

The Almanac

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

APRIL 1, 2015 | VOL. 50 NO. 30



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Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Two students at Woodside Elementary School, Luke Weigle, right, and Peyton Warford stood at the intersection of Canada Road and Glenwood Avenue recently to analyze cyclists' behavior at stop signs.

Most cyclists stop for stop signs

■ That's what a survey taken in Woodside by fifth-graders shows.

By **Dave Boyce**
Almanac Staff Writer

California law requires bicyclists to stop at stop signs, but many bicyclists regularly and blatantly ignore this rule of the road. Are the scofflaws in the majority? Or are they a minority whose behavior may make them more memorable to observers?

According to a recent survey, at the corner of Glenwood Avenue and Canada Road in Woodside, a little more than a third of the cyclists blow through stop signs, but that's when no one appears to be observing them. In the same survey, by Woodside Elementary School fifth-graders Luke Weigle and Peyton Warford, the data shows that cyclists may be modifying their behavior when they're conscious of being observed.

Luke and Peyton, working on their school science fair project, spent 90 minutes on each of two weekends measuring the stop-

Cyclist behavior at stop signs

SCENARIO	STOPPED	DID NOT STOP	TOTAL	% DID NOT STOP
Patrol car present	269	13	282	4.6%
Handmade sign advising cyclists of the law	206	21	227	9.2%
Stop sign alone	173	90	263	34.0%

Source: Survey by Luke Weigle and Peyton Warford of Woodside Elementary School on Feb. 1 and March 8, 2015.

sign behavior of cyclists headed north and south on Canada Road. A legal stop on a bicycle, according to deputies, means "a cessation of movement" accompanied by either putting one's foot on the ground or balancing the bike.

The surveys took place between noon and 1:30 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 1, and Saturday, March 8. The students employed three scenarios, each 30 minutes in length:

■ **Scenario 1:** Approaching cyclists could see a patrol car from the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office near the intersection. By design, the car was unoccupied, though Deputy James Goulart stood nearby.

Of the 282 cyclists that passed by, the survey showed that 95.4 percent stopped at the stop sign.

■ **Scenario 2:** Approaching cyclists would see Luke and Peyton standing at the intersection holding up a large handwritten sign that read "Bikes must stop." Under these circumstances, the survey showed 90.8 percent of 227 riders coming to a stop.

■ **Scenario 3:** The intersection appeared to be unattended, leaving cyclists to their own devices. In this scenario, 66 percent of the 263 riders stopped.

The boys reported their

See CYCLISTS page 6

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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Couple give \$50M to brain research center

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

Mark and Mary Stevens, the Atherton couple who recently gave \$50 million to the University of Southern California's Neuroimaging and Informatics Institute, are among 129 billionaires worldwide who have signed the Giving Pledge, started by Warren Buffett and Bill Gates, promising to give away at least half their wealth.

The couple's donation, announced by USC on March 25, "promises to improve the lives of millions of people worldwide" by speeding the "translation of basic research into new therapies, preventions and cures for brain injury and disease, including Alzheimer's, schizophrenia and traumatic brain injury," the university said in its announcement.

The institute will be renamed the USC Mark and Mary Stevens Neuroimaging and Informatics Institute.

Mark Stevens, a venture capitalist who has worked for Sequoia Fund and is now with S-Cubed, said the impetus for the donation was "multi-faceted." He has long supported USC, where he is a trustee and an alumnus. He and his wife also funded the USC Stevens Center for Innovation and the Stevens Academic Center for student-athletes.

Neurological research, Mr. Stevens said, "is the next big great frontier of medical research." Scientists have learned a great deal about other aspects of human health, he

said, but are only now getting to really understand the human brain.

Advances in medicine have allowed people to live longer, but more people are being diagnosed with brain diseases such as Alzheimer's and autism. Brain injuries from high-impact sports have also recently become more widely recognized, he said.

In addition, the Stevenses have experienced neurological diseases in their own family — his father has Alzheimer's and one of his three children is dyslexic. "It touches not just the old, it touches the young and the middle aged," he said.

"It made a pretty compelling case for our gift."

The gift also helps fulfill a promise made in the statement the Stevenses made when they agreed to the Giving Pledge.

"We as a family have embraced philanthropy as a true value," Mr. Stevens said. In their giving pledge statement, the Stevenses say they realized they had "more wealth" than they "would ever need and began to think about what to do about it." They realized, their pledge statement says, that there are limited things one can do with money: "1) give it to your kids (we have three), 2) let the government take it from you and redistribute it, 3) spend with reckless abandon or 4) donate virtually all of it to causes and organizations that we feel could make a difference in the world."

They chose the last option, their statement says, because "the first option would inhibit our children's dreams and motivations; the second option is very inefficient; the third option

is not part of our DNA."

Locally, the family has donated to their three children's schools, including Menlo School, Sacred Heart Prep, Las Lomas district schools, and the Charles Armstrong School. They have 17-year-old twin boys and a 13-year-old daughter.

The Stevenses have also donated to Mary's alma mater, Santa Clara University, and to other health related causes, including the Palo Alto Medical Foundation's Sunnyvale Center for oncology and general medicine in honor of Father Paul Locatelli, former president of Santa Clara University.

Mark Stevens grew up near USC in Culver City. He has bachelor's degrees in economics and electrical engineering and a master's degree in computer engineering from USC, and an MBA from Harvard University. He has been on the USC Board of Trustees since 2001 and serves on the boards of the USC Health System and the school of engineering.

Mary Mathews Stevens, who grew up in Portland, Oregon, moved to California to attend Santa Clara University, where she played soccer and received a bachelor's degree in finance. She is now on the university's board of trustees. Ms. Stevens spent 14 years in the commercial real estate business.

"Both of us grew up in middle class homes ... where commitment, hard work, strong values and common sense framed the foundation of our early years," their Giving Pledge statement says.

In fact, an Almanac reader says Ms. Stevens, while she



Photo courtesy of the Stevens family

Atherton's Mary and Mark Stevens have given the University of Southern California \$50 million to name and endow the school's Mark and Mary Stevens Neuroimaging and Informatics Institute.

was still Mary Mathews, "was our first paper 'boy' and also provided babysitting services," when they all lived in Portland in the 1970s.

Mr. Stevens says the couple met "in the office lobby of Sequoia Capital."

The neuroimaging institute the Stevenses are supporting works to further understanding of the brain's structure and function in health and disease. The institute's interdisciplinary teams were among the first to map the spread of Alzheimer's disease in the living human brain and to create digital 3-D

and 4-D brain imaging that examines the effects of neurological diseases, according to USC's announcement of the gift.

The announcement says the institute has the world's largest repository of healthy and diseased brain images, along with medical and cognitive data from diverse populations around the globe.

The institute works closely with the USC's engineering school as well as faculty in biology, genetics, biostatistics, computer science, mathematics, pharmacology and other disciplines. ■

Menlo Park to look at extending parking time limits downtown

By Sandy Brundage
Almanac Staff Writer

The city of Menlo Park will look at four proposed changes to downtown parking: letting people park in the downtown plazas for up to three hours for free; increasing the time people can park in short, "drop-off" spaces on Santa Cruz Avenue to 30 minutes from 15; converting one-hour spaces to two hours; and funding parking garages.

Those ideas were an outcome of a March 24 City Council

study session on downtown parking.

Transportation Manager Nikki Nagaya said the staff wanted guidance on three questions: What are the pros and cons of the current parking arrangements? What is the experience of parking downtown like? What values should the city's parking policy prioritize, such as vibrancy versus employee convenience?

The experience question had a straightforward answer: As council members have personally

experienced, parking downtown is stressful because of the time limits and rapid enforcement.

Councilman Ray Mueller said he recently met for a business lunch downtown and "was embarrassed" by how everyone had to keep checking their watches to make sure they could get back to their cars without getting ticketed.

Mayor Cat Carlton, an avid supporter of extending the free parking limits to three hours in the parking plazas, said she has been talking with business

owners who would love to open a Menlo Park location, but hesitate because they worry people don't linger downtown long enough to shop.

"We have the foot traffic, and then we take a stick and chase them away" as soon as they're done with lunch, Mayor Carlton said.

The council also voiced support for looking at charging "in lieu" fees to help pay for a parking garage as new projects come in. They acknowledged that getting everyone in the community

on board with building garages "will be a long conversation," as the mayor put it.

Ms. Nagaya said that the staff will return at a later date with feedback on the proposed parking changes, noting that extending the free parking time limits would come with an associated cost to replace all the signs — estimated at \$30,000 — as well as implications for parking enforcement, including how often the police department's officers would patrol and how that would affect revenue. ■

Community Health Education Programs



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

April 2015



Dementia Caregiver Education Series:
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Mondays, April 13, 20 & 27, May 4, 11 & 18, 1 to 3 p.m.
Alexandra Morris, Alzheimer's Association

PAMF Sunnyvale Center

301 Old San Francisco Rd., Second Floor Conference Center, Sunnyvale • (408) 730-2810



Dr. Tom McDonald Memorial Lecture Series Autism Spectrum Disorder Update

April 14, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Brian Tang, M.D.

PAMF Developmental and Behavioral Pediatrics

PAMF Palo Alto Center

795 El Camino Real, Third Floor Conference Center, Jamplis Building • (650) 853-4873



Genetics and Your Health

April 14, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Monique de Bruin, M.D., MPH

PAMF Medical Oncology

Mountain View Center

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

Ankle 101: Common Problems and Their Treatments

April 22, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Andrew Haskell, M.D., PAMF Orthopedics

San Carlos Center

301 Industrial Road, Conference Room A, San Carlos • (650) 853-4873

Pain Management: An Alternative Approach

April 27, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Avi Mamidi, PAMF Pharmacy Services

San Carlos Library

610 Elm Street, San Carlos • Rhea Bradley, Librarian at (650) 591-0341, ext. 237

Fewer live on streets

San Mateo County is home to approximately 747,400 people, according to the U.S. census. While some still call the county home without, in fact, having one, their numbers are down. Preliminary estimates show that around 690 people are living on the streets, in vehicles or in encampments, lower by 47 percent from the 1,299 people counted in 2013.

The county's biannual census of the homeless took place Jan. 22, when some 200 volunteers went out in the predawn hours to count those they found living without an address. The census is documented in a report by the county's Human Services Agency.

Also down, but by just 7 percent, is the number of people living in emergency shelters, transitional housing, motels and institutions: 915 in 2015

versus 982 in 2013.

Of the households in shelters, 124 are families with dependent children. There are no children living on the street, the report said.

Final numbers, including information on what led people to homelessness and how long they've been so, are due in May.

The overall decrease in homelessness "is great news for San Mateo County, and evidence that our community's collective efforts are working," said Iliana Rodriguez, director of the Human Services Agency.

"We still have work to do, in getting everyone desiring a home in one, and this data suggests that we are making progress," Ms. Rodriguez said. "Addressing or preventing homelessness ultimately creates a stronger, more stable and more thriving community across the board."

Most cyclists stop for stop signs

continued from page 3

findings on March 21 to the town of Woodside's Circulation Committee. The committee's mission is to encourage a sense of community in the safe use of town roads. The boys' conclusion: "It turns out that human behavior changes under the act of observing it," Peyton said in an interview. "We believe that cyclists are more willing to stop and obey the law when somebody is watching them."

It's an example of the Hawthorne Effect, they said. An everyday example: People in public bathrooms are more likely to wash their hands when there's another person present. The journal *Occupational Medicine*, published by Oxford University Press, describes the Hawthorne Effect as people changing their behavior when they think they're being watched.

For this Woodside experiment, the second day of Scenario 2 showed a 10 percentage point increase in cyclists ignoring the hand-lettered sign. The reason, the boys said, may be that cyclists reacted differently, having seen the sign four weeks earlier.

The Sheriff's Office has not seen the survey data, Deputy Rebecca Rosenblatt said in an email. When asked whether it

could be meaningful, she said that it could help the town's Circulation Committee with its traffic safety efforts.

Class acts

Some of the cyclists spoke kindly to the boys; some did not.

Among the kind comments: "Nice job," "I agree with the sign," "Did I stop?" and "That's one for the 'stop' column."

A lot of people said, "You suck," the boys said. One cyclist, on his way through without stopping, told the boys, "Your parents are raising you to be Nazis."

Was Deputy Goulart there to hear any of this negative stuff? "No, unfortunately, because I would have had a little discus-

sion with those people," he said. "What's the reason for making a snide comment to a kid?"

The boys said that hostility, when it surfaced, came more often from groups of cyclists. Deputy Goulart did not disagree, but noted that he's been successful in talking with cycling groups about

acting in the interest of better relations with the public.

The boys proposed adding small signs to the stop signs informing cyclists of their obligation to stop. "After they're there for a while, they just become part of the scenery," Deputy Goulart said. "They just blend back into the environment." ■

'We believe that cyclists are more willing to stop and obey the law when somebody is watching them.'

PEYTON WARFORD

Jury rejects Ellen Pao's claims of gender bias at Kleiner Perkins

By Sandy Brundage
Almanac Staff Writer

After two full days of deliberation following an almost month-long trial, a jury on March 27 found in favor of venture capital firm Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers in a lawsuit alleging gender discrimination brought by Ellen Pao, a former junior partner.

The jury, composed of six men and six women, found that Ms. Pao's gender was not a substantial factor in the firm's decision to deny her a promotion to senior partner. They voted 9-3 that Kleiner Perkins had not demonstrated gender bias with regard to her advancement; did not fire or fail to promote her in retaliation for the complaint; and had taken steps to prevent gender discrimination against her.

Ms. Pao filed the lawsuit in 2012. After earning both a law degree and an MBA from Harvard, as well as a degree in electrical engineering from Princeton, she joined Kleiner Perkins in 2005.

The suit alleged that the firm discriminates against women for promotions and compensation, and retaliated against her after she complained about harassment by a peer who allegedly pressured her into a brief sexual relationship.

She asked for \$16 million in

compensatory damages as well as an unspecified amount of punitive damages.

The case may not be over, as Ms. Pao and her attorneys have the right to appeal the verdict. She is currently working as interim CEO of Reddit.

The lawsuit detailed what Ms. Pao described as specific instances of gender exclusion, including a company ski trip in January 2012 and several dinners to which reportedly only male employees were invited.

Kleiner Perkins refuted the allegations, saying in its filed response that Ms. Pao has "twisted facts and events in an attempt to create legal claims where none exist."

Ms. Pao was fired from the firm about six months after filing the lawsuit.

In filings made before the trial started as well as arguments made in court, attorney Lynne Hermle, representing the venture capital firm, argued that Ms. Pao was not promoted because she lacked the interpersonal skills and ability to work as a team member.

During the trial, both sides offered testimony that could have swayed jurors in either direction: For example, Ms. Pao alleged that she was pressured into an affair with a married colleague, while the defense offered evidence of a consensual

relationship.

The man, Ajit Nazre, was later fired in 2012 after the company investigated another woman's complaint that he had sexually harassed her. Ms. Pao initially intervened to prevent his firing, according to court testimony, while Kleiner Perkins allowed Mr. Nazre to anonymously have input into her performance reviews after the affair ended on a sour note, according to witness testimony reported by the Wall Street Journal. Mr. Nazre did not appear during the trial.

Courtroom watchers said the verdict is less important than the fact that the trial raised gender issues in Silicon Valley to a high profile, hopefully prompting change in the venture capital arena.

Ms. Pao exited the courtroom and said she appreciated the support that everyone had expressed during the trial.

"I have told my story and thousands of people have heard it. If I've helped to level the playing field for women and minorities, then the battle was worth it," she said.

Neither attorney Alan Exelrod, who led Ms. Pao's case, nor Ms. Hermle, the chief representative for Kleiner Perkins, responded to requests for interviews. ■

Bay City News Service contributed to this report.

Crowdfunding drive to save Nak's

A crowdfunding campaign has kicked off to rescue Nak's Oriental Market in Menlo Park. The market, which has been open for nearly 47 years, carries a combination of Asian and Dutch products, in addition to produce and sushi-grade meat.

Rent hikes and competition from big grocery stores have made operations difficult for the small business at 1151 Chestnut St. even before owner Sam Kurose turned the business over to his son, Ken, in 2013. The son is now facing the possibility of shutting Nak's down and shifting to online sales and home delivery, according to the IndieGoGo crowdfunding site.

Go to tinyurl.com/ogmgthq for more information.

Two cited for buying alcohol for minors

Two adults were cited March 26 for misdemeanors after they bought alcohol for a minor decoy working on behalf of the Menlo Park Police Department.

■ BRIEFS

While standing outside a liquor or convenience store, the decoy asked 61 adults to make a purchase, police said. Decoys must "be under the age of 20, must have the appearance of a minor, cannot wear clothes or jewelry that would make them look older, and must answer truthfully if asked their age," police said.

The penalties for those cited include a minimum \$1,000 fine and 24 hours of community service, according to the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control.

The decoy operation was funded through grants from the California Office of Traffic Safety and the ABC.

Fire district renews SLAC contract

When Stanford University's National Accelerator Laboratory calls, the Menlo Park Fire Pro-

tection District will still come running.

The district announced on March 25 that it has renewed a three-year emergency services agreement with the facility, with a possible two-year extension. According to the press release, the number of emergency calls to SLAC decreased by 40 percent since the district began providing services in 2012, thanks to a combination of better alarm systems and improved emergency response training on site.

As part of the renewed contract, effective April 1, SLAC will pay a base rate of \$34,000 a month to the fire district. The district will receive a 1 percent increase in the monthly amount if it buys a pumper truck, which it plans to do in July, according to Fire Chief Harold Schapelhouman.

SLAC will provide higher reimbursement for service calls that last longer than two hours, which happened twice during the fire district's first three years at the facility.

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EVENT SCHEDULE

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The **Almanac**
AlmanacNews.com

LET'S DISCUSS:

Read the latest local news headlines and talk about the issues on Town Square at AlmanacNews.com

Mass-market hydrogen-powered car at Earth Fair

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

Of the five factory-manufactured cars parked with their hoods up at the 2015 Earth Fair in Woodside on Saturday, March 28, electric motors powered all of them. “OK,” a reader might say. “This is 2015. What else have you got?”

One car did not require a plug on a wire to recharge. The Mercedes Benz F-CELL, which is not available in the United States, runs on an electric motor, but derives its electricity from an on-board hydrogen fuel cell, a type of battery.

To refuel this car, the driver must stop at a service station that pumps hydrogen, park next to the pump, grab a hose with a nozzle on the end, and connect it to the car’s fuel tank after opening a small door along the rear side of the car’s body.

In short, the hydrogen powered car is ready for prime time. All that’s needed is a network of hydrogen fueling stations and a customer base who own hydrogen-powered cars, neither of which exist at the moment.

It’s a chicken-and-egg problem, and the California Fuel Cell Partnership is taking it on. “We determined that stations must come before vehicles, and the stations must be customer-friendly locations that are convenient to home and work,” says the website. The 32 members in this partnership include vehicle manufacturers, hydrogen sup-

pliers, fuel cell developers and government agencies such as the California Energy Commission and the California Air Resources Board.

Toyota, Honda and Hyundai are expected to be selling hydrogen-powered cars in California in 2015, said Jennifer Hamilton of the fuel-cell partnership.

And by the fall, a small network of hydrogen pumping stations may be on the Peninsula, including in Woodside, Redwood City, Mountain View, Palo Alto and Los Altos, according to a state report. The Energy Commission, acting on legislation enacted in 2013, is engaged in establishing a hydrogen infrastructure in Berkeley, the Peninsula and parts of Los Angeles.

The owners of the Skylonda station will be spending around \$2.8 million to remodel the site, with \$2.1 million of that coming from Sacramento, according to Colin Armstrong, president of British Columbia-based Hydrogen Technology & Energy Corp. The company joined with property owner Kalaf Properties in bidding for a Skylonda facility after the Energy Commission decided that it wanted a station in Woodside.

At the Earth Fair, Ms. Hamilton talked with the Almanac from behind the wheel of the Mercedes F-CELL. “It’s just like driving a (gasoline powered) car,” she said. “What’s different is knowing you’re driving a zero-emissions car.” That and the plethora of decals on



Photo by Dave Boyce/The Almanac

The Mercedes Benz F-CELL car, powered by a hydrogen fuel cell, displayed decals hinting to visitors to the 2015 Woodside/Portola Valley Earth Fair that its only exhaust is water vapor.

the outside dropping hints to the observer that this vehicle’s exhaust consists of water vapor.

The F-CELL has a range of about 240 miles and refuels in three to five minutes, according to a brochure. Ms. Hamilton said she has driven the car round-trip between Sacramento and the Bay Area. As with electrically powered vehicles in general, the car has regenerative braking, she said. In other words, the car can recharge the battery a bit when the vehicle is decelerating.

There are preconceived notions out there on the dan-

gers of hydrogen as a fuel, and one of her jobs is informing the public about it, including emergency first responders. One key difference between hydrogen and gasoline is the behavior of the vapor. Both are flammable, but gasoline vapors are heavier than air and can settle around an accident site, whereas hydrogen is 14 times lighter than air, she said.

Environment champs

At the Earth Fair, Portola Valley and Woodside named their environmental champions for 2015.

Woodside’s champion was

Jason Mendelson, who organized the Earth Fair and was quite embarrassed to be so honored. “I do like to hear myself talk, but this is a little much,” he said. “I guess they knew I’d be here so that’d be a plus for this thing.”

Portola Valley Mayor Jeff Aalfs announced Adeline Jessup as that town’s honoree. Ms. Jessup, an early member of the town’s Architectural and Site Control Commission, is remarkable for her passion and stewardship and “a giant” upon whose shoulders today’s volunteers stand, Mr. Aalfs said. ■

Ballast rock update expected by April 3

By Sandy Brundage
Almanac Staff Writer

After holding a meeting with an estimated 45 Belle Haven residents concerned about the dusty piles of ballast rock stored near the Chilco Street railroad tracks, Caltrain said it would provide an update and possible solutions by Friday, April 3, according to the city of Menlo Park.

The Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center facilitated the March 23 community meeting. Caltrain representatives told residents that it would take about two years to move the rocks to an industrial site in Redwood City.

Caltrain started storing ballast, or railroad rock, in piles next to the tracks and near Chilco Street in Menlo Park in 2008. The rock provides a bed for railroad tracks. But left sitting in



Photo by Magali Gauthier

The rock piles, stored by Caltrain, are situated along the train tracks that run parallel to Chilco Street in Menlo Park.

piles, it sends dust into the air that may be a health hazard, according to the residents who live nearby.

According to a meeting summary provided by the city, there are several options to explore in an attempt to

minimize the dust: continuing to water the piles; covering the piles; and planting trees around the site to provide a barrier.

Residents said that watering doesn’t happen often enough to control the dust,

and when it does happen, the puddles attract mosquitoes. They asked for greater transparency during upcoming discussions between the city and Caltrain, as well as a direct line of communication to the rail agency. ■

Police cite man for allegedly impersonating cop

A “driving incident” on Crane Street in Menlo Park led to the citation of a Menlo Park man for allegedly impersonating a police officer.

Mark Shafran, 53, reportedly flashed a badge and told a woman that he was a cop during an argument they had gotten into as each was driving on Friday, March 27.

After the 65-year-old woman called the Menlo Park Police Department around 11 a.m., the real officer who came out to the scene allegedly found a fake “Security Enforcement Officer” badge in Mr. Shafran’s white Ford F-150 pickup truck.

Mr. Shafran was cited for misdemeanor impersonation of a police officer, according to the report. The case has been sent to the San Mateo County District Attorney’s Office for disposition.

Filoli executive talks about moving past recent turmoil

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

Nearly six weeks after she first declined interviews with the Almanac, Filoli's executive director, Cynthia D'Agosta agreed to an interview at Filoli on March 26 to discuss how those at the historic estate are working to move past the recent turmoil.

Ms. D'Agosta said 1,060 active volunteers had signed a controversial volunteer agreement by March 27, along with 28 inactive emeritus volunteers and 14 volunteers who are on leave. That means at least 240 of 1,300 active volunteers declined to sign the mandatory agreement and have left Filoli since the March 1 signing deadline.

Ms. D'Agosta said 80 who have left were part of a group that leads students on nature walks at Filoli, but that program has not been cut. A volunteer said the nature docents who have left account for more than 250 collective years of experience.

In mid-February, a number of Filoli volunteers contacted the Almanac to express distress over the volunteer agreement they had been told they had to sign by March 1 to keep their volunteer jobs. At that point, according to an email from Filoli management, only 600 volunteers had signed.

After the Almanac posted a story about the controversy, Filoli's governing board met and said volunteers could cross out the most objectionable clause, which states volunteers will not make "a claim of any negligence, personal injury, wrongful death or property damage against Filoli" in connection with the volunteer's work at Filoli.

In the March 26 interview, Ms. D'Agosta said that work on a volunteer agreement began about four years ago, before she was hired in late 2012.

The governing board asked for a volunteer agreement because "there was not an official way for the organization to remedy a situation when we had a volunteer who was ... putting others in danger," she said.

While the intent may have been to put in place a disciplinary procedure, the final agreement says nothing about such a process, Ms. D'Agosta admits. "Over time, it took a very different turn," she said.

Through changes in Filoli's governing board, volunteer leadership and administration

over those four years, many different people worked on the agreement and "things lose their initial intent over time — they lose their context," she said.

Ms. D'Agosta said her major input to the agreement was to gather examples of similar agreements from other groups.

Heidi Brown, who became the president of the Friends of Filoli only in November, and Ms. D'Agosta "both were handed this document, basically, to implement," she said.

"This was a collective decision of management," she said. "This was not something I put down when I got here and said, 'This needs to happen.'"

When asked why, after so much time without an agreement, the executive board insisted on going ahead even after it was clear that there was much opposition, Ms. D'Agosta said, "I'm not sure; I'm honestly not sure."

'This was a collective decision of management.'

CYNTHIA D'AGOSTA,
FILOLI EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In recent years, many changes have taken place at Filoli, where there have been five executive directors in 10 years, Ms. D'Agosta said. "That amount of change is hard on the staff; it's been hard on the volunteers. Sometimes I feel that what we're dealing with is just that whole aspect of change," she said.

With the help of the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center, a San Mateo-based nonprofit, Ms. Brown and Ms. D'Agosta and governing board President Toni Barrack have been holding

a series of what they call "facilitated discussions" with groups of about two dozen volunteers at a time. Seven of the two-hour sessions had been planned or held at the time of the interview, but Ms. D'Agosta said "we will continue to add (sessions) until there's no more requests."

"We're making it a place where people are free to speak their minds," she said. "People coming out of the meetings have said thank you, this has been very helpful, very useful and that they felt better."

Ms. D'Agosta said she had refused to comment for so long in part out of frustration "with a lot of things that were going on — not just what was being printed, but the challenges here that we were dealing with. And it wasn't so much about you or about what you were doing; it was about what was being said that was so frustrating," she said. "By talking to you I wasn't necessarily going to get to talk to those people."

"We then went in and started working internally instead," she said.

Ms. D'Agosta also gave the Almanac a prepared statement, sent by Larry Kamer, whose Oakland-based crisis communications management company, Kamer Consulting Group, has been working for Filoli since the dispute over the volunteer agreement went public in late February.

Go to tinyurl.com/filoli326 to see the statement (PDF).

While some have called for Ms. D'Agosta's firing or resignation, she says she is staying. "I don't plan on going anyplace," she said. "We want to settle this and get back to what we love."

Go to tinyurl.com/filoli303 to see a longer story on the interview. ■

Bette Davis Moorman

(1923 – 2015)

Bette D. Moorman, 91, of Atherton, passed away peacefully on March 16th at Stanford Hospital. Born in Duluth, MN, Bette graduated from The Masters School (Dobbs Ferry, NY) in 1940, and went on to major in Child Study at Vassar. A lifelong advocate for children, Bette supported Stanford's Department of Child Psychiatry, the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, the Child Advocacy Council, and many other groups.



Bette was preceded in death by her brother Fred and her husband, Albert J. Moorman, who she married in 1949. She is survived by her children Lisa Fremont and Mark Moorman, their spouses Mike and Cameil, and five grandchildren, Daniel, Grace, Yasmeen, Christian, and Andrew. A celebration of Bette's life will be held on July 17th at 2 pm. at Menlo Park Presbyterian Church.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Reading Partners, 180 Grand Ave - Suite 800, Oakland, CA 94612.

PAID OBITUARY

Joanne S. Janssen

The Janssen family sadly announces the passing of Joanne Seidel Janssen on Monday, March 9, 2015, from complications due to Alzheimer's disease. Joanne was 87. A resident of Menlo Park, CA for over 40 years, Joanne relocated in her later years to Eugene, Oregon and finally Southern California to be closer to her children and grandchildren.



Joanne was born in Berkeley, CA on October 28, 1927 to parents Vaughn and Mildred Seidel. Her father, Vaughn D. Seidel, served as Superintendent of the Alameda County School District and was the leading pioneer in founding the first public education television station in the United States, KQED/Oakland. Joanne was immensely proud of her father's accomplishments.

Joanne attended Berkeley High, where she graduated a California Scholarship Federation Sealbearer, then continued her education at UC Berkeley from 1944-46. While at CAL, Joanne was a member of the Alpha Phi sorority where she made lifelong friends and learned the importance of philanthropy and its ability to make a positive difference in one's community.

Joanne married Arthur D. Janssen, Jr. in September 1947 (divorced July, 1971) and the newlyweds settled in Atherton, CA. Determined to finish college, Joanne graduated from Stanford University (B.A., Economics) in June 1954. In 1973, Joanne was hired by Hewlett Packard's Data Processing Department and enjoyed a successful 25-year career there.

Her five children—Dean Janssen, Dwight Janssen, Linda Mirch, Lisa Magnuson and Jody O'Donnell—survive Joanne, as do her 12 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

Joanne was preceded in death by her beloved brother, William Gordon Seidel, Lt. Col., USAF, Ret. Bill served in the Air Force for 22 years, culminating in his final assignment as former President L.B. Johnson's private pilot.

Those who knew Joanne will fondly recall her passion for tennis, cycling, a good mystery, crossword puzzles and cheering on her favorite sports teams—the Oakland Raiders (she attended three victorious Super Bowls with the Raider Rooters) and the Los Angeles Lakers. Joanne was an energetic, vivacious person full of life and love for her family and friends.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Alzheimer's Association (www.alz.org).

PAID OBITUARY

Earl Wendell Chambers

Earl Wendell Chambers, 70, passed away on March 19, 2015, at his home in Hollister, CA.

Wendell was born on August 21, 1944, in Marysville, CA to Earl and Shirley Chambers.

Wendell is survived by his wife, Danni Chambers; loving parents, Earl and Shirley Chambers; sister Earlene Chambers; children Dorcy Kaplan, Tracy Radwan and Kevin Chambers.

A Celebration of Life will be held on March 29th at 2 pm at Gilroy Gaits, 7800 Lake Road, Hollister, CA.

In lieu of flowers, please make a donation to the American Cancer Society or an organ donor network such as Donate Life.



PAID OBITUARY

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www.menloschool.org

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Atherton

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Get immersed in technology at this 2-week, pre-college summer academy. Teens ages 13-18 code apps, program with C++ and Java, mod with Minecraft, engineer robots, and program websites. Tour a development studio and create a portfolio.

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Palo Alto / Pleasanton

Hourly day care center opens

Toddle, the West Menlo Park day care center that takes children by the hour as a convenience for busy parents, opened March 23 at 3131 Alameda de las Pulgas, at the intersection with Manzanita Avenue.

The center, which also has a preschool, accommodates up to 24 children from ages 2 to 6, said Heather Hopkins, who co-founded the center with Amy Burnett. Registration and reservations are done through the website at toddle.org.

The center is open from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Parking is available on the Alameda and in the driveway.

Ms. Hopkins is the founder and board chair of My New Red Shoes, a Redwood City non-profit that provides new shoes to children living in poverty. Ms. Burnett sits on the board of Fit Kids, which organizes free after-school fitness programs at Bay Area schools, including in East Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Redwood City.



Photo by Magali Gauthier

Maria Rodriguez, Ella and Aiden play together at the new Toddle day care center in West Menlo Park.

Some neighbors opposed the center when it was being considered by the San Mateo County Planning Commission. When the commission approved the plans, 14 neighbors appealed the decision to the Board of Supervisors.

The board rejected the appeal in July 2014, giving Toddle's founders the green light to go ahead with their plans.

Since Toddle opened, there have been neighbors with children who have signed up for day care, Ms. Hopkins said. ■

Retreat center sues county over plan to reorganize as drug, alcohol rehab facility

■ County supervisors had rejected Stillpath's plan to become a rehab center.

By **Dave Boyce**
Almanac Staff Writer

The owners of the Stillpath Retreat Center at 16350 Skyline Blvd. in the unincorporated woods above Woodside are suing San Mateo County in federal court.

At issue, according to a complaint filed March 25 with the U.S. District Court for Northern California, is a unanimous decision by the county Board of Supervisors in March 2014 to overturn the Planning Commission's decision to allow the retreat center to reorganize as a non-medical drug-and-alcohol rehabilitation center for people with addiction problems.

In the complaint, lawyers for Stillpath claim that the supervisors, by rejecting the rehab center, violated federal fair housing and disability laws protecting the rights of Stillpath's potential clients, including recovering alcoholics and substance abusers. The complaint also cites anti-discriminatory passages in state laws on fair employment, housing, planning and zoning.

Neighbors of the facility had appealed the Planning

Commission's January 2014 decision and the supervisors upheld their appeal. The neighbors' objections included the possibility of a recovering addict dropping a lit cigarette in the deep dry woods that populate the neighborhood, the length of time it would take for emergency first responders to get there, and the impacts on traffic and the supply of fresh water.

The neighbors initially complained to the Planning Commission, but the county staff addressed the objections with remedies.

San Mateo County has just 287 beds for treatment of substance abuse, the staff said, while the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services estimates show 65,800 people potentially needing treatment.

"Stillpath will provide a public health service by providing a necessary substance abuse treatment facility to County residents that is geographically near the County's urban populations," the county staff report said.

When the commissioners voted, it was 3-1 in favor of allow-

ing the project to go ahead.

In hearing the neighbors' appeal, supervisors said that the cost to the county by a higher intensity use of the property outweighed the benefits. With estimated monthly fees of \$45,000 per client, the center's customers would be coming from elsewhere, one supervisor said.

"It would serve a very small exclusive class of people," Supervisor Don Horsley said at the time. "It's not going to benefit people of San Mateo County."

As for water, while the facility has a 100,000-gallon storage tank, "if you have a forest fire, 100,000 gallons isn't going to do much," Mr. Horsley said.

Supervisor Dave Pine also singled out the water supply infrastructure. "That is a very delicate system with minimal capacity," he said. "That system is not robust."

If the matter goes to trial, one question to be litigated is whether Stillpath is the appropriate representative to speak for its potential customers, said Tim Fox, a deputy in the County Counsel's Office in San Mateo County. Another issue is whether the intensity of the intended use as a rehab center is in keeping with the zoning for the area, he said. ■



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What should Atherton do with millions in excess library funds?

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

Atherton property owners pay a library tax that generates about \$1 million a year more than is needed to operate the Atherton Library. Should this money stay in Atherton or be shared with the county library system?

The Atherton City Council plans to discuss this topic when it meets Wednesday, April 1, in the Holbrook-Palmer Park Pavilion at 150 Watkins Ave. The meeting starts at 4 p.m. Also on the agenda is the town's 2015-16 budget.

The Atherton Library is part of the San Mateo County Library system, and Atherton is

part of a Joint Powers Authority (JPA) that manages the system. Other members are Belmont, Brisbane, East Palo Alto, Foster City, Half Moon Bay, Millbrae, Pacifica, Portola Valley, San Carlos and Woodside as well as unincorporated San Mateo County.

For years, library property tax dollars (\$32 per \$100,000 in assessed value) beyond the amount needed to pay library operating costs and a share of administration and overhead

Atherton property owners pay about \$1.3 million more each year in library tax than is spent on library costs.

costs were given back to cities, to be used to pay library-related expenses only. Atherton is one of three so-called "donor cities" that receive these excess funds. The other two are Woodside and Portola Valley.

Atherton property owners are now paying about \$1.3 million more each year in library tax than is spent on library costs, according to Mayor Rick DeGolia, who is on the library JPA's donor fund subcommittee.

At the end of June 2014, the town had accumulated \$8.6 million in its fund, which will go to build a new library. Once the library is built, however, even with higher operating expenses, the town will still bring in about \$1 million a year in excess tax revenues, Mr. DeGolia said.

Mr. DeGolia said county library staff have proposed changing the JPA agreement (with a two-thirds vote of members) to give only half the excess library tax revenues back to donor cities, with a cap on each donor city's fund of \$1 million.

The remaining money would go into the county library's general fund, resulting in nearly \$1 million in annual revenue for the county system.

Mr. DeGolia said he instead wants donor cities to be allowed to use as much of their excess funds as they need for library-related purposes, with any money remaining split between the city and the county system. He said he has suggested the county's share go into a reserve fund that other cities could apply to dip into.

Atherton currently uses some of the donor funds for library maintenance, custodial and landscaping services, library supplies, and to keep the library open 17 additional hours a week.

In the future, Mr. DeGolia said, Atherton could spend its excess funds on one of his current pet projects, such as outfitting the town with a town-wide high-speed Internet connection providing library services. The funds could also pay for more service hours and programs; remote library kiosks at schools, the park and other locations; and an enhanced bookmobile program, he said. ■



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Opposition grows to herbicide spraying

By **Barbara Wood**
Almanac Staff Writer

The Committee for Green Foothills has joined the protest over recent roadside spraying of herbicides by the California Department of Transportation.

The environmental organization, which works to preserve open spaces, farmlands, and natural resources in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, called on Caltrans in a letter to “cease the practice of broadcast spraying with herbicides” along all county highways, and “instead mow to control roadside weeds, and only if absolutely necessary, use spot spraying.”

“The broadcast spraying of herbicides cover our roadside ditches, which flow into our creeks, potentially contaminating our watersheds, wells and our health.”

PROTECT OUR WATERSHED,
SAN MATEO COUNTY

In addition, the president of the South Skyline Association, representing 1,500 households, has written to Caltrans expressing concern that “broadcast spraying of herbicides that Caltrans now employs poses a potential threat to the environment and people.”

By March 28 nearly 300 people had signed a Change.org petition that says “the broadcast spraying of herbicides cover our roadside ditches, which flow into our creeks, potentially contaminating our watersheds, wells and our health. There are better ways to control vegetation.”

Caltrans sprayed herbicides along state Highway 84 (Woodside/La Honda Road) on March 17 and state Highway 35 (Skyline Boulevard) in January, prompting the protests.

Citing environmental and health concerns, San Mateo County in 2012 stopped broadcast spraying herbicides on county-maintained roads. At the time, Caltrans said it might do the same, but it has not done so.

The Committee for Green Foothills Committee letter, signed by Ladera’s Lennie Roberts, says: “San Mateo County’s natural habitats are home to over 40 endangered or threatened species. ... We all need to do everything possible to ensure that these species survive, and that human health is not compromised.”

The South Skyline Association letter asks Caltrans to, at the very least, provide advance warning.

“Without advanced notice at the site of spraying, bicyclists, motorcyclists, hikers, and property owners cannot make informed decisions to avoid the areas, or protect themselves from the herbicides,” the letter from Michael Rowe says. ▣



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Former DA dies at 93

Keith C. Sorenson, the San Mateo County district attorney from 1953 to 1982, died March 20 in his Redwood City home. He was 93.

Mr. Sorenson played a major role in hiring Sandra Day O'Connor, now a retired U.S. Supreme Court Justice, as a deputy

DA after she graduated from Stanford University law school, said current District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe.

Mr. Sorenson hired Mr. Wagstaffe and his predecessor James Fox as deputy district attorneys.

A native of Utah, Mr. Sorenson grew up on a farm, where his routines included rising at 4 a.m. to milk cows and collect eggs, according to a biography published by the San Mateo County History Museum. He had a bachelor's degree and law degree from the University of Utah.

He moved to Redwood City with his wife Maxine Swinson and worked for a private law firm before being hired as a deputy district attorney.

He was appointed to succeed District Attorney Louis DeMatteis when Mr. DeMatteis took a judgeship. Mr. Sorenson served seven terms as district attorney and retired in 1982. His responsibilities included that of county counsel, a position that has since been reorganized as a separate office with its own set of attorneys.

San Mateo County had a colorful decade in the 1950s and Mr. Sorenson was instrumental in cleaning it up, Mr. Wagstaffe said. The county was corrupt and tainted, Mr. Wagstaffe said, by bookmaking, prostitution and gambling operations that were under the protection of law enforcement and other governmental officials.

Mr. Sorenson sought and won the death penalty in three murder cases in which the victims were police officers, Mr. Wagstaffe said.

Under Mr. Sorenson's tenure, his office trained hundreds of deputy DAs, "and every one of them became better lawyers under his leadership," Mr. Wagstaffe said. "He was a wonderful role model and mentor to all prosecutors throughout his life."



Keith Sorenson

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Cops look for accomplice

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

Investigators from the Menlo Park Police Department are looking for an accomplice of the man accused of backing a truck into a rear glass door of a downtown Menlo Park camera store on March 22, according to San Mateo County prosecutors.

The accomplice, said to be a woman, fled the scene at Mike's Cameras at 715 Santa Cruz Ave. and is still at large, said Menlo Park police Sgt. Matthew Ortega. Police are looking for her but have no identifying information beyond her gender, he said.

Meanwhile, the accused man — Joshua Lincoln Nelson, 46, of Daly City — appeared in court March 23 in Redwood City and pleaded not guilty to charges that include burglary, vandalism and possession of stolen property, the District Attorney's Office said.

After a witness called police around 5 a.m. Sunday, March 22, police responded within about 40 seconds. An officer chased and captured a man dressed in black and wearing a ski mask. The man, who had run for about 20 yards, stopped when threatened with a Taser, prosecutors said.

A pair of bolt cutters was found near the door.

The incident left the camera store with damages of about \$9,000. The truck, owned by ZipCar in San Francisco, had been stolen, prosecutors said.

Investigators ask that anyone with information about this incident call the Menlo Park Police Department at 330-6300 or the anonymous tip line at 330-6395. ■

Sculpture tours

The annual Art/Sky sculpture tours at the 583-acre Djerassi resident artists facility in Woodside are being held through November.

Three types of guided tours are available: six director tours (\$50 per person), 12 two-mile tours (free of charge) led by program volunteers; and a limited number of private tours. All tours require advance reservations.

The tours are strenuous with steep uphill and downhill hiking. Reservations will no longer be taken by telephone.

Visit tinyurl.com/djerasi131 for more information.



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■ POLICE CALLS

This information is based on reports from the Menlo Park Police Department and the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office. Under the law, people charged with offenses are considered innocent unless convicted. Police received the reports on the dates shown.

WOODSIDE

Theft: An employee at Canada College left a tote bag on a chair near her workstation when she left the room on a break, but the bag was gone when she returned. A security camera in the room captured video of a man getting up and walking toward the chair, which is off camera, then walking back into view holding the bag. The bag was later found on a SamTrans bus, but a laptop computer and credit cards had been stolen from it. The credit cards were used at stores in Redwood City. March 17.

Stolen vehicle: Someone stole a vehicle in Burlingame that belonged to a resident of Canada Road. March 16.

MENLO PARK

Residential burglaries:

■ Someone stole an unlocked bike from an apartment complex carport on Coleman Avenue. Estimated loss: \$700. March 24.

■ Police arrested two people on burglary and conspiracy charges after they allegedly worked together to steal a credit card from someone in the 1000 block of El Camino Real, then used it to buy three gift cards. No estimate on losses. March 24.

■ A resident of a house on Linfield Drive told police that someone broke the window of a glass door in the rear of the house, then entered the house and rummaged about. An initial examination showed nothing missing. March 23.

■ Someone threw a rock through a glass door of a house on Pope Street and triggered an alarm, to which police responded. The homeowner searched the house and found nothing missing. March 25.

Auto burglary: With no sign of a break-in, someone entered a vehicle parked in a carport on Coleman Place, stole a bag containing personal items, then dumped the bag and its contents in a nearby carport. No losses. March 23.

Thefts:

■ A thief stole a woman's purse from the trunk of an unlocked vehicle parked on Marsh Road. Inside the purse were eyeglasses, cash and personal effects. Estimated loss: \$1,565. March 20.

■ A thief entered a house on Wallea Drive without breaking in, then left with jewelry from a box on a nightstand. Estimated loss: \$1,325. March 25.

■ A bike was stolen from the front yard of a house in the 1500 block of Santa Cruz Avenue. Estimated loss: \$500. March 23.

■ Someone stole a bike parked in front of Oak Knoll School on Oak Knoll Lane. Estimated loss: \$435. March 24.

■ An unlocked bike was stolen from the 800 block of Newbridge Street. Estimated loss: \$300. March 21.

■ A house on Monte Rosa Drive was robbed of a decorative bench in the front yard. Estimated loss: \$200. March 24.

■ Someone stole a purse from an unlocked vehicle parked on San Mateo Drive. Estimated loss: \$142. March 23.

■ The owner of a car parked on Fanita Way returned to find that his keys had been stolen from the ignition along with his vehicle registration. March 23.

Menlo Park teen competes in fencing championship

Maia Chan Chamberlain, 16, of Menlo Park has earned a spot on the U.S. team that will compete at the Sabre Cadet Fencing World Championship in Tashkent, Uzbekistan, on April 2.



Maia Chan Chamberlain

Chamberlain made the team by ranking second nationally

after six months of competition that included six international and five domestic tournaments. She and two teammates will compete against the top fencers under age 17 from 28 countries.

Maia began fencing at age 9 years. After she won a bronze medal at the 2007 Summer Nationals in San Jose nine months into the sport, her parents, Warren Chamberlain and Lin Chan, encouraged her to continue.

Household waste drop-off

Menlo Park residents may make appointments to drop

off household hazardous waste materials on Saturday, April 11, between 8:30 a.m. and noon. The exact location will be announced after the appointment is confirmed.

Acceptable items include acids, aerosol cans, automotive supplies such as motor oil and batteries, pesticides, paint and fluorescent light bulbs.

Go to smchealth.org/hhw to make the required appointment, or call 363-4718. Space is limited.

Students invited to submit artwork

Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Menlo Park, is inviting students in her 18th Congressional District to submit artwork for the 2015 Congressional Art Competition. The winning artist in each congressional district will have the artwork displayed in the corridors of the U.S. Capitol for one year.

Work must be submitted by 5 p.m. Thursday, April 23, to Rep. Eshoo's Palo Alto office at 698 Emerson St.

A local reception will be held to announce the winner and recognize all participants. The winner will be awarded two round-trip airline tickets to Washington, D.C., to attend a reception with other young artists at the unveiling of their works in the Capitol.

Visit eshoo.house.gov for detailed guidelines.

Galway visitors

Go to tinyurl.com/galway310 to see Jim Lewis' account of a recent visit by Galway, Ireland, officials to Menlo Park. There are photos of the visit with the Jim Lewis story and on the Photo Gallery page.

Go to AlmanacNews.com/photo_gallery to see the photos.

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