

The Almanac

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

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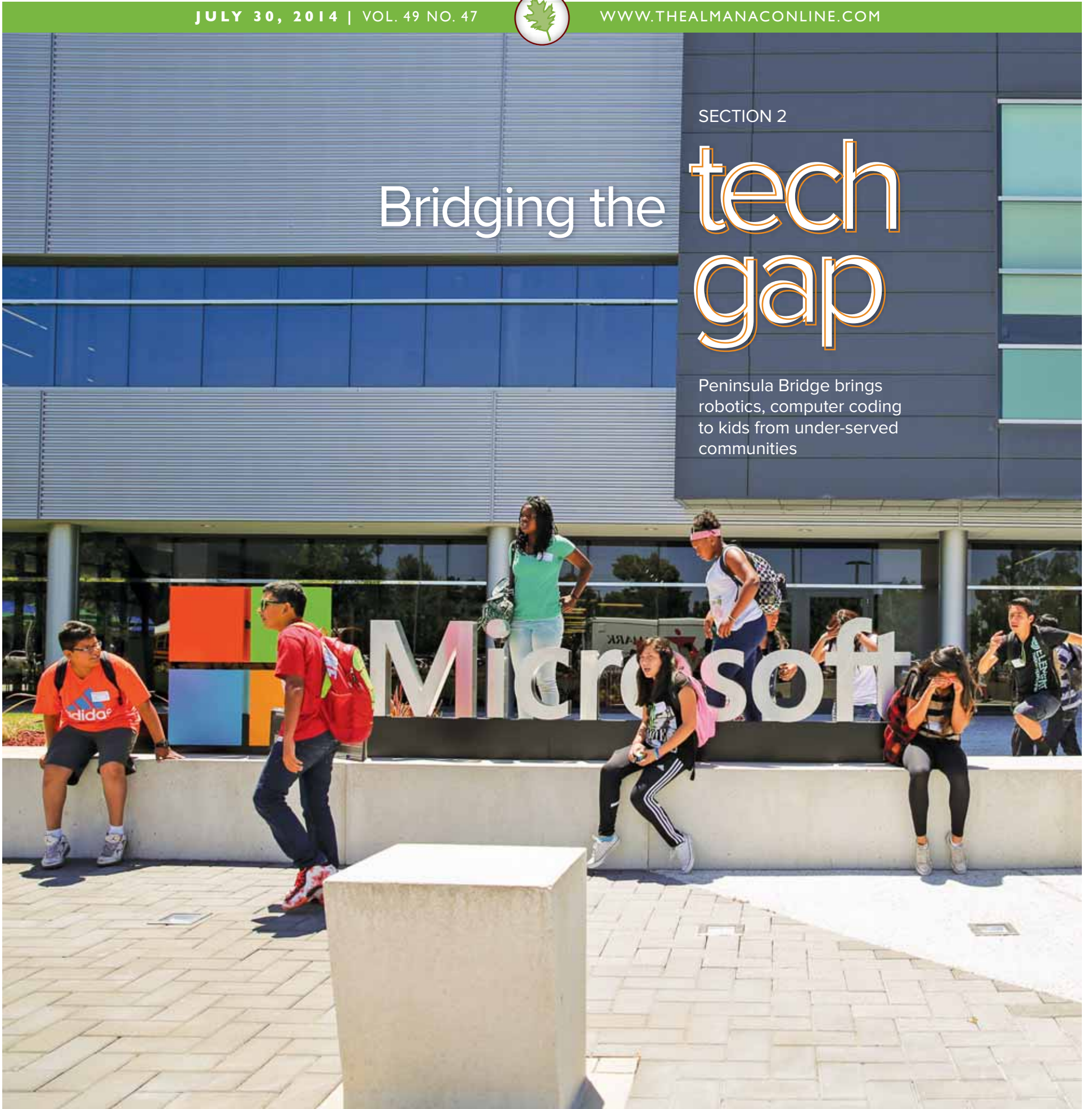


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Menlo Charity Horse Show jumps into its 44th year

The 44th annual Menlo Charity Horse Show, benefiting Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, will be held Aug. 5-10 at the Menlo Circus Club in Atherton. Some 450 exhibitors are bringing horses to the show.

The six-day event features hunter and jumper competitions on the polo field from sunrise to sunset in three arenas.

Los Gatos Luxury Cars and British Motor Car Distributors will present the Los Gatos Luxury Car Grand Prix on Saturday, Aug. 9, the highlight of the competition. An Aston Martin custom-made for the show will be on display. A portion of the proceeds from its sale will benefit the horse show.

On the sidelines, about 40 vendors will sell clothing, jewelry, and merchandise for the home, garden and stable. Food and beverages will be available in the Circus Club dining room and from purveyors on the grounds.

Highlights

■ Wednesday, Aug. 7, at 6 p.m.: \$2,000 Windy Hill Larry Mayfield Memorial Horse & Hound Jumper (Class 238 1.2 m). This event will feature teams of horses with riders and hounds with handlers racing through a course of jumps.

■ Thursday, Aug. 8, at 4 p.m.: \$10,000 USHJA International Hunter Derby presented by Daryl K. Hofman, M.D. Emulating the open hunt, field horses will jump over a traditional hunt course and a handy hunt course. This class exhibits the beauty and tradition of the sport.

■ Friday, Aug. 9, at 6 p.m.: \$10,000 Harrell Remodeling Ryman Memorial "Take Your Own Line" Jumper Speed Class. The event showcases the speed and athleticism of show jumpers.

Following this event will be a dinner-dance and a live and silent auction benefitting the Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Reservations



Photo by Alden Corigan

Hunter Siebel of Woodside rode Z Coast C at last year's show in the \$10,000 USHJA International Hunter Derby, sponsored by Dr. Daryl K. Hofman of Atherton.

are required.

For more information, call Lindy Sherwood at (415) 254-5683.

Saturday

The Los Gatos Luxury Car Grand Prix will be held at 6 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 10. Horses and riders will compete over obstacles as tall as 5 feet, 6 inches for a \$40,000 prize. The event will be followed by an awards program

and fashion show.

Admission to the show is \$10 per day. Children and those over 65 are admitted free. A six-day pass may be purchased for \$35. Street parking is available and free shuttle service to the grounds is provided.

Go to menlohorseshow.com or call 701-0543 for more information. The Menlo Circus Club is at 190 Park Lane in Atherton.

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Buyer-Only Agents

Dear Monica: I am looking to buy a home and have seen ads for buyer specialists; agents who only work with buyers and never with sellers. Do you think it would be to my advantage to engage a buyer-only agent? Bill J.

Dear Bill: I don't think having an agent who only works with buyers is an advantage at all. Why limit yourself to someone who only has experience on one side of a transaction and doesn't have any first-hand experience sitting with sellers on the other side? You need someone who can help you understand what sellers think, what they need, and what their motivations are; and an agent can't do this if they have never represented them. The agent

you want to have on your side is someone who has been an agent for both buyers and sellers and can share insights with you and guide you through the process.

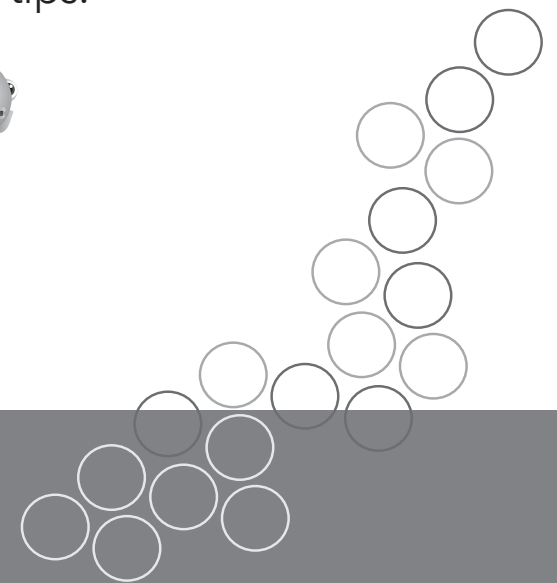
The same is true for sellers. The best seller's agent is someone who also works with buyers and knows how buyers see things, what they like and how they will respond to a property. An agent only knows this if they have worked with buyers and have seen properties through their eyes. A seller will only be successful if he or she knows how to attract these buyers.

For your purchase, find yourself an experienced agent who knows and understands both sides of a transaction and you will have the best chance of success.

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

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■ E-mail letters to the editor to: letters@AlmanacNews.com

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August 2014

Community Health Education Programs

For a complete list of classes and class fees, lectures and health education resources, visit pamf.org/education.

East Palo Alto Library
2415 University Avenue
East Palo Alto
No registration required.

Preventing Falls: What Can You Do?

Aug. 6, 6:30 – 7:30 p.m.
Debbie Swartz, R.N., A.E.-C
PAMF Health Education

Did you know that one out of three adults age 65 and older fall each year? The chances of falling and of being seriously injured increase with age. Join us to learn about the main causes of falls and what you can do to help prevent them.

Mountain View Center
701 E. El Camino Real
Mountain View
(650) 934-7380

The Aging Eye

Aug. 12, 7 – 8:30 p.m.
Yichieh Shiuey, M.D.
PAMF Ophthalmology

Attend this lecture to learn about conditions of the aging eye including macular degeneration, dry eye and cataracts.

Dr. Tom McDonald Memorial Lecture Series at the Palo Alto Center

Palo Alto Center
795 El Camino Real
Palo Alto
(650) 853-4873

Don't Turn Green, Live Green

Aug. 12, 7 – 8:30 p.m.
Barbara Erny, M.D.
PAMF Health Education



Please join us for an interactive discussion on environmental health issues, including how to avoid harmful products and toxins that can be found in our homes.

Palo Alto Center
795 El Camino Real
Palo Alto
(650) 853-4873

Medicare Basics

Aug. 27, 6:30 – 8 p.m.

A HICAP (Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program) Community Educator will explain the benefits covered by Medicare Part A and B and how to choose a Part D plan that will save you money. Attend the presentation to learn the differences between a Medicare Advantage Plan and Medigap policies.



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pamf.org/education

Buying or Selling...



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We're Hiring Arts & Entertainment Editor

The Palo Alto Weekly is for looking for a talented, experienced journalist with a passion for the worlds of art and entertainment.

The ideal candidate for the full-time job of Arts & Entertainment Editor will be knowledgeable about the local scene, from Mountain View to Redwood City. You are as adept at covering the traditional arts as you are great nightlife. You can tweet from events, brainstorm multimedia features and dive into arts education. As A&E Editor, you will be responsible for seeking out and keeping our readership informed of all the significant and interesting arts happenings via our website (www.paloaltoonline.com/arts), weekly print edition and social media.

This is a great opportunity for an organized and creative self-starter who also enjoys working as part of a team. Because this is an editor position, we are looking for someone with a strong journalism background and plenty of ideas. Solid editing, writing and social media skills a must. Please email your resume, cover letter and three A&E-related clips to Editor Jocelyn Dong at jdong@paweekly.com, with "Arts Editor" in the subject line. NO PHONE CALLS, PLEASE.

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Local News

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City of Menlo Park

New mixed-use proposal for El Camino Real

Just when you think there's no pleasing anyone, let alone everyone, in Menlo Park, a rendering (shown above) of a proposed mixed-use project by local developer Pinnacle Group at 1283 El Camino Real, near Valparaiso Avenue, drew raves on the Almanac's online forum, Town Square. A three-story building with 15 residential units and about 1,906 square feet of commercial space (the type yet to be determined) would replace the current buildings on the site.

New principal at Corte Madera

Cyndi Maijala, principal at Bret Harte Middle School in the San Jose Unified School District, has been named principal of Corte Madera School, a fourth-through eighth-grade school in Portola Valley with about 350 students.

Lisa Gonzales, superintendent of the Portola Valley School District, who made the announcement July 24, said Ms. Maijala will start in early August.

The decision to hire Ms. Maijala was discussed at a special school board meeting on July 24. She had been unable to attend an earlier final round of interviews due to a family emergency, and the board had appointed an interim principal on July 18. Her contract is expected to be ratified at

the next regular school board meeting on Aug. 20.

Ms. Maijala has spent the last nine years as an elementary and middle school principal. "She led (Bret Harte's) transition to the Common Core State Standards and developed systems to ensure an optimal learning environment for all students with a balance of social emotional and academic growth," Superintendent Gonzales said in a press release.

Ms. Maijala was an elementary school principal in the Cupertino Union School Dis-

trict, and was a middle school core teacher (language arts, social studies) and a third- and fourth-grade teacher in the San Jose district.

She has a bachelor's degree in social science from San Jose State University and a master's degree in educational leadership from Santa Clara University.



Photo courtesy Portola Valley School District
Cyndi Maijala

Correction

In a July 16 article, the Almanac incorrectly reported that Superintendent Lisa Gonzales said that an initial recruitment effort for a Corte Madera principal produced no good candidates. Ms. Gonzales said that, in fact, the district effort did produce "suitable candidates" for the position. The Almanac apologizes for this error.

Menlo Park studies lane changes on El Camino Real

By Sandy Brundage
Almanac Staff Writer

The quest for a wider El Camino Real — three lanes in each direction — is moving forward in Menlo Park, but as always, the wheels of progress, like those of commute traffic, turn slowly. The project would also add a right-turn lane at the intersection of northbound El Camino Real and Ravenswood Avenue.

Right now, the consultants from Whitlock & Weinberger Transportation Inc. are conducting a \$460,000 study of current road conditions along El Camino Real from Sand Hill Road to Encinal Avenue, and possible alternative road designs.

They're also looking for the community's input. Approximately 30 people attended a workshop in April to discuss what El Camino Real is like right now, according to the city. Interim Transportation Manager Nikki Nagaya said the primary concerns came as no surprise — traffic congestion and safe access for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Traffic counts identified some interesting patterns, Ms. Nagaya told the City Council on July 15.

The segment of El Camino Real near Sand Hill Road experiences the highest daily volume — an estimated 46,700 vehicles per day. The daily volume decreases to 44,100 near Middle Avenue and then to about 34,000 cars between Ravenswood and Glenwood avenues.

The timing of changes in traffic volume, as measured along El Camino Real at Santa Cruz Avenue, did have some surprises. Northbound traffic starts to rise during the morning commute, and continues to increase throughout the workday to peak at approximately 1,500 cars per hour by early evening.

Southbound El Camino Real sees a different temporal distribution, with a bump to about 1,500 cars per hour during the morning commute, then tapering off to a relatively consistent level of approximately 1,300 into the early evening, according to the city's data.

During the presentation, Councilman Peter Ohtaki noted the El Camino Real intersection at Ravenswood Avenue has a reputation as a bottleneck. "Three lanes going northbound coming into Menlo Park, and then it

City contemplates additional northbound through lane, right-turn lane at Ravenswood Avenue

See **LANE CHANGES**, page 6

Woodside green-lights revised plans for new home on La Questa Way

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

After two public hearings before the Town Council, Woodside residents Nick and Ling Triantos now have a green light to proceed with plans to demolish the residential structures at 451 La Questa Way and build a zero-emissions house along with a guest house, four-car garage, swimming pool and cabana.

The council first considered the plans in April, on appeal. A unanimous decision by the Planning Commission in February gave Mr. Triantos the go-ahead,

but his neighbor, Naomi Kameda, objected and appealed the decision to the council. Her principal concerns: excavations on the hillside above her property, drainage down on to her property, and the potential for disruptive views into her property.

A council majority upheld the appeal, but offered Mr. Triantos a chance to revise his plan in concert with town staff and neighbors and return for another hearing. He did that on July 22. After some interrogation of his team on plans involving 175 to 200 dump-truck trips to remove 2,250 cubic yards of soil, the council approved his proposal

on a 6-0 vote. Councilwoman Deborah Gordon was absent.

The neighbor, Ms. Kameda, had argued that a proposed second garage and driveway would remove trees and impinge on her privacy, and that Mr. Triantos' plans did not adequately address the potential for severe drainage and mud-flow issues when it rains.

The original plans also included extensive on-site redistribution of excavated soil. On-site redistribution is generally welcomed in Woodside, where minimizing off-hauled soil is a priority, but in this case, grading plans conflicted with another

priority: to not harm trees.

The process of redistributing soil under the drip-lines of existing oak trees would kill most if not all of them, Councilman Dave Tanner said. The new plan has the soil being off-hauled.

The revised plan addressed the privacy issue by eliminating the second garage and driveway. Town staff would address the drainage issues during the permitting process, and the height of the main house would drop by 4 feet, 2 inches, reducing its profile along the skyline.

Ms. Kameda was effusive in her praise. "I really thank you very much," she told the council.

"I feel much, much safer now."

The council asked Mr. Triantos to be sensitive to neighbors' concerns. Their approval included a condition that he provide a construction schedule and a plan for trucking out the soil.

Ten truckloads an hour

At times when excavating 2,250 cubic yards of soil, dump-truck traffic will be frequent on La Questa Way, said Jim Toby, a professional engineer with Lea and Braze Engineering of Hayward. "Ten truckloads an hour is not unheard of when you're really try-

See **WOODSIDE HOME**, page 6

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{ www.robertsmarket.com }

DUI driver sentenced to five years in prison

By Sandy Brundage
Almanac Staff Writer

With three prior drunken driving convictions, the driver in a DUI crash in Menlo Park that left her and a passenger seriously hurt, and her infant son with minor injuries, pleaded no contest to felony drunk driving causing injury.

On July 22 San Mateo County Superior Court Judge Jonathan Karesh sentenced Carina Lisbet Sandoval, a 27-year-old East Palo Alto resident, to five years in state prison with credit for 376 days served, and ordered her to pay \$370 in fines and restitution.

Ms. Sandoval and her boyfriend were hurt after her Honda

turned left in front of oncoming traffic before running into an SUV near Bayfront Expressway and Chrysler Drive, according to investigators. Her 16-month-old son, who was riding in a car seat, was treated for minor cuts and abrasions at a local hospital. The occupants of the SUV were not hurt.

Investigators found a case of Tecate beer and a shot glass in Ms. Sandoval's car, according to the police report, and her blood alcohol level was measured at 0.22 percent — more than twice California's legal limit of 0.08 percent.

At the time of the Menlo Park collision, Ms. Sandoval was out of custody on an October 2013 DUI charge, according to District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe. ▀

Advisers sought on general plan

Here's a chance to shape the future of Menlo Park's industrial zone, otherwise known as the M-2 district. The city seeks volunteers to serve on an advisory committee that will provide guidance as Menlo Park works on updating its general plan, which functions as the "constitu-

tion" for development within the city. The M-2 district will be a special focus within that update.

Go to tinyurl.com/n625hun to fill out an application. The deadline to submit it to the city clerk's office is Aug. 11. Members will be appointed by the City Council on Aug. 19.

LANE CHANGES

continued from page 5

squeezes down to two lanes," he said. "... That's what causes the brake lights and congestion."

Ms. Nagaya said that the addition of a right-turn lane on northbound El Camino at Ravenswood Avenue and another northbound through-lane is expected to decrease congestion, but until the analysis is completed, the extent of the decrease remains unknown. She

added that the right-turn lane is identified as a traffic mitigation measure in the downtown/El Camino Real specific plan.

Go to menlopark-elcamino.com for more information and to participate in an online survey regarding this project through Sept. 12. A second workshop to identify possible street reconfigurations will be held on Oct. 2, and a draft analysis of the options will be presented in December, along with a third workshop. ▀

WOODSIDE HOME

continued from page 5

ing to get the work done," he said. "We are trucking quite a bit off site, yes," Mr. Triantos added. But where else could it go, given that his original redistribution plan was not acceptable? "We could not find a place to do it" without creating a whole lot of new challenges, he said.

The low-environmental-impact design of the house, including water recycling, on-site electricity generation and an orientation to take advantage of the sun and the breezes, will result in a "zero-energy" house, project architect Stuart Welte told the council.

When the discussion returned to the dais, Councilman Dave Tanner did not mince words. "I'm having a hard time calling

this a completely green house because of the energy it takes to build this house," he said. "It'll probably zero itself out in 25 or 30 years, maybe."

As for the trucking plan, "I think you need to get to know your neighbors a bit," he added. "You're going to need to be in harmony with the neighbors on this one."

Councilwoman Anne Kasten lauded the cooperative efforts. "That's the part that I'm really proud of," she said. "We got there and it's a lot of hard work."

"I don't think that you did a very good job (on keeping) the dirt on site," said Councilman Peter Mason. "I don't think you really dealt with it." Mr. Triantos replied that he would "love" to work with the town on reducing the off-haul. ▀

Atherton pedestrian, 32, struck by car while crossing El Camino, dies of injuries

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

Atherton resident Shahriar Rahimzadeh, 32, who was struck by a car shortly after 3:30 p.m. July 23 while crossing El Camino Real on foot, died of his injuries a few hours later at Stanford Hospital.

He had been crossing El Camino from east to west at Almedral Avenue, Sgt. Sherman Hall of the Atherton Police Department told the Almanac.

He was struck in the south-

bound slow lane by a Volvo S40 driven by a 17-year-old girl from San Carlos, police said. The driver's name was not released because she is a minor.

A witness told police that Mr. Rahimzadeh was not in the crosswalk at Almedral Avenue when he was struck.

Mr. Rahimzadeh was a 2001 graduate of Menlo-Atherton High School.

Police are investigating. "We're looking at the speed and that kind of stuff," Sgt. Hall said. "So far, we're not able to place (Mr. Rahimzadeh)

in the crosswalk."

Mr. Rahimzadeh was struck hard enough to be thrown some distance from the site of the collision, Sgt. Hall said. There was "significant damage" to the Volvo, he said.

Police waited until the driver's parents were on the scene before interviewing her, and she was "absolutely cooperative" with police, Sgt. Hall said.

Southbound El Camino Real lanes were closed from 5th Street and northbound lanes were reduced to one lane of travel. ■

Former Atherton councilman Jim Dobbie dies

By Renee Batti
Almanac News Editor

Jim Dobbie, who resigned his seat on the Atherton City Council in March because of poor health, died on July 24 at Stanford Hospital. He had celebrated his 84th birthday earlier this month.

After Mr. Dobbie announced his resignation, his wife, Pat Dobbie, told the Almanac that for the prior few months, he had been battling a strange respiratory condition, and despite undergoing numerous tests by "outstanding" doctors, the cause remained a mystery.

In a formal announcement issued the morning after Mr. Dobbie's death, the town of Atherton wrote that the former councilman "held a clear sense of commitment ... to this town and its residents. The town will miss Jim and his passion for democracy."

Mr. Dobbie served a four-year term on the town's Planning Commission before his June 2008 election to an 18-month council term. He and now Councilwoman Elizabeth Lewis vied for the seat that had been vacated by Alan Carlson, who had moved from town. Voters overwhelmingly elected Mr. Dobbie, and that victory was followed by his reelection in 2010 to a four-year term, which was set to expire in December.

Councilman Bill Widmer said Mr. Dobbie was "a real family man" who also loved the town he lived in for more than 20 years. "He wanted to do the right thing for Atherton," Mr. Widmer said. "He was a strong businessman and always paid attention to the dollars and cents."

Several years ago, when the town was struggling with a systemic budgetary deficit, Mr. Dobbie was a key player in helping turn the situation around,

'We owe him a debt of gratitude many of us will never really understand.'

FORMER COUNCILWOMAN
KATHY MCKEITHEN

said Mr. Widmer, who also played a major role in helping the town return to financial health.

Former councilwoman Kathy McKeithen, who served with Mr. Dobbie for four years, said in an email to the Almanac: "Jim was one of those rare breed of great people who did what he believed was good and right despite the potential personal consequences, be they to his own failing health or likely public criticism."

"When the town faced major fiscal problems due to long-

term pension and health obligations — which were quickly leading to potential bankruptcy — Jim helped fashion a plan to resolve those issues. He was stalwart in his love for Atherton and its citizens and if, today, Atherton is on a firm financial footing, it is in no small part due to Jim Dobbie.

"We owe him a debt of gratitude many of us will never really understand."

Mr. Dobbie was born in Scotland, and served as a pilot in the Royal Air Force Reserve. He moved with his wife to the United States in 1957. They lived in Palo Alto for 19 years before moving to Atherton about 20 years ago. He worked as a high-tech executive before retiring.

Several months after his June 2008 election, Mr. Dobbie was diagnosed with stage 4 lymphoma, he told the Almanac in a 2009 interview. He underwent five months of chemotherapy and the removal of his spleen — treatment that eliminated the cancer, he said.

Mr. Dobbie is survived by his wife, Pat, their three daughters, and seven grandchildren. The Almanac will report information about memorial services when it becomes available. ■



Jim Dobbie

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environments and would pass a veterinarian health screening? Stanford Hospital and Clinics, in conjunction with Pet Partners (formerly Delta Society) is holding a **free** information session (approximately 1.25 hours) on Saturday, August 16, 2014 at 3:00 pm in Palo Alto. No pets please — humans only.

RSVP via email to Lyn Belingheri at labsite@sbcglobal.net, location details will be sent to you via email. RSVP required to attend this session.

For more program information, please visit the Stanford PAWS website at: <http://stanfordhospital.org/forPatients/patientServices/pawsGuestServices.html>

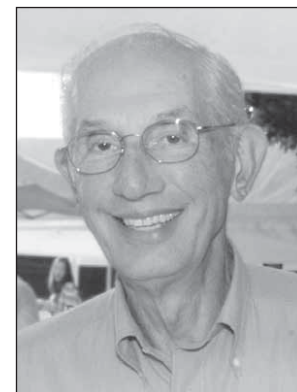
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George L. Shmagranoff, M.D.

July 12, 1924 – June 24, 2014

Dr. George Shmagranoff, an Internist, who specialized in Endocrine and Metabolic diseases, passed away at Sequoia Hospital on June 24, 2014, surrounded by his family. George created a legacy while being a part of the Sequoia Hospital family for over 50 years. His commitment and positions held, helped shape early policies and allowed him to be a mentor to many.



Born in Illinois, but raised in St. Louis, Missouri, George showed a great affinity to academics at an early age. He earned his degrees from Washington University, St. Louis, serving in WWII in between.

He arrived at Stanford University School of Medicine as a Fellow in 1956, starting as a teaching assistant, and throughout his career continued consulting in the Endocrine and Diabetic Clinics as a Clinical Associate Professor. He opened his private practice in Redwood City in 1959, which he ran until 2011.

George was a member of the Menlo Circus Club, a former member of the Stanford Golf Club, and a member of many medical organizations. He loved to attend the Stanford football and basketball games, and he loved his tennis games with his friends. He is survived by his wife, Helen, and his children, George Jr. (daughter-in-law Sami), Paula and Joan. He was preceded in death by his sister Elizabeth.

He will be deeply missed by his family and friends, but his compassion, integrity and smile will be remembered forever. A private burial was held.

PAID OBITUARY

Atherton: Third candidate files for council race

Rose Hau, who serves as vice chair of the town's Civic Center Advisory Committee, has filed candidate papers to run for a seat on the Atherton City Council, according to the city clerk's office. She joins incumbents Bill

Widmer and Rick DeGolia in the race for three open seats on the five-member council.

Michael Lempres, an attorney who is a member of the town's Transportation Committee and its Rail Committee,

has also taken out papers.

Ms. Hau is an architect who has served as an Atherton planning commissioner.

Residents have until Friday, Aug. 8, to file papers for the Nov. 4 council race.

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Menlo Park plans for water restrictions

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

With more than half of California experiencing “extreme drought,” Menlo Park’s greenery will look thirstier than ever starting Sept. 1, once the state gives the expected final approval to mandated water restrictions.

The new restrictions would forbid washing hard surfaces such as sidewalks; watering outdoor landscapes to the extent that runoff occurs; hosing off vehicles unless the hose has an automatic shut-off nozzle; and using potable water in fountains unless the water is recirculated.

Urban water agencies would also have to implement water shortage contingency plans, according to the state water board. Menlo Park receives water from the California Water Services Company and the Menlo Park Municipal Water District.

The city of Menlo Park has already asked residents to voluntarily reduce water use by 10 percent, and is now preparing for the mandated restrictions and then some, said interim

Public Works Director Jesse Quirion.

“We anticipate incorporating all of the state’s water restrictions at a minimum and we may consider a few additional water restrictions to continue doing our part in Menlo Park,” Mr. Quirion said.

The changes are also affecting city-owned properties. As some observers noted, the sprinklers at the Civic Center often leave puddles on the sidewalks — something Mr. Quirion said has now been addressed by reducing watering schedules and the amount of water used.

Violations of the water restrictions will carry stiff penalties — up to \$500 per day for residents, and up to \$10,000 per day for water agencies.

“It is our understanding that each city will be responsible for the resident enforcement, but we have not yet confirmed what the penalty structure is,” Mr. Quirion said.

The new reduction plan will be presented to the City Council on Aug. 19 to bring everyone up to date, but its approval is not required to enact the changes. ■

Police: Overall crime stats are down in Menlo Park

By Sandy Brundage

Almanac Staff Writer

Compared to the first six months of 2013, Menlo Park saw a 14 percent drop in the total number of reported crime incidents during the first half of 2014, according to statistics released by the city.

Property crime, which includes burglaries and auto thefts, dropped 16 percent, with 277 cases reported during the first half of 2014 compared to 329 during the same period in 2013. Car thefts decreased by 50 percent, with seven cases reported this year to date.

While there were four robberies reported, versus 10 in 2013, aggravated assaults rose slightly, with 14 cases reported to date this year — one more than at this point last year.

Eight rapes and sexual assaults were reported from January to June 2014, compared to no reported rapes in 2013. This year

the data combined both types of incidents into a single category.

The Menlo Park Police Department has implemented several changes during the past six months that may be contributing to the overall decrease in crime: Traffic enforcement, including the deployment of officers on motorcycles, increased; the Belle Haven substation at 871 Hamilton Ave. opened in April; and the department began using automated license plate readers in May.

Police Chief Bob Jonsen attributed some of the success to the department’s police advisory group, which recently celebrated its first anniversary. Among their contributions: Helping to prepare a traffic-enforcement plan that contributed to a 19 percent reduction in collision-related injuries during the first half of 2014, the chief said, and also recruiting neighborhood watch block captains. ■



This acrylic painting, titled “Netherlands Windmills,” is among the new works by Jerry Peters on exhibit in August at the Portola Art Gallery in Menlo Park.

Former firefighter shows new works

The August show at the Portola Art Gallery in Menlo Park is “New Works” — acrylic paintings of vintage trucks, vintage windmills, vintage tractors, and new still life and landscape paintings by former Menlo Park firefighter Jerry Peters.

His love of painting began after retiring from the fire service in 1996. He spent 30 years as a firefighter, the last 10 as a battalion chief in the Menlo Park Fire Protection District.

His career inspired his early

work in acrylics, which included fire engines, fire helmets and fire scenes.

For the past 15 years, he has specialized in portraits, landscapes and still life paintings. He has a special fondness for painting old trucks in rural settings, blending the beauty of nature with the character and history of battered vehicles.

In addition to his vintage trucks, he paints from photographs taken during his travels. His work includes scenes

from Italy, Germany, Belgium, Egypt, Greece, England and Turkey, as well as from across the U.S. and Canada.

A reception for Mr. Peters will be held from 1 to 4 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 2, at the gallery, located at the Allied Arts Guild, 75 Arbor Road in Menlo Park.

The exhibit runs through Aug. 31. The gallery is open Monday through Saturday, from 10:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

— Frances Freyberg
Blackburn

Arizona men charged in Woodside burglary

Two Arizona men are accused of flying to the Bay Area for a brief stay in March 2012 and, while here, burglarizing an unoccupied Woodside home of jewelry with an estimated value of \$30,000 to \$50,000, prosecutors said.

Bradley Sullivan, 51, and Michael Hunter Wallen, 48, both from Glendale, Arizona, are charged with burglary, grand theft and possession of stolen property, Chief Deputy District Attorney Karen Guidotti said. Both men pleaded not guilty and

are in custody on \$500,000 bail.

“The defendants had flown to (the) Bay Area from Arizona to burglarize residences and somehow found the victims’ home,” District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe said in a report.

A video recording from a neighbor’s surveillance camera allegedly shows the two men pulling up in front of the victims’ home in a rental car and emerging from the car, prosecutors said. One man allegedly walked up to the home while the other stayed behind to hide

the car’s license plate number, but not before the surveillance camera sees it, prosecutors said.

The investigation led detectives to the defendants’ home in Glendale, Arizona, where they acquired a search warrant and allegedly found jewelry matching descriptions of the jewelry stolen from the Woodside home, prosecutors said.

The men were arraigned in March 2014 and the case is set to go to a jury trial at 8:45 a.m. on Monday, Aug. 18.

Post-spraying, infected mosquitoes not found in Ladera

Results are in for the July 24 effort to combat West Nile Virus and the infected mosquitoes that had been detected in Ladera and San Mateo.

After six hours of fogging by the San Mateo County Mosquito and Vector Control District, infected mosquitoes were found in San

Mateo but not in Ladera, district officials said. Another round of fogging is set for San Mateo.

Infected mosquitoes had been found in Ladera on July 18 and in the San Mateo area, officials said.

While birds are the primary hosts, humans, horses and

other animals can be infected. Among human victims, 80 percent show no symptoms at all, officials say.

Infection requires the bite of an infected mosquito; the virus cannot be spread person-to-person.

Go to westnile.ca.gov for more information.

Power loss, traffic jam tied to grass fire near I-280

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

A grass fire along Interstate 280 in Woodside occupied firefighters for more than seven hours on July 24. At about 3:30 p.m., a eucalyptus tree fell across Canada Road near Godetia Drive and took with it a 60,000-volt electrical power line.

Because the power line happened to cross from one side of Canada Road to the other at that location, its sparks ignited weeds and brush on both sides of the road, including thick vegetation in the open space alongside the freeway, said Battalion Chief Rob Lindner of the Woodside Fire Protection District.

There were no reported injuries and the one-alarm fire was contained within an hour and under control by about 8 p.m., Mr. Lindner said.

Participating were firefighters from the Woodside district, the Redwood City Fire Department and the San Mateo County Fire Department, as well as a wildland-response team from the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection.

The Cal Fire group included five engine companies, two airplanes and a helicopter, with the helicopter doing most of the airborne firefighting, Mr. Lindner said. The helicopter dropped three or four loads of water, he said.

Traffic was snarled on northbound I-280 as the two lanes nearest the fire were closed. Parts of Canada Road were closed for several hours.

One fire, two fires

Woodside residents Denise and Millo Fenzi happened to be behind the lead car in the incident, and Mr. Fenzi made the 911 call, Ms. Fenzi told the Almanac.

"It was really something to watch," she said. "I just looked up and the tree was coming over Canada Road."

The driver ahead of her stopped and four young women got out and walked back to the Fenzis' car, Ms. Fenzi said. They all heard a loud bang and the fires started, she said.

"As we talked to the dispatcher, we watched the fires (start): one fire, two fires, three fires, four fires," she said.

Canada Road residents came out and fought the fire with hoses, she said.

Delayed response?

Ms. Fenzi said the firefighters took at least 10 minutes to arrive on the scene.

The tree blocked her passage home, so she turned around and got to I-280 north via the college campus, then to Edgewood Road and back down Canada to her home on the other side of the incident, where she loaded her three dogs into her vehicle. At that time, there was still no evidence of firefighters, she said.

"We live in a high fire danger area so how can it take 10 minutes," she asked. "I don't know what to expect, but I know that's not right."

Fire Chief Dan Ghiorso said his engine company was on the scene six minutes and 45 seconds after hearing from dispatchers, well within the response-time standards.

A confluence of events may have contributed to the delay.

Ms. Fenzi said that during the 911 call, her husband had to repeatedly tell the dispatcher that a car had not collided with a tree and that the incident had not happened on the freeway.

"They were determined to make it a car accident," she said.

And it had been a busy few minutes, for dispatchers and



Courtesy of San Mateo County Sheriff's Office

A darkened hallway at Canada College in Woodside served as a backdrop for a fabricated "active shooter" exercise on July 18 for first responders in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

'Active shooter' exercise at Canada College

In what was said to be a first for the Bay Area, first responders from law enforcement, firefighting, communications and emergency medical care gathered at Canada College in Woodside on July 18 for an unrehearsed exercise in dealing with a fabricated "active shooter" scenario.

The day-long exercise at

4200 Farm Hill Blvd. included more than 180 front-line personnel from San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, none of whom knew what to expect, according to the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office. The exercise had volunteers playing roles as victims and witnesses.

The purpose: "To prepare

first responders from all public safety disciplines physically and mentally for a violent intruder on a college campus," the Sheriff's Office said in a written statement.

Feedback from participants was "extremely positive" and more such exercises are likely, the statement said.

Woodside firefighters, Chief Ghiorso said. Within the two-minute window of the 911 call about the Godetia Drive fire, there had been four others for the Woodside district: two vehicle accidents and two medical calls. FireDispatch.com also shows a separate report of smoke on I-280 at Woodside Road.

The fire district is investigating and has asked for recordings of the 911 calls, Chief Ghiorso said.

Lucky escape

The incident may easily have

resulted in serious injury and even death, firefighters said.

When the eucalyptus tree fell, it fell in front of northbound traffic on Canada Road. In the lead car, the driver managed to stop and prevent serious damage, but the downed wires came to rest on the car — and the driver and passengers decided to get out.

The body of the car could have been electrified. Had a passenger stepped to the road while touching any part of the car's electrified body — or been separated from the car by

a few inches of air space — the passenger could have completed an electrical circuit from the wire to the ground and suffered a severe and perhaps fatal shock.

"We would not have approached the car," Chief Ghiorso said. "We would have told them to stay in the car until we got the wires secured."

Crews from Pacific Gas & Electric Corp. arrived quickly, but complications with grounding the wires delayed the shutdown of the electricity, Mr. Lindner said. ▣

Veteran sentenced in Woodside shovel attack

A sentence of a year in jail, with credit for time served, and three years probation was handed down to Milo Mcintosh Imrie in connection with a December 2012 incident in Woodside involving an assault with a shovel.

Over the objection of prosecutors, Criminal Presiding Judge Jonathan Karesh on July 25 reduced a charge of felony assault to a misdemeanor, according to a report from San

Mateo County prosecutors.

Mr. Imrie, a 25-year-old military veteran believed to be afflicted with post traumatic stress disorder, had pleaded no-contest to felony assault in May 2014.

Judge Karesh credited him with 644 days already served.

The incident in Woodside began with Mr. Imrie threatening to kill his 22-year-old cousin and himself, either with a knife or by dousing them both with

gasoline and igniting it, prosecutors said.

The cousin took a gasoline can from Mr. Imrie and took knives from the kitchen and threw them up on to the roof, but while his back was turned, Mr. Imrie allegedly hit him on the back with the shovel then fled.

Deputies found him at the Menlo Country Club on Woodside Road, where he was taken into custody after resisting arrest, prosecutors said.

Aug. 5: National Night Out

The annual National Night Out is almost upon us. Neighborhoods and agencies across the United States will throw parties on Aug. 5 to promote camaraderie and crime prevention.

Go to tinyurl.com/k2yuytn to register your party for the event.

Poll workers sought

The San Mateo County Elections Office is seeking people to work as election officers in polling places on Election Day,

■ BRIEFS

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Daycare with hourly drop-offs gets boost in West Menlo

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

County supervisors recently added momentum to plans to proceed with a daycare center in West Menlo Park, one designed for parents with busy and varied schedules.

The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors on July 15 unanimously rejected an appeal by 14 residents of unincorporated West Menlo Park who sought to deny a permit for a new preschool daycare in a single-family home at 3131 Alameda de las Pulgas and Manzanita Avenue. The county Planning Commission had agreed to issue the permit.

The board's decision gives the green light to Toddle LLC, a Menlo Park company, to proceed with a minor remodel of the home.

The Almanac was unable to reach Peter MacDonald, who led the appeal, for comment on the board's decision.

The new center, Toddle, will

accommodate up to 24 children from ages 2 to 6. Unlike whole-day facilities, Toddle will take children by the hour.

Reservations will be required and will involve a computer to schedule staggered drop-offs and pickups on an hour-by-hour basis, from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. Parking will be available on the Alameda and in the driveway.

The staggered scheduling is meant to address concerns raised by the local community about increasing traffic on quiet, narrow side-streets that often function as sidewalks and playgrounds for families in the area.

Among the conditions of the permit are that daycare customers sign contracts agreeing to use Alameda and Manzanita Avenue to get to and depart from the daycare center — and to not use Barney Avenue, a dead-end street that offers a back way to Valparaiso Avenue, but is frequented by walkers, bikers and kids on scooters.

Drop-offs and pickups will

be restricted to no more than two during a 12-minute period. Parking is restricted to not more than 10 minutes.

Some 120 local residents signed a petition opposing the project. Along with traffic issues, the residents expressed concerns over noise and over allowing a commercial enterprise to set up shop in a residential area.

Elaine MacDonald, a resident with three children, said the facility belongs in the commercial zone and will alter the character of her neighborhood and affect the lives of local families and students.

Eric Jester, a project opponent, proposed a 12-child facility, at least to start, arguing that it would be easier to allow more children later than to allow fewer.

Kathy Schoendorf, a resident from across the street from the proposed facility, focused on the traffic impact. Traffic will go up and down Manzanita and use Barney “no matter how it's set up,” she said. Enjoyment of the

neighborhood will be diminished for seniors, dog walkers and children, she said.

Danielle Critchley wondered how she was going to get the message to drivers. “How do I communicate to those 164 trips (the anticipated total) that are most likely going to flow down Manzanita of the importance of driving carefully and slowly and cautiously, because I can't tell the kids to move onto the sidewalk. We don't have one.”

“If anyone can run a tight ship, it's Heather and Amy,” said Ashley Riley, referring to Toddle co-owners Heather Hopkins and Amy Burnett. “I have no doubt they will run a carefully monitored business that will be treasured by the entire neighborhood.”

Carol Thomsen, a backer, congratulated Toddle for succeeding in overcoming the challenges of establishing daycare, given the processes of San Mateo County.

Courtney Charney, a real estate

agent with a 3-year-old daughter, said local daycare will improve the community and increase the desirability of living there.

Several backers noted that opponents of daycare in residential neighborhoods tend to make the same arguments every time and that they turn out to be unproven as time goes on.

In the end, the board made small changes to the original proposal. The board agreed to review the operation after six months and to study the possibility of a loading-zone area on the Alameda, an idea proposed by Supervisor Don Horsley.

“I'm hopeful and I'm fairly confident that the impacts will be minimal,” said board President Dave Pine. “If there are occurrences when these standards are not met, I think we will hear about it and I think the applicant will (have a strong incentive) to make sure that it stops. ... This need for daycare and childcare is so critical to our community.”

Potential council candidates weigh in on initiative, conflicts of interest

By Sandy Brundage
Almanac Staff Writer

Two questions immediately pop up when newcomers announce that they may run for Menlo Park City Council in the Nov. 4 election: What do they think of the initiative, which will be on the same ballot and that seeks to change the downtown/El Camino Real specific plan? And what matters

would they not be able to vote on due to conflicts of interest?

Kristin Duriseti, who has served on the Environmental Quality Commission for the past six years, pulled nomination papers on July 21. Her volunteering activities also include participating in the Oak Knoll Safe Routes to School steering committee and Laurel Elementary School's site council.

A graduate of Stanford Uni-

versity, she holds a master's degree in economics and a Ph.D. in political science from the University of Michigan. In addition to handling the accounting for her husband Ram's startup company, she works for Stanford University's Woods Institute for the Environment as the managing editor of Climatic Change.

That means issues such as the university's controversial mixed-use proposal for 500 El Camino

Real, as well as portions of the downtown/El Camino Real specific plan that would affect the university's Menlo Park properties, would be off the table for her as a council member.

Ms. Duriseti said that as for other potential recusals, she would need to seek clarification from the city attorney before giving a definitive answer. “It's still early in the process for me, and I'm vetting these issues as well.”

She extended that answer to cover her opinions of the specific plan initiative, and the specific plan itself.

“I don't mean to be evasive, but I think I still need to have clear guidance on the conflict of interest issue before I could comment on the initiative or specific plan,” Ms. Duriseti said.

Andrew Combs

Fellow potential new candidate Andrew Combs was appointed to his first term on the Planning Commission in May. Prior to that, he served on the Bicycle Commission and has volunteered as a tutor at the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula. He pulled nomination papers for the council election on July 18.

He holds a bachelor's degree in urban studies from Columbia University and a law degree from Harvard, although he does not currently practice as an attorney, and has covered business and legal matters as a journalist for publications such as the San Francisco Daily Journal and American Lawyer.

He said that since he lives near the SRI campus, he would recuse himself from related matters.

As for the hot topic in this year's election: Mr. Combs sounded like he supports both the initiative and the specific plan.

He said he could “think of no better framework for future development in downtown and (El Camino Real) than the plan's 12 guiding principles.”

However, his concern is that the specific plan, “especially in the absence of a vigilant council, allows for development that isn't true to many of those guiding principles.”

Since major development along the city's main corridor will impact everyone's daily life, everyone should get a say, he said. “Simply put, I trust the voters of Menlo Park to make the right decision far more than I trust developers, Stanford's real estate department or the city council.”

The willingness to allow voters, rather than special interests or a small group of people, to decide reflects his commitment to the democratic process and non-partisanship, according to Mr. Combs.

He said he hopes to keep an open mind during the debates of the election season, but right now is inclined to vote for the initiative.

The newcomers could find themselves facing three incumbents: Current council members Rich Cline, Kirsten Keith and Peter Ohtaki have also taken out papers for the November election.

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More must be done for safety on El Camino

The death last week of 32-year-old pedestrian Shahriar Rahimzadeh, who was struck by a car and killed while crossing El Camino Real in Atherton at Almandral Avenue, near his home, has thrust the issue of pedestrian and bicyclist safety on that major thoroughfare onto center stage, once again. Caltrans and the town of Atherton have studied the safety issue for years, ramping up their efforts in 2012, when two women were struck and seriously injured in a crosswalk at Isabella Avenue, two years to the day that a man on a bicycle was struck and killed in the same crosswalk. A number of other vehicle-vs.-pedestrian fatalities and serious injuries in the last few years have also occurred along the 1.6-mile stretch of the state highway that runs through Atherton.

The investigation into the July 24 incident is still ongoing, but it appears that the driver of the car that struck Mr. Rahimzadeh, as he was trying to run through the last of six lanes to reach the west side of the road, was not speeding. His presence was obscured by other vehicles traveling in her direction, and she just didn't see him. This won't surprise people who regularly drive this six-lane portion of El Camino, nor would it surprise those who have tried to cross the busy roadway on foot: It is a difficult, often frightening experience to cross six lanes of highway, even in a crosswalk, at an intersection with no traffic light.

Understandably, Atherton residents sounded the call for action. They called Town Hall and other agencies. City Manager George Rodericks said he received a call from state Sen. Jerry Hill's office; the senator's aide told him that the office had received a call or two from people demanding that the state and the town act to improve El Camino safety.

The reality is that Atherton and Caltrans have been intently

focused on the issue, and have come up with options for future safety-improvement projects. A study is looking at options including narrowing the roadway from six lanes to four — an idea that would be difficult to sell, particularly to neighboring jurisdictions. There's been enhanced striping and signage at crosswalks at uncontrolled intersections. And state funding is already secured to place flashing beacons at crosswalks at Isabella and Alejandra avenues.

But it's more than a cliché to say that public agencies move at glacial speed. Even the fully funded crosswalk beacons won't be in place until sometime in 2017. The El Camino problem demands more action, now.

Already, police officers have stepped up enforcement on the highway, ticketing speeders, and though speed was probably not a factor in the recent tragedy, anyone who drives El Camino knows that there's a speed problem, making crossing the road even more hazardous. More enforcement was a positive step, but still more is needed. Atherton residents have supported a robust police force, and a greater police presence on El Camino should move even higher on the priority list.

The town and Caltrans have also worked together to increase visibility by trimming trees and removing vegetation within medians. Is there more that can be done in this area? If so, it should be done.

Also, could Caltrans' seemingly ubiquitous electronic message boards be called into service in areas pedestrians frequently cross, flashing a message that motorists are approaching a hazardous crosswalk?

The town and Caltrans cannot be faulted for doing nothing. But last week's tragedy reminds us of the need to take interim measures to protect pedestrians and bicyclists today while the wheels of government agencies roll along their measured ways. ■

LETTERS

Our readers write

Accepting consultant's report a 'great disservice'

Editor:

By law, the city is not allowed to take sides in elections. All materials provided by the city must consider all important points and be fair to both sides of the issue. The \$150,000 Wise report, which the Menlo Park City Council accepted July 15, does not meet this standard.

For example, when analyzing the Initiative's section prohibiting balconies and rooftops from being considered as open space, the Wise report ignores the obvious public benefit of requiring developers to include more open space in their projects. The report did not analyze any impacts of pending projects, including the massive and controversial proposals from Stanford and Greenheart, nor did it evaluate against the community's Vision for the Plan area what will happen with these and other pending projects.

In accepting an admittedly deficient report, in midsummer with no prior discussion, and no other meetings scheduled, the council gave the



Portola Valley Archives

Looking back

The Hallidies, who like other wealthy San Franciscans had a summer retreat on the Peninsula, pose for this undated photograph with family and friends at Eagle Home Farm on Spring Ridge. The woman on the left is identified as "Mrs. Baba" (or Baza). Also pictured, from left, is Grandma Eliza Brown, Florence Doyen, Andrew Hallidie, Martha Hallidie, Andrew Smith Brown, Annie Grant Sheppard, and Joe Doyen. Andrew and Martha Hallidie had moved into the area in 1883, and their 368-acre Eagle Home Farm extended from Portola Road, just across from today's Village Square, up to Skyline, according to "Life on the San Andreas Fault: A History of Portola Valley," by Nancy Lund and Pamela Gullard.

city's official backing to work known to be inaccurate. This is a great disservice to the voters of Menlo Park who are relying on the city to provide complete, accurate and truthful informa-

tion for the upcoming ballot measure.

The city should immediately address the report's shortcomings and issue corrections as soon as possible. Not doing so

violates the law and deprives the public of vital information necessary to decide this important issue.

Heyward Robinson
White Oak Drive, Menlo Park

Respect for cows and horses, but the pigs? No.

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

Rodeos are rough and tumble, but they are not without scenes of animal grace. A bull leaping in balletic arcs, legs extended, to free himself of the interloper on his back; a bucking bronco making a move that looks practiced to quickly rid himself of the interloper on his back; a steer, its matte-tan hide gleaming in the sunshine, twisting and turning, but finally accepting the lasso around its horns and turning, rather deliberately, to face the interloper at the other end of the rope.

At the July Fourth junior rodeo in Woodside on the grounds of the Mounted Patrol of San Mateo County, there were no bulls and no bucking broncos. Calves and steers were roped, but frequently with break-away lassos. Often they managed to avoid the lasso altogether and meander around the arena. With encouragement by mounted cowhands, they would eventually find the exit and rejoin their herd.

Horses were graceful, too, particularly in a slalom-like event in which horse and rider weave twice through a line of flexible poles. Some of the horses seemed to know what was expected of them and showed agility and concentration. And the announcer, in play-by-play style, spoke highly of them all, losers included. As he did during the cow-roping events.

Respect seemed the order of

the day. If these animals were stressed, they weren't showing it with their voices. No bawling and no whinnying, at least not during the action. What, then, was passing through the minds of the pigs?

The pig scramble, an annual event, involved two groups of about 20 adult pigs who, upon being released from a windowless livestock trailer, tumbled out into the open air and got to snuffling enthusiastically in the arena dirt. Their silent explorations were short-lived. In seconds, they were

inundated by a wave of humanity — three times by children and once by adults. The goal: catch a pig and maybe win a trophy, while the pig was manhandled back into the trailer.

The pigs made a noise. When in captivity, they would scream loudly, intensely and continually, enough to undercut the sounds of enthusiasm from the crowd. A 3-year-old boy in the bleachers began to cry while his dad, smiling, looked on.

Each round of the "scramble" meant five minutes of mayhem as impromptu gangs of people roved the arena in the manner of predators. Clusters would accumulate around a captured pig like ants subduing a victim. One pig was seen trying to re-enter its trailer. It was twice intercepted and kicked away.

The pig scramble is not illegal, said Christina Hanley, an investigator for the Peninsula Humane Society in San Mateo.



REPORTER'S
NOTEBOOK



Photo by Brandon Chew

A scene from the rodeo pig scramble.

A veterinarian is on call during the event, she added.

"Pigs do scream a lot," she said. "Any time you try to handle them, their reaction is to scream. They can make a lot of noise even if they're not stressed."

There's no record of pigs being injured, said Ronald Johnson of the Mounted Patrol in a statement. The animals are local and brought in "just in time for the event," cared for by the farmer, and returned to the farm "immediately" after the event, he said. "There is no special training or program for the animals that participate," he added. "The animals are a commercial product for the farmer, and it is not in his best interests to have any of his stock injured."

Mary Paglieri is the founder of The Little Blue Society, a Red-

wood City nonprofit dedicated to resolving land and resource conflicts between animals and humans. Her comment on the pig scramble: An "exceptionally cruel" form of "fun" that can cause invisible injuries. "Pigs are sensitive, social creatures," she said in an email. "Their intelligence is comparable to a three-year-old child. They are one of the most intelligent animals that humans eat."

Invisible injuries can happen to any animal, Ms. Hanley said when asked to comment. "To (the Mounted Patrol's) knowledge and to our knowledge, no animals have been injured."

That's not to say that she looks kindly on pig scrambles. "Even if animals aren't being injured, it is definitely stressing them out," she said. Would she let her child participate? "I would never let my child do that," she said. "There's

a huge chance that someone is going to be injured. I think it's irresponsible parenting."

Is the pig scramble animal cruelty? "It's a tricky issue, especially with rodeo," Ms. Hanley said. California animal welfare laws "aren't where they need to be," and have gaps in defining animal cruelty, she said. And rodeos have lobbyists. "I don't think that there's really any need for rodeos anymore, (but) it's an uphill battle because there are so many people who are lobbying to keep rodeo in California," she said.

The key to this event is human dominance. The pigs don't have a chance. Try it with an animal that can fight back.

Even if this "contest" is not as traumatic for the pigs as it appears, it sets a bad example for kids and is beneath our dignity as thinking, feeling human beings to be a party to it. ■

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