Ms. Myers first applied for a conditional use permit to begin small-scale farming of fruits, vegetables and hay on between 10 and 11 acres of it.

The proposal was always controversial. The initial plans included a barn-like storage building and fences to protect the crops. The vineyard was added later, but is necessary to make the agricultural operation pay for itself, Dr. Neely has said.

The couple already have a winery and 13 acres of grapes under cultivation, according to a staff report, but they cannot be seen from the road. Grapes from the new vineyard would be trucked to the winery, the report said.

The commissioners and members of the public have, over the years, expressed high regard for the couple's stewardship of their land.

The Oct. 16 meeting included

an analysis of how to best protect the field's character: through a conditional use permit or requiring a conservation easement. Either can be strongly worded, Town Planner Tom Vlastic said, and new uses would require formal amendments.

Public comment

Former mayor Jon Silver called a vineyard inconsistent with the field's agricultural character and requested the commission opt for an easement.

Linda Elkind, a former commissioner, warned the panel of sowing seeds that could redefine meadows and open spaces. "Meadowland is not monoculture," she said. "You're laying out a very significant path."

"What are we going to use (a conservation easement) for if we're not going to protect our last meadow?" resident Beverly Lipman asked.

Resident Danna Breen, a member of the Architectural and Site Control Commission, said she was speaking for herself in support of the vineyard as a "rea-

See **VINEYARD** page 14

Correction

An article ("What's happening at the high end?") in the Fall Real Estate special section, which ran in the Oct. 16 issue of the Almanac, incorrectly reported that Tom Dallas sold a \$52.5 million Woodside property this year. The property was sold in 2000.

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MENLO PARK CELEBRATES 150 YEARS OF TRAIN SERVICE

Story by Emma Marsano | Photos by Michelle Le

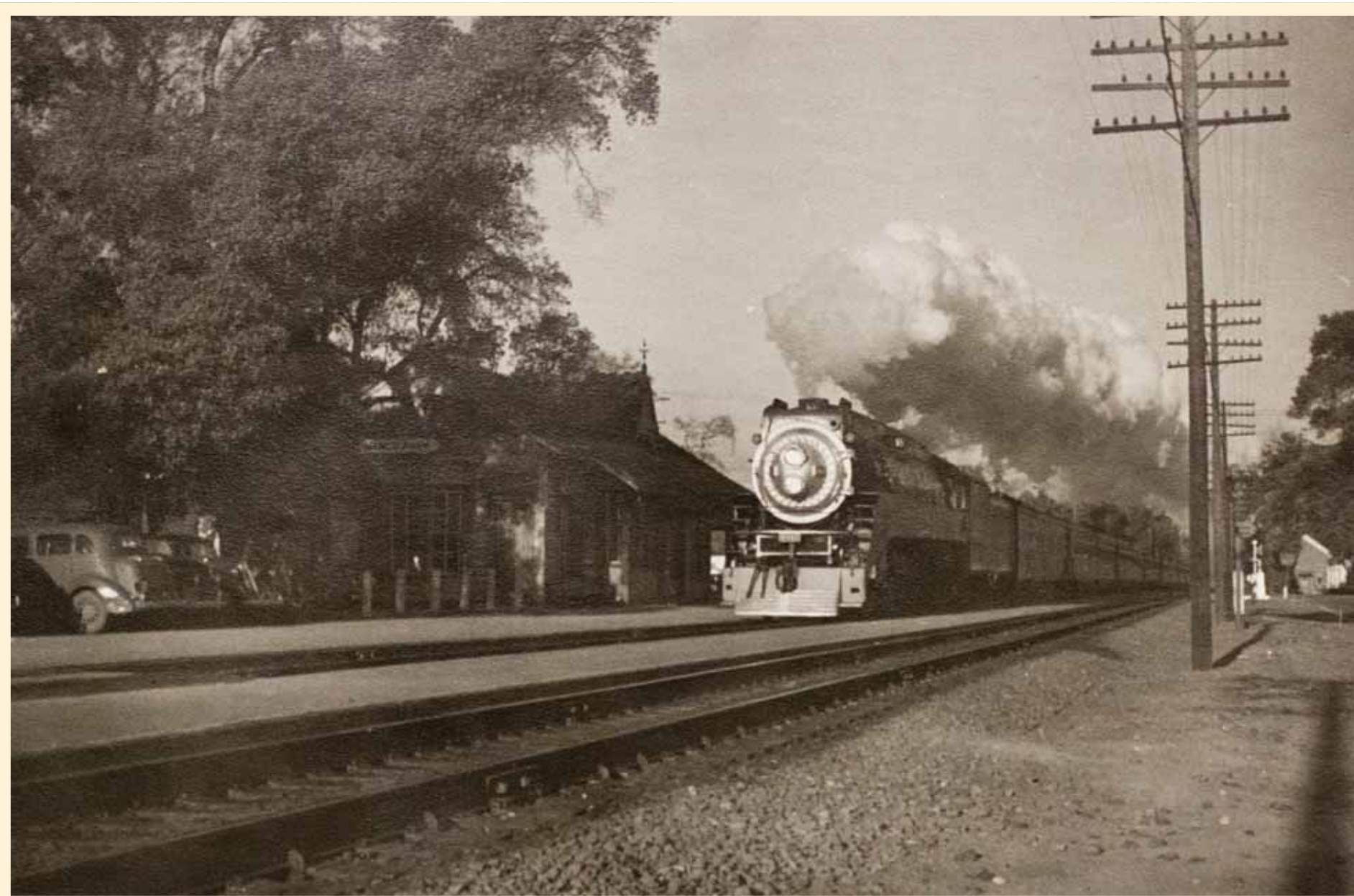
Special to the Almanac

The ride down was so beautiful. I can even see us purchasing property here some day!’ quipped Mrs. Leland Stanford to her husband on Saturday (Oct. 19)

OK, so the woman speaking was really an actress, playing Mrs. Stanford in a historical re-enactment. But maybe the Stanfords really did discuss the possibility of buying land around here 150 years ago, while enjoying a picnic that celebrated the progress of the San Francisco-to-San Jose railway. In 2013, we can only speculate, as did spectators at the Menlo Park Caltrain station on Saturday afternoon during a re-enactment of the picnic that took place in October 1863.

A few hundred people milled around the parking lot of the train station at the kick-off event for Caltrain’s year-long celebration of the 150th anniversary of Peninsula rail service. Toddlers reached longingly for model trains that chugged around a 20-foot-long, oval track; older kids dragged their parents toward the free Baskin-Robbins ice cream offered at the other end of the parking lot; and parents listened to numerous speeches, including one by state Senator Jerry Hill, D-San Mateo.

Mayor Pdraig Conneely of Galway, Ireland, also spoke at the event, sharing stories about the Irish immigrants who gave Menlo Park its name. In the 1850s, Dennis J. Oliver and his brother-in-law D.C. McGlynn bought a tract of land, and erected an arch at the entrance to their property inscribed “Menlo Park” after their home village of Menlough in



Galway. The train station constructed here in 1863 took its name from that archway, as did the city that grew around the station.

Mayor Conneely was in town to sign a friendship agreement between his city and Menlo Park, with Mayor Peter Ohtaki.

“It’s absolutely fantastic,” Mayor Conneely said, adding that he didn’t realize there was so much known here about the two immigrants, Oliver and McGlynn.

“I hope (this friendship) will work going forward,” he said, “from a business

point of view, and from an educational point of view,” with contact between universities in both cities.

Food trucks provided lunch for those who came to enjoy the festivities. But the actors sat down to croissants and cold cuts after arriving on the 12:14 p.m. train from San Francisco. At picnic tables decorated with metallic gold pumpkins and wreaths of red and orange leaves, they stayed in character to discuss the importance of the new railroad.

The actor portraying Judge Timothy Dame, who at the time was president of

the San Francisco-to-San Jose railroad company, sported a top hat and formal coat. When prompted to put the significance of the railroad into context, he responded in character. The railroad, he said, “provides rapid, convenient, and comfortable transport. It’s going to make people’s lives so much easier.”

People won’t have to travel “by buggy and coach,” he added. “They will be able to travel without getting muddy and covered in rain!”

The actors themselves might have welcomed a few rain clouds, though.

One actress remarked: “Dressed like this, you realize why women fainted so much! Long sleeves, high collars, tight corsets.” That’s a lot of layers in 75-degree weather.

Even beyond transportation and women’s clothing, much has changed here in the past 150 years. Menlo Park has gone from a name on a gate to an economic center that attracts venture capital firms and technological innovators alike. Caltrain’s celebration served as a reminder of the advancements that helped build the city we know today. ■

In addition to the historic photos of the Menlo Park train station and a steam locomotive, courtesy of the Menlo Park Historical Association, there are photos of Saturday’s community festival and re-enactment of a historic train ride and picnic in 1863. Clockwise from left: Actor Peggy Burgi plays a lady passenger from 1863; Teddy, 4, left, and Jordon, 5, watch model trains set up at the festival; actor Richard Howse plays the capitalist Michael Ripley, who attended the 1863 picnic; and actor Jim Bradford plays Oregon Governor Addison C. Gibbs, who waves to the crowd upon debarking.

Cover photo: Playing the roles of Mrs. and Mr. Stanford, who attended the historic 1863 picnic, are real life wife and husband actors Cynthia and Chuck Arella. (Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac)



Two Menlos

A new organization to support the friendship agreement between Menlo Park and Galway has been formed, according to co-chairs Jym Clendenin, Fran Dehn and Jim Lewis. For more information, do a Google search for: Two Menlos sisters.



Three take shot at council seat

continued from page 7

which is helping to plan the building of a new Town Center that will be largely funded through private donations, has quickened his desire to be even more involved in the town, he said — hence his decision to run for council. He has strong skills, he said, in listening to others and in helping groups find consensus, and noted that those skills would be valuable on a council that, in his observation, “didn’t always treat people with respect.”

His priorities as a council member would include a push for better communication with the community and a higher level of involvement of residents in civic affairs. He also wants to “bring a stronger focus to the needs of young families and of older residents,” he said, not-

ing that the number of parents with young children continues to rise, increasing the need for the town to accommodate that population.

Younger residents factor in another of his concerns: safety for bicyclists and pedestrians as well as motorists on Atherton streets. Among his goals in that area is creating a better means for kids to cross El Camino Real near Watkins Avenue so they can safely access the town’s only park.

Other priorities include sound management of the town’s finances, and maintaining an in-house police force, which, he said, appears to have widespread, solid support among residents.

Mr. DeGolia supports renewal of the parcel tax, noting that there are many needed capital

improvement projects, such as solving drainage problems and building bike lanes, that would be funded through the tax. The council, he noted, has a responsibility to assess its revenues every year and decide on whether to impose the tax. If the increase in property tax revenue seen in the last two years continues, “and if we pay off our long-term liabilities, we may not need a parcel tax,” he said.

Diane Sandhu

Ms. Sandhu also is a relative newcomer to town civic affairs, having been appointed to the town’s Audit and Finance Committee in September 2012. She was reappointed earlier this year, and now serves as vice chair.

She said she became involved after her children graduat-

ed from school, and she was becoming increasingly aware of problems involving road maintenance. When looking for a way to participate in the town, she chose the finance committee because of her background in business and finance, she said. One of her biggest concerns, she said, was over the town’s “off-sheet liabilities,” which are now being paid.

Ms. Sandhu, self-employed in the fields of software and staff augmentation, said she opposes Measure X, which would renew the parcel tax for another four years. The tax, which raises about \$1.86 million, expires at the end of June 2014. Sixty percent of the revenues go to police services and 40 percent to public works projects.

She said if she’s elected to the council and Measure X passes, she would support suspending it or reducing its rate. The town, she said at a recent candidate

forum, “is capable of managing our money better. ... It doesn’t matter how much money you have. It matters how it’s spent.”

Ms. Sandhu said that, if elected, her priorities would include paying down the town’s pension liability, and improve roads. In her campaign statement, she says: “I will monitor and work with the Public Works department to make sure there is continued improvement in our roads and to evaluate the road impact fees.”

She also would work to install “non-intrusive, aesthetically consistent and environmentally safe lighting which will allow for pleasant evening walks and safe passage of our children walking home from school,” she says in her campaign literature. To pay for it, she said, the town can apply for federal and state grants.

Ms. Sandhu said the town should evaluate all options for providing police services, but she doesn’t advocate outsourcing. At a recent forum, she said she hasn’t heard a call from residents to outsource, and “it wouldn’t be something I would push for.”

Regarding her inexperience in town civic affairs, Ms. Sandhu said, “It won’t be a detriment.” She has been a businesswoman for more than 25 years, she said, and she would be a fresh face with fresh ideas if elected to the council. “I’m not a career politician,” she said. ■



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■ POLICE CALLS

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

PORTOLA VALLEY

Residential burglary report: Two pairs of earrings and a ring are missing from a house on Possum Lane for a loss totaling about \$16,400, Oct. 10.

WEST MENLO PARK

Residential burglary report: Several tools with an estimated total value of \$2,431 were found missing from a home construction site on Stanford Avenue. The tools had been left overnight in a small room that could not be completely secured, Oct. 10.

LADERA

Residential burglary report: A construction worker working on an unfinished house on Corona Way reported that the interior of the house had been ransacked and appeared to be missing a TV. When the resident returned from a trip, he reported that on his front porch, he found a flat-screen TV and other items thought to be stolen, Oct. 13.

WOODSIDE

Residential burglary report: Someone tried to open a glass door into a residence in the 100 block of Old La Honda Road but was unsuccessful and fled the scene, Oct. 15.

Accident report: A northbound bicyclist collided with the passenger-side mirror of a northbound vehicle as the vehicle

See **POLICE CALLS**, page 16

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NONCONFORMING
continued from page 6

Town Attorney Jean Savaree told the council. This interpretation is not uncommon among architects, said Councilman Peter

Mason, an architect. Dr. Alamin argued that the words "footprint" and "increase" should be interpreted using their everyday meanings. Council members voting to deny Dr. Alamin argued that

while he deserved a common-sense interpretation, by upholding his appeal, the resulting policy change could be exploited by other residents in nonconforming homes with more significant modifications in mind and who had been constrained by the earlier inter-

pretation. The majority did not disagree, but contended that denying Dr. Alamin would be an injustice and possibly a protracted injustice if the town's normal bureaucratic processes to change the policy extended over months. The council decision added

pressure, directing staff and the Planning Commission, in its November meeting, to revise the regulations to specifically allow minor modifications to footprints of non-conforming structures. New regulations could be in place by February. ■

*Anthony S. Felsovanyi,
M.D., M.A.C.P.*

December 20, 1914 – October 7, 2013

Dr. Felsovanyi served his community as a beloved physician, a revered clinical professor, a profoundly compassionate human being and devoted friend for over 65 years. From his early medical training at Johns Hopkins, Yale, service as Officer in the U.S. Public Health Service, then in 1946 as the first Fellow in Cardiology at Stanford until his death, his practice exemplified the highest standard of medical excellence, integrity and compassion.

A Memorial will be held at 4:00p.m. Stanford Faculty Club on Saturday, November 23rd, 2013. In lieu of flowers donations should indicate:

"In memory of Dr. Anthony Felsovanyi - for medical scholarships". Checks payable to Stanford University, sent to: Development Services, P.O. Box 20466, Stanford, CA 94309

PAID OBITUARY

VINEYARD

continued from page 9

sonable use" of the land. "I find it exciting for our community to grow food. It makes us self-sustaining," she said. "I would like to see this approved without a conservation easement. I think it would be a wonderful project. I'd like to see it move on now."

Official comment

A vote is set for Nov. 20; commissioners Nate McKitterick, Arthur "Chip" McIntosh and Nicholas Targ sounded supportive of the vineyard while commissioners Denise Gilbert

and Alex van Feldt sounded opposed.

"I truly believe that it's designated a meadow preserve for a reason and vineyards are not a meadow preserve," Ms. Gilbert said. "If we go ahead and give them a vineyard, they're going to come back again. ... In five or 10 years, our meadow is going to be down to the Midpeninsula part of it."

Ms. Von Feldt agreed, adding that row crops and fences are not indicative of a meadow. "I feel like a meadow preserve is a meadow preserve," she said. "This is still sacred as a meadow ... I think it should stay that way."

"The agricultural history of the town is a long one, including the growing of grapes for wine," said Mr. Targ.

Mr. McKitterick said he supported "the thrust" of the proposal and noted that past uses of the field have rendered it no longer in a natural condition.

Mr. McIntosh said he thought the language of the general plan can be read as allowing a vineyard. "I think there's too much sentiment behind keeping it as a hayfield," he added. "I think that vineyards are attractive, interesting and historical and it fits with that location." ■

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Elizabeth Ann Gray

March 5, 1927 - September 29, 2013

Elizabeth Ann Gray, 86, passed away peacefully, and surrounded by family, at her home in Menlo Park, CA on September 29, 2013.

Liz was born on March 5, 1927 in Corsicana, Texas, to the late Brook Edward Davis of Kerens, Texas and Elizabeth (Oldham) Davis of Waxahachie, Texas. A lifelong learner, she graduated from North Dallas High School in 1944, being voted Most Popular and serving as a member of the Jockey Club and of the Olympiads. Liz received her B.A. in English from Southern Methodist University (SMU) in 1949, where she was also a member of the Pi Beta Phi sorority as well as several other social organizations.

Liz married the love and light of her life, the late Gilman Gray, Sr., in 1953, and theirs was a rich and happy union. Their marriage, which she considered one of the greatest blessings of her life, spanned 49 years.

Liz was a devoted, dedicated, proud, and always-interested mother. She is survived by her five sons: Ned Gray, Brook Gray, Gilman Gray, Jr., Timothy Gray and Daniel Gray. Often was the phrase uttered, "Five sons? Your poor mother!" Liz was also a beloved grandmother to Emily Gray, Elizabeth Gray, Brook Gray and Hayden Gray and mother-in-law to Vicki Gray, Patti Gray and Stephanie Gray.

Liz and Gil were always active members in their local churches, from Midway Hills Christian Church in Dallas, Texas to Bethany Christian Church in Odessa, Texas to Central Christian Church in Marshalltown, Iowa to Ladera Community Church, in Portola Valley, California. They taught Sunday school, served on outreach and stewardship committees, held service positions, and were always great friends and supporters of all of their pastors. At Ladera Community Church, Liz served for many years on the Nominating/Enlistment Committee, Stewardship Committee,

Endowment Committee, Scholarship Committee, Board of Christian Service and Board of Trustees.

Liz was proud of her 29-years of volunteer work as a "Pink Lady" with the Stanford University Medical Center Auxiliary, a non-profit that supports and complements patient care and community service at SUMC. She and Gil were also very active with and supportive of OICW (now JobTrain), an educational and training institution that also offers career counseling and job-placement services to its graduates. Her prolific volunteer work was the natural extension of the primary principal she lived: "When more is given, more is expected."



Liz was a prolific reader, a lover of the written word, and was never more at home than with a good book. She loved to travel, and she and husband Gil traveled much of the world together. She was an avid tennis player (who only recently stopped playing at age 82), piano player, lover of music and dance (quite the jitterbugger). She played bridge and always enjoyed going to the movies. Anyone who knew Liz, however, knew that her true love was the telephone -- where she spent countless hours chatting and checking-in with family, friends and those who she loved and for whom she cared. Liz always wanted to know how you were feeling and how you were doing, to tell you she was thinking of you and that she loved and cared for you.

Liz will be most remembered for her great sense of humor, loving nature, selflessness, energy, charity and positivity. She was a great listener, always easy to laugh and smile, a sincere and devoted wife, mother, mother-in-law, grandmother and friend. And, of course, anyone who knew Liz will never forget her sweet, signature Texas twang -- the quintessence of this Southern Lady. Elizabeth Gray will be missed.

PAID OBITUARY

Cate Fisher memorial dedication on Saturday

A memorial for Cate Fisher, the 19-year-old gymnastics instructor who was shot and killed more than two years ago, will be dedicated at 2:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 26, at the Arrillaga Family Gymnastics Center, according to her mother, Michelle Sutton. That day would have been her daughter's birthday.

The city will dedicate a tree as well as a portion of the new gymnastics center, to be called "Cate's Corner." The center is at 600 Alma St.

Halloween Hoopla

Get your costume on before heading to Menlo Park's annual

BRIEFS

Halloween parade on Saturday, Oct. 26. The parade starts at 11:45 a.m. in the Maloney Street parking lot off Santa Cruz Avenue, and winds up at Fremont Park. Afterward, from 12:30 to 3 p.m., downtown stores displaying trick-or-treat signs will give out treats, and Fremont Park will host other activities.

From 2 to 4 p.m., the Menlo Park Library will provide pumpkins for a carving contest for teens. Registration is required; email atajar@plsinfo.org to sign up. The library is at 800 Alma St. in Menlo Park.

Simon Winchester at Kepler's

Simon Winchester will discuss his first book about America, "The Men Who United the States: America's Explorers, Inventors, Eccentrics and Mavericks, and the Creation of One Nation Indivisible," at 7:30 p.m. Monday, Oct. 28, at Kepler's, 1010 El Camino Real in Menlo Park. Mr. Winchester, an English author who resides primarily in the United States, is the bestselling author of "Atlantic" and "The Professor and the Madman."



Photo by Satsuko Winchester

Charles Howard Brock, Sr. "Chuck"

Woodside and La Quinta, California

Chuck left this earthly life peacefully in the early hours of October 12, 2013 in Woodside, California at the age of 83. Chuck was born on August 8, 1930, in the Dalles, Oregon and spent his early years in Goldendale, Washington. He met his future wife, Phyllis Egger, while attending the University of Washington. They married after graduation in 1952 and happily spent the next 61 years together.

After serving 2 years in the United States Army, Chuck attended Hastings College of the Law in San Francisco where he graduated at the top of his class. He was admitted to the California Bar in 1957 and began what was to become a brilliant career with the San Jose office of Hoge, Fenton, Jones & Appel. Chuck loved the law and committed himself to its practice for the next 44 years. Those who had the privilege of working with him knew Chuck to be a highly skilled, ethical and respected lawyer. Chuck was a fierce advocate for his clients, but always remained a gentleman. In the legal community, he was often described as "a lawyer's lawyer". He was a Fellow of the American College of Trial Lawyers and was a member of the prestigious American Board of Trial Advocates. He is a past president of the American Inns of Court, Santa Clara Inn, and served on its executive committee. He also served on the Board of Governors of the Association of Business Trial Lawyers, Northern California, and was listed in the "Best Lawyers in America."

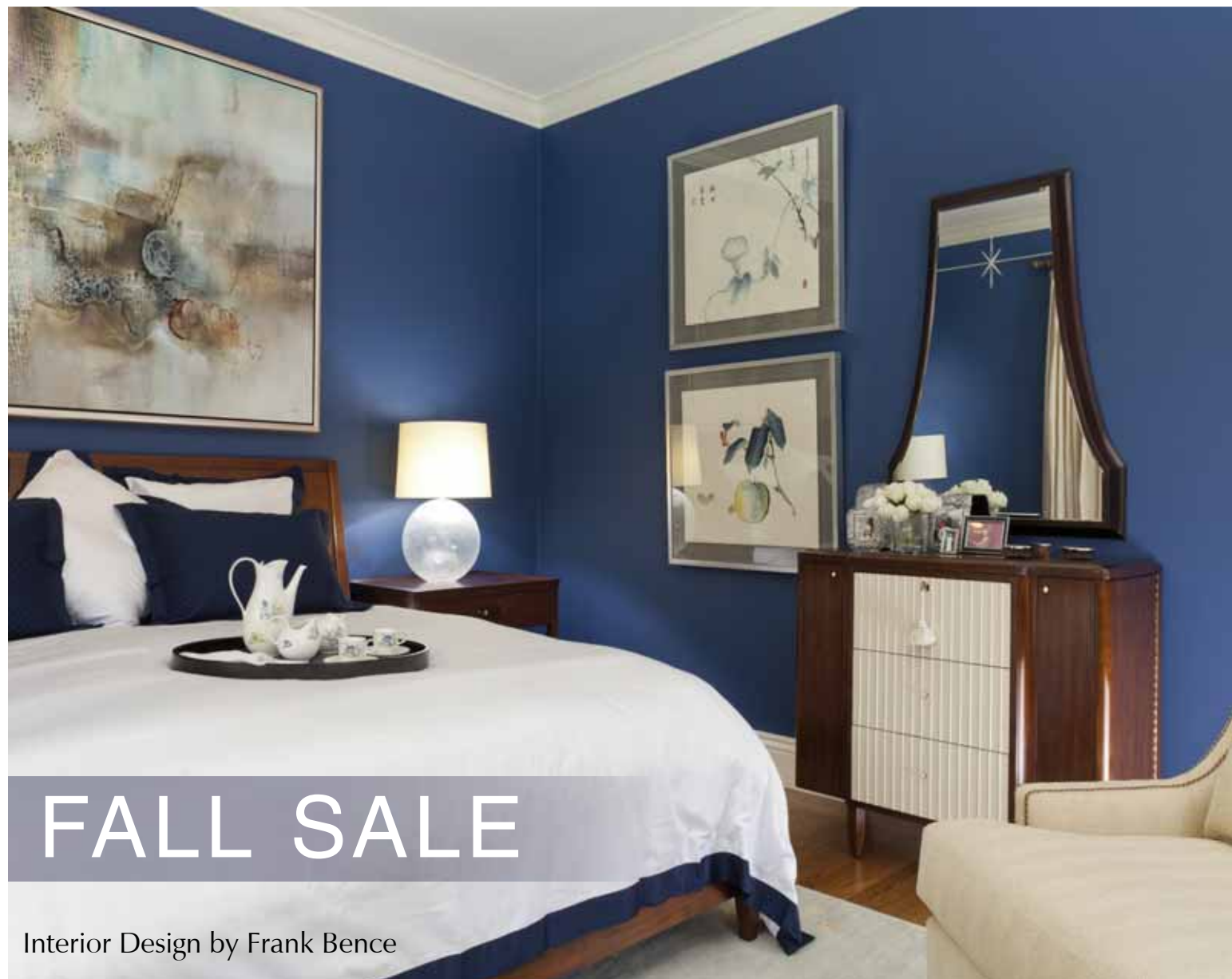


A devoted family man, Chuck leaves behind his loving wife Phyllis, four children: Jennifer Marsden (and her husband, Ken) of Woodside, Charles Brock, Jr. (and his wife, Marsha) of Menlo Park, Peter Brock of Newport, Oregon, and Suzanne Brock of Santa Rosa. He also leaves behind six grandchildren: Peter Marsden, Charles Brock, III, Todd Brock, Chenoa BrockWalder, Kalen BrockWalder, and Joshua BrockWalder. He is also survived by his brother, William Brock of Ashland, Oregon.

Although an accomplished golfer, Chuck's true passions outside of the law were horses, traveling, singing, acting, and being of service. Even while he was maintaining a thriving practice, he served on numerous boards, including Sharon Heights Golf and Country Club, La Quinta Country Club, the Woodside Village Church, and the Los Altos Hunt Pony Club. He was also extremely active in Woodside and the community doing whatever he could to be of service. He participated in numerous plays and loved singing with his friends.

There will be a service at Woodside Village Church on Wednesday, October 23rd at 4:30 p.m. and a reception at Sharon Heights Golf and Country Club at 6:00 p.m. In lieu of flowers the family requests that memorial contributions be made to Alzheimer's Association, the Parkinson's Association or a charity of choice.

PAID OBITUARY



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■ POLICE CALLS

continued from page 12

was making a right turn from Portola Road onto Family Farm Road. The accident threw the cyclist from his bike and caused him minor abrasions and some pain and he was taken to the hospital for observation, Oct. 12.

MENLO PARK

Commercial burglary report: Someone entered the parking lot of Memry Corp. on Campbell Avenue and stole 240 pounds of nickle-titanium metal with a value of about \$10,800, Oct. 11.

Residential burglary report: A resident of Waverley Street found the door to a storage room kicked in and that tools and hardware were missing from the room, Oct. 8.

Auto burglary report: Someone smashed a window of a vehicle parked near Marsh Road and Bayfront Expressway and stole a purse for a total loss estimated at \$156, including \$85 in cash, Oct. 13.

Theft reports:

■ A resident visiting the main police station on Laurel Street alleged that a relative stole \$20,000 from the family trust in the mid-1980s. The family had discovered the alleged theft in late 2010 and tried to settle it, but efforts to resolve the matter internally led to further accusations and to

the police getting involved, Oct. 7.

■ Jewelry with a value of about \$2,500 and belonging to a resident of Hamilton Avenue is missing, Oct. 12.

■ Someone stole a wallet for a total loss of about \$1,650, including \$450 in cash, from an unlocked vehicle parked on Bay Road, Oct. 10.

■ A cellphone, driver's license and debit card, with a total value of about \$240, are missing from an unlocked storage cubby at the public gym on Laurel Street, Oct. 7.

■ A cash register at the outpatient facility of the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at 321 Middlefield Road is missing \$170, Oct. 17.

■ Someone absconded with a \$157 car cover from a vehicle parked in a carport on Oak Court, Oct. 10.

■ A watch with a value of \$120 was found missing from a backpack after the backpack's owner visited Kelly Park on Terminal Avenue, Oct. 10.

■ Three people are suspected of conspiracy in the theft of \$52 worth of baby formula from the Safeway supermarket on Sharon Park Drive, Oct. 14.

Fraud report: A woman on a cab ride from San Francisco to the 1300 block of Mills Street told the cabbie upon arriving on Mills Street that she had to go inside to get money for the fare, but then never returned, Oct. 5.

Stolen vehicle report: A gray 2008 BMW was stolen from the 1100 block of El Camino Real, Oct. 16.

Halloween Heroes in Portola Valley

Girl Scouts and Cub Scouts of Portola Valley are collecting new and "gently-used" Halloween costumes to donate to the InnVision Shelter Network, which helps local homeless families.

More than 50 girls and boys from Daisies (grades K-1) Troop 62409, Brownie Troops 61728 and 62216, and Cub Scouts Pack 163 are taking part in the Halloween Heroes project.

The scouts have created banners for the drop-off zones at Ormondale and Corte Madera schools in Portola Valley. Emails to publicize the campaign were sent to scout parents and the Community Forum. The children designed collection boxes for the three collection days and organized

into teams of six to man the collection sites each day.

Over the weekends, other scouts have cleaned, organized and re-packaged the costumes for donation to homeless families.

"So far, the scouts have collected more than 125 costumes and followed every step of the project for the last month," says Brownie leader Kristi Travers. Rich Zamboldi is Bear Cub leader. Project Halloween Heroes is a first for the scout groups.

Portola Valley Girl Scouts and Cub Scouts are no strangers to community service, says Ms. Travers. They collect trash along trails and roads and carve Halloween pumpkins with residents of The Sequoias retirement community.




Brownie scouts Sophia Unnasch, left, and Lindsey Travers welcome a Halloween donation from James Wernikoff.

The New Definition of Home Care

caregiver *noun* \-,giv-,ər\
 an individual who provides direct care to the elderly or chronically ill, may or may not have experience and/or Department of Justice background check.

home care assistance caregiver *noun* \ˈhōm- \ə-ˈsɪs-tən(t)s\
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Stock #	Country/Design	Color	Size	Regular Price	Sale Price	Stock #	Country/Design	Color	Size	Regular Price	Sale Price
6959	Pakistan Sultanabad	Beige/Red	8.3 x 10.2	\$6005	\$1500	1017	India Tabriz	Black/Gold	8 x 10.1	\$6860	\$1950
4537	India Tabriz	Navy/Beige	8 x 10	\$5765	\$2650	1248	India Agra	Ivory/Red	8.2 x 10.1	\$6175	\$1650
6056	India Kohinoor	Beige/Red	7.11 x 9.11	\$5665	\$2950	3764	India Kashan	Navy/Gold	7.11 x 9.7	\$5795	\$2750
6990	India Ottoman	Beige	7.11 x 10	\$4755	\$2275	2157	India Serapi	Light Gold	7.11 x 9 x 10	\$3315	\$1350
4496	India Jaipur	Rust/Beige	7.11 x 9.11	\$4095	\$1950	4116	Persian Baktiari	Multi	7.4 x 10	\$4805	\$2650
4484	India Rajasthan	Beige	7.11 x 10	\$5705	\$2650	6991	India Soumak	Light Blue	8 x 9.10	\$2045	\$990
4479	India Rajasthan	Gold/Ivory	7.8 x 9.8	\$2745	\$1350	535	India Tabriz	Navy	7.8 x 9.10	\$3810	\$990
1132	India Tabriz	Blue/Ivory	7.11 x 10	\$7525	\$1990	1266	Pakistan Peshawar	Grey	8.1 x 9.9	\$5910	\$2150
977	India Rajasthan	Green	8.2 x 9.10	\$7630	\$2950	2089	India Tabriz	Navy	7.11 x 10	\$7910	\$3550

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6331	India Tabriz	Red/Ivory	6.1 x 8.11	\$4475	\$2125	4148	Persian Kelim	Red	6.9 x 9.8	\$2445	\$1450
6330	Iran Ardebil	Purple	6.6 x 8.10	\$5685	\$3515	6337	India Saroul	Navy	6 x 9	\$4865	\$2725
1126	Pakistan Peshawar	Beige	6 x 9.4	\$4200	\$1950	6328	India Sultanabad	Ivory/Yellow	6.3 x 9	\$5205	\$2750
6335	India Ziegler	Ivory/Yellow	6.2 x 9	\$4695	\$2525	880	India Agra	Black/Gold	5.11 x 8.9	\$3365	\$1350
4538	Iran Soumak	Brown	6 x 9.3	\$2285	\$1425	4477	India Rajasthan	Red/Ivory	6.1 x 9	\$2025	\$990

Intriguing area rugs. Unique motifs and palettes. All specially priced for this sale.

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1117	Pakistan Peshawar	Brown/Beige	6.5 x 8	\$3850	\$1250	6136	Turkish Sultanabad	Beige/Gold	6 x 9	\$1385	\$650
1293	Pakistan Peshwar	Green	6.7 x 12	\$3865	\$1525	3969	India Jaipur	Ivory	6.3 x 9	\$2815	\$1425
830	Peshawar Sultanabad	Black/Ivory	6 x 7.8	\$3500	\$1250	5373	Pakistan Sultanabad	Rose/Blue	6.7 x 8.9	\$5005	\$1550
822	Peshawar Zeigler	Multi	6 x 8.3	\$3715	\$1375	800	Pakistan Ghazani	Rust/Gold	6 x 8.8	\$3380	\$1295
5909	Iran Tabriz	Blue	5.8 x 8.3	\$3935	\$2125	6984	India Soumak	Ivory/Gold	6.3 x 8.11	\$1455	\$850

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7696	Afghan Balouch	Navy	3.5 x 6.7	\$705	\$350	7527	Turkish Kelim	Multi	3.5 x 5.9	\$485	\$250
7697	Afghan Baloch	Black	3.4 x 6.1	\$705	\$350	7694	Afghan Baloch	Rust	3.10 x 5.10	\$705	\$350
1316	Persian Soumak	Multi	3.11 x 5.10	\$2425	\$1250	7695	Afghan Baloch	Red/Navy	3.7 x 6.8	\$705	\$350
2534	Peshawar Sultanabad	Beige	4 x 6.3	\$1875	\$750	7124	Pakistan Floral	Multi	4.2 x 6.2	\$3000	\$1500
4343	Peshawar Sultanabad	Beige	4 x 6.2	\$1685	\$750	5060	Afghan Baloch	Red/Navy	4.2 x 6.2	\$755	\$450

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Stock #	Country/Design	Color	Size	Regular Price	Sale Price	Stock #	Country/Design	Color	Size	Regular Price	Sale Price
3453	India Rajasthan	Green/Gold	15.9 x 23.7	\$67,500	\$15,500	774	India Oushak	Red/Beige	11.8 x 19.5	\$12,430	\$4500
1618	India Oushak	Green/Gold	14.11 x 19.10	\$22,125	\$8500	884	India Agra	Red/Ivory	12 x 17.11	\$12,900	\$4950
1195	India Agra	Red/Navy	14.9 x 16.5	\$15,005	\$8500	546	Pakistan Zeigler	Burgandy	11.9 x 17.9	\$15,645	\$7500

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Clear choices in fire board race

The Menlo Park Fire Protection District serves Menlo Park, Atherton, East Palo Alto and a large swath of unincorporated San Mateo County. In this election, five candidates are vying for three seats, including one being vacated by Stephen Nachtsheim after only one term on the board.

Incumbents Rex Ianson and Steve Nelson are seeking re-election and are being challenged by former board member Peter Carpenter and newcomers Chuck Bernstein and Carolyn Clarke, who last year made an unsuccessful run for the Menlo Park City Council.

Although there are other issues, this race is boiling down to a fight over whether candidates should accept contributions and campaign help from the firefighters union, whose contract is expected to be up for approval in the near future.

Candidates Carpenter, Ianson and Bernstein are working together and have emphasized that they have refused any contributions or in-kind help from the union. Their reason: Fire board members should represent the best interests of the residents of the district, not the firefighters union, especially when it comes time to approve a new contract. This is important, they say, since it appears that the district and union may finally get to the bargaining table after going without a contract for the last seven years.

Ms. Clarke and Mr. Nelson, also running as a team, unabashedly admit that they are getting union support and see nothing wrong in it, although both refused to share their answers to a union questionnaire with the Almanac, saying the union asked them not to make them public.

During her Almanac interview, Ms. Clarke said she decided to enter the race after a firefighters union official suggested it as she was leaving a union interview during her run for Menlo Park City Council last year. Mr. Nelson received union help four years ago in his first campaign for the board, and often votes with Rob Silano, who was elected with union help two years ago. If Mr. Nelson and Ms. Clarke were elected it would give the union a 3-2 majority on the board, an outcome we do not believe would be in the best interest of fire district residents.

Mr. Carpenter has made no secret that he is in the race to prevent a union takeover of the board. An Atherton resident, he previously served nine years on the board and is deeply knowledgeable about fire board business. He is also a crusader for transparency, who convinced a prior board to make any proposed contract public to give residents to scrutinize it before it is ultimately passed by the board. Even his opponent Mr. Nelson admitted that Mr. Carpenter is qualified and would do a good job.

Rex Ianson, of Menlo Park, who served 36 years with the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, has a huge store of institutional knowledge about the workings of the district. And although he was a member of the union during his years as a firefighter and accepted union help in the run for his first term, he says he now firmly believes that he cannot accept the union's endorsement or support and remain an independent board member.

Chuck Bernstein lives in Menlo Park and operates his own teaching business in Palo Alto, with 140 employees. He has an MBA from Stanford and has worked for Fortune 500 companies. He also is a huge fan of, and participant in, the district's CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training. He said that if the board actively seeks more participants, CERT-qualified residents could be the backbone of the district's coverage when a disaster strikes here. He was appointed by the fire chief to serve on the CERT Advisory Board and currently serves as secretary.

In individual interviews, all the candidates voiced hope that the district's ongoing mediation with the firefighters would lead to a new contract soon. But it is perplexing that two candidates for public office, Ms. Clarke and Mr. Nelson, believe the public doesn't have the right to know how they responded to the union's questions. "If the two sides arrive at a possible contract, we think residents of the district will be far better off if Peter Carpenter, Rex Ianson and Chuck Bernstein are elected to the board. We believe they can be trusted to work out a deal that will be fair to the firefighters and district residents."

DeGolia for Atherton Council

Besides deciding whether to renew the parcel tax (see below) Atherton residents will select one of three City Council candidates to replace Jerry Carlson, who resigned in July.

Of the three candidates running, our choice is Rick DeGolia, vice chair of the Civic Center Advisory Committee and a high-tech business executive and lawyer who has some fresh ideas that we believe could improve the council's relations with the community. His opponents are Greg Conlon, a former state Public Utilities Commission member who now serves as chair of the town's finance committee, and Diane Sandhu, who is now that committee's vice chair.

In our opinion, Mr. DeGolia stands out in this race due to his insights as a longtime business executive and corporate board member and his willingness to listen, respectfully, to all ideas and try to come up with creative solutions to problems before the council and of concern to residents. His decision to get involved in town government was sparked in the last election, when he was dismayed that the proposal to build a library in Holbrook-Palmer Park was pushed "from the top down" by a slim council majority, he said.

Mr. DeGolia notes that the town was recently able to pay \$2 million toward its long-term pension obligation, which he says is due in part to the influx of many young families who are moving to Atherton and paying higher property taxes. Mr. DeGolia says these families will want playing fields, bike lanes and a safe way for pedestrians to cross El Camino Real, where several fatal accidents have occurred recently.

Mr. DeGolia did not accept support from the police union, and said he believes there is almost no possibility that the town will outsource police services. He did say that police costs and pensions, which take up more than half the town's budget, are worthy of discussion.

Mr. DeGolia is a candidate who will make sensible decisions as a council member. He vows to listen to residents and says he will try to make the council's decisions as transparent as possible. He is not endorsed by any current council members, who split 2-2 on many issues, so Mr. DeGolia could be a swing vote. We urge voters to elect Rick DeGolia to the Atherton City Council.

Parcel tax wise choice

Despite its ranking as one of the most affluent ZIP codes in the country, Atherton's local government has often struggled to meet its budget obligations. And one way it has traditionally made up for its lack of income is by asking voters every four years to approve a \$750 annual parcel tax. The money in

Continued on next page



Atherton Heritage Association

Our Regional Heritage

Then Atherton resident Lucie Stern gazes fondly at her daughter Ruth, who suffered from epilepsy, during a moment at the Stern's Byde-A-Whyle 30-acre estate, located where today's Polhemus Avenue and Selby Lane meet. After her husband Louis died in 1924, Lucie stayed on until 1932, when architect Birge Clark designed two side-by-side homes for her in Palo Alto, where she became a generous philanthropist, funding the Community Center, the children's library and the Sea Scout base.

PARCEL TAX

continued from page 18

recent years has been split 60-40 between police and public works improvements. Four years ago, the parcel tax was approved with a 77.4 percent margin.

This election, the tax is once again on the ballot, and has attracted some opponents who say the town is in much better financial shape than it was in 2010, so consequently voters don't need to impose the tax on themselves.

All four City Council members (a fifth will be elected Nov. 5) have endorsed the tax. Although they submitted their arguments too late to be included in the voter guide, a small group of parcel tax opponents, including former City Council member Kathy McKeithen, has surfaced. Although some may have other reasons, the core goal of this effort is to force a discussion of outsourcing the police department. In addition, they say the city has plenty of revenue and can easily get by without the tax.

In our view, there is no reason not to pass the tax, which can be adjusted by the council every year, from zero to the entire amount. But today's budget surplus in Atherton may be gone next year, and if there is no parcel tax, the town will have to cover all police costs and whatever public works are planned out of the general fund.

And even if the town has signed a favorable labor agreement with the Atherton Police Officers' Association, which will save about 5 percent or more over last year, it still makes sense to approve the parcel tax. We doubt if the \$750 annual levy will create a significant hardship for any resident, and the council can certainly cut back the assessment anytime it wants. We urge Atherton residents to approve the parcel tax on Nov. 5.

Incumbents, Pollioni look best

Woodside Elementary School has escaped the runaway enrollment growth found in Menlo Park's Las Lomas and Menlo Park City school districts, but nevertheless, school officials are likely to seek voter approval of a bond issue in the next year or so, to upgrade classrooms and other facilities at the 451-student school.

In the school board race four candidates are vying for three seats, and responded to an Almanac questionnaire. Our endorsements are based on their answers to those questions.

Woodside Elementary has always provided a top-quality education for its students, who routinely post test score results that are among the top in the state. The one-school district also benefits from a strong education foundation, which funnels more than \$1 million into the district every year.

In this race, voters are fortunate to have two excellent incumbents — board president Wendy Warren Roth and Marc Tarpinning — and two well-qualified challengers — Robert Hooper and Claire Pollioni. Our choices are the incumbents and Ms. Pollioni.

Wendy Warren Roth has a long history of working in the district, including nine years with the foundation before joining the board in 2009. She helped design a long-term strategic plan for the district and helped guide the district as it began the transition to the Common Core standards. In response to concerns that working parents cannot attend the afternoon board meetings, she said she was open to trying later meetings, although she recalled that when tried before, very few, if any, spectators showed up in the evening.

Marc Tarpinning, vice president, has served four years on the board, and said he is eager to help the school through the implementation of the Common Core curriculum over the next two years. Along with other board members, he has supported increased professional development for teachers, including experimentation with strategies aligned with critical thinking and Common Core goals.

He supports a bond measure to help repair and remodel some of the school's buildings, and create new space for project-based hands-on learning.

Ms. Pollioni, a longtime parent volunteer and PTA member since 2005, has been involved with the district's Facilities Committee and was liaison from the PTA to the board. She considers the district's support of teacher development a factor that will help with the implementation of the Common Core standards. She believes it is important that students graduate with strong writing and communication skills as well as math, which she would like to see emphasized in the years ahead.

Robert Hooper, a former teacher, also is well-qualified, although we prefer Ms. Pollioni due to her long commitment to the district.

We urge Woodside residents to vote for Wendy Warren Roth, Marc Tarpinning and Claire Pollioni for the three seats on the Woodside Elementary School board.

Menlo Park celebrates with sesquicentennial weekend

By Peter Ohtaki

Over the weekend, Caltrain celebrated the 150th anniversary of train service from San Francisco to Menlo Park, which began in 1863. I also had the honor of commemorating another sesquicentennial event: signing a friendship agreement between Menlo Park and the city of Galway, Ireland. These two events are linked by our history.

Just three months after the Civil War battle of Gettysburg and one month before Lincoln's Gettysburg address, at the western edge of the continent, a railroad line began service from San Francisco half way down the Peninsula. At the end of the line, workers saw a gate built by two men from Galway, Dennis Oliver and Daniel McGlynn, that had the words "Menlo Park" on it, named after their beloved village of Menlough in Galway. The train station was named Menlo Park, and so, our town was born.

It is appropriate to pause and celebrate the 150th anniversary of Menlo Park as a town, even though we weren't incorporated until much later. It gives us an opportunity to look back on where we've come and to look forward to our

future.

We've seen a lot of changes in Menlo Park since 1863. Then, we were considered a suburb of San Francisco — a place for business people to escape for the summer. Through the 1970s, the train carried commuters primarily to jobs in San Francisco.

Over the last few decades, we've been considered a charming suburb in Silicon Valley, as folks began commuting south. More recently, Menlo Park has become a center of global innovation, with the location here of Facebook and major venture capital firms that now fund start-ups worldwide. As I like to say, in many ways, the future begins in Menlo Park.

So it's not a surprise that 150 years later, we are challenged with balancing two highly desired but often conflicting goals in our community — maintaining village character while encouraging economic vibrancy. I believe we are in the enviable position of embracing our status as a center for innovation while managing its impact on our residential quality of life. We welcome your input in this ongoing dialogue.

Peter Ohtaki is mayor of Menlo Park



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