

Menlo Park: More than 30 burglaries,  
thefts in one week | Page 7

# The Almanac

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

MARCH 12, 2014 | VOL. 49 NO. 27

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Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

**Don Pugh** shares a moment with his quarter horse Nevada at the grounds of the Mounted Patrol of San Mateo County. Mr. Pugh, a Woodside resident and the Patrol's mount sergeant, received the Outstanding Horseperson-Citizen Award for 2013.

## On horseback, he has done it all

Mounted Patrol names Don Pugh Horseperson-Citizen of the year

By **Dave Boyce**

Almanac Staff Writer

Horses have had a remarkable influence on the second half of Woodside resident Don Pugh's life.

Mr. Pugh, 68, began riding horses at 36 and was so taken by it that when IBM made clear its intentions to transfer him from Woodside to Georgia a few years later, he declined and he and the company went their separate ways.

In the years since, Mr. Pugh, now a technical consultant and a resident of Woodside for 40 years, has cut out cattle from a herd like a cowboy, hunted on horseback with dogs like an English lord, traversed mountain trails like a native tribesman, and gamed like a sixth-century B.C. Persian horse soldier.

He's been on the town's Trails Committee since 1999 and is a longtime advocate on behalf of equestrian trails, according

to a biography by the Mounted Patrol of San Mateo County announcing that Mr. Pugh is the recipient of the Outstanding Horseperson-Citizen Award for 2013.

In an interview at the Patrol grounds in Woodside, Mr. Pugh talked about his 165-mile trip around Lake Tahoe on his quarter horse Nevada. "It's a tough, tough ride," he said. You're on the trail by 8 a.m. and in the saddle for six or seven hours, he said. You're bone tired at day's end, he said, but ahead is unpacking, setting up camp, making dinner and cleaning up so bears won't visit and breakfast will go smoothly. You're in your sleeping bag by 9, he said.

Being active in the mountains usually demands fitness, given the lower oxygen content of the air, but for riders it's not bad, Mr. Pugh said. "You have to have your horse in shape," he added, but it's a way to enjoy the high country without having to hike with legs and lungs that

have seen fitter days.

When he hunts by horse, it's typically on a large cattle ranch and he's in an English saddle and wearing formal clothes. In the English fox-hunting style, including the camaraderie, they chase fox hounds who chase coyotes — an animal that ranchers are happy to have as the target. "Pretty much, we don't catch them," Mr. Pugh said.

In team penning, a sport played in an arena with about 30 head of cattle, the challenge for the three-rider team is simple but demanding. Under the pressure of a stop watch, the team approaches the herd, finds and cuts out three specified animals, and attempts to drive them into a pen at the other end of the arena. Mr. Pugh took it up in 1993 and has won more than \$500 at it.

Polo is thought to have Persian roots. Mr. Pugh has played since the mid-1990s, in Atherton at

See **HORSEPERSON**, page 6

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

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# Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

## Design, name chosen for new Menlo school

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

A single two-story building housing 16 classrooms and larger spaces for music, science and arts instruction will be built on the Menlo Park City School District's "O'Connor" site in Menlo Park's Willows neighborhood — a plan unanimously endorsed by the school board last month.

The new third- to fifth-grade school will be the district's fourth elementary school facility, and will ease the growing enrollment strain on Encinal, Laurel and Oak Knoll schools when it opens in mid-2016.

The space will house 360 students, but the campus is designed in such a way that it can be converted to a K-5 school with classroom conversions and a building addition next to the gym.

The school will have a recognizable name: Laurel. It will be a second campus for the existing K-3 Laurel School a short distance away in Atherton. When the new school opens, the existing Laurel will enroll kindergarten through second-grade children, who will move to the new campus beginning in third grade. The district is still deciding on secondary names



Design by Deems Lewis McKinley Architecture

A rendering of the planned two-story school on the old O'Connor School campus in the Willows. The view is from Elliott Drive.

for both schools to distinguish one from the other.

Last November, district voters overwhelmingly approved a \$23 million bond measure to pay for the new school at 275 Elliott Drive, where the district once operated O'Connor School before declining enrollment led to its closure.

Designed by Deems Lewis McKinley Architecture, which also designed the district's Hillview Middle School, the new school building will be about

54,565 square feet, and will include 14 standard classrooms of 960 square feet and two 1,100-square-foot classrooms. The classrooms will be built in a way that allows the combination of two to three spaces for collaborative projects.

The design also provides for additional flexible space — a feature that's become more desirable as modern education trends move toward hands-on, collaborative learning.

The plan also includes a

2,000-square-foot library, a 5,000-square-foot multi-use gym, a stage, a warming kitchen, and administrative offices. The gym is designed to allow community use without permitting access to the school's interior.

The existing building will be demolished. The campus has been leased since 1991 to the private German-American International School, which is applying for permits to move to a site in North Fair Oaks next year after its lease expires.

### Access

The board also approved a plan that preserves the current automobile access to the school from Elliott Drive, but directs bus traffic through an existing gate on Oak Court — a development a number of residents of that street aren't happy about.

Oak Court residents have written emails and attended school board and city meetings arguing against allowing vehicle

See **MENLO SCHOOL**, page 8

## Jim Dobbie resigns from Atherton council

By Renee Batti

Almanac News Editor

Jim Dobbie, an Atherton City Council member for the last six years, has resigned from the council, only eight months before his term was to end. He is suffering from an as-yet undiagnosed health problem that has left him too frail to continue serving, according to his wife, Pat.

Mr. Dobbie, 83, submitted his resignation letter on March 4, citing personal reasons. Pat Dobbie said her husband has for the last few months battled a strange respiratory condition, and despite undergoing numerous tests by "outstanding" doctors, the cause remains a mystery.

"For the last three or four months, (the ailment) has been



Jim Dobbie

gathering speed," Ms. Dobbie said. Despite his declining health, he has attended most council meetings, although he missed the regular meeting of the council last month, she said.

The Dobbies, who have lived in Atherton for 20 years, are still "very hopeful" that he will recover from his illness, as he did early in his council tenure when he battled another serious health crisis, she said. "He's just very sorry to let

his constituents down," she said.

The council will discuss how to proceed at its March 19 meeting, according to Mayor Cary Wiest. Options include appointing someone to fill the seat until

See **JIM DOBBIE**, page 8

## Police pick cop for Facebook-funded post

■ Council accepts social networking company's offer of up to \$220,000 a year

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

Within two days of the Menlo Park City Council voting 5-0 to accept Facebook's offer to fund a police officer position for at least three years, the police department selected Officer Mary Ferguson-Dixon to fill the position.

During the March 4 council meeting, Police Chief Robert Jonsen described the agreement as "a benchmark in public-private partnership" that would benefit youth and businesses within the wider community, not just Menlo Park.

Facebook, with headquarters located not far from where a new substation will

open within a strip mall at Hamilton Avenue and Willow Road this spring, offered to pay the city up to \$220,000 a year to underwrite the full-time, sworn officer position. It will also consider renewing the agreement for another two years.

The officer, like any other, will work solely for the city, not Facebook. According to the police chief, the work will focus on schools and kids, with priorities that include responding to any school incidents and creating programs designed to reconnect



Mary Ferguson-Dixon

truants with their schools.

Creating safety plans for responding to "man-made assaults ... the most violent types of attacks that come upon our most sacred ground, schools" will also be a priority, according to Chief Jonsen. The planning will also encompass local businesses.

Calling it a "win win win" situation for the city, the community and the police department, the Menlo Park City Council voted unanimously to accept the offer.

"Thank you, Facebook. Your generosity speaks for itself," Councilman Rich Cline said, then asked how the effectiveness of the posi-

See **POLICE**, page 8

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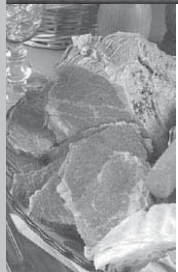
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## Menlo man dies of burns from fireworks explosion

Randy Mark Feldman of Menlo Park died on Feb. 27 in a Las Vegas hospital from severe burns suffered when fireworks in the trunk of a car exploded Feb. 12 in Lake Havasu City, Arizona.

Mr. Feldman, 59, was in Havasu for the Western Pyrotechnics Association's aerial-fireworks event, according to the News-Herald in Lake Havasu.

The incident happened when Mr. Feldman, a longtime member of the association, was driving on State Route 95 in Havasu. Fireworks' casings were strewn along the road, and the driver stopped and got out of the car to investigate, according to the News-Herald.

"That's when the back (of the car) blew up," said Battalion Chief Mike Quijada of Lake Havasu City Fire Department.

Mr. Feldman was evacuated by

air to Las Vegas, where he died Feb. 27 in Sunrise Hospital, surrounded by his family.

The family said he was a man of many talents who could fix anything, would help anyone and talk to everyone.

He was married to Linda Feldman for 28 years; father to Jessica Lynn and Alison Michelle; son to Bernard and Ellen Feldman and Marian Hammer; brother to Michael, Daniel, Adam and Marshall; and uncle to many nieces and nephews.

The family prefers memorial donations in his name to: The Firefighters of Southern Nevada Burn Foundation, 3111 S. Valley View Blvd., Suite B -111, Las Vegas, NV 89102; The Lion's Burn Care Center at University Medical Center, 1800 W. Charleston Blvd., Las Vegas, NV 89102; or to a charity of the donor's choice.

## Scam: Paying to avoid arrest

Deputies from the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office say that residents have been receiving bogus phone calls claiming that arrest warrants have been issued in their name. The caller, who poses as an employee of the Sheriff's Office, says that to avoid arrest, residents must buy a prepaid GreenDot debit card. The Sheriff's Office is not mak-

ing such calls, deputies said.

Residents who receive such a call should ask the caller for contact numbers and other identifying details and then, using "publicly available resources," check into the caller's story.

Residents who have been victims of this type of scam should call their local law enforcement agency.

## HORSEPERSON

*continued from page 3*

the Menlo Circus Club and elsewhere. "When you're (playing polo), you're using every muscle in your body," he said. Asked if the sport is dangerous, given the close quarters, athletic jostling and large animals, Mr. Pugh replied: "Everything in life is dangerous."

He has competed in horse trials, including dressage, jumping and cross country, according to the bio. In 2000, Mr. Pugh and his wife Sandie traveled to Ireland and rode sport horses known for their athleticism, including jumping over walls and down banks.

Woodside resident and author Rebekah Witter helps equestrians develop good working relationships with horses. The Almanac asked for a comment on Mr. Pugh's award. "He is the ultimate horseman," Ms. Witter said. "He is a horseman (who)

does it all ... a wonderful ambassador for the horse community."

His breadth of equestrian interests "are measures of the full relationship of the horse to the human," Ms. Witter said. He is a "huge fundraiser" for the trail system, she added.

Mr. Pugh joined the Mounted Patrol in 1986 and is the current mount sergeant. He's been a regular participant on major annual rides. He has a bachelor's degree in mechanical engineering from Bucknell University, and master's degrees in business and computer science from Stanford University. He was a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army and served in Vietnam.

"For all Don has done for the equestrian community, and as an exemplar of what it means to be a horseman, Don was chosen for this honor," Patrol spokesman Bill Wraith said. "We all congratulate him and wish him further success in his endeavors — it benefits all of us!" ■

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# 30 burglaries, thefts in a week

By Dave Boyce  
Almanac Staff Writer

March got off to a rough start in Menlo Park, where victims of crime extended from the west to the east sides of town. A \$9,000 wedding ring, a \$1,000 sweater and two potholders are among the items stolen in more than 30 burglaries and thefts.

Menlo Park police on Monday, March 3, arrested and booked into San Mateo County jail Fabian Hagnere, 29, of Redwood City and Jessica Lawler, 22, of San Jose. The two are suspects in some 17 burglaries and thefts on March 3 in the area of Hedge Road in the Flood Park neighborhood of Menlo Park.

Mr. Hagnere faces burglary charges and being under the influence of a controlled substance. Ms. Lawler also faces controlled-substance charges and was booked into jail on a parole hold, police said.

Police responded to reports of two people in a heated argument in the area of Bay Road and Harmon Drive. A search turned up one person hiding behind a parked vehicle on Lorelei Lane and another running from the area of Marsh and Bay roads, police said.

A search also turned up a large amount of stolen property hidden in the rear yard of a residence, including property from the reported burglaries and thefts, police said.

At around 7:45 a.m. on March 3, police were called about an overnight burglary of an occupied residence in the 100 block of Hedge Road. The house had been entered via a rear door and someone stole \$14,800 in goods, including an Apple iPad, a Kindle Fire, a purse, digital recorder, camera, two laptop computers and two men's watches, police

said.

While on that scene, police received more reports of residential and vehicle burglaries and thefts in the same area.

Two auto burglaries on Oakhurst Place led to the loss of a \$300 pair of sunglasses and \$1 in change from one vehicle, and from another \$90 in cash, gift cards and movie tickets, police said. One vehicle was locked and the other unlocked.

An unlocked vehicle on Hedge Road yielded a blood-pressure cuff in another burglary; the cuff was later recovered, police said.

Thieves opened nine more unlocked vehicles parked on Hedge Road, Greenwood Drive and Oakhurst Place. Some were left ransacked without anything missing, police said. The stolen items, many of which were recovered, included a \$100 hand-held marine radio, a total of \$238 in cash, gift cards, the two potholders, checkbooks, and identification materials.

In a house on Theresa Court, someone tried to climb in through an unlocked bathroom window, but fled after encountering a resident, police said.

## More burglaries

The \$9,000 wedding ring was reported stolen from a dresser drawer of a residence on Santa Cruz Avenue on March 4. The ring was later pawned, police said. A Santa Cruz Avenue home under construction was robbed of \$1,234 in bathroom fixtures, police said in a March 1 report.

Two bicycles locked together and having a total value of \$4,298 were stolen from an Arbor Avenue carport, according to a March 6 report.

On Ivy Drive in an incident reported March 1, someone entered a home, possibly

through an unlocked door, and stole three gold bracelets and a gold ring for a total loss of about \$1,500, police said.

Someone entered a Woodland Avenue home through an open window and stole change and a flashlight, a loss of \$35, police said in a March 3 report.

In two incidents on Continental Drive reported Feb. 28 and March 5, would-be burglars made attempts at entry. One house showed holes drilled into a back door and in the other, someone used a crowbar on a rear sliding door, police said.

A man entered Draeger's Supermarket at 1010 University Drive with an empty shopping bag and walked out with it full of groceries that he hadn't paid for. The groceries were recovered and the suspect, a San Francisco man, was arrested, police said.

A scattering of auto burglaries, including two involving smashed windows and one with a door pried open, left the owners bereft of a \$500 radar detector (on Garwood Way), and a pair of sunglasses and a USB drive for a loss of \$360 (on Encinal Avenue). Nothing was taken in the other two incidents, police said.

## Thieves at large

Someone left a necklace in a hotel room on Sand Hill Road but did not notice its absence until arriving home, police said. The necklace, a \$3,840 value, was not in the hotel room when the victim contacted the hotel, according to a March 3 report.

A woman sitting in a chair in the 2800 block of Sand Hill Road had placed on the chair next to her a Louis Vuitton purse containing a Gucci wallet, \$20 in cash and an Apple iPhone. She

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# Voters have choices for few county offices

South San Mateo County voters won't have choices in who will be their sheriff, their district attorney, or their superintendent of schools, but they will choose whether to return a supervisor, the coroner, and the assessor to office on June 3.

District 3 Supervisor Don Horsley will face businessman and victim's advocate Michael Stogner at the ballot box. Mr. Stogner was one of five candidates for the seat in 2010, which Mr. Horsley won after a run-off election with April Vargas.

Mark Church, the current assessor-county clerk-recorder, is being challenged by businessman John K. Mooney. And incumbent

Robert Jon Foucrault and small business owner Rick Dalton are in a contest for the top job in the coroner's office.

With current controller Bob Adler choosing not to run, assistant controller Juan Raigoza is in a race for that office against Joe Galligan, a certified public accountant. The filing deadline, which ended March 7 for races in which incumbents filed papers to run again, has been extended to March 12 in the controller's race.

There is a second contested race for the Board of Supervisors, but voters in the Almanac's circulation area won't be able to vote in it because, under new rules, only residents of a district can vote for

their district representative. District 2 Supervisor Carole Groom is being challenged by retired businessman Mark De Paula.

District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe, Superintendent Anne Campbell, Sheriff Greg Munks, and Treasurer-Tax Collector Sandie Arnott are set to coast back into office without pause; there are no challengers for those posts.

Juan Pablo Lopez had taken out papers to run for sheriff, but didn't qualify for the ballot, according to the final roster from the San Mateo County Elections Office. Mr. Lopez couldn't be reached for comment by the Almanac's press time. ■

## REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



### The Spring Market is Here

The daffodils and California poppies are up and the clocks have moved ahead! The days are getting longer with more hours to enjoy looking at real estate, and more properties are coming on the market. The spring real estate market, typically the biggest market of the year, has arrived! This is the time when you can purchase a home and settle in by summertime. Interest rates are still very low and it is an excellent time to lock in a low rate for the next thirty years.

The best first step is to meet

with your realtor and decide on a plan of action. Then meet with a good lender to obtain loan approval before you make an offer on a home. You will then be prepared to move quickly on a purchase if you find a good property. You may look at five or fifty homes before you buy but if you stay engaged, you should find the right home for you. This is probably the biggest purchase you will make so have fun with it. Good preparation will put you in the best position to be successful.

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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## Jim Dobbie resigns from Atherton council

*continued from page 5*

December, when the post will be filled by a successful candidate in the November election.

Mayor Wiest noted that the council has many important matters before it — including passage of a budget for the next fiscal year, which was the subject of a public study session on March 5 at which Mr. Dobbie's resignation was announced. "We'll certainly miss him," Mr. Wiest said.

Mr. Dobbie served a four-year term on the town's Planning Commission before his 2008 election to a two-year council seat. He ran successfully for re-election in 2010.

He was a key player in the town's efforts to whittle down and

ultimately eliminate a structural budgetary deficit. He served as mayor in 2011, when in an effort to reduce employee costs the town laid off a majority of its non-police staff members and hired private contractors to provide services.

On an often-divided council, Mr. Dobbie was considered part of the council majority when Kathy McKeithen, a three-term council member who didn't seek re-election in 2012, was part of the mix. Since Ms. McKeithen left the council, Mr. Dobbie and Councilman Bill Widmer have often cast the minority votes — most recently, opposing the size of the planned Little League grandstand, which the council majority approved to accommodate up to 200 people. ■

## POLICE

*continued from page 5*

tion would be assessed.

Chief Jonsen said it was "very measurable" and, as an example, cited using data analysis to see if there's a correlation between reduction in crime and a reduction in truancy, which he described as "a gateway to crime."

This is the first time a private company has offered to foot the bill for a police officer in Menlo Park, according to City Attorney Bill McClure. The social networking company is also helping to pay for the new Belle Haven substation itself.

### Officer Ferguson-Dixon

An eight-year employee with the city's police department, Officer Ferguson-Dixon already has a head start on the position.

She created a truancy-abatement program four years ago, according to the police department, that included visiting homes to shed light on why children were skipping school.

Part of her new responsibilities will include working with Sgt. Kevin Paugh, one of the department's critical incident instructors, to create safety plans and deliver safety presentations to the community.

She earned a bachelor's degree in criminal justice and sociology, and has also attended multiple training programs on juvenile diversion and truancy, the department said in a press release.

Cmdr. Dave Bertini told the Almanac that the department has a new officer ready to be hired to fill Officer Ferguson-Dixon's previous position. He expects the recruit to start at the end of March. ■

## MENLO SCHOOL

*continued from page 5*

access, whether buses or passenger cars, on the narrow street, which has no sidewalks.

Resident Bob Arabian said he and several other leaders in the effort to minimize traffic impacts of the school on their street are "trying to do our best to work through the process" with the district. The residents "are still somewhat divided" on the issue, with "one camp that doesn't want any entry (of buses) through Oak Court, and a camp that's trying to make peace with the board's decision."

Mr. Arabian said a key concern of residents is that allowing buses now could create the proverbial "slippery slope," leading

to gradual easing of restrictions on additional vehicle access and pressure to construct sidewalks on what he characterizes as "a narrow country lane."

Ahmad Sheikholeslami, the district's facilities and operations director, noted that the district looked at several options — ultimately narrowed down to three alternatives — and that the board's decision was made after much analysis, working with city staff, and hearing public comment.

He said the district is still working on details of the plan, however, and is looking to form an advisory committee with community members; among other questions, the committee will try to address issues with the new school's neighbors. ■

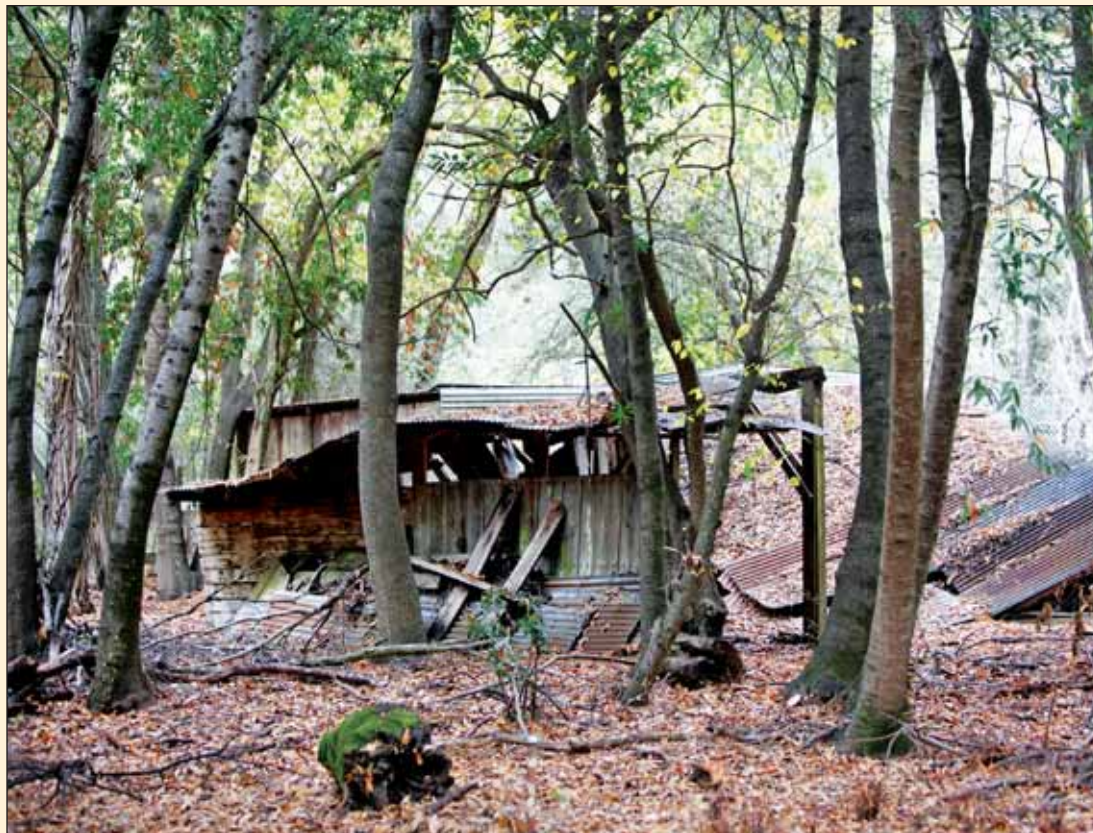


Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

**Dust to dust, ashes to ashes.** It is the beginning and end of everything and everyone, including this complex of accessory structures at the Hawthorns estate in Portola Valley.

## Open space district looking for partners, ideas for Hawthorns estate

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District is looking for partners to collaborate on finding uses for the Hawthorns Historic Complex, a former estate that is home to a century-old mansion and several other structures. The estate is on 79 acres of steep meadows and forests between Los Trancos and Alpine roads in Portola Valley.

"Time is of the essence to develop a partnership, given that the buildings continue to be exposed and impacted by the elements," the district says in a statement. At the end of March, the district will issue a solicitation for letters of interest, which include information about

the estate and parameters for establishing partnerships.

The district's website includes a study of the estate structures' history, which begins around 1875 with the building of a large barn and house. The two-story mansion followed in 1886, then a large garage in 1916, and a modern one-story home in 1952, the study says. The older structures clearly show the effects of decades of weathering. The mansion and other houses are boarded up and numerous out-buildings are in various stages of falling down.

District staff are looking for conceptual proposals and discussions to "narrow down

the list of viable partnerships," the statement says. For more information, contact district Planner Ariel Shaw at (650) 691-1200.

Go to [tinyurl.com/haw452](http://tinyurl.com/haw452) for links to the historic study and reports on the structural integrity of the buildings and the geological circumstances of the property. The notorious San Andreas fault runs through Portola Valley.

The district came into possession of the Hawthorns in 2011 and has attached it to the adjacent Windy Hill Open Space Preserve, one of 26 preserves on some 62,000 acres on both sides of the Coast Range from Woodside to Sunnyvale and Los Gatos.

## Ex-symphony head accused of embezzlement, forgery

By Nick Veronin

*Mountain View Voice*

The former executive director of the Peninsula Symphony Association has been accused of embezzling hundreds of thousands of dollars from the decades-old Los Altos community orchestra.

Stephen Jay Carlton, a 45-year-old Novato resident, is facing multiple felony charges, including grand theft, embezzlement,

forgery, identity theft and tax evasion.

He faces up to 18 years in prison if he is convicted.

Mr. Carlton came under suspicion in September 2013 after one of the association's board members was alerted that the 65-year-old nonprofit's funds were unusually low, according to a press release issued by the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office.

Mr. Carlton resigned shortly

after board members brought the issue to the Los Altos Police Department. One of the symphony's endowments dropped from \$227,000 to \$375; another was depleted by nearly \$200,000 — going from \$195,000 to \$395.

In a subsequent investigation, it was shown that Mr. Carlton had used association checks to pay himself, prosecutors said. He is accused of forging the signatures of two board members on a number of the checks, taking out an unauthorized \$25,000 loan in the association's name, and using the money to pay down personal debts. ■



# New housing complex proposed next door to new housing complex

By Sandy Brundage  
Almanac Staff Writer

People who move into the apartment complex being built by St. Anton's and Facebook on Haven Avenue will have neighbors sooner rather than later, according to a project proposed by another developer.

Greystar LLC has submitted an application to build a 146-unit complex at 3645 Haven Ave. in Menlo Park, according to the city.

Still in the preliminary stages, the project will first undergo an initial evaluation by planning staff. A formal submission of plans will follow in the next few months, and the project will then proceed through a Planning Commission study session

as well as further staff evaluation.

Headquartered in Charleston with an office in San Francisco, Greystar has built about 60 apartment complexes across the United States during the past 16 years, according to the company's website.

In the meantime, St. Anton awaits an answer to its request to include fewer below-market-rate apartments in its 394-unit complex at 3639 Haven Ave. Menlo Park's community development department needs to approve the change, and planning staff said the request is likely to be granted, although it probably won't be finalized for several weeks.

The original plan included 38 affordable housing units. Now

St. Anton has asked the city to lower that by 16, although of the 22 remaining units, rents would decrease to be affordable to those earning "very low income," defined as \$56,550 a year for a family of four and \$39,600 for an individual. Previously, those units targeted a higher income category.

Facebook would continue to subsidize 15 affordable housing units that will be income-restricted for 55 years.

Senior Planner Deanna Chow noted that St. Anton's new distribution of BMR units still complies with state law. The very low income units would be a nice addition, she said, since those are difficult to get, particularly in a market-rate development. ■

# Traditional and transitional

Eileen Bocci brings a new look to a familiar location

By Jane Knoerle  
Almanac Lifestyles Editor

Traditionally Derby, located at 850 Santa Cruz Ave. in downtown Menlo Park, opened last August in the site formerly occupied by Traditions. The store is a blend of the old and the new, giving a "today" look, while carrying some of the former store's lines.

Owner Eileen Bocci lives in San Carlos, but is no stranger to Menlo Park. She often stopped at Traditions after dropping her kids off at Sacred Heart Prep. Although this is her first retail venture, she has had a design studio for 10 years and grew up with antiques and design. (Her mother had an antique store).

The name Traditionally Derby is an acronym, combining Tradition with Design by ERB, her initials. She employs a staff of five for the 5,500-square-foot showroom; two are interior

## ■ BUSINESS

During the past year, a half dozen new home furnishings and interior design stores have opened in downtown Menlo Park. During the next few weeks, the Almanac plans to profile several of them.

designers available to customers. The store manager is Amy Templeton, who had worked at Traditions the last two years.

The store features a broad selection of upholstered sofas and chairs, tables, desks, beds and more. It carries Kindel Furniture, Hickory White, Lillian August Collection, and MT Company including Shabby Chic, among others. There are also works of art from the Dorothy Draper collection. (Dorothy Draper was one of the 20th century's most famous designers.)

Ms. Bocci points out a crescent-shaped Dorothy Draper

sofa covered with gray velvet. (Gray is the new neutral, she says.) The sofa was decorated with several pillows, including a luscious cream silk creation embroidered with silver leaves.

Beautiful pillows, mirrors, rugs, candlesticks, painted Italian urns, table linens, luxurious bed lines, framed prints and more are available as household accessories. Ms. Bocci carries Arte Italica, vintage-inspired tableware combining porcelain and pewter.

There are also tempting gift items scattered about the store, such as faux flowers in a square glass vase or Manhattan scented candles in a velvet-lined case. Derby also offers complimentary gift wrap.

Customers range from the late 20s to the 80s with a definite input from the tech generation. Asked if Facebook and Google employees were shopping, Ms. Bocci said there is definitely a tech presence. "The younger generation usually knows what they want. They're decisive."

Ms. Bocci is proud of the extensive Design Library at the back of the store filled with fabrics for special order upholstery, window treatments, pillows and bedding. Derby's home design workroom does custom upholstery and draperies.

"Our Design Library is a unique space. It eliminates all those trips to the Design Center in San Francisco. We let our customers check out items. Then they can just drop them off in the mail slot in the back door," she says. ■



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Owner Eileen Bocci at her store, Traditionally Derby.

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## City releases title and summary for proposed specific plan initiative

By Sandy Brundage  
Almanac Staff Writer

The official title of the proposed specific plan initiative is a mouthful, in the way government titles tend to be: “An initiative measure proposing amendments to the City of Menlo Park general plan and Menlo Park 2012 El Camino Real/Downtown specific plan limiting office development, modifying open space requirements, and requiring voter approval for new non-residential projects that exceed specified development limits.”

The city announced the title and summary in a news release on March 6, along with a few comments from Menlo Park’s top official.

“It’s a fundamental right of any community member to utilize ballot initiatives,” said City Manager Alex McIntyre. “As a community, we must also respect and honor the integrity of the public process that created this Plan. The issues raised by the initiative were examined, debated, and reconciled during that process.”

Save Menlo, a grassroots coalition organized to protest the specific plan once a large mixed-use development was proposed along El Camino Real, notified the city in February of its intent to get the initiative on to a ballot.

The city’s summary of the initiative states that it would cap office space in any individual development at 100,000 square feet; limit total new office space approved after the specific plan took effect to 240,820 square feet, and restrict overall new, non-residential development to 474,000 square feet within the plan’s boundaries.

In addition, according to the summary, the City Council would not be able to change these provisions. Voter approval would be needed to revise the ordinance or to exceed the square footage limits for office and non-residential development. However, voter approval would not be needed to go over a 680 residential unit cap.

The initiative would also redefine open space to mean only areas no higher than 4 feet tall. Save Menlo has stated that one of its goals is to prevent balconies from counting as open space.

Former planning commissioner Patti Fry, who co-sponsored the initiative at Save Menlo’s request, said the city’s summary was adequate, and neutral “as it’s supposed to be.”

Projects that obtain building permits before the proposed revisions take effect would be built under the current specific plan regulations, but would

count against the square-footage limits of the initiative.

A “severability clause” states that if any part of the measure is invalidated, the remaining provisions would still remain in effect. A “priority clause” would allow the initiative to supersede all conflicting ordinances and policies, according to the city’s analysis. Finally, should another measure on the same ballot compete with the initiative, that other measure would be voided should the initiative get more votes.

The changes appear to target two mixed-use development proposals already on the horizon; the proposed measure would slice the amount of office space allowed in those developments by about half.

Stanford University and developer John Arrillaga want to build a complex on the mostly vacant car lots along 300 to 500 El Camino Real. The 8.4-acre project would involve 199,500 square feet of office space, 10,000 square feet of retail, and up to 170 apartments.

A second project, designed by Greenheart LLC, would put 210,000 square feet of office space, 210,000 square feet of apartments and 13,000 square feet of retail on the 7-acre site located at 1300 El Camino Real and Oak Grove Avenue.

Save Menlo has until mid-July to collect the estimated 1,780 signatures of registered voters needed to put its initiative on the November ballot, or 2,670 to call a special election. Should it make a ballot, the measure then needs a majority vote for approval.

Menlo Park Mayor Ray Mueller told the Almanac he thinks the city should hire an independent consultant to analyze the initiative, then hold a public hearing sooner rather than later to compare proposed changes with the current specific plan. ■

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### Library book sale this weekend

It’s time to stock up on reading material again (and help the local library, too). The Menlo Park Friends of the Library sale runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, March 15. All books sell for full price that day.

On Sunday, March 16, from noon to 2 p.m., the event will hold its “\$5 bag

sale,” when patrons can fill a purchased bag with as many books as they can fit. If you only want to buy the books, and not the bags, the price of the books will be half off.

The event will be held both indoors and outdoors at the main Menlo Park Library at 800 Alma St.

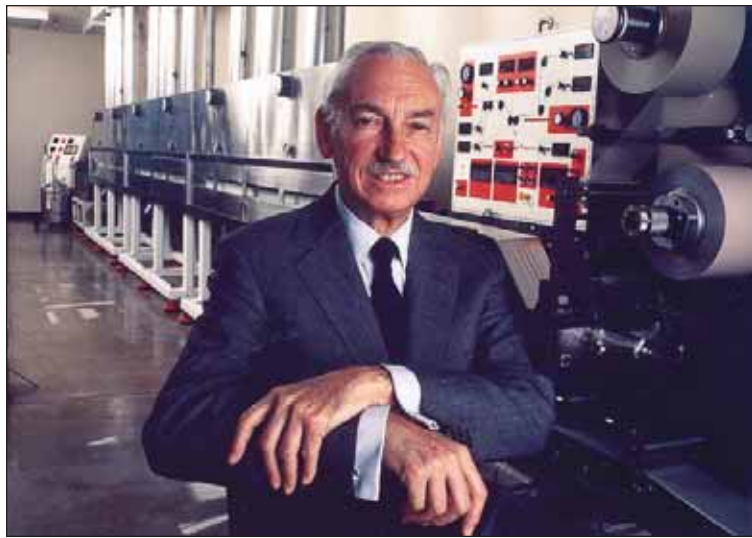


Photo courtesy of the Zaffaroni family

**Alejandro Zaffaroni** was widely considered a pioneer in drug delivery and the field of biotechnology.

## Biotech innovator Zaffaroni dies at 91

By Stanford News Service

**A**lejandro Zaffaroni, an innovator in biotechnology and drug delivery systems, died peacefully at home in Atherton on March 1 at age 91.

Mr. Zaffaroni, a native of Montevideo, Uruguay, earned a bachelor's degree from the University of Montevideo in 1941. He first came to the United States on a Fulbright Scholarship to the University of Rochester, where he earned a doctorate in biochemistry in 1949.

In 1951, he joined Syntex Corp., a small chemical company in Mexico that was prominent in steroid research. He played a key role in transforming it into a major pharmaceutical company headquartered in the United States in the Stanford Research Park. Eventually, he became president of Syntex Laboratories and president of Syntex Research Institute.

He was widely considered a pioneer in drug delivery and the field of biotechnology.

Mr. Zaffaroni founded a number of companies, including ALZA Corp. (an acronym of his name), which was acquired by Johnson & Johnson in 2001; Affymax Inc., which was acquired by Glaxo in 1995; Affymetrix, Alexza Pharmaceuticals, Symyx Technologies and Maxygen.

In 1980, he cofounded the DNAX Institute of Molecular and Cellular Biology with three Stanford scientists: the late Arthur Kornberg, professor of biochemistry and winner of the Nobel Prize in 1959 for his work elucidating how DNA is built; Paul Berg, the Robert W. and Vivian K. Cahill professor of cancer research, emeritus, and winner of the Nobel Prize in chemistry in 1980 for his funda-

mental studies of the biochemistry of nucleic acids with particular regard to recombinant DNA; and Charles Yanofsky, Morris Herzstein professor of biology, emeritus.

The DNAX Institute, which supported the development of novel therapeutic products based on recombinant DNA technology, was sold to Schering-Plough Pharmaceuticals in 1982.

In 1995, President Bill Clinton presented Mr. Zaffaroni with the National Medal of Technology, the nation's highest honor for individual achievement in science and technology.

In 2006, Stanford established a \$10 million financial aid program for Latin American students at Stanford to honor Mr. Zaffaroni and his wife, Lida. The Alejandro and Lida Zaffaroni Scholarship and Fellowship Program was partly funded by gifts from a group of more than 35 associates who credited Mr. Zaffaroni with providing inspiration, mentorship and friendship during their careers.

The Zaffaronis were also major donors to the Lida and Alejandro Zaffaroni Breast Imaging Center at the Stanford Cancer Center.

Mr. Zaffaroni also served as a member of the Stanford University Hospital Board of Directors and the Beckman Center for Molecular and Genetic Medicine Advisory Council at Stanford.

He is survived by his wife, Lida, his son Alejandro and daughter-in-law Leah, his daughter Elisa, and two grandchildren, Alejandro Peter and Charles A. Zaffaroni.

A private family service has been held. A memorial service may be held at a later date

## Students win Zider scholarships

By Marjorie Mader

**S**tudent-athletes Leah Hess at Pinewood School and Adam Greenlow of Menlo Park at St. Francis High School are the winners of the 2013 Chris Zider Scholarship awards.

Each receives a \$15,000 scholarship that can be used for college, private high school tuition, or for education-related expenses, such as taking a summer course on a college campus.

This year's winners and finalists represent nine high schools: Bellarmine, Castilleja, Crystal Springs Uplands, Menlo-Atherton, Menlo School, Palo Alto High, Pinewood, Sacred Heart Prep, and Woodside High.

Since 1993, when the Chris Zider scholarship program was established, two scholarships have been awarded each year, one for a boy and one for a girl, in memory of Chris. He grew up in Menlo Park and Portola Valley and was the oldest child of Bob and Cheryl Zider of Portola Valley.

Chris died in a snowboarding accident at Lake Tahoe in 1992, when he was 15 and a sophomore at Woodside High School. He attended Menlo School his freshman year after graduating from the Portola Valley School District.

The scholarship was established to honor the memory of Chris by recognizing the character and accomplishments of high school sophomores in the classroom, on the athletic fields, and in their families and communities.

Over the past 21 years, there have been 166 scholarship finalists and winners and 1,500 applicants from 15 local high schools. The final Zider Scholarships were awarded in 2013.

"We believe the scholarship has accomplished its purpose and far surpassed our expectations in a profound way," said Mr. Zider.

"In my eyes, all these young adults are winners," said Ms. Zider. "Besides their many



Photo by Bob Newell

**Chris Zider** Scholarship finalists are, from left, Sahana Shankar, Leah Hess, Adam Greenlow, Megan Colford and Julia Weingart. Leah and Adam won the scholarships. Finalists not in the picture: Jake Dow, Steven Larreynaga and Nicolas Plume.

accomplishments in the classroom, on the playing fields, and in the community, their love for their family comes across."

### The winners

Adam Greenlow from Bellarmine College Prep played football and ran track both his freshman and sophomore years. He has volunteered at Via West, an organization dedicated to helping those with disabilities and special needs.

Leah Hess played tennis and soccer at Pinewood School both her freshman and sophomore years and received the coaches' award in tennis. She spent three weeks in France during the summer and lived with a French family. Her family also hosted a French exchange student. She is a Girl Scout, sings in a choir, and volunteers at Lytton Gardens senior center in Palo Alto.

### Finalists

Megan Colford, a member of Friends of the Poor (Bay Area Chapter), took a 10-day trip to Guatemala this past summer. She studies French and Spanish at Castilleja School, serves on the student government, and also has played lacrosse and tennis at her school. During her spare time, she enjoys yoga.

Jake Dow played basketball at Crystal Springs Uplands as

a freshman and sophomore and also played football his freshman year. He works at the Riekes Center, a youth development center in Menlo Park.

Steven Larreynaga played basketball and football his freshman and sophomore years at Woodside High. He was accepted at Middle College and is able to attend classes there while still in high school.

Nicolas Plume ran cross-country and track both his freshman and sophomore year at Menlo-Atherton High School. He received the most improved player award on his cross-country team. Since 2009, he has been running a soap business, which, he said, has been quite profitable.

Sahana Shankar ran track and played tennis both her freshman and sophomore years at Crystal Springs Uplands and received the most improved player award in track her freshman year. She volunteers at Arbor Bay School with special needs children, and SNAP, a dancing, singing and acting class for special needs children.

Julia Weingart played soccer and lacrosse both her freshman and sophomore years at Menlo School and also plays club soccer. She is a member of the National Charity League and participates in the Amigos leadership program. She spent seven weeks in Nicaragua last summer. ■

## Keri Nicholas named top agent at Coldwell Banker

Menlo Park's Keri Nicholas ranked No. 1 in Northern California and No. 3 worldwide for 2013 sales by Coldwell Banker residential real estate agents, the company announced.

Ms. Nicholas, who operates out of the Coldwell Banker office at 930 Santa Cruz Ave. in Menlo

Park, sold approximately \$154.5 million worth of real estate in 2013, surpassing more than 84,000 agents in 51 countries.

Born and raised in Atherton, Ms. Nicholas has been selling real estate for more than 20 years and has established a network of experts to help with her clients' home buy-

ing, selling and maintenance needs, such as handy men, painters, stagers, landscapers, architects, designers and electricians.



Keri Nicholas

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## School board puts bond measure on June ballot

By Dave Boyce  
Almanac Staff Writer

The ballot for the primary election on June 3 will include a proposed bond measure asking voters for \$265 million in capital improvement funds for the Sequoia Union High School District.

Having already indicated at earlier meetings a preference for a June rather than November election, the district board gave the measure a unanimous vote on March 5. Member Carrie DuBois had expressed reservations about June, but voted with the majority.

Ahead of the vote, the board engaged in a few minutes of discussion and encouraging words for the co-chairs of the volunteer campaign whose task now is eliciting support for the measure among the district's 125,911 registered voters.

An analysis commissioned by the district estimated a turnout of 36.5 percent (45,328 voters) for a June election. State Proposition 39 allows school construction bond measures to pass if approved by 55 percent majority rather than the two-thirds majority required for most tax increases. With a 36.5 percent turnout, 24,930 voters would have to approve the measure.

Board president Allen Weiner recommended that the campaign use data analytics — a focus on individual voters through the analysis of data about them. The campaign

needs to be smart about selecting audiences and matching them with bond measure projects, he said. “We want to be as lovely and attractive to all audiences as possible” and, toward that end, “to analyze and slice (data) in order to figure out how to target messaging,” Mr. Weiner said.

If the measure passes, the district would have the funds to add classrooms and related facilities to address an expected increase in enrollment in district schools, including Woodside and Menlo-Atherton, of at least 20 percent over the next seven years.

With burgeoning enrollment now in the Menlo Park and Las

Lomitas elementary school districts, M-A will experience a significant increase. The bond measure's project list would include a new high school in the Menlo Park area with a specific curriculum focus

— art or science, for example — for 300 to 400 students.

This measure would add a tax of about \$16 per \$100,000 of a property's assessed value. The four bond measures passed by Sequoia district voters between 1996 and 2008 add up to a debt of about \$30 per \$100,000 in value. The 2014 measure would raise that to about \$46.

The 2014 bonds would be paid off in 30 years. With interest payments included, the total cost to retire the bonds would amount to about \$530 million, a district official said. ■

**With interest, the bonds will cost about \$530 million to retire, an official said.**

## Volunteers sought for water conservation task force

The drought continues, despite the recent rain, and the town of Portola Valley is looking for up to nine residents to sit on a new task force to consider ideas on how property owners, residents and town staff can conserve water.

Anyone interested should email or fax a message to the Town Council by 5 p.m. Tuesday, March 11. The council plans to conduct interviews at its regular meeting on Wednesday, March 12. The meeting starts at 7:30 p.m. in the Historic Schoolhouse at 765 Portola Road.

The council asks that applicants consider the time and

energy needed to serve on “this important task force,” probably a minimum of six hours a month, with meetings scheduled during business hours. Advisory roles to the task force are available if the timing of meetings is unworkable.

Go to [tinyurl.com/wtr32](http://tinyurl.com/wtr32) for the task force's charter.

Go to [tinyurl.com/wtr33](http://tinyurl.com/wtr33) for the committee handbook.

To let the Town Council know of your interest, send an email to [towncenter@portolavalley.net](mailto:towncenter@portolavalley.net) or a fax to (650) 851-4677.

For more information, contact Brandi de Garmaux at [bdegarmaux@portolavalley.net](mailto:bdegarmaux@portolavalley.net) or 650-851-1700 ext. 222.

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## Insurance will cover fraud loss by school foundation

The investment account of the Portola Valley Schools Foundation, which was defrauded of \$182,500 over the fall of 2013, has been made whole, a foundation official told the Almanac.

The foundation's fraud-protection insurance covered the situation and restoration came Friday, Feb. 28, said foundation co-president Randy Von Feldt, who had predicted a full recovery.

Irregularities in the foundation's accounts turned up in November 2013 during a monthly reconciliation of the books, Mr. Von Feldt said at the time.

A series of false checks, written between early September and early November 2013, transferred money from the foundation's Charles Schwab account into a JP Morgan Chase account at an unknown location, according to a San Mateo County Sheriff's Office report.

Checks for between \$15,000 and \$20,000 were written out to "Eye For Design LLC" in Monroe, Connecticut. The checks had been pre-printed with the foundation's name misspelled and without an address, but with correct account and routing numbers, deputies said. The check numbers were significantly out of sequence, Mr. Von Feldt said.

As for counter-signatures, the counterfeiters appeared to have used forged signatures of two foundation members.

Investigators from Charles Schwab, the U.S. Postal Police and investment management firm BNY Mellon in New York worked on the case, Mr. Von Feldt said.

Asked if the investigation is over and if suspects were identified, Mr. Von Feldt said he had no information about suspects and that he is "not 100 percent certain" that the investigation is complete.

## Menlo police arrest woman with piles of stolen mail

Police have arrested a San Jose woman in connection with thefts of mail from residential mailboxes in West Menlo Park, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office reported.

Menlo Park police on Feb. 18 arrested and booked into county jail Sandra Cristina Couto on charges that include suspicion of possession of stolen property, deputies said.

Deputies had responded to a call from a resident of the 2000 block of Monterey Avenue, who reported seeing a suspicious vehicle, a Buick, parked in front of his house at around 7:50 p.m. on Feb. 18. The Buick made a U-turn and left the scene, the resident told deputies, revealing a pile of opened, discarded mail next to where

the car's driver's side door had been, deputies said.

Deputies examined the pile of mail and determined that it was addressed to residences "throughout the area."

While collecting the mail from the ground, deputies learned of an arrest by Menlo Park police following a traffic stop of a white Buick. The arresting officer reported "a large amount of mail" inside the Buick, deputies said.

Ms. Couto had an outstanding no-bail warrant for her arrest on drug-related charges in Santa Clara County, deputies said. Given the large amount of mail involved, police notified the U.S. Postal Inspectors Office and the San Jose Mail Theft Task Force, deputies said.

## New environmental health director

Heather Forshey will join the San Mateo County Health System on March 24 as the new director of environmental health.

With 18 years of experience, Ms. Forshey most recently served as deputy director of environmental health in Santa Clara County, with oversight of food and drinking water safety, childhood lead prevention, and tobacco retailing. She currently serves as an advisory council member for the Bay Area Air Quality

Management District.

Ms. Forshey earned a master of science in environmental health from East Carolina University, a bachelor of science from Purdue University, and is a registered environmental health specialist with the state of California.



Heather Forshey



### ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

TOWN OF ATHERTON  
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

### 2014 SLURRY SEAL PROJECT PROJECT NO. 56058

Notice is hereby given that SEALED BIDS will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, California 94027, until 3:00 p.m. MARCH 27, 2014, at which time they will be publicly opened and read, for performing the following work:

Performing of Type II micro-surfacing per Town specifications on the listed streets, which includes notifications, traffic control, prep work, oil, compaction, sweeping, and re-striping/pavement markings (as needed) with a 1-year guarantee.

The Engineer's Estimate for the project is: \$333,000

Per Section 6.01 of the Town of Atherton's Standard Specifications, the General Contractor shall perform, with his own organization, work of a value amounting to not less than 50% of the total contract, excluding specialty items as indicated on the bid schedule.

Bids must be for the entire work, and shall be submitted in sealed envelopes clearly marked: "Bid of (Contractor) for 2014 SLURRY SEAL PROJECT, Project No. 56058", along with date and time of bid opening..

Plans and specifications may be obtained at the Town of Atherton's website at <http://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/index.aspx?NID=331> under Bid Posting at no cost. Additional important information is contained in Town of Atherton Standard Specifications, which are available on line at <http://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/285>. Contractor shall be responsible for any addendums that may be posted on the Town's website. No Planholders list shall be available.

Bids must be accompanied by a bid security in the form of cash, a cashier's or certified check or bid bond for not less than ten percent (10%) of the amount of the bid, as a guarantee that the bidder, if awarded the Contract, will fulfill the terms of the bid.

The Town of Atherton, The City, reserves the right to reject any or all bids; to make any awards or any rejections in what it alone considers to be in the best interest of the City, and waive any informalities or irregularities in the bids. The contract will be awarded, if at all, to the responsible bidder that submits the lowest responsive bid. **[NOTE: If there are alternates in the bid, the City will need to state how the low bid will be determined, as required by PCC 20103.8.]**

Bidders are hereby notified that, pursuant to California Civil Code Sections 3247 and 3248 and Standard Specifications Section 3.02, the successful bidder will be required to provide payment and performance bonds in the amounts of 100% of the contract price.

Bidders are hereby notified that provisions of California Labor Code regarding prevailing wages and apprentices are applicable to the work to be performed under this contract. Pursuant to Section 1773 et seq. the general prevailing wage rates have been determined by the Director of the California Department of Industrial Relations and appear in the California Prevailing Wage Rates. Copies are on file at the office of the City Engineer and are available to interested parties upon request. The successful bidder shall post a copy of the wage rates at the job site.

The Contractor may elect to receive 100 percent of payments due under the contract, without retention of any portion of the payment by the Town of Atherton, by depositing securities of equivalent value to the retention amount in accordance with the provisions of Section 22300 of the California Public Contract Code.

All bidders shall be licensed under the provisions of the Business and Professions Code to do the type of work contemplated in the project. The City has determined that the Contractor shall possess a valid Class A license at the time the bid is submitted. Failure to possess the specified license shall render the bid non-responsive.

Each bidder shall submit with this bid a statement setting forth his/her/its experience and qualifications. The statement shall be made on the forms provided by the Town and must accompany each bid. The three lowest bidders will be required to submit subcontractor's experience and qualifications statements within 48 hours of the bid opening, on forms provided by the Town.

By submitting a bid in response to this advertisement for bids, the bidder shall be conclusively deemed to have read, understood and agreed with all of the information and materials contained in the bid documents, including but not limited to the construction contract, the standard specifications, the special provisions, the required nature and amount of insurance and the documentation evidencing said insurance.

Any questions regarding the project should be directed to David Huynh, Project Engineer, telephone: (650) 752-0555 or by written Requests for Information (RFI) to: Public Works Department, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, CA 94027, no later than ten (10) business days before bid opening. RFIs may be emailed to [dhuyh@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:dhuyh@ci.atherton.ca.us) or faxed to (650) 688-6539. Responses shall be posted on the Town's website no later than five (5) days prior to bid opening.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
Gordon Siebert, P.E., City Engineer

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Kindergarten registration opens

Registration packets for the 2014-2015 school year are available at the Woodside School office at 3195 Woodside Road in Woodside.

Children who will be 5 years old by Sept. 1 are eligible to attend kindergarten in August 2014. Children who will turn 5 between Sept. 2 through Dec. 2 are eligible

to register for transitional kindergarten.

Birth certificate, proof of residency, immunization records and a physician's report will be required before your child enters school in the fall.

Visit [woodside.k12.ca.us](http://woodside.k12.ca.us) or call 851-1571 for more information.

## Joyce W. Ruys

1924-Feb. 25, 2014

Joyce West Ruys passed away on February 25th, 2014, after a short illness. She was 89 years old.

A Midwestern girl with Czechoslovakian heritage, Joyce was born in 1924, in Sioux City, Iowa, one of five children, where she attended Central High and subsequently graduated from Nursing School.

While working as a surgical and obstetric nurse in Los Angeles, she met a young doctor, Frank C. Ruys and they married in 1947. The newlyweds moved to the San Francisco Bay Area, eventually settled in a ranch house in Woodside, and raised five children. She is remembered as a keen mind, a great beauty, a pragmatist with the ready laugh, and a generous and warmly captivating mother, never missing one of her children's or grandchildren's major events.

Possessing an adventurous spirit, Joyce traveled extensively, with an immense interest in art and art history. She would often read several books at a time, conversing well on most any subject.

Joyce never missed the Daily Crossword and Jumble in the SF Chronicle and she was a fierce bridge player. A memorable gourmet cook, Joyce was a passionate aficionado of Julia Child, and a member of Medical Friends of Wine.

Joyce enjoyed her children, her community, and traveling. She would often stay up late into the night making Halloween or ballet costumes, themselves a work of art, the next morning off to chair a PTA meeting at the local school.

Creative ideas came easily to her, as she plunged into years of fundraising for her favorite projects, including Woodside Elementary School, Sequoia Hospital, the Peninsula Symphony, Friends of the Library, and other organizations.

During her term as President of the Ladies Auxiliary of the Peninsula Symphony, she instituted a hugely successful Oktoberfest fundraiser called The Heurigen, an Opera Ball and Fashion Show, as well as personally hosting many of the guest performers, some of whom have remained friends since.

In her later years, after moving to Palo Alto, she volunteered at the Palo Alto Parental Stress Hotline, and donated generously to many charities. She was much loved, and will be greatly missed.

Joyce is survived by her children, Elaine Ruys of Portland, Oregon, Patty Ruys Stearns of Trinidad, California, Willem Tim Ruys of South Bend, Indiana, Jennifer Gill of Redwood City, and Renee Iverson of Kirkland, Washington, and her brothers Richard West, Larry West, and sister Marian Deal and her sisters-in-law Constance Ruys, Fieke Ruys, Marti West, Jeanne West, Nancy West, as well as her grandchildren Megan May Stearns, Kelly E. Stearns, Christopher Ruys, Vincent Gill, Emily Iverson and Jocelyn Iverson, and great grandson, Giovanni Ghinami.

She is pre-deceased by her husband, Frank C. Ruys, and her brother Jack West.

A memorial service is scheduled for July 27th, in Trinidad, CA. Please contact Patty Stearns, email: [patty@pattystearns.com](mailto:patty@pattystearns.com) for more information. The family would appreciate any stories or photos friends want to share.



PAID OBITUARY



The St. Raymond School team finished first in the Archdiocese of San Francisco Academic Decathlon and will represent the archdiocese in April at the state Academic Decathlon in San Bernadino.

## St. Raymond first in academic decathlon

Submitted by Lynn Stieren, teacher at St. Raymond School.

St. Raymond School in Menlo Park and 10 other elementary schools from the Archdiocese of San Francisco participated in the annual Academic Junior High Decathlon at St. Pius School in Redwood City on March 1.

Cheered on by parents, classmates, and teachers, the

15-member St. Raymond Academic Decathlon Team finished in first place in the Super Quiz and first place overall, outscoring second-place Notre Dame Elementary School in Belmont, and third-place St. Gabriel School in San Francisco.

St. Raymond School will represent the Archdiocese of San Francisco in April at the State Academic Decathlon in San

Bernadino.

In individual events, St. Raymond students Emma Connors, Lesly Duke and Chelsea Dunleavy were awarded gold medals in English, science, and fine arts, respectively; and Sebastian Marshall took the silver medal in current events.

The Academic Junior High Decathlon is a competition for students in grades 6 through 8. There are 10 events. Two are collaborative team efforts—a logic quiz with 20 rigorous thinking problems, and a super quiz with 50 multiple-choice questions on five broad academic themes.

The remaining eight events test individual knowledge of the Roman Catholic doctrine, English, literature, science, mathematics, current events, social studies, and fine arts (art and music). Awards are given for individual and team performance, and the winning school team from each geographic diocese competes in a state championship.

The St. Raymond team is made up of Alexis Bundy, Emma Connors, Leslie Duke, Chelsea Dunleavy, Matthew Huo, Rebecca Latham, Margaret Leahy, John Lonergan, Ronan MacRunnels, Sebastian Marshall, Scott Nelson, Christian Powell, Roger Ross, Thaddeus Sison, and Matthew Smithers.

With their adviser, Mr. Patrick Sullivan and the academic coaches, teachers, and parents, the team worked before school, after school and weekends, studying subjects such as science, fine arts, social studies, religion, and literature.

The real “gold,” however, could be felt in the fellowship that developed during the hours spent studying together, questioning one another on the subject matter, and learning how to work together as a team. ■

## Jeanne Rinear Bancroft

March 1, 1923 – February 19, 2014

Passed away at the age of 90 just short of her 91st birthday.

Born in Cleveland, Ohio to Eugene and Anne Rinear  
Sister of Richard Rinear  
Marjorie (Rinear) Shafer  
Marion (Rinear) Kiewit  
All preceded her in death

She is survived by her loving husband of 70 years, Paul O. Bancroft. She loved reading, cooking, bridge, skiing, golfing and having a ball with her many friends, and family.

She had been a member of Palo Alto Hills Country Club  
Menlo Country Club and Rancho Santa Fe Country Club

Loving mother to  
Judy (Bancroft) Congdon (Clarke)  
Janet (Bancroft) Burttram (George)  
Paul O. Bancroft Jr. (Joice)

And her grandsons  
Chip, Brian, Paul, Justin, Michael, and Jerrod and their wives

And her greatgrandchildren  
Dylan, Matteo, Samuel, Finley, and Zuli

We are most appreciative of hospice and the wonderful people who helped her over the past nine months.

A celebration of Jeanne's life will be held April 19th 2-5 at Luttickens 3535 The Alameda, Menlo Park.

Memorial donations can be made to  
Hospice 585 North Mary Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94085.

PAID OBITUARY



## Student faces drug charges

By Renee Batti  
Almanac News Editor

A preliminary hearing is set for this week for a Menlo College student arrested Feb. 28 by Atherton police and charged with possessing marijuana and other drugs for sale.

Daron Wing Mark, 18, pleaded not guilty on March 3 to three felony charges stemming from the alleged discovery of marijuana, cocaine and 58 pills of the methamphetamine "ecstasy" in his dorm room on the Atherton campus.

Superior Court Judge Stephen Hall set bail for \$50,000, and Mr. Mark remained in custody as of March 5, according to District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe. His preliminary hearing is set for March 14.

Mr. Mark, a resident of Granite Bay in Placer County, was arrested after his student adviser allegedly found the drugs, along with scales, in the dorm room. The adviser searched the room after hearing rumors that Mr. Mark was selling drugs on campus, and seeing a photo of the student holding two large bags of marijuana, according to Mr. Wagstaffe's report.

A police search also reportedly produced cocaine, packaging material, invoice forms and \$678 in cash, the DA's report said.

Mr. Wagstaffe said the suspect "acknowledged responsibility" for the items found, but not that his intent was to sell the drugs. "But 58 pills of ecstasy? That's a lot of play weekends, isn't it?" he added. ■

## Office skills class

Canada College in Woodside, in collaboration with PeninsulaWorks-Menlo Park, is offering a free 15-week program focused on essential office skills for dislocated workers and veterans.

The program begins March 17. Students will attend class Monday through Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. at JobTrain, located at 1200 O'Brien Drive in Menlo Park.

Classes included training in Microsoft Windows, Human Relations in Business, Beginning & Intermediate Word Processing, Business Writing and Presentation Methods, Spreadsheets, Using Outlook, and Essential Skills for the 21st Century.

Go to [tinyurl.com/Class-227](http://tinyurl.com/Class-227) for more information.

## Thomas Arthur Croft

February 15, 1931 – February 11, 2014  
Resident of Atherton

Thomas Croft passed away at Kaiser Permanente in Redwood City surrounded by his family. He was born in Denver, Colorado to Edwin and Pearl Croft.

He graduated summa cum laude in electrical engineering and business from Dartmouth College, joined the Navy, went to Officer Candidate School, and became a fighter pilot. He loved flying the F11F Tiger and F8U Crusader in their first operational year. At Convair Astronautics he worked on the Atlas Rocket. After earning a PhD from Stanford, he was assigned to an over-the-horizon (OTH) radar group. He then worked on planetary radar astronomy, participating on radio science teams of the Pioneer Venus orbiter, sun-orbiting Pioneers 6,7,8 and 9, Mariner 5, and two Voyager spacecraft. Returning to SRI International he again worked in the OTH group.

His lifelong hobby was photography, especially making home movies.

Tom leaves his wife Rachel of 49 years, sons Andrew (Vicky), Steven (Laurie), and daughter Rachel (Javier), and one grandson Nicolas, five granddaughters, Erica, Emily, Nicole, Danielle, and Allison. Tom's brother Harold pre-deceased him. He also leaves many nieces and nephews.

He was a life well-lived, and we were fortunate to have shared it with him. A celebration of Tom's life has been held with family and friends.

Donations to a favorite charity will be appreciated.



PAID OBITUARY

## Robert Stanley Carey

May 10, 1927 – February 26, 2014

Robert S. (Bob) Carey passed away in Portola Valley, peacefully at home after a short illness. Bob was a beloved husband of more than 66 years to his wife, Myrtle (Myrt) Ciprian Carey. He was a loving father and mentor to his five children (and their spouses), Robert (Vance) of Watsonville, Kent (Theresa) of Palo Alto, Dawn (Stephen Schaniel) of Los Gatos, Paul (Natasha) of Mountain View and Glen (Lynn) of Palo Alto.

Bob was much loved by his 10 grandchildren and two step-grandchildren, Kyle (Kelly), Kenneth, Colleen, Kate, Stephanie Schaniel, Stacie Schaniel, Clay, Kristen, Philip, Elizabeth, Nick Tuosto (Sarah) and Jessica Tuosto. He was a devoted brother to Dorothy Howe.

Bob was born in Kansas City, MO and raised in Chicago, IL, where he met Myrt in their early teens. Myrt and Bob married in November 1947 and moved to Ann Arbor, MI, where in 1952, he received Bachelor of Science degrees in Metallurgical and Chemical Engineering from the University of Michigan. Bob moved from Michigan to California to work for Union Oil as a Refinery Corrosion Engineer shortly after graduation. In 1958, he became involved in the aerospace industry at Aerojet, first in San Ramon and then in Southern California to participate in the Space Race. When Voyager didn't see life on Mars, Bob turned his engineering talents to the medical research instruments industry, working at Beckman Instruments in Palo Alto as Chief Metallurgical Engineer and moving his family to Ladera in Portola Valley.

Bob had a passion for reading, playing racquetball and golf, traveling the world, watching Giants baseball and attending college football games. He also enjoyed attending his children and grandchildren's many activities, including numerous sports, performances and plays. He was Head Umpire for Alpine Little League in the late 1960s. Bob was an Elk from 1976 through 2004. After retiring in 1991 from Beckman, he spent many pleasant Tuesdays as a Golf Marshall at the Stanford Golf Course until last year.

Foremost, Bob was a loving, lifelong companion to Myrt. His legacy is that of a mentor with a strong moral compass, who led by example with warmth and grace.

A memorial service for Bob will be held at 2 p.m., Saturday, March 15, at Ladera Community Church, 3300 Alpine Road, Portola Valley.

Donations in his honor may be made to The Canary Foundation (local cancer research) online at [www.canaryfoundation.org](http://www.canaryfoundation.org), or by check to Ladera Community Church Endowment Fund, 3300 Alpine Rd., Portola Valley, CA 94028.



PAID OBITUARY

## Dandridge M. Gray

May 20, 1920 – February 25, 2014

Dandridge M. (Dan) Gray, longtime resident of Ladera in Portola Valley, California, died on February 25th, 2014, at the age of ninety-three. He is survived by Joan, his wife of nearly sixty-six years; eldest son John and his wife Georgette, of Verdi, California; daughter Allison, her husband Ron Cox of Pleasanton, California, and their children Steven, Meghan and Kendalyn; nephew Gordon Gray, his wife Janet and their family of Richmond, Indiana. He also had a second son, Stuart, now deceased.

Dan was born on May 20th, 1920, in Farmington, Connecticut to Harry F. and Margaret Gray. He attended Deerfield Academy and graduated from Amherst College in Massachusetts. In World War II he served four years as a lieutenant on the destroyer U.S.S. Lang in the Pacific theater. He and Joan were married in 1948.

Dan worked first in the life insurance business and later in investments, forming his own company, Gray Ammonette, with partner Gunny Ammonette. Later he worked for Protected Investors of America, the Menlo Park firm Judy and Robinson, and finally as financial planner for American Investors. He retired in 2009 at age eighty-nine.

Dan served as Senior Warden and treasurer of Christ Church, Portola Valley, as President and treasurer of Foothills Tennis and Swim Club in Palo Alto and helped organize and head Urban Ministry, a multi-church program providing meals and clothing for the homeless. Dan was an excellent tennis player and enjoyed golf in his later years.

A Celebration of Life memorial service will be held Friday, March 14th, 2pm, at Christ Church, 815 Portola Road, Portola Valley.

Donation can be made to Mission Ministry of Christ Church, 815 Portola Rd., Portola Valley, CA 94028

PAID OBITUARY

## Sandy Elmer

March 10, 1928 – February 24, 2014

Sandy was raised on a farm on Phillippi Street in Boise, Idaho. After serving in the Army, Sandy attended San Jose State University and was a member of Lambda Chi Alpha fraternity. Sandy lived in the Hilltop Guest House in San Francisco, where he met Norma, his wife of 50 years. They moved to unincorporated Menlo Park in 1958, helping to establish the Ladera community and raising Allison and Blake in the company of other young families.

Sandy and Norma each worked at Stanford University for over 25 years, and participated in and supported Stanford's educational, cultural and athletic programs, including the Stanford Historical Society. Sandy's work at Stanford included space planning for the Graduate School of Business and the Law School in the 1960s and 1970s. The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation at Quadras recruited Sandy to serve as the Foundation's controller. After a decade, Sandy joined Hunk Anderson and the Anderson Collection, where he worked until 2012. Sandy's love of art, art history and architectural design broadened through his work with the Anderson Collection, as well as his extensive travels with Norma, including annual trips to London's Theatre District.

Sandy spent the last 40 years of his life enjoying the views of Stanford land from his Ladera home. As he wished, Sandy ("Elmo" to his grandsons) died peacefully in his sleep.

In honor of his long affiliation with Stanford and the Anderson family, donations in Sandy's memory may be made to support the programs of the Anderson Collection at Stanford University. Gifts may be directed to:

Anderson Collection at Stanford University  
Jason Linetzky, Director  
326 Galvez Street  
Stanford, CA 94305-6105  
Attn: Kathleen Quinn  
In memory of Norma and Elmer Sandy

PAID OBITUARY

# THE TEACHING OF CHARACTER AND THE CHARACTER OF TEACHING

**Michael McPherson**

President of The Spencer Foundation

**Thurs. March 13, 2014**

5:00 p.m.

Stanford Humanities Center

Stanford University

We believe that schools can cultivate good character, as if character can be "taught" in a way that is analogous to teaching math or language. McPherson argues that the development of these virtues is better seen as a byproduct of education done well.

Sponsored by the McCoy Family Center  
for Ethics in Society at Stanford  
[ethicsinsociety.stanford.edu](http://ethicsinsociety.stanford.edu)

## Opening day at new Ford Field

By Emma Marsano

Special to the Almanac

Portola Valley's Ford Field has hosted countless Little League games and community events since its construction more than 50 years ago. But the Little League opening day game that will be played at field on Saturday, March 15, is a special one.

It will be the first event held at Ford Field since a recent renovation that updated —

### ■ PORTOLA VALLEY

among other elements — the field's backstop, dugouts and bleachers.

The hybrid ribbon-cutting ceremony and opening day celebration will offer attractions ranging from a speech by former Major Leaguer Eric Byrnes to a home run derby competition, open to any child registered in the league.

The town of Portola Valley

invites current and former Little League players and their families to grab their bats and helmets, and to join those who helped fund the Ford Field renovation in breaking in the field's new sod on Saturday.

Each attendee is entitled to receive a commemorative Ford Field pin and some peanuts and Cracker Jack.

Ford Field is located at 3329 Alpine Road in Portola Valley; the festivities will begin at 9 a.m. ■

## THEFTS

continued from page 7

looked up a few minutes later and saw that her purse was gone, a total loss of \$3,155, police said in a March 1 report.

That same day, a man was seen on a video surveillance camera stealing a \$998 Chanel cardigan sweater from Afterwards Clothing Store at 1159 El Camino Real, police said.

Cash, wallets and purses were stolen from an open work area at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital at 351 Middlefield Road, police said in a March 4 report. ■

## Sandra Day O'Connor to speak at county event

Retired Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor will speak at this year's induction ceremony for the San Mateo County Women's Hall of Fame on March 21.

Justice O'Connor, who will be inducted herself at the ceremony, started her legal career in San Mateo County, going on in 1981 to become the first woman appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court. She also served as a community volunteer in East Palo Alto and for local nonprofits.

Also being honored this year are Dr. Faye McNair-Knox, director of the One East Palo Alto Neighborhood Initiative; Fatima Soares, director of the nonprofit Coastside Hope; and Nina Luo, a Millbrae high school student and community volunteer.

Go to [tinyurl.com/lj3wmrw](http://tinyurl.com/lj3wmrw) to buy tickets, which cost \$75 to \$125. The event starts at 5:30 p.m. at the San Mateo County History Museum, located at 2200 Broadway in Redwood City.

### PENINSULA

## DINE OUT

Discover the best places to eat this week!

#### AMERICAN

##### Armadillo Willy's

941-2922

1031 N. San Antonio Road, Los Altos  
[www.armadillowillys.com](http://www.armadillowillys.com)

##### The Old Pro

326-1446

541 Ramona Street, Palo Alto  
[www.oldpro.com](http://www.oldpro.com)

#### ITALIAN

##### Cucina Venti

254-1120

1390 Pear Ave, Mountain View  
[www.cucinaventi.com](http://www.cucinaventi.com)

#### CHINESE

##### Ming's

856-7700

1700 Embarcadero East, Palo Alto  
[www.mings.com](http://www.mings.com)

#### CHINESE

##### New Tung Kee Noodle House

947-8888

520 Showers Drive, Mountain View  
[www.shopmountainview.com/luunoodlemv](http://www.shopmountainview.com/luunoodlemv)

#### INDIAN

##### Janta Indian Restaurant

462-5903

369 Lytton Ave.  
[www.jantaindianrestaurant.com](http://www.jantaindianrestaurant.com)

Read and post reviews,  
explore restaurant menus,  
get hours and  
directions and more at  
ShopPaloAlto, ShopMenloPark  
and ShopMountainView

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30+ years of local knowledge.  
Born in Menlo Park.  
Raised in Atherton.  
A Woodside resident.



**STEVE GRAY**

BRE# 01498634

**650-743-7702**

[sgray@cbnorcal.com](mailto:sgray@cbnorcal.com)

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## Humankindness lets you wait for the ER at home.

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- ✓ Hospice
- ✓ Private Duty

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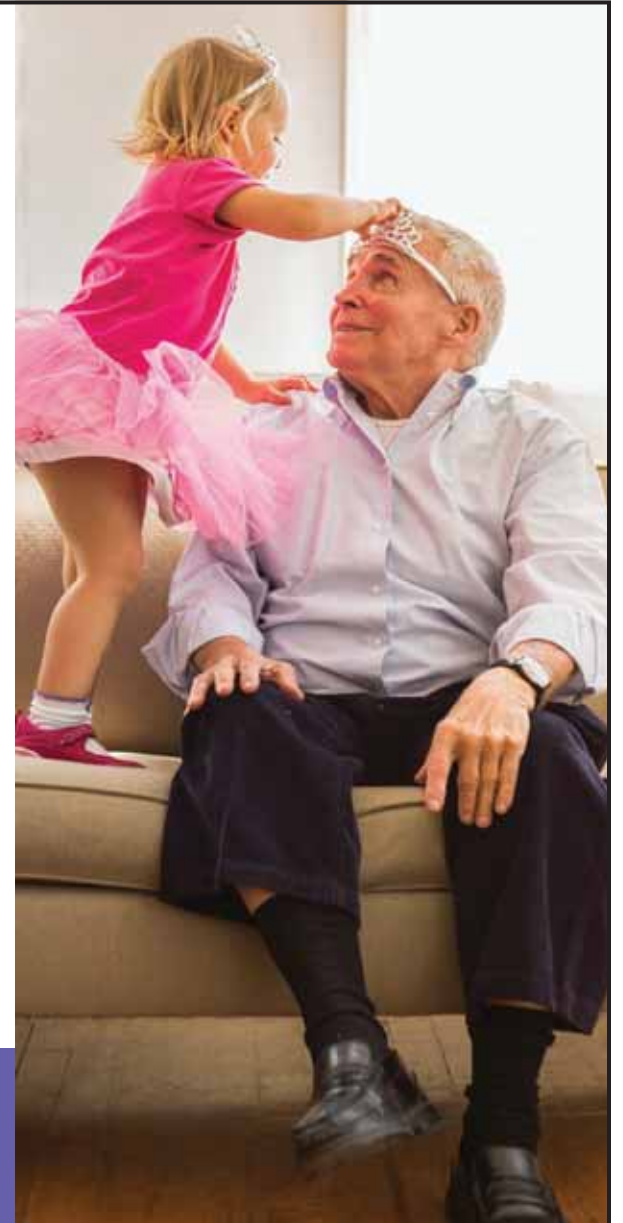
—Liz Mazzei, daughter of a Pathways patient

Pathways is non-profit and affiliated with local community hospitals, providing care for 37 years.

◆ 1.888.755.7855 ◆  
[pathwayshealth.org](http://pathwayshealth.org)

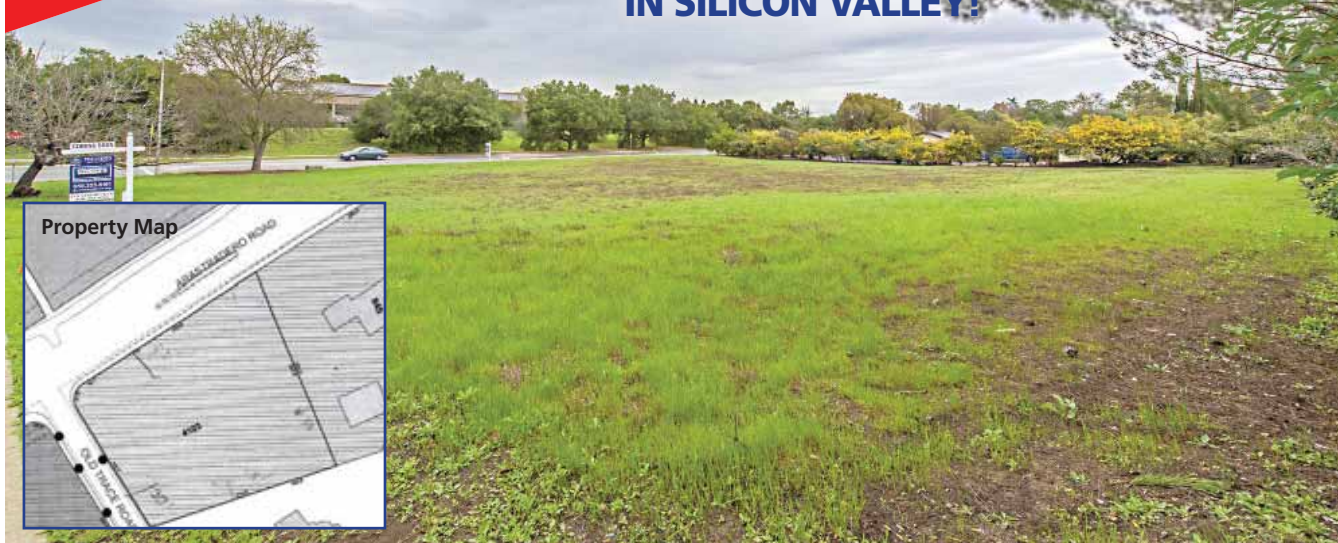


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RESIDENTIAL**

**PALO ALTO  
RARE FLAT ONE ACRE  
BUILD YOUR OWN VILLA OR SPECIAL PROJECT  
IN SILICON VALLEY!**



Stanford University



Property Map

[www.4103OldTraceRoad.com](http://www.4103OldTraceRoad.com)

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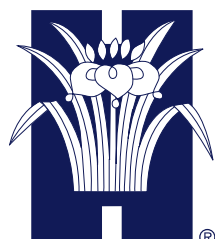
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The Almanac, established in October 1965, is delivered each week to residents of Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside and adjacent unincorporated areas of southern San Mateo County. The Almanac is qualified by decree of the Superior Court of San Mateo County to publish public notices of a governmental and legal nature, as stated in Decree No. 147530, issued December 21, 1969. ©2014 by Embarcadero Media Company. All rights reserved.

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# Viewpoint

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

## Initiative would shrink Menlo projects

Menlo Park voters who have noticed the recent skirmishes over the proposed mixed-use housing, office and retail projects on El Camino Real may get a chance to have their say in November.

A group of local residents, called Save Menlo, has said it will challenge the city's Downtown/El Camino Real Specific Plan, despite the plan's five-plus years of public hearings and approval by the City Council. If Save Menlo can procure at least 1,780 signatures from registered voters, its initiative will either be adopted by the council or placed on the November ballot.

During its first annual review of the specific plan, the council made only minor tweaks to the regulations. But Save Menlo believes the plan favors large developers like Stanford and Greenheart LLC, which have each proposed major projects on El Camino that they are legally entitled to build under the specific plan's rules.

The result is Save Menlo's proposed measure to limit office space for an individual project to 100,000 square feet, and cap total new office space allowed within the specific plan's boundaries at 240,820 square feet. The initiative would require voter approval for any project that would exceed those limits, or result in total non-residential development exceeding 474,000 square feet.

Regardless of whether Save Menlo can get enough signatures to put the initiative on the ballot, the mere announcement of its campaign worries developers, who need to get financing and building plans finalized. The ill-fated Derry project that would have occupied a portion of the Greenheart site at Oak Grove Avenue had to contend with the likelihood of a down-sizing initiative, and finally settled the dispute just before the housing market crashed in 2008 and financing dried up. The project was never built.

To avoid that outcome, Menlo Park Mayor Ray Mueller suggests the city hold a public hearing to compare the specific plan with the initiative. Saying he did not want to see the question turn into a "...mailer and insult" war, he proposed that an independent consultant be brought in to analyze the initiative and then hold a hearing, allowing the public and city staff members to comment. Just like the specific plan, Mayor Mueller said, the initiative should be studied and debated in public before a vote of city residents.

Although it is a long shot, negotiation could be another way to resolve the issue. The city and Stanford have tried before to work with Save Menlo, and were unsuccessful. But if Save Menlo would be willing to bargain with the developers, perhaps it could

achieve some of its goals. Stanford already responded to earlier criticisms about its project by eliminating medical office space and making other changes. A negotiated solution would avoid a contentious November election.

Otherwise, the city will be preoccupied all summer with an intense discussion on the merits of the specific plan, the guidelines that most residents had hoped would avoid this type of dispute. The whole point was to create certainty for developers as well as the community. The city may as well have not bothered spending five years on the plan if it is now faced with an initiative that will dramatically change what type of development is permitted.

Not surprisingly, Jean McCown, Stanford's assistant vice president for government and community relations, said she believes the specific plan provides benefits for Menlo Park and El Camino Real.

"The initiative would not only change the plan's provisions, it would make it burdensome to adapt to desired changes to the area in the future by requiring a public vote to alter any of the initiative's requirements. I question whether this sort of restrictive initiative is the best way to plan for and respond to the future needs of the community."

On the other side former planning commissioner Patti Fry, who co-signed the Feb. 19 notice that informed the city of the signature drive, said Save Menlo tried to convince the council that the specific plan is flawed, to no avail. Rather than "passively wait" for what Save Menlo thinks will be the damaging impacts of new, large office complexes along El Camino Real, she said, "residents have chosen to reach out to voters in the hopes of establishing their own remedies."

She described the initiative's revisions as modest changes that would support the goal of promoting renewal consistent with Menlo Park's character.

"No one asked for huge office buildings more suited to an office park. Residents asked for a vibrant and sustainable mix of uses: transit-oriented housing, retail/restaurants, hotel, and small-scale offices," Ms. Fry told the Almanac.

If the initiative reaches the ballot, voters will decide whether to invalidate the specific plan, and whether they want larger or smaller mixed-use projects on El Camino Real. And if the answer is "smaller," developers will either have to build 50 percent less than intended, or drop out and think about building elsewhere, which would push Menlo Park's downtown development plans back to square one.

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

LETTERS

Our readers write

### No one is excluded from church

Editor:

Menlo Park Presbyterian Church is a biblically based church with thousands of members who try to follow Jesus and be a credit to our communities and beyond. Like Jesus, who invited all people to come to him, MPPC welcomes everyone regardless of race, sexual orientation, political persuasion or resources. No one is excluded; our members and clergy want everyone everywhere to know Jesus. No conditions; no exceptions.

Your article concerning the vote of the MPPC members to terminate its affiliation

with the Presbyterian USA quoted two of the 158 people (8%) who voted against this move and none of the 2024 members (92%) who overwhelming voted in favor.

You quoted a Ms. Holvick who strongly intimated that MPPC does not welcome gay people and she seemed to infer that the withdrawal from the Presbytery concerned an alleged desire of MPPC to exclude gay people.

Both of these notions are patently untrue. Your failure to investigate the veracity of these fallacious positions suggests that you are either badly misinformed or promoting another agenda unconnected with MPPC. Did you or Ms. Holvick ever question why 99% of the voters were in favor of leaving the Presbytery as did 200 other churches last year?

I urge you and everyone else on our community to come to a service at MPPC to see

for yourselves what a wonderful and inspirational place it really is and to experience the joy and comfort that comes from being a part of a group of friendly people who love Jesus and work to help others in our community and the world.

Charles Hawkins  
Menlo Park

**Editor's note:** The Almanac conducted an extensive interview with MPPC Communications Director Nicole Laubscher, who discussed the church's support for changing denominations. The articles presented that perspective at length. We also asked to speak with Senior Pastor John Ortberg; he was not available. In addition, we asked several members of the congregation to comment on why they supported the switch; they weren't willing to be interviewed.

### WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

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

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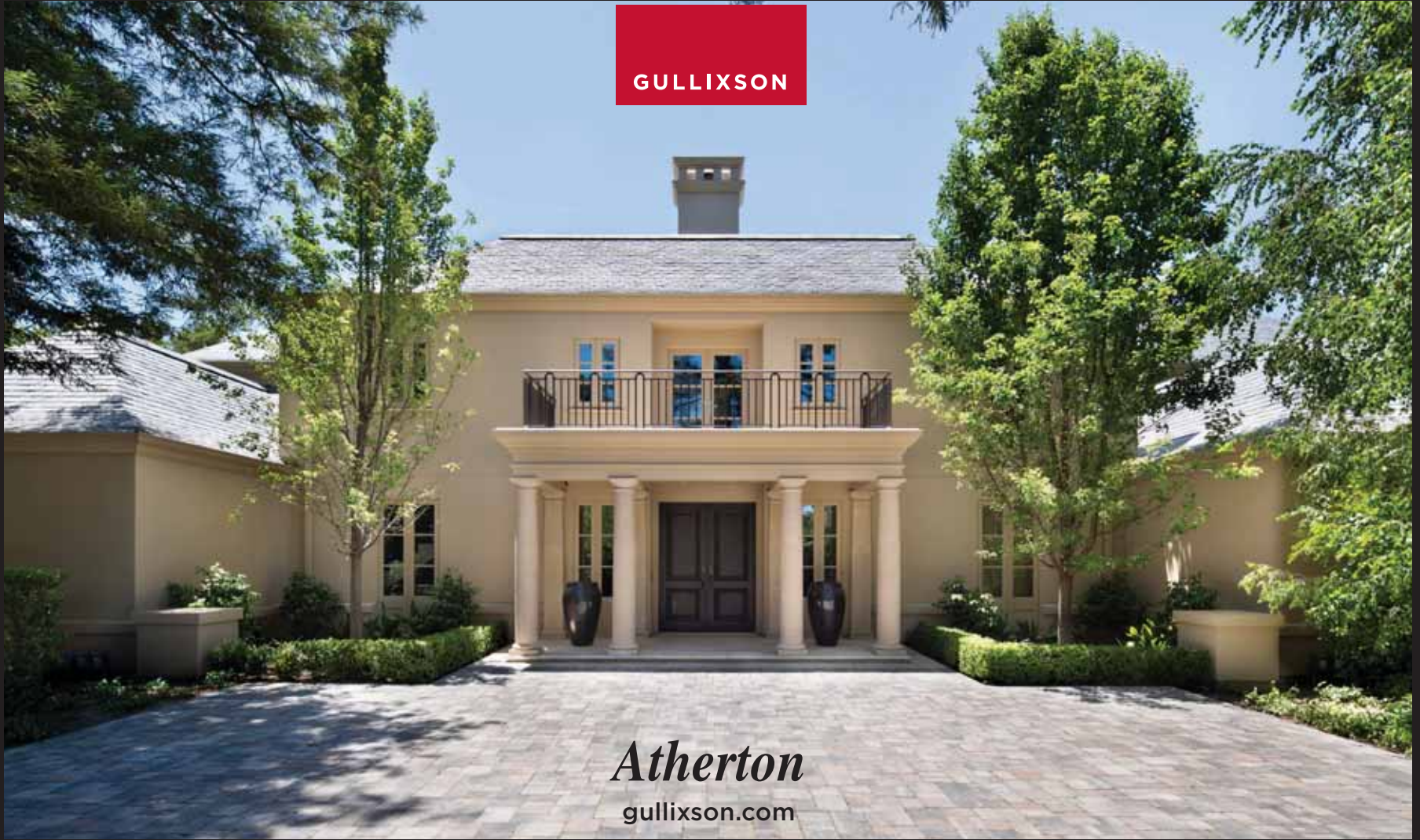
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