

It's time to vote | Page 12

The Almanac

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

MAY 6, 2015 | VOL. 50 NO. 35

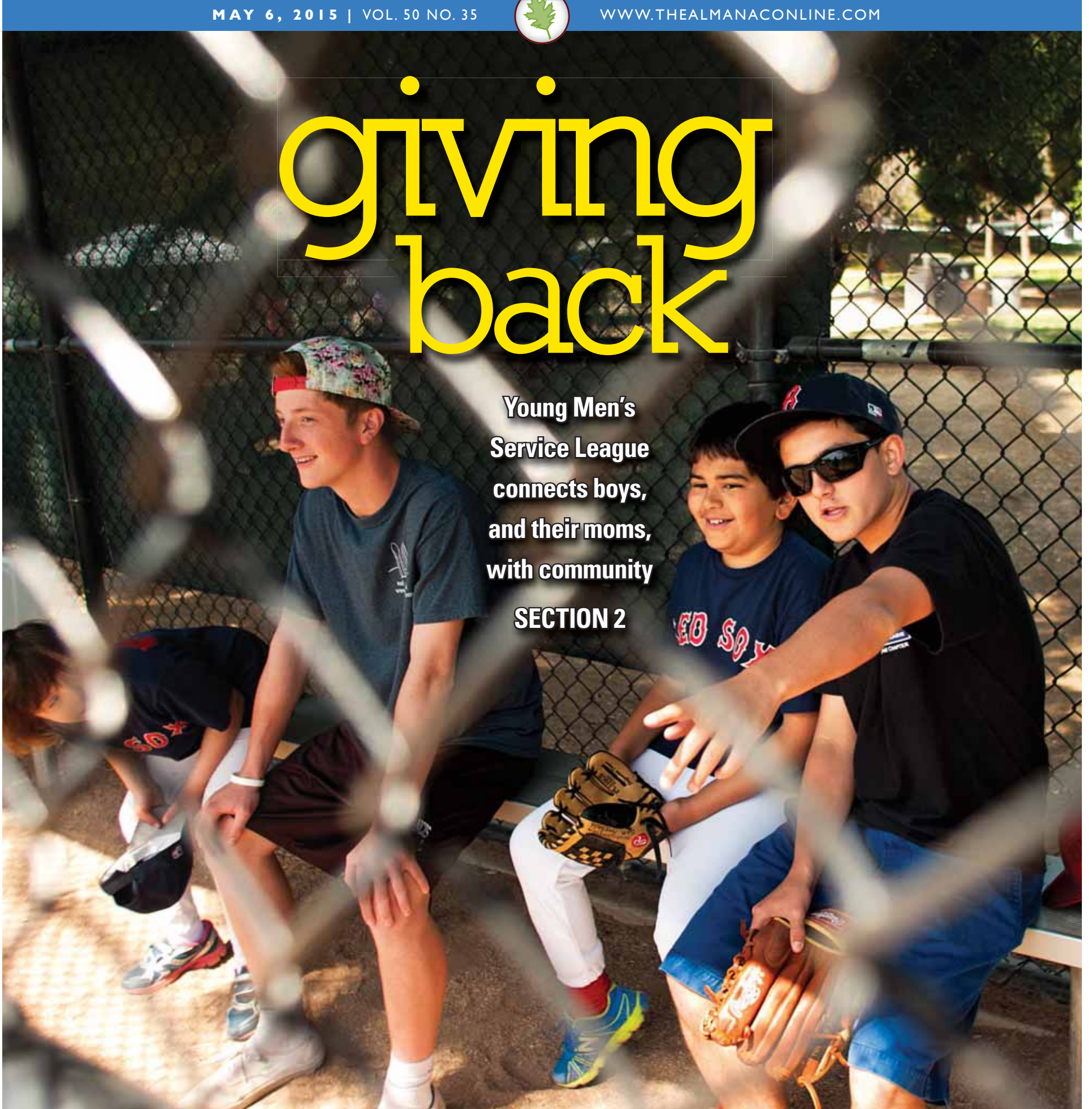


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SECTION 2



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- New construction completed in April 2015 by PNC Properties
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- Cabaña guest house with 1 bedroom, 1 bath, and full kitchen
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for a private showing.



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hcornish@cbtnorcal.com
CalBRE# 00912143



NATALIE COMARTIN
650.380.3122
natalie.comartin@cbtnorcal.com
CalBRE# 01484129



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Photo by Barbara Wood/The Almanac

Getting ready for candy to be thrown their way at the annual Woodside May Day parade are, from left, Samantha, Isaac, Molly and Grace.

Woodside celebrates May Day

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

Woodside celebrated its 93rd May Day on Saturday, May 2, with its annual parade, carnival, fun run, Maypole dance and pancake breakfast.

Woodside Elementary School superintendent Beth Polito led the parade as grand marshal. After the parade, and before the third-graders did their traditional Maypole dance, Anne Wright was named Citizen of the Year by the Woodside PTA.

Kassia Kingsley, who co-chaired the May Day event with Kerri Stenson, said Ms. Wright has "been a tireless volunteer for the past nine years," including several stints as PTA head room parent, working on the PTA's After School Enrichment Program, serving as operations manager for the operetta



Anne Wright



Photo by Barbara Wood/Almanac

Princess, a Gypsy Vanner mare who belongs to Michele and Brad George, tries to kiss the hand that pats her, while waiting for the start of Woodside's May Day parade.

and driving "on virtually every field trip," even on some her children were not attending.

"You're always thinking of others, putting them first, and making them feel special and for this we honor you today," Ms. Kingsley said.

As usual much of the town

turned out for the annual parade. 🐾

INFORMATION

Go to tinyurl.com/ws515 to see more photos from the parade and festival.

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■ E-mail news, information, obituaries and photos (with captions) to: editor@AlmanacNews.com
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Emily Joubert

home & garden

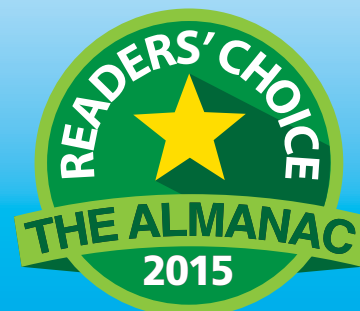
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health matters

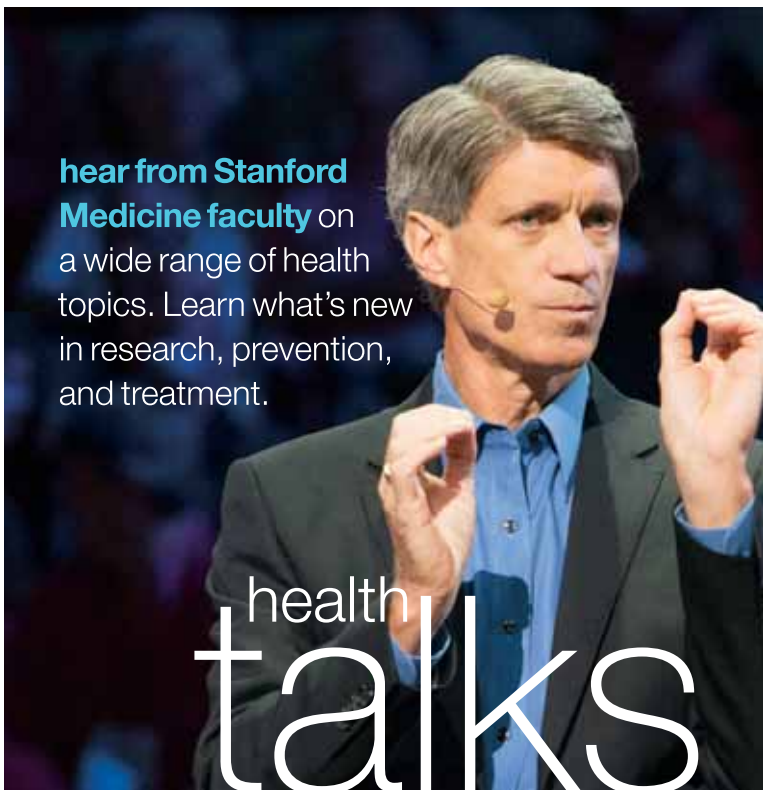


Stanford Medicine Community Day

health talks | interactive health pavilion | food & fun

saturday 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. may 16

Li Ka Shing Center for Learning and Knowledge
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hear from **Stanford Medicine faculty** on a wide range of health topics. Learn what's new in research, prevention, and treatment.

health talks

7

talks from
10:00 a.m. – 2:15 p.m.

tips for safe workouts:

how to stay healthy and injury-free

teen mental health and your family:

practical information and insights

understanding breast cancer biology:

the latest discoveries and treatment advances

infectious disease:

risks and precautions

approaching the second half of life with health and vitality: the latest research on aging and longevity

heart disease prevention:

what you really need to know about diet, exercise, and heart health

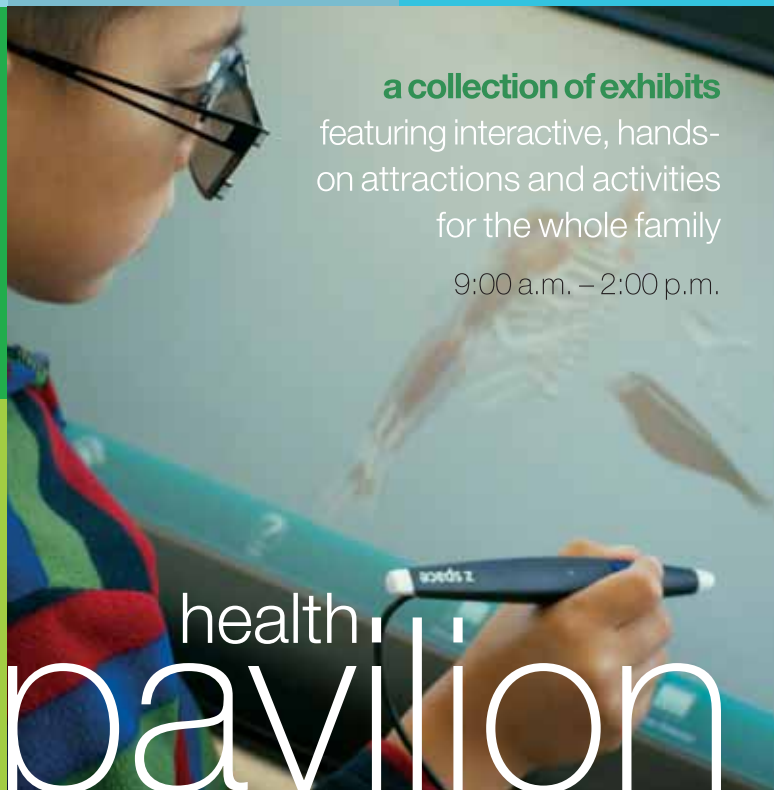
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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Webb Ranch teems with new, old activity

By Kate Daly
Special to the Almanac

The jewel of Silicon Valley” is how Doug Galen described Webb Ranch to the crowd assembled for a groundbreaking ceremony at the rustic site in Portola Valley on a sunny day at the end of March.

The family-run business has been operating on land leased from Stanford since 1922. The 236-plus acres straddling Interstate 280 on the northern side of Alpine Road might look like a throwback in time, but they are teeming with activity, and about to get busier.

Mr. Galen is chairman of the board of Jasper Ridge Farm, a nonprofit that is sub-leasing 3.5 flat acres at Webb Ranch to build a new home for its programs. The nonprofit enables children facing life-threatening illnesses, stressful family situations, or living with special needs to find comfort and joy in the company of gentle farmyard animals. There are also programs for adults, including veterans.

Farm equipment and horse trailers were recently relocated to another part of the ranch to make way for a new barn, storage shed, turnouts and paddock for 17 new residents: miniature horses, goats, sheep, rabbits, guinea pigs, chickens and a cat.

The bulk of the construction is slated to be done by early summer. The hope is the new space

will enable the programs to run year-round and reach more than the 1,500 people currently served each year.

Wendy Mattes was a Webb Ranch riding instructor when she taught a student suffering from a brain tumor. That experience led Mrs. Mattes to co-found Riley’s Place in Woodside in 2009.

Over a year ago the organization changed its name to Jasper Ridge Farm, applied for building permits, and moved to temporary quarters in Gilroy. The farm visits have been on hiatus but the animals continue to travel to interact with people at places such as Ronald McDonald House at Stanford and Haven Family House in Menlo Park.

Plans are to ramp up the HorseBuddies part of the program at Webb Ranch. For a couple of years, volunteers and Webb Ranch riding instructors have been working with students on the ranch’s lesson horses. Groups of veterans were added last year.

After fundraising is complete, a new covered arena is planned for the corner closest to the large barn that Webb Ranch President Tom Hubbard calls a “historical building,” based on pictures from the 1870s. Deemed unsafe a year ago, the swaybacked barn is fenced off and boarded up, waiting for a decision from Stanford about possible next



Photo by Vicky Hamby

Jasper Ridge Farm Executive Director Wendy Mattes and Webb Ranch President Tom Hubbard at a groundbreaking ceremony for Jasper Ridge Farm’s new home at Webb Ranch.

steps.

June will bring a new wave of children to Webb Ranch for summer riding camps. The 13 week-long sessions are so popular most of them are already sold out.

“This summer it’s unclear what we’re going to do with water,” Mr. Hubbard said.

Last year Webb Ranch’s U-Pick berry season started in June, but due to the drought, he is predicting an earlier start, probably in mid-May. The pub-

lic is invited to come on weekends to pick various varieties and enjoy pony rides, a jumpy house and picnic area until July.

This summer corn, tomatoes and the rest of the organic produce grown at the ranch will once again be sold at Bianchini’s, Roberts market, Sigona’s, and the Portola Valley Farmers’ Market. The old fruit stand on Alpine will remain closed until September, when pumpkins will be sold there. It morphs into a Christmas tree lot around

Thanksgiving.

Three generations of the Webb family live on the ranch, including Stanley Webb, the founder’s youngest son. Mr. Webb’s daughter, Lyndal, is married to Mr. Hubbard. They raised their daughters there and one has stayed: Summer Hensley, runs the riding school and lives on the ranch with her husband, Nate, the stable manager.

Depending on the season, 20 to 30 employees work the farm (they were unionized in the 1990s) and 10 to 15 people teach riding lessons. Mr. Hubbard says 80 percent of the employees live in doublewide trailers and a dorm near the former fruit stand.

Including the Stanford polo team as well as privately boarded and lesson horses, there are 250 horses spread out in pastures, paddocks and barns at Webb. They generate a steady demand for upkeep.

In March ranch workers replaced the ground layer with new footing in the arenas. They also moved around the mature manure piles to fertilize the fields.

“We are constantly working on the business, on what can we afford to upgrade,” Mr. Hubbard says. “We are the mom and pop horse stable, not where you watch your trainer ride your horse.”

See **WEBB RANCH** page 8

Landscape irrigation focus of water-reduction effort in Woodside

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

To meet its targets for water conservation as the drought goes on, Woodside residents will need to focus on reducing outdoor irrigation. Such are the views of the town’s Sustainability & Conservation Committee, the Town Council in giving direction to staff, and the manager of the local water district.

The council met April 28 to consider recommendations from the sustainability committee on what the town should do to respond to state water conservation regulations expected to go into effect around June 1.

Woodside will almost certainly be among the communities required to cut water use significantly. Along with Portola Valley, Atherton and parts of Menlo Park and Redwood City, much of Woodside is supplied by the Bear Gulch District of the California Water Service Company.

The State Water Resources Control Board is proposing the Bear Gulch District reduce water use by 36 percent from 2013 levels. The district has already cut back by 11 percent.

Committee Chair Jason Mendelson, using census and water district data for 2014, told the council that 10 percent of Woodside residents used 38 percent

Ten percent of Woodside residents used 38 percent of the town’s water consumption in 2014.

JASON MENDELSON,
CONSERVATION COMMITTEE CHAIR

of the town’s water consumption. Those consumers averaged 1,336 gallons per person per day. The other 90 percent of residents averaged 242 gallons per person per day, he said.

Mr. Mendelson called the heavy uses of water “obscene,” but said that outreach to resi-

dents is preferable to shaming them. The council, in principle, accepted the committee’s suggestions, which included setting a target for gallons of water used per-resident-per-day and pushing for higher rebates for residents who replace their lawns with less water-intensive planting.

The town will also adopt water-use regulations that mirror those now in effect throughout the state, including prohibitions on watering that runs into the street, washing hard surfaces such as driveways and patios, washing cars without an automatic shutoff nozzle, and filling or refilling swimming pools.

If Woodside residents supple-

mented their outdoor irrigation with water from showers, bathtubs and bathroom sinks, that could reduce water use by 15,000 gallons a year per person, the committee said, adding that the town should put together a brochure on how to do that.

Without significant cutbacks by heavy consumers, Bear Gulch won’t meet its 36 percent goal, said George Offen of the sustainability committee.

Dawn Smithson, manager of the Bear Gulch District, replied: “Where can we help you cut back? I understand that (going after big consumers) is the biggest bang for the buck. That really, really is.” ▣

Community Health Education Programs



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

May 2015



Survivorship Celebration Day and Art Show

Presented by PAMF's Cancer Care Program

- Presentations on topics that touch cancer patients, survivors and caregivers
- Art work created by cancer patients who participated in our PAMF Expressions Class
- Cooking demonstration with a focus on healthy and delicious foods
- PAMF and community services and resources

June 6, 9 a.m. to noon

No registration required. Learn more about this free event at pamf.org/cancerevent or by calling **(650) 934-7380**.

PAMF Mountain View Center

701 E. El Camino Real, Third Floor, Mountain View



Dr. Tom McDonald Memorial Lecture Series Skin Cancers and Common Look Alikes

May 12, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Amy Adams, M.D., Ph.D., PAMF Dermatology

PAMF Palo Alto Center

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



Dr. Marvin Small Memorial Parent Workshop: Positive Discipline 101

May 12, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Susan Stone Belton, Family Coach and Motivational Speaker

PAMF Sunnyvale Center

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



Senior Driving: Take Control Of Your Driving Future

May 21, 1 to 2:30 p.m.

Rosemary Robles, DMV Senior Driver Ombudsman

PAMF Sunnyvale Center

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



Illustration courtesy Menlo-Atherton Little League

The Atherton ballpark officially opens Saturday, May 9.

Willie Mays guest at Atherton ballpark opening

By **Barbara Wood**
Almanac Staff Writer

More than five years after improvements to the baseball field at Holbrook-Palmer Park were proposed by the Menlo-Atherton Little League, the new field will be officially opened at 11 a.m. Saturday, May 9, at 150 Watkins Ave.

Special guests at the event will include Atherton resident Willie Mays, who will have just turned 84 on May 6. The field will be called Homer Field at Willie Mays Ballpark, honoring both

Mr. Mays and Mike Homer, who donated much of the money for the park's original field. Mr. Homer, who died in 2008, had asked to name the field in honor of his father, James Homer.

Refreshments will be served before the inaugural game between the Independent Electric Supply Scrappers and the Big Tray Dragons.

The main feature of the new facility is a covered grandstand designed to seat as many as 200 spectators, with bathrooms and storage. The project was paid for entirely by the Little League. ■

High school achievement gap narrows, officials say

By **Dave Boyce**
Almanac Staff Writer

The high school achievement gap narrowed significantly in San Mateo County public high schools for students who were freshmen in 2010 and graduated in 2014, according to data from the county Office of Education.

In particular, students of color, students with socio-economic disadvantages, special-education students and students whose first language is not English all graduated at notably higher rates, officials said.

As a whole, graduation rates were up 5.9 percent in the county in 2014, said Nancy Magee of the Office of Education. But rates were up 21 percent for students who identify ethnically as Pacific Islanders and up 11.8 percent for African-American students, she said.

The graduation rate rose 9 percent for students classified as socio-economically disadvantaged — students who receive federally subsidized lunches or whose parents did not graduate from high school. Among students considered English-

language learners, the graduation rate went up 10.8 percent, Ms. Magee said. The rate rose 6.1 percent for special education students.

This data is particularly significant in that these rates reflect close tracking of these students as a group from their freshman years, Ms. Magee said. In the past, graduation and dropout rates were less accurate, in part because it was harder to track students who moved to other high schools.

The findings are also significant because, for the past five years, educators throughout the state have been focusing on narrowing the achievement gap, Ms. Magee said. "There's been a steady focus on how to meet the needs of all kids," she said. "You can't say it's any one thing."

Included in that focus are more welcoming school climates, more thoughtful disciplinary methods, personalized learning, social and emotional supports, and the advent of the Common Core curriculum, which puts an emphasis on creativity in the classroom and teacher collaboration across academic disciplines, Ms. Magee said. ■

Dave Goldberg dies at 47

By Sandy Brundage
Almanac Staff Writer

Tributes flowed in for 47-year-old Dave Goldberg of Menlo Park. The CEO of SurveyMonkey and the husband of Facebook chief operating officer Sheryl Sandberg, he was on vacation in Mexico with his wife when he died on Friday, May 1.

According to the New York Times, a Mexican official said it appears Mr. Goldberg “fell off the treadmill and cracked his head open” at a gym at the Four Seasons Resort near Punta Mita. He died of head trauma and blood loss, a spokesman for the prosecutor’s office in Nayarit State told the Times.

“It’s with incredible shock and sadness that I’m letting our friends and family know that my amazing brother, Dave Goldberg, beloved husband of Sheryl Sandberg, father of two wonderful children, and son of Paula Goldberg, passed away suddenly last night,” his brother Robert posted on Facebook Saturday morning.

Mr. Goldberg lived in Menlo Park, studied government at Harvard from 1985 to 1989, and was formerly associated with Benchmark Capital in Men-

lo Park and Yahoo, according to his Facebook page. SurveyMonkey, a company that provides online surveys and data analysis, is headquartered in Palo Alto. He was known as a tireless advocate for gender equality in and out of the workplace.

He met Ms. Sandberg in 1996, according to a post on her Facebook page:

“I met Dave over 15 years ago and we immediately became the best of friends,” she wrote. “He was the first person to show me the Internet, the kind of friend who shows up to help you move apartments ... and always made me feel like I was home no matter where I was.”

The couple married eight years later. “... I wrote in ‘Lean In’ that the most important decision a woman makes is if she has a life partner and who that life partner will be. The best decision I ever made was to marry Dave.”

Many tributes were posted online, with Silicon Valley luminaries expressing shock at his death and gratitude for the time



SurveyMonkey
Dave Goldberg

they had together.

“Dave Goldberg was an amazing person and I am glad I got to know him,” Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of Facebook, posted on his Facebook page. “My thoughts and prayers are with Sheryl and her family. I hope friends will join me in celebrating his life by sharing your memories of Dave on his profile, as his brother Rob suggests.”

SurveyMonkey posted a brief statement on its website announcing Mr. Goldberg had died and offering its condolences.

“Dave’s genius, courage and leadership were overshadowed only by his compassion, friendship and heart,” the statement reads. “His greatest love was for his family. Our sympathy goes out to them and to all who were touched by this extraordinary man. We are all heartbroken.”

Fortune magazine writer Adam Lashinsky described Mr. Goldberg as someone who “tended always to know what was going on, and if he didn’t he was the kind of guy who said he didn’t know. He was talented, successful, bright, kind, humble, and universally admired and liked. Words can’t begin to describe how much Dave Goldberg will be missed.” ■

Suspects charged in shooting incident

By Sandy Brundage
Almanac Staff Writer

Two suspects in custody for a violent Fremont home invasion that led to a police pursuit into Menlo Park, where shots were fired at officers, will be prosecuted by Alameda County, according to that county’s District Attorney’s Office. A third suspect remains at large.

Haloti Lauese, 22, of East Palo Alto, and Derrick Fracure — also known as Shawn Oceola Thomas —, 21, of Sunnyvale, were arrested after the April 29 pursuit. Investigators are still looking for 18-year-old Demetrius Crayton Jr., also known as “Lil meme” or “MeMe.”

Court records filed by the Alameda County District Attorney’s Office stated that the three men went to an apartment in Fremont shortly before 5 p.m. on Wednesday, April 29. Reportedly armed with semiautomatic guns, they confronted three people inside, ransacked the residence, and pistol-whipped a victim when he pleaded to keep his cellphone, police said. The victims told investigators that they didn’t know the suspects.

A witness called police with

the license plate number after watching the men run out of the apartment and into a green 1997 Honda Civic. A Fremont detective in an unmarked vehicle spotted the car as it drove toward the Dumbarton Bridge and followed it, eventually joined by a patrol car carrying two Newark officers.

With the police behind them running emergency lights and sirens, the suspects drove across the bridge, then turned into a business park in the 1300 block of Willow Road in Menlo Park around 5:28 p.m.

The trio ditched the car, with Mr. Lauese allegedly firing four shots with a .45-caliber gun at the Newark patrol car, hitting the driver’s side door. He ran and then stopped again to shoot three times at the Fremont detective’s car, police said. None of the officers was hit.

Mr. Lauese threw the gun away before clambering over an ivy-covered fence. Officers found him hiding “in a brush area” at 1135 O’Brien St., according to court records.

Mr. Fracure was caught inside a Jack in the Box restaurant, carrying a cellphone that showed repeated calls from a “MiMi.” GPS data led police to an East

Palo Alto home on Tulane Avenue that belonged to a relative of Mr. Crayton, the same location a canine unit had tracked to, but the suspect evaded the search.

A search of the Honda turned up two additional guns, police said.

Mr. Lauese reportedly confessed to the crimes and said he had accidentally fired the gun while running from the site of the home invasion; a matching bullet casing was in his pocket, police said. He is charged with three counts of attempted murder, two counts of robbery during a home invasion, one count of attempted robbery and two counts of using a gun while committing a felony, according to the court records. No prior convictions were listed.

Mr. Fracure, who denied participating in any of the events, and Mr. Crayton face the same charges with the exception of attempted murder. There’s no indication in the court records that either man fired a gun during the incident.

Mr. Fracure was convicted of burglary in Santa Clara County in January 2015. Mr. Crayton was convicted of carrying a loaded gun in San Mateo County in November 2014. ■

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Appraisals

Dear Monica: I want to make an offer on a property and there will be multiple offers. To make my offer as attractive as I can, I want to waive contingencies including the appraisal contingency. But what if the property doesn’t appraise at full value? Do I have to make up the difference in cash? Sarah G.

Dear Sarah: Appraisers are being asked to find high values in a rising market and for some of them it is very tough. I get calls every week from appraisers who are appraising sales and refinances, many of whom are not aware of relevant pending sales that would be good comparables for them to use. Many appraisers have not seen the properties they are using as comparables

so they rely on agents’ opinions.

There is some risk for you in making an offer without an appraisal contingency but if you have extra cash to use in the event it appraises lower than purchase price, you will be okay. It will cost you a bit more of your own money, but that may be fine. If you don’t have extra cash, your agent can advise you on how likely it is that the property will or will not appraise and you can assume the risk or not.

Most appraisers in this area are well informed about the market and are able to support the prices in a rising market. But you should understand the consequences to you should the property not appraise, and make your decision accordingly.

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



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RELEASE DATE: April 20, 2015

Media Contact: Fire Chief Dan Ghiorso
Woodside Fire Protection District
3111 Woodside Road
Woodside, CA 94062
Phone Number: (650) 851-1594

WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT TO HOST COUNTY WIDE WILDLAND & EVACUATION DRILL IN WOODSIDE MAY 16, 2015

(Woodside, CA) – Fire Departments from all over San Mateo County will be converging on Woodside May 16th to conduct a day long training drill on wildland firefighting.

The Woodside Fire Protection District (WFPD) hosted the same type of drill last year in Portola Valley. This year the community of Old La Honda Rd. will participate in an evacuation scenario, while Woodside Town staff complete a test run of their Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

“This drill provides ideal training and familiarization for firefighters from different cities who are not accustomed with our problematic narrow streets and abundance of fire-prone vegetation,” said Fire Marshal, Denise Enea.

Fire crews will simulate an aggressive wildfire in Woodside. They will stage at the South SLAC entrance on Alpine Rd. and proceed to various locations along Old La Honda Rd. During the simulation exercise Old La Honda Rd. will be closed. Residents are asked to participate in the exercise and demonstrate their evacuation skills. SMC ALERT and RAPID NOTIFY will be utilized to notify residents when to evacuate. The drill will incorporate the Office of Emergency Services (OES), SMC Sheriff’s Office, Town of Woodside, CERPP, Cal Fire and other San Mateo County Fire agencies.

WFPD prides itself in proactive operational training for its firefighters and residents. “Wildfire has been a constant and looming threat in California over the years. The present drought conditions only raise the possibility of an intensified fire in our immediate area,” warns Fire Marshal, Denise Enea. “The Woodside Fire Protection District is primed for a wildland fire with its steep, brushy slopes full of hillside homes many with aging wood shake roofs.”

CERPP Coordinator, Selena Brown encourages all residents of Old La Honda to participate in the evacuation drill. “We can reduce the potential loss of life and property by preparing for a catastrophic event before it happens”.

####

Horsemen's Association celebrates 75th anniversary

By **Kate Daly**
Special to the Almanac

On May 9 the San Mateo County Horsemen's Association is celebrating its 75th anniversary with a cavalcade, live music and lunch at a fundraiser in Woodside.

"Leather, Lace & Horse Power!" is being held from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the National Center for Equine Facilitated Therapy, 880 Runnymede Road.

Tickets for the event cost \$75 and must be purchased in advance.

Go to smcha.org/leather-lace or call (650) 851-9853 to buy tickets.

Over the years the group of horse lovers has grown from 25 to nearly 400 members. They help develop horse trails in the county, host regular horse shows and clinics, and participate in events such as the May Day Parade in Woodside. ■



Photo by Kate Daly

This old barn at Webb Ranch is no longer being used. Webb Ranch President Tom Hubbard says there are pictures of it from the 1870s. Deemed unsafe, the swaybacked barn is fenced off and boarded up, waiting for a decision from Stanford about possible next steps.

Russian Ridge trail extension opens

A public grand opening celebration will be held at 2 p.m. Thursday, May 7, for the Ancient Oaks Trail Extension at Mindego Gateway in Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve. The new one-mile trail extension connects the Mindego Gateway parking lot to the Russian Ridge trail system,

creating a four-mile loop.

The Mindego Gateway, which opened last year, is located in La Honda on Alpine Road, 1.4 miles west of Skyline Boulevard. The celebration is sponsored by the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District in partnership with Peninsula Open Space Trust.

Correction

In the story "Creating a unified look" that appeared in the Spring Real Estate section of

the April 22 issue of the Almanac, two photographs were credited incorrectly. David Eichler photographed the two midcentury modern homes.

WEBB RANCH

continued from page 5

Boarders pay monthly anywhere from \$450 to keep a horse in pasture to \$740 for a stall. Cynthia Brownlee of San Francisco has boarded two horses there on and off for eight years and says what she likes about Webb Ranch is "its really nice kind of friendly, low-key

family environment."

"It's a wonderful place," says Liz Carey, who for seven years has been driving from Campbell to ride her horse there. She still marvels at how she went to Stanford and didn't even know Webb Ranch existed.

Before he came to Webb Ranch, Mr. Hubbard worked for PG&E and had over an hour commute to the East Bay.

Now with his short walk to the ranch office, he says: "I feel lucky being here in the middle of the Peninsula. It's obviously fantastic to be able to live and work here."

He acknowledges the extra perk of "what you're getting paid for in addition to the dollars" with a nod to the bucolic backdrop that surrounds him and his family every day. ■

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Photos by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Work in progress

Interior demolition work on the British Bankers Club is underway. After getting the permits in February, local restaurateur Rob Fischer embarked on an interior renovation of the Menlo Park landmark. Located at 1090 El Camino Real, at the intersection with Santa Cruz Avenue, the building is being turned into a three-floor restaurant, complete with rooftop dining, that may open early next year. These photos were taken April 30.



Burmeister new assistant superintendent

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

The governing board of the Menlo Park City School District made it official when it met on April 27: Erik Burmeister, currently the principal at Hillview Middle School, will become the district's new assistant superintendent when the current school year ends.

The district hopes to bring to the board on June 9 a candidate to replace Mr. Burmeister at Hillview.

The assistant superintendent is "responsible for the overall quality of teaching, learning, and assessment," according to the job description approved by the board. Mr. Burmeister will take on human resources activities, including being in

charge of employee recruitment and selection.

He will fill in for the superintendent as needed, as he did recently when Superintendent Maurice Ghysels was out on sick leave.

Mr. Burmeister said he sees the job as helping to manage all the changes currently taking place in education, including what students are learning, how learning is measured, and the materials and technology used for teaching. Part of his job will be to make "sure we don't get hung up on ... the sheer volume of tasks that we have to accomplish" over the



Photo: Menlo Park City School District
Erik Burmeister

next several years, he said.

The school board's vote was unanimous.

Board members said the additional administrative support Mr. Burmeister will provide is necessary to help carry out many of the policies the board and administration have recently adopted, including allowing principals to make more decisions for their own schools.

Board president Maria Hilton said hiring Mr. Burmeister as assistant superintendent should make "the difference between being busy and productive."

Mr. Burmeister agreed. "The biggest obstacle to innovation is the urgent replacing the important," he said.

Candidates have until May 19 to apply for the Hillview principal job, Superintendent Ghysels said. ■

Ruth "Sis" Henry Jones

1921 - 2015

She was born in Newton, Mass. Her parents were Ruth and Mark Lucas. She went to Newton High, Edgewood Park, and Briarcliff Manor in New York. She worked for 3 years at Peter Bent Brigham Hospital in Boston. In 1945, she joined the Red Cross. Her first job was running an airstrip center at the Tacloban Airstrip, Layte, Philippines and was a hostess on a troop train from Tokyo to Kyushu, Japan. She helped the 11th Airborne run a Red Cross club on the island of Bihoro, Hokkaido, Japan and helped run a Red Cross for sailors in Kyushu. She returned home in 1947.



Sis married Parshall Henry, a former captain in the airborne whom she met in Bihoro. They married on Cape Cod and immediately moved to California. They lived in both Southern and Northern California. Their last move was to Atherton, California in 1969. In 1970, they joined Sharon Heights Country Club. She was active in the 18 hole ladies golf. She was the mother of 3, Kristin, Guy, and Laurin, 5 grandchildren, and 1 great grandchild.

Parsh died in 1985 and she continued to live in Atherton. She later married Dr. Howard Jones. Howard died in 1996. After Howard's death she moved to the Parc Regent in Los Altos. There she met many but Jim Jensen was special. She always had a smile for everyone and was loved by many.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests making a donation to the Red Cross, Project Hope, or Pathways hospice.

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Stanford report: Searsville Dam will stay for now

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

Stanford University on May 1 released a long-awaited report on what it will do with its 123-year-old Searsville Dam, saying its preferred plan is to create an opening at the base of the dam, which the university says will allow the passage of fish, including endangered steelhead trout, while preserving some of the flood control the dam now provides.

The 65-foot tall and 275-foot wide dam is located off Sand Hill Road west of Interstate 280, in the Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve on Stanford land, adjacent to Woodside. It holds back Corte Madera Creek to form the reservoir known as Searsville Lake.

The 41-page report says if the first choice proves unworkable, the second choice is to allow the lake to finish filling with sediment, a process already 90 percent complete. Stanford would then create a new fish passage, either using fish ladders or a rerouted stream channel.

In either case, Stanford would

continue using water from the creek. The first alternative would allow eventual removal of the dam, the report says.

The report says the most critical aspect of the first alternative is whether or not the 2.7 million cubic yards of sediment now trapped upstream of the dam can either safely travel downstream through San Francisquito Creek to the Bay or be stabilized in place.

Stanford says the permitting process for either alternative will involve multiple agencies, could take years and that doing either project could cost up to \$100 million.

Groups that have been urging Stanford to remove the dam said neither of the solutions is a good one. "Poking a hole in an unneeded dam or letting it fill in with sediment are not viable solutions," said Portola Valley's Matt Stoecker of Beyond Searsville Dam.

Mr. Stoecker said the university's proposed solutions "are unlikely to secure permits or attract funding support." He said that recent studies have

Some groups pushing for dam removal don't like the plan.

shown that dam removal, combined with separate floodwater detention ponds, "can provide the greatest ecosystem benefit while also achieving elevated flood protection," which Stanford said it is striving for.

Los Trancos Woods resident and environmentalist Jerry Hearn, who served as co-chair of the Searsville Advisory Group, said the Stanford proposal is not perfect, but could work. "Ultimately, what I would have liked to have seen is the dam no longer being there and the stream bed reshaping itself," he said. "I think this approach has the possibility of getting there."

The issue is very complicated, he said, especially because the dam and reservoir are in the middle of the Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve and downstream from a highly-urban-

ized area. San Francisquito Creek does not have "a lot of wiggle room for the water and the sediment," Mr. Hearn said. "That has been keeping many of us awake at night."

He speculated that it will take at least five years for Stanford to get permission to proceed with either alternative. Environmental reviews and authorization will be required from agencies including: the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the State Water Resources Board, the California Division of Safety of Dams, San Mateo County and the San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority.

The recommendations are the result of four years of work by the Searsville Alternatives Study Steering Committee, made up of university administrators and faculty, with input from an advisory group of local officials, environmental advocates, neighborhood groups

and state agencies.

Steve Rothert, California director for American Rivers, said his organization is "concerned that operating a dam with a hole in it will be more troublesome than they expect," citing possible problems with fish passage and sediment accumulation. He said he believes Stanford will ultimately decide to remove the dam. "We expect they will reach that conclusion before too long as resource agencies weigh in," Mr. Rothert said.

Both Mr. Rothert and Mr. Stoecker are members of the Searsville advisory committee.

The report also recommends continued diversion of water from the creeks for Stanford's use, shifting water storage from Searsville to Felt Reservoir.

"The recommendation regarding water diversion and storage is intended to preserve Stanford's rights to creek water diversion and storage considering the effects of climate change, population growth, and drought on the region's water sources," the report says. ■

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Construction starts on apartment complex

Construction has started on Greenheart Land Company's planned 195-unit apartment complex at 777 Hamilton Ave. in Menlo Park. The developer received building permits on April 16 for the first 85 units.

The complex will have 117 units with one bedroom, 52 with two bedrooms and 26 with three bedrooms. The units will range in size from 703 square feet to 1,569 square feet, according to the city of Menlo Park.

None will be restricted to low-income tenants. Construction is expected to be finished by spring 2016.

Water Awareness Festival

The California Water Company plans to hold a "Water Awareness Festival" from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 12,

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in Atherton's Holbrook-Palmer Park at 150 Watkins Ave.

The free event will supply information about ways to conserve water, and will also feature music, food, face painting and raffle prizes.

Affordable home loan workshop

Learn how to join the affordable home loan program administered by HEART of San Mateo County for first-time home buyers at a workshop on Saturday, May 9, from 11 a.m. to noon.

Find more information on qualifications and register at tinyurl.com/nkgufx6. The workshop will be held in San Mateo at the Martin Luther King Jr. Community Center at 725 Monte Diablo Ave.



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PORTOLA VALLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Request for Proposal For Food Service Providers

The Portola Valley School District is soliciting a Request for Proposal (RFP) as an initial step in the selection of a qualified Food Service organization to provide food preparation, delivery, and distribution services to the District for the lunch program at Ormondale and Corte Madera Schools. The qualified Food Service organization must be willing and able to operate in accordance with current National School Lunch Program regulations and requirements.

For application materials, please contact:

Jonathan Barth

CBO

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From the qualified list of food catering companies, the District may proceed to select a number of companies for oral interviews. The deadline for submission of the RFP application materials is Wednesday, May 20, 2015 at 3:30 pm.

The Request for Proposal does not commit the Portola Valley School District to award a contract or pay any costs incurred in the preparation of a proposal responsive to the request. The District reserves the right to accept all or part of any proposal or cancel in part or in its entirety this Request for Proposal. The District further reserves the right to accept the proposal that it considers to be in the best interest of the District.



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TOWN OF ATHERTON NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Atherton City Council will hold a public hearing to consider adopting an Ordinance amending Atherton Municipal Code Chapter 17.56, modifying the Special Event regulations.

Summary changes to the ordinance:

- Add Section 17.56.040(c) to “require a special event permit for any special event held on private property that requires the assistance of the Town for traffic control, public safety services, extraordinary parking control measures or other mitigation measures arising from the special event.”
- Modify Section 17.56.040(D) to “require special events held on private or public schools and events held at country clubs that require the assistance of the Town for traffic control, public safety services, extraordinary parking control measures or other mitigation measures due to the special event, require a special event permit.”
- Add “Responsible parties will be responsible for the direct costs of the Town for extraordinary costs in response to the event. In such cases, the responsible party will be required to obtain an after the fact special event permit, with a penalty as established by Resolution of the City council in addition to being financially responsible for the Town’s direct costs related to the event.”

The zoning code amendment is exempt from further review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to section 15305, minor alternation in land use limitation.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that said item is set for hearing by the City Council at its regular meeting on May 20, 2015 at 7:00 P.M. in the Town Hall of the Town of Atherton, at which time and place all persons interested may appear and show cause, if they have any, why the code amendment should or should not be adopted.

IF YOU CHALLENGE the code amendment in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City Council at, or prior to, the public hearing.

Any attendee who wishes accommodation for a disability should contact the City Clerk at (650) 752-0529 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting. For additional information please contact Lisa Costa Sanders, Town Planner at 650-333-0248 or lcostasanders@ci.atherton.ca.us.

Deputy Lopez sues Sheriff’s Office

By **Dave Boyce**
Almanac Staff Writer

Deputy Juan Lopez of the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office has filed a lawsuit against the county and the Sheriff’s Office, alleging retaliation over his decision to run for sheriff (unsuccessfully, as it turned out) against sitting Sheriff Greg Munks in the March 2014 primary election.

Mr. Lopez, through his

attorney, David W. Washington of Stockton, claims in an April 24 lawsuit filed in San Mateo County Superior Court that the county violated his First Amendment rights and his rights as a California law enforcement officer.

Mr. Lopez, who is 51, has been on administrative leave as a deputy since July 2014.

The complaint says the county deceptively sought and received search warrants with-

out probable cause and concealed and discarded exculpatory evidence.

Asked to comment, Chief Deputy County Counsel David Silberman said: “The lawsuit doesn’t make much sense. As far as we can tell, it doesn’t have much merit. We don’t, frankly, understand what he’s alleging in his complaint.”

Mr. Lopez was arrested in November 2014 and charged in connection with a plan to bring cellphones and drugs to Redwood City jail inmates, the District Attorney’s Office said. He is not accused of bringing contraband into the jail, but of being complicit in allowing a cellphone to be brought into the jail. Mr. Lopez pleaded not guilty to the charges and has been out of custody.

In February 2015, the DA charged Mr. Lopez with violating election laws in his run for sheriff. Prosecutors allege he lied about his residence, embezzled from his campaign funds and, in a separate case, attempted to profit off of his Newark home by filing false documents. Mr. Lopez pleaded not guilty to those charges as well.

Mr. Lopez alleges that in searching his homes — he also has a residence in Redwood City, he says — investigators exceeded the scope of the search warrant and inappropriately targeted his friends and family.

The circumstances of his arrest, on nonviolent charges, by officers with their guns drawn and requiring him to get on his knees before being handcuffed “places a chilling effect on employees that are considering running for the Office of Sheriff and thereby violating the rights of all peace officers employed by the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office,” the lawsuit says. ▀

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The award-winning news organization Palo Alto Weekly/PaloAltoOnline.com is seeking a well-rounded journalist to become our new associate editor. The ideal candidate is equally comfortable editing hard and soft news and possesses the creativity, organizational aptitude, focus on quality and adroitness in interpersonal communications to guide publications from start to finish.

Our associate editor plays a key role as the deputy head of the department, helping to ensure the smooth operation of the team and leading the department in the absence of the editor-in-chief. Experience as a news reporter or editor is desired, as is knowledge of the Palo Alto community. An enjoyment of teamwork and the ability to develop writers, including interns and freelancers, are musts.

The ideal candidate will have a strong interest in home and real estate topics, the position’s main beat. New to the job will be the responsibility to push the bounds of digital presentation on those topics. Beyond real estate, the associate editor is involved in news coverage, arts, cover stories and special publications.

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To apply, please submit a cover letter detailing how your experience fits the needs of the position. Also attach your resume, three articles you’ve written and links to two publications or sections you’ve edited. Email the materials, with “Associate Editor” in the subject line, to Editor Jocelyn Dong at jdong@paweb.com. *No phone calls, please.*

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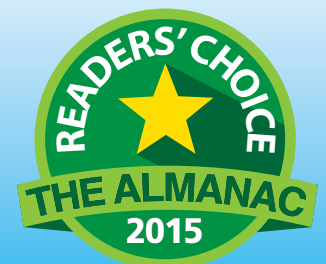
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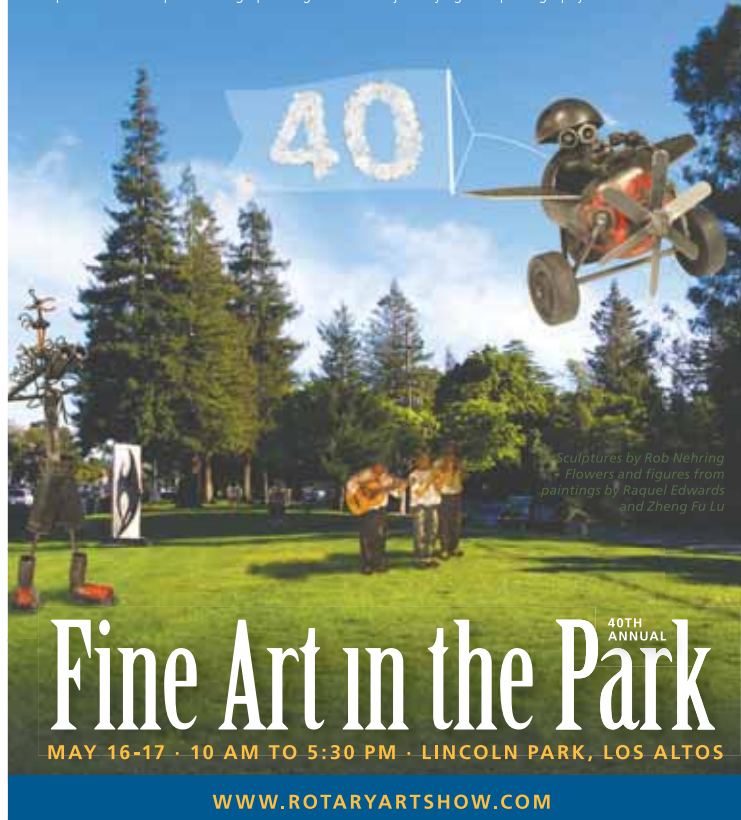
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Driver says he was attacked

A man driving in his 2015 Ford Explorer pulled over after a bicyclist threw something at the car, according to Menlo Park police, and was then struck in the head with a bicycle lock.

The 24-year-old man was driving in the 700 block of El Camino Real around 4:30 p.m. Tuesday, April 28. He pulled over to check for damage, finding a dent, while the suspect wordlessly flung the lock at the back of his head, leaving a laceration, police said.

Running with his bike down El Camino Real, the suspect was last seen turning left onto Alma Street.

The driver described the assailant as a thin male, approximately 5 feet 8 inches tall, with medium-toned skin and either in his late teens or early 20s. The suspect had a closely trimmed beard and mustache, "blondish" hair and wore khaki pants and a khaki shirt, the report said. ■

— Sandy Brundage

Man pleads not guilty to shooting

A man arrested after Menlo Park police officers responded to a report of gunshots has pleaded not guilty.

Isileli Lolohea, a 29-year-old Menlo Park resident, entered the plea in San Mateo County Superior Court on Monday, April 27. He is charged with two felonies — negligently firing a gun, and having a firearm despite being legally prohibited from doing so because of a prior conviction within the past 10 years, according to the District Attorney's Office.

Menlo Park police officers went to Chilco Street around 4:37 a.m. Friday, April 24, after a caller reported hearing gunshots. The officers then went to Hamilton and Plumas avenues, where additional shots had been heard, eventually hearing four gunshots themselves near Modoc Avenue.

In the 1400 block of Modoc Avenue, officers spotted Mr. Lolohea walking alone with a beer bottle in one hand, the District Attorney's Office said. After he put the bottle down at their request, the officers found an empty .22-caliber handgun along with four spent casings nearby.

Mr. Lolohea remains in custody on \$25,000 bail. His preliminary hearing has been scheduled for May 8. ■

— Sandy Brundage

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Fire district faces challenges of development

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

Should Atherton residents care if fire trucks are getting caught in traffic on Menlo Park's Willow Road, on their way to ever-more-frequent emergency calls from East Palo Alto and Belle Haven?

According to Chief Harold Schapelhouman, of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, they should. He told those attending a joint meeting of the district's governing board and Atherton City Council on April 29 that if emergency vehicles become tied up in one part of the fire district, it could make it harder to respond quickly in other areas.

The fire district covers Atherton, Menlo Park, East Palo Alto and parts of nearby unincorporated San Mateo County.

So far, the chief said, the fire district has managed to maintain good response times. However, he said, many things outside the district's control are affecting how quickly and effectively the district can

respond to calls. He asked the town to consider how any town projects, such as traffic-calming measures or anything that narrows streets, could affect emergency response.

"The problem we have is not only how long it takes to respond, but once you get in there, how long it takes you to get back out," he said.

The chief also asked Atherton officials to urge Menlo Park and East Palo Alto to study the effects on emergency response of any development projects, both in terms of response time and in cost.

"We knew down the road bigger would come," the chief said about recent building in Menlo Park. "Bigger is here." The question, is, he said, who should pay for any additional fire services? "Should the rest of the district's residents, through their tax dollars, absorb that?" he asked.

Impact fees

The district, he said, is studying charging impact fees for new development. Such fees will probably not include single

family homes, he said, except, perhaps homes with basements. Basements pose dangerous and unique fire-fighting problems, he said.

"Going subsurface for a firefighter," the chief said, "that's a bad day." Underground fires can get very hot, and destroy the underpinning of a building, which can collapse on firefighters, he said.

The joint study session, which

the chief said was the first since 2007, was held in Holbrook-Palmer Park's Jennings Pavilion. Officials from the town and the fire district talked about several other issues that affect both entities. One of those is the town's plan for a pedestrian-controlled stoplight on El Camino Real at Alameda Avenue, near the district's only station inside Atherton.

Chief Harold Schapelhouman

said the light could help fire trucks more easily turn onto or across El Camino. Board members asked to put the matter of possible district help with the costs of the light, including equipping it so firefighters may stop traffic, put on the agenda of their next meeting.

The town has also asked for fire district input when it designs an emergency operations center for its new civic center. ■



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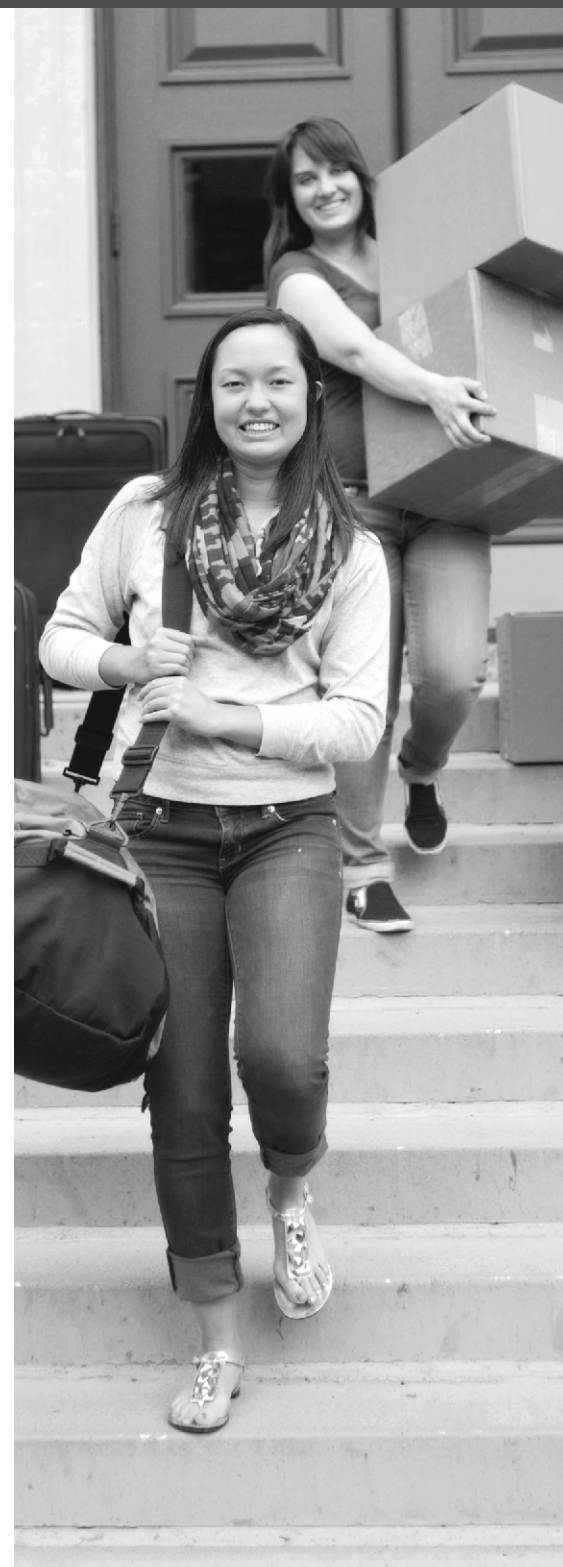
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Sheriff Greg Munks, a sponsor of the festival, with 2015 Queen of the Festival scholarship finalists: top row, Vanessa Murillo, left, and Angelica Salto; bottom row, from left, Mary Robles, Michelle Quintero and Monica Orellana.



Photo by Abel Sanchez, Golden Images

Seniors compete for scholarships

Two Woodside High School seniors are among the five Redwood City students competing for the title of Queen of the Festival

at the North Fair Oaks Community Festival, which will be held Aug. 16.

The winner will receive a

\$10,000 college scholarship.

Monica Orellana and Mary Robles are the Woodside seniors. Other finalists are Vanessa Murillo of Notre Dame High School, and Michelle Quintero and Angelica Salto of Sequoia High School.

The Queen of the Festival scholarship program is part of the Sheriff's Youth Program Fund held in conjunction with the 14th annual North Fair Oaks Community Festival on Aug. 16.

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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

Traffic accident: Medics took a cyclist to Stanford Hospital after the cyclist was found in a ditch in the 3000 block of Portola Road. April 16.

Auto burglary: A burglar smashed a rear window of a vehicle parked at Highway 84 and Hobart Heights Road and stole a gym bag from the rear floorboard. Estimated loss: \$850. April 18.

Theft: Someone broke into a locked drop box at Huddart Park on Kings Mountain Road in Woodside and stole the cash inside. Estimated loss: \$40. April 28.

WEST MENLO PARK

Residential burglary: A burglar broke into a home on Mills Avenue and stole an Apple iPad, two Apple cellphones, several items of jewelry and personal documents. No estimate on losses: April 26.

MENLO PARK

Residential burglary: A locked bicycle was stolen from a parking area under an apartment complex on Crane Street. Estimated loss: \$200. May 1.

Commercial burglaries:

■ A burglar smashed a window on the front door of Mike's Camera on Santa Cruz Avenue, entered the store, smashed a display case and stole about 15 cameras. Estimated loss: \$6,240. April 28.

■ Someone broke into the office of OC Communications on Haven Avenue and the alarm sounded. An initial investigation showed nothing missing. No estimate on losses. May 1.

Auto burglaries:

■ A thief entered a vehicle parked on

Pope Street by means unknown and stole a computer and a vehicle key. Estimated loss: \$2,797. April 24.

■ Keys and a camera were stolen from an unlocked truck parked on Oak Grove Avenue. Estimated loss: \$90. April 29.

Thefts:

■ Someone stole a bike locked to a bike rack in the 600 block of Alma Street. Estimated loss: \$1,000. April 28.

■ An unlocked and unattended bike was stolen from the 1300 block of Willow Road. Estimated loss: \$933. April 24.

■ Someone entered a vehicle while it was being serviced on the 1400 block of El Camino Real and stole jewelry. No estimate on losses. May 1.

■ A thief stole a bike locked to a bike rack on Ivy Drive. Estimated loss: \$500. April 28.

■ Someone stole a bike locked in a parking area under an apartment on Crane Street. Estimated loss: \$250. April 30.

■ A bike was stolen from a closed unattached garage on Crane Street. The thief entered the garage through an unlocked window. The bike was later found around the corner. April 30.

■ Two outdoor rugs were stolen from the front porch of a home on Blake Street. No estimate on losses. April 30.

Stolen vehicle: A blue 2014 Audi SQ5 from Laurel Street. April 25.

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Three Woodside agents in top 10

Three Woodside Realtors — Scott Dancer and Brad and Helen Miller — have been ranked among the top 10 agents for Coldwell Banker Residential Brokerage in Northern California, based on 2014 sales.

The Realtors also rank among the top 1 percent of all Northern California agents for the company.

Mr. Dancer had sales volume of nearly \$84 million in 2014. He has been associated with Coldwell Banker's Woodside office since 1984.

The Miller team outpaced more than 3,900 sales associates with sales volume of more than \$120 million in 2014. Ms. Miller joined Coldwell Banker in 1992. Mr. Miller joined the company in 2011 after a career in real estate investment banking and institutional securities sales.

The three Realtors are among the 58 agents and teams to be invited to the company's top 1 percent retreat to be held later this year at Pelican Hill resort in Newport Beach.

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Associate Editor
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Sandy Brundage (223-6529),
Barbara Wood (223-6533)

Contributors Marjorie Mader, Kate Daly

Special Sections Editor
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On departing, thinking about city's future

By Paul Bendix

Arriving in Menlo Park in 1981, I discovered the pleasures of a 10-minute commute to work and no more fines for parking in a San Francisco alley. My new apartment featured a lawn, a patio and, inexplicably, sun. It was hard to get used to the quiet. I imagined lying down on Linfield Avenue, broad enough for four lanes of traffic and almost carless.

Cars and suburbia were designed for each other. In Menlo Park my disabled life acquired convenience. Shopping was faster, entertainment easier. I could spontaneously go out for a meal or a movie. It was all a pleasant antidote to the pressures of working in Silicon Valley.

When I moved downtown in 1993, plate glass windows on Santa Cruz Avenue revealed an aging, slumping and stiffening person in a wheelchair. The reflections were mercilessly accurate. I was adjusting to another stage of disability. Which is why I needed those other reflections, the faces of people who got to know me in shops and restaurants. Menlo Park felt small and friendly, and I needed a place that was both.



GUEST OPINION

Former Menlo Park resident Paul Bendix was an Almanac blogger before his move to San Francisco. You can read his archive blog columns by going to AlmanacNews.com and clicking on "Blogs" in the menu bar.

Today, lots of people want to keep the town small and friendly — provoking big and unfriendly civic battles.

For many, Menlo Park offers nightly refuge from the workplace. Silicon Valley's pressures and tumult are close, but they can seem far away. No wonder, in high-tech boom times, Menlo Park's property values keep soaring.

So do expectations. Can Menlo Park reap the benefits of proximity to high-tech companies without taking on the responsibilities?

Entrepreneurs want to grow businesses, a growth that keeps local home values high and boutiques full. How much growth do they need, and where is it supposed to take place?

Downtown Menlo Park is on the brink of inevitable transformation. Environmental pressures, now including drought, signal an end to urban sprawl. Home and workplace must be closer together, in time or space. This means denser communities and faster mass-transit commutes, but you'd never know it from talking to many in town.

So I leave Menlo Park wondering how the community will take on these challenges. Caltrain offers an enduring litmus test. The commuter line carries much of the region's professional workforce, and I'm reasonably confident it will get electrified, with the faster acceleration and performance the route demands. As for grade-separated crossings, I'm not holding my breath.

Besides, I've got plenty to worry about in my new San Francisco neighborhood. My wife can walk to work. And I can board the 35 Eureka bus for a hair-raising slalom over the lower slopes of Twin Peaks. When Muni deposits me back in my neighborhood, the real excitement begins — with a wheelchair roll home down the cliff-like slopes of Glen Park. I asked for it. Now it's home.

LETTERS

Our readers write

Another reason to say 'no' to leafblowers

Editor:

I want to thank you for Dave Boyce's article about the landscaper Danna Breen, who advises us to keep leafblowers away from our gardens. "Gardens are simply being destroyed by these blowers," she says, because they blast away the blanket of leaves that keeps soil moist.

I hope people will heed this advice, both for the sake of the gardens and for the sake of those neighbors who, like me, work at home. The roar of the leafblower has become a nearly constant background noise in our community.

Jeanne DuPrau
Santa Margarita Avenue
Menlo Park

What's on your mind?

From City Hall politics and the schools to transportation and the drought, the Almanac aims to keep readers informed about their community. But we also want to hear from you.

Tell us what's on your mind by sending your letters to letters@AlmanacNews.com. Or snail-mail them to: The Almanac, 450 Cambridge Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94306.



Menlo Park Historical Association

Looking back

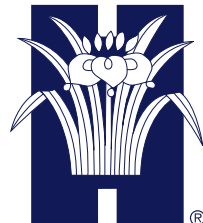
Former U.S. Sen. Milton S. Latham bought a 380-acre property east of the railroad tracks in Menlo Park from the estate of William E. Barron, according to "Menlo Park: Beyond the Gate" by Michael Svanevik and Shirley Burgett. It was 1871, and the selling price was \$75,000. On that site, the 50-room Thurlow Lodge rose. The authors write of the mansion: "Elaborately carved and corniced, the house was immense with a tower rising just over 98 feet above the ground." While the mansion was being built, Mr. Latham, a banker, was becoming a "dominant force" in Northern California railroading — an enterprise that eventually "broke Latham's financial back," the authors say. He resigned his banking position in 1878, and auctioneers began selling off the Latham estate in September 1880.

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