



**Curious about  
Curious.com?** | Page 3

# *The* Almanac

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

OCTOBER 7, 2015 | VOL. 51 NO. 5

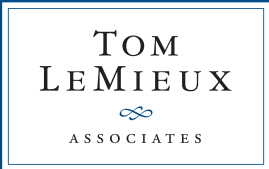


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## Building bridges

As Facebook grows, it works to make  
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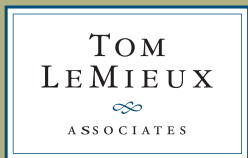
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Photo by Ron Hemphill

Justin Kitch sits in the new control room at his Menlo Park startup, Curious.com.

## Curious about Curious.com?

By Kate Daly  
Special to the Almanac

I'm curious. I love being curious," says Robert Redford in the newly released movie, "A Walk in the Woods." That could be a slogan for the Menlo Park online startup Curious.com.

The company's target audience is what co-founder and CEO Justin Kitch calls "lifelong learners ... a large minority who believe learning is a part of living."

He goes on to describe them as anyone who might listen to NPR, "read newspapers and novels, and watch National Geographic specials."

On the website Curious.com, they can continue to learn everything from pole dancing to training a dog, blogging, giving a TED talk and speaking another language. Mr. Kitch estimates that more than "25 percent of our learners are overseas," and many use the lessons to learn English.

The company's slogan is "grow your skills."

In under three years, Curious.com has grown to where it offers 18,000 online lessons created by 1,500 teachers around the world.

In most cases it seeks out the teachers and then provides them with a marketplace and platform.

About 90 percent of those on the Curious.com platform were hand-selected by the company "out of all their peers on the Web," Mr. Kitch says. About half of the teachers have done something on YouTube or Vimeo.

**Curious.com offers 18,000 online lessons created by 1,500 teachers around the world.**

"Many have tried to sell their content directly," he says. "That's when they come to us. It's very hard to do."

Several of his 25 employees are called lesson wranglers. Their job is to take material submitted in different file formats and help turn it into polished teaching blocks that include quizzes, assignments and attachments.

"We think of ourselves as a media company," says Mr. Kitch, sitting in his office at the company headquarters on the corner of

Middlefield and Willow roads in Menlo Park.

In April the company added another dimension: streaming 10 free video channels labeled: brainy, tech, code, biz, craft, music, photo, life, health and food. They run ad-free all day and night, and broadcast more than a thousand introductory lessons at scheduled times.

To dig deeper, learners can buy Curious+ subscriptions for \$14.99 a month or \$89.99 a year and gain unlimited access to all the lessons in the library, plus some interaction with teachers. The company keeps track of which lessons are watched, and pays teachers based on viewership.

A lot of people apply to become teachers, but few make the cut, he says. He recalls just one time a teacher came in off the street and landed a spot.

Sophie Maletsky of Sophie's World is more the norm. Her planning business for children's events is based on the Peninsula (she hosted a workshop on making things out of duct tape at the Menlo Park Library last year), but on her personal YouTube channel she claims to have 9.5 million

See **CURIOS**, page 18

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# Woodside Day of the Horse



**The first horse came to Woodside and Portola Valley in 1769 with Gaspar de Portola.** They camped in a nearby valley and discovered the Bay. Now the Woodside horse population is by far the largest of any Peninsula town.



© Nancy Dunlop Cawdrey



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# Local News

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## Building bridges

As Facebook grows, it works to make Belle Haven neighbors into friends

By Barbara Wood  
Almanac Staff Writer

When Facebook moved its first employees into the old Sun Microsystems campus in Menlo Park in August 2011, some outsiders were skeptical that the company could survive, much less grow to occupy the additional nearby land Facebook owned.

How could a company make money on a service it gave away, a service based on, of all things, relationships — on networks of friends?

Now, a mere four years later, Facebook is the largest landowner in Menlo Park's M-2 industrial area, the area the city is now calling the Bayfront. Soon, the number of employees that work in Facebook's Menlo Park offices may outnumber the residents of Belle Haven, the residential area next door to Facebook. Facebook says about 5,500 of its 11,000 worldwide employees work in Menlo Park, and city statistics from May 2015 show Belle Haven has 5,647 residents.

Facebook's growth in Menlo Park has been rapid. By January 2012, the company had moved all of its employees from its former Palo Alto offices to Menlo Park. The Frank Gehry-designed MPK-20 building, which has room to eventually hold 3,000 workers, was opened in March of this year, across the Bayfront Expressway from the former Sun campus. (MPK-20 stands for the 20th Menlo Park building.)

The growth spurt is far from over. In July, Facebook presented plans to eventually add two more office buildings, each larger than MPK-20, plus possibly a hotel, to the land it owns between Bayfront Expressway and Chilco Street. The remodeling of an 180,000-square-foot warehouse and distribution building on the

former TE Connectivity site into an office building with a cafe is already underway and scheduled for completion mid-2016.

Facebook also owns the 56-acre Menlo Science and Technology Park, east of Willow Road near Bayfront Expressway. Facebook is working with the city to designate the property for new housing and retail on the site, along with more offices. The city's current version of the plan for the area also shows the Facebook property as the possible home of

a supermarket, which has been long requested by Belle Haven residents.

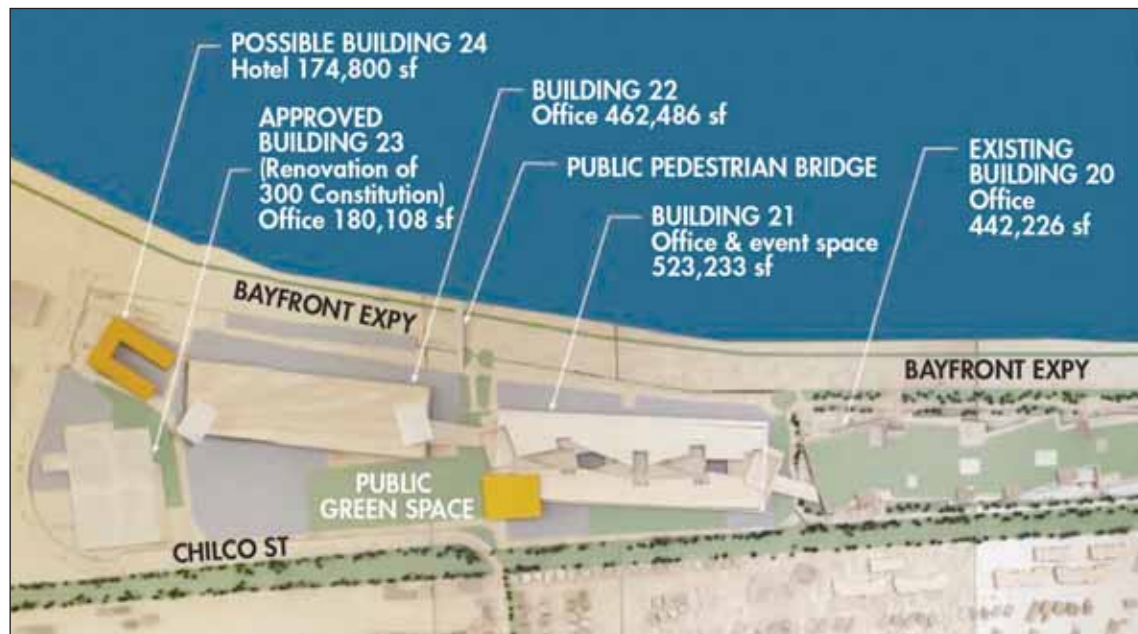
As Facebook grows, it is paying attention to its neighbors. The campus expansion plans presented to the city in July show a three- to four-acre public green space between the two new buildings, connecting to a public pedestrian bridge that would cross over Bayfront Expressway, giving easy access from the Belle Haven neighborhood, and the Facebook campus, to the Bay Trail.

The green space could be used for events such as farmers' markets, outdoor movies and more, Facebook says.

Facebook also is working on improving the Dumbarton rail right-of-way, a 100-foot-wide strip of land along the sparsely used tracks that divide Belle Haven from the M-2 industrial area.

"It's in the best possible location" to promote biking, dog walking or hiking, "or if you wanted to have a victory garden," says John Tenanes, who heads Facebook's worldwide real estate activities. "We've been working with Caltrain and Samtrans, and we think it's possible."

He compared the area to Manhattan's High Line Park, built on a no-longer-used elevated railway. "This is our version — the Low Line," he says. A major



Drawing courtesy city of Menlo Park

**Facebook plans** new development on land it owns between Bayfront Expressway and Chilco Street, adjacent to the new Frank Gehry-designed MPK-20 building.

difference is that only the space beside the Dumbarton tracks would be used and the rail could still accommodate trains.

The preliminary plans also show a safer, more walkable Chilco Street.

Facebook has already contributed in other ways to the neighborhood it borders. A public tunnel under Bayfront Expressway connects the north and south sides of Facebook's campus, and bikers and walkers to the Bay Trail. Facebook pays the salary of a full-time police

officer for the neighborhood's new Hamilton Avenue substation, helps support a community garden in Belle Haven, recently started a public Sunday farmers' market and has many employees volunteering in local schools and other activities.

Mr. Tenanes says Facebook is working hard to be a good neighbor partially because the company believes it will be in Menlo Park for a long, long time. "If you think about Facebook, we're not a developer," he said in a recent interview in the MPK-

20 building. "We're really here for the long term, and it is an investment. We're a neighbor. We're about integrating into the community."

Someday, in fact, many Facebook employees may live in the neighborhood as well as work there. In the zoning being considered as part of the revisions to Menlo Park's general plan, thousands of housing units could be added to Facebook's original Menlo Park site (the former Sun

See **BUILDING BRIDGES** page 8



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

**Facebook's** vice president for real estate John Tenanes and community outreach manager Lauren Swezey on the roof of Facebook's MPK-20 building. They say they both have been active in working with the Belle Haven neighborhood. **On the cover:** Facebook's Lauren Swezey on the roof of Facebook's MPK-20 building, with the site of the proposed future development in front of her and the Belle Haven neighborhood to her left. (Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac.)

## Community Health Education Programs



For a complete list of classes, lectures and support groups, or to register, visit [pamf.org/healtheducation](http://pamf.org/healtheducation).

All our lectures and events are free and open to the public.

### October and November 2015

#### October



#### How Genetics and Genomics Affect Cancer Care

Oct. 13, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

Join PAMF Oncology nurse navigator Frank delaRama, MSN, AOCNS, to discuss how the study of our inherited traits impacts the diagnosis and treatment of cancer.

#### Palo Alto Center

795 El Camino Real, Palo Alto • 650-853-4873



#### Medicare Update

Oct. 20, 6:30 to 8 p.m.

This year, the Medicare Enrollment period runs from October 15 through December 7. Join Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) of San Mateo County counselor Marla Seidman to learn how to find a better deal, lower co-pays and save money.



#### Attention Deficit and Hyperactive Disorder: Unlock Your Child's Potential

Oct. 28, 7 to 8:30 p.m.

PAMF neurologist and pediatric neurology specialist Sarah Cheyette, M.D., will talk about what is (and isn't) ADD/ADHD, as well as medication and non-medication approaches to treatment.

#### San Carlos Center

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

#### November



#### Medicare Update

Nov. 17, 6:30 to 8 p.m.

This year, the Medicare Enrollment period runs from October 15 through December 7. Join Health Insurance Counseling and Advocacy Program (HICAP) of San Mateo County counselor Marla Seidman to learn how to find a better deal, lower co-pays and save money.

#### San Carlos Center

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## Another alleged victim steps forward in case against former coach

By Dave Boyce  
Almanac Staff Writer

As another alleged victim has come forward, authorities have added allegations of sexual activity with a minor to the charges against Julio Edgardo Ortiz, a former coach at Selby Lane School in Atherton and Clifford School in Redwood City, according to San Mateo County prosecutors.

Mr. Ortiz, who is 34 and a Redwood City resident, was already in jail after being arrested in an incident involving a 14-year-old boy at a rest stop on Interstate 280 on Sept. 18. In connection with that incident, he is facing charges of oral copulation with a minor under the age of 16, oral copulation with a minor where there is an age difference of 10 years, and child endangerment, prosecutors said.

The new allegations involve 16 counts of a lewd act with a youth under the age of 14 over a period of 15 months — between January 2013 and March 2014 — while the youth was a player on the Clifford School basketball team, prosecutors said. This alleged victim came forward following the publicity of the first set of charges against Mr. Ortiz.

Monica Toole, Mr. Ortiz's attorney, was unavailable for comment.

Mr. Ortiz is in custody on

bail of \$1.5 million, up from the original \$500,000 bail, prosecutors said. He has not yet entered a plea, they said. A preliminary hearing is set for 1:30 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 13, before Commissioner Rachel Holt in Redwood City Felony Court.

The initial arrest was made late on the evening of Sept. 18 at the I-280 rest stop overlooking the Crystal Springs reservoir. Two California Highway Patrol officers on patrol entered the rest stop and were checking on a blue 2012 Chevrolet Cruze when they observed the alleged sexual activities, deputies from the Sheriff's Office said.

The charges in that incident include misdemeanor drunken driving and driving on a suspended license, prosecutors said.

In addition to his coaching positions at the elementary schools, Mr. Ortiz volunteered as a coach for the Sheriff's Activities League, deputies said.

The elementary schools and the activities league ended their relationships with Mr. Ortiz in 2014 after he was arrested in Santa Clara County for providing alcohol to a minor, deputies said.

Investigators are asking anyone with information on this or other incidents involving Mr. Ortiz to contact Detective Dan Hoss at (650) 363-4066 or [dhoss@smc-gov.org](mailto:dhoss@smc-gov.org). The anonymous tip line is 1-800-547-2700. ■

## Firefighters looking into cause of Filoli grass fire

By Dave Boyce  
Almanac Staff Writer

Fire investigators have not yet settled on what started a nearly five-acre grass fire in the vicinity of Edgewood and Canada roads on a northern portion of the Filoli estate in Woodside on Saturday, Oct. 3. The initial reported cause, downed electrical wires, turned out to be inaccurate, Fire Chief Dan Ghiorso of the Woodside Fire Protection District told the Almanac.

Firefighters from San Mateo County Fire, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection and the Woodside district responded to a report of a fire at about 5:50 p.m. and contained it within 10 minutes, Chief Ghiorso said in an email.

There were no injuries and no damage to buildings or other structures, Cal Fire spokesman Scott McLean said.

Quick action was the order of the day. "Light flashy fuels" in combination with some winds were a threat to the fire crossing Canada Road, the chief said. At first, firefighters called for a full response, including a bulldozer and aircraft. The bulldozer was instrumental in helping ground crews contain the fire, but firefighters canceled the aircraft, the chief said.

Critical to the containment was a section of the grounds that had been gone over with a disk. "That really helped stop the spread of the fire," the chief said. "If you notice in (the) Filoli estate, they cut/disk every year for this reason." ■



Image courtesy of Stanford University

Stanford rendering shows a view of the proposed residential area of the project along El Camino Real.

## Locals react to Stanford's new development plan

By Kate Bradshaw  
Almanac Staff Writer

Since Stanford submitted its new plan Sept. 28 for its 8.4-acre property along El Camino Real in Menlo Park, city officials and residents have voiced their opinions about the mixed-use project.

In its latest proposal, Stanford would reduce office space to 145,000 square feet, increase the number of rental apartments to 215, keep retail at 10,000 square feet, and increase open space, including the size of a plaza near Middle Avenue.

City Council members who weighed in said they are pleased with the changes, but they want to do more analysis.

"Menlo Park needs to activate its vacant lands on El Camino Real, bringing life and activity back into the affected neighborhoods," Mayor Catherine Carlton said. "This project, if done well, will contribute to a coherent community fabric."

However, she added that she "was surprised not to see the undercrossing that will link Burgess Park to the plaza, providing easier and safer access to the park, a safer route to school, and better connecting Menlo Park east to west."

Councilman Peter Ohtaki said decreasing office space would help mitigate traffic, but noted that adding anything to the empty lots on the site would increase traffic to the already bottlenecked intersection at El

Camino Real and Ravenswood Avenue.

"The Stanford project can take place as long as we fix that bottleneck," he said. "It will enhance the vitality and vibrancy downtown."

Councilman Rich Cline said the new plans are "far and away improved" in comparison with earlier iterations. A primary concern, he said, is traffic, but he is "ready for us to all have a discussion about it."

**'The Stanford project can take place as long as we fix that bottleneck (at El Camino and Ravenswood Avenue).'**

COUNCILMAN PETER OHTAKI

John Kadvan, who said he was speaking as a private citizen and not as a member of the Menlo Park Planning Commission, said the new proposal "looks like an improvement in terms of the plaza location, building design, scale and the mix of residential and office (space)."

He said he had continuing questions about the project and the streets it would affect, including: whether an additional crosswalk would be added at the street crossing at El Camino Real and Middle Avenue, how much Stanford will commit to supporting a

pedestrian and bike tunnel under the tracks to the Civic Center, and whether land currently occupied by rarely used parking spots in the Big 5 Sporting Goods lot could be used for the development of the tunnel.

Former councilman Steve Schmidt and former planning commissioner Patti Fry said they had wanted to see clearer commitments by Stanford to building a pedestrian tunnel beneath Caltrain to enable a safer crossing to Burgess Park and the Civic Center area.

Both were proponents of Measure M, the ballot proposal, defeated by voters, that would have limited office development along El Camino and downtown

Mr. Schmidt said he thought that a tunnel at El Camino Real and Cambridge Avenue, instead of at El Camino Real and Middle Avenue, might be a more feasible option.

"The tenants of Stanford's housing should be able to access the city's park, library and Civic Center," he said. "Stanford should be willing to pay for the construction of the undercrossing."

Ms. Fry also said she was "pretty disappointed that there's no commitment to funding the tunnel," and said she wants to see what effect the project would have on the job-housing ratio, a measure of the number of jobs the new space would create versus the number of people it can house. ■

## REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman

### Helping Your Children Buy Property



**Dear Monica: I am helping my son buy a property by giving him the down payment, but I think I must do more. I am frustrated that even with my help, he cannot purchase a home? Leslie C.**

Dear Leslie: It is a difficult time for buyers. The market is so competitive and there are lots of cash buyers. One of the things you can do, if you are able, is use your cash to purchase a property, which will allow you to close escrow very quickly, and then let your son take out a mortgage immediately after close. This would still be considered a purchase money loan which means that he will have the

ability to deduct the interest on the loan and other expenses. He has no more than ninety days to put a loan on the property to qualify it this way. Once he has the loan he can transfer the proceeds to you.

You can also buy a property with your son, if you are financially able. He can own a percentage and so can you, as tenants in common. You can maintain this arrangement for the long term, or gift or sell it to your son over time. Talk to your financial advisor about the rules that apply to this type of transaction. It is good that you are able to help him because this will make the process easier for him. I hope you find something soon.

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



### YVONNE FAISAL

Yvonne is the Coordinator of Systems and Innovation at the Priory. She is an honors graduate from Drury University with a Bachelor of Arts in Mathematics and Physics, and holds a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering from Washington University.

She loves to teach, acting as a guide to the world of science and critical thinking. She is heartened to see students grow and become enthusiastic learners.

She has developed two new Tinker Labs at the Priory.

When asked about awards and accomplishments, Yvonne says, "My daughters are the greatest gift or award I could ever receive."

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For information and to R.S.V.P. contact Admissions at 650.851.8223

# Belle Haven residents give Facebook a thumbs up

By Barbara Wood  
Almanac Staff Writer

Facebook officials say they have built a positive relationship with residents of the Belle Haven neighborhood adjoining their headquarters.

It is difficult to find Belle Haven residents who don't agree.

An Almanac reporter met with a number of Belle Haven residents in the past several months, many of them known to be outspoken advocates for their neighborhood, to ask them about the newcomer in their midst.

They range from Rose Bickerstaff, who has lived in Belle Haven for more than 40 years, to Juliana Parker, a 16-year-old who has been there for eight years.

Rachel Bickerstaff, the president of the Belle Haven Neighborhood Association, says she "married into the neighborhood" when she married Rose's son David, and brought up two daughters there who are now 17 and 21.

"It's been all pros for me as far as Facebook being in the neighborhood," Rachel Bickerstaff says. "They care about what we want."

Vicky Robledo says that her biggest concern about Facebook "is how their community is going to integrate into our community." While most Facebook employees are white, Asian or from India, "our community is black and Latino," she says. "Belle Haven is such a wonderful diverse community."

Sheryl Bims says that while traffic is bad in the area, if "Facebook just disappeared, I'd still be stuck not being able to get out of my driveway."

Whitney Hoermann says she agrees that "Facebook is doing a lot of really good

things," and in fact "they get asked to do, and they agree to do, way too much."

"That bothers me," she says. "They are paying for things the city doesn't pay for."

Rose Bickerstaff says that "all the things that have been proposed and have been done by Facebook have been very attractive and an improvement to this community."

It would be surprising to find Juliana Parker saying anything bad about Facebook. The company's founder, Mark Zuckerberg, has been a mentor for her and three other local students since they were in eighth grade.

"Every month we do a dinner," she says. "We have one-on-ones and he asks us about our grades. He makes sure we're

doing OK academically, emotionally."

And if that's not enough, Juliana also did a six-week internship for Facebook this summer along with 20 other students from Menlo Park, East Palo Alto and San Francisco. As part of her internship, she traveled to London. "I got to learn a little bit about what it's like to work for Facebook," she says.

While Juliana says some of her friends' rent has gone up so much they are afraid they may have to move out of the area, she thinks the neighborhood has improved.

"I've noticed a change in the community," she says. "It's actually pretty quiet now." With the new police substation and other changes, "now I feel so much safer,"

she says.

Ramon Sanchez, whose backyard gate opens to the community garden that Facebook is helping the Rotary Club of Menlo Park support, says he is just happy to have a place where he can smell a tomato that "reminds me of my grandparents' village in Mexico for some reason."

Rachel Bickerstaff says her 21-year-old daughter Mercedes, who will graduate from the University of Arizona in December, also did a Facebook internship. Where is Mercedes hoping to work when she graduates?

Facebook.  
"They love her, and she loves them," Rachel Bickerstaff says. ▣



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

**Ramon Sanchez**, whose backyard opens onto this community garden, says he is happy to have a place where he can smell tomatoes that remind him of his grandparents' village. Facebook is helping the Rotary Club of Menlo Park support the garden.

## BUILDING BRIDGES

continued from page 5

Microsystems property) as well as on Facebook's Willow Road property.

New housing is also being built near Facebook. Greenheart Land Company has a 195-unit building under construction, and a few miles away, St. Anton's is building 394 units off Haven Avenue near Marsh Road. Facebook is subsidizing 15 of the St. Anton's units so they will be affordable to low-income tenants, and the company is working on making it easy to bike between Facebook and the new complex.

Listening to its neighbors is not new, Facebook says. "When we first moved here, we made friends with the local city officials, the city manager, the city council; but also the local community," Mr. Tenanes says. "I think we've done really well in terms of connecting with them."

The new buildings Facebook has proposed for the former TE

Connectivity property will also be designed by Gehry Partners.

Like MPK-20, parking will be tucked under the buildings to hide cars from view and allow more landscaping and less paving. Bridges would join the buildings together.

The model made to help design the new development includes Belle Haven as well as Facebook buildings. "We're starting to think about the neighbors, and that's why the neighborhood is included in the model," Mr. Tenanes says. "We're thinking beyond just this building ... how do we fit into the neighborhood at the right scale."

The proposed MPK-21 and MPK-22 buildings will "address some of the scale and geometry of the community," he says. "There's more movement, the roofs are a lower scale, they're sloped" and the building's exterior has more articulation, or distinct changes in form, he says. Landscaping will help the buildings blend in, especially from a distance.

Improving the view from the neighborhood won't be difficult. Today the TE Connectivity site as seen from Belle Haven is a

view of loading docks, garbage dumpsters and towering industrial tanks screened only by chain link fences and scraggly

vegetation.

Facebook plans to demolish the

See **BUILDING BRIDGES**, page 16



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

**This view** from the roof of Facebook's new MPK-20 building shows the former TE Connectivity site, where Facebook plans its next phase of development, as well as the Dumbarton rail right-of-way and the Belle Haven neighborhood beyond. Gehry Partners, Frank Gehry's architecture firm, will design the new buildings.

# Seeking to renew harmony in Town Hall, council hires help

By Dave Boyce  
Almanac Staff Writer

## ■ PORTOLA VALLEY

When Portola Valley celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2014, a key theme was the town's success at maintaining its pastoral character, a hard-won achievement by volunteers working with a Town Hall staff noted for an interior harmony that complemented its relations with the community.

If that harmony was as real as it's said to have been, that fabric has been frayed by recent events and the Town Council has hired help as it tries to restitch it, maybe with more modern threads.

Kick-starting this effort was the Aug. 12 "involuntary resignation" of then town manager Nick Pegueros, who was hired in May 2012. The council had seen him as doing a "great job" until around mid-summer, Councilman Craig Hughes told the Almanac.

Council members gave Mr. Pegueros a new contract in October 2014 and a pay raise in April. In July, they began a series of closed-door sessions to evaluate his job performance.

The public may never know why Mr. Pegueros left. A full discussion is hampered by his contract, which forbids the council or staff from talking about details of his departure beyond what was agreed to in the press release that announced it — a clause that may have been added in December, Mr. Hughes said.

Town Hall staff, already small at 13 but notable for its long-term employees, had gotten smaller. At the time the closed sessions began, Deputy Town Planner Karen Kristiansson and Recreational Facilities Coordinator Tony Macias were gone, and Administrative Services Manager Stacie Nerdahl had given notice.

At the council's Sept. 23 meeting, Councilwoman Ann Wengert said staff had "(in) adequate processes ... to be able to move forward when they felt like they didn't have direction from us, or any internal support systems they needed to address any conflicts they were having internally."

### Shocks and clashes

The events surrounding Mr. Pegueros' departure were a "shock," Mr. Hughes told the Almanac. To "help smooth things out and prevent something similar from happening again," Mr. Hughes said, "and also to take care of the situation as it exists today," the council hired Leadership Balance, an executive-coaching consultant based in Eagle, Idaho.

According to Leadership Balance's contract, the town government is "taking action to address the situation and stabilize the staff situation to maintain a high level of support and services to the community. They have requested assistance to provide specific and targeted coaching and support to the interim town

### Town staff lacked 'support systems they needed to address any conflicts they were having internally.'

COUNCILWOMAN ANN WENGERT

manager and staff, as well as working with the Town Council members to become more actively involved in oversight and accountability for the team."

The council heard from company principals Cathy Light and Bobbie LaPorte, who had interviewed council members. In a report, they outlined council members' views, but without attaching names to comments.

The interviews revealed clashes, they said. "Council seems to be not aligned in terms of how they see the vision for the town moving forward," Ms. LaPorte said. "There's definitely a difference of opinion between the five of you about how ... we maintain the 1964 consensus and keep to those values."

### A balancing act

The "1964 consensus," as former mayor Steve Toben called it at a September 2014 community meeting, is taken from the gen-

eral plan and creates "an overall impression of open space, natural terrain and vegetation, interrupted minimally by the works of people" while "the presence of development at night is difficult to determine." Residents should be able to see the stars and hear the sounds of nature, Mr. Toben said.

That consensus is based on the "building blocks" of quality town leadership and staff; zoning and building regulations; and "high-octane" citizen engagement, he said.

Is that template sufficient? Leadership Balance's report on council interviews included this comment: Staff like Town Hall's informal culture, but efficiency and progress are important. Maybe it's a balancing act. Maybe the town should be run "more like a business than as a family."

Councilman John Richards said he saw that comment as being contradictory to the town's past and future evolution.

The comment was "a throwback," Ms. Wengert said, to Mr. Pegueros' tenure and tension among staff over his view that Town Hall needed to be "more professional, however that's defined."

Mayor Jeff Aalfs said he saw the business-versus-family comment as "the heart" of the issue. "We've sort of run (Town Hall in a way) that feels like family," he said, "but the work load here has gotten more complicated."

Staff does face new demands, Mr. Hughes said. "We are going to have to modernize" to give residents easier access to town records, but without significant effects on staff routines, he said.

Councilwoman Maryann Moise Derwin said she didn't sense much of a problem between staff and the community, and that a familial tone and professionalism are not mutually exclusive.

Leadership Balance will be coaching Interim Town Manager Debbie Pedro while the council searches for a new manager, a process expected to take three months. The company will assist the council on matters such as developing a "format" by which council members can communicate with staff, according to the contract. ■

## Menlo Park holds Halloween party for teens

Teenagers ages 13-18 are invited to a Halloween party and pumpkin carving contest at the Menlo Park Library from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Friday, Oct. 23.

Pumpkins and tools will be provided and there will be snacks. Teens will leave with their own carved pumpkin and will be entered into a contest to decide the favorite.

Go to [tinyurl.com/carve329](http://tinyurl.com/carve329) for more information. Registration is required for this free event. The library is at 800 Alma St. in Menlo Park.

## Chris Stivers

June 1, 1965 – September 5, 2015

Christopher C. Stivers, a resident of Berkeley, passed away September 5, 2015 while vacationing in Vietnam. Chris recently retired from the UC Berkeley Athletics department, where he was Associate Director for Compliance for the past 15 years. Chris was doing what he loved most, traveling the world.

Chris is survived by his mother, Dorothy Stivers of Atherton, and three sisters, Katie Stivers of Menlo Park, Sarah Camp of Antelope, and Hope Stivers of Redwood City. He is predeceased by his father, Edward Stivers.

Chris grew up in Atherton, attended Menlo-Atherton High School, and received his undergraduate degree in Economics at UC Berkeley, and a JD at UC Hastings College of the Law. He made his career in College Athletics, first at the University of Colorado Boulder and then at UC Berkeley.

A tribute for Chris will be held on Wednesday, October 14, 2015 at 4:00 pm in the Club Room at Haas Pavilion, Berkeley, and a celebration of his life will be held Friday, October 16, 2015 at 2:00 pm in the Jennings Pavilion at Holbrook Palmer Park, Atherton. Donations in Chris' name can be made to the Cal Athletics Fund.

Link: <https://give.berkeley.edu/fund/?f=FF0520000>

PAID OBITUARY

## Autumn in Woodside

Saturday Oct. 10

Woodside Day of the Horse

Sponsored by WHOA! - Woodside-area Horse Owners Association

Join us at the Horse Fair, for free (Woodside Town Hall 10-2:30). Ride the Wells Fargo Stagecoach, listen to a horse's heartbeat, learn all the horse activities in this area & more! Or pre-register for the Progressive Ride and ride through Woodside's beautiful Town trails (11-2). Proceeds go towards the preservation of the rural heritage, which horses support.

[www.whoa94062.org](http://www.whoa94062.org)

Sunday Oct. 11

Woodside Pumpkin Festival

Sponsored by the Mounted Patrol of San Mateo County

Bring the kids and enjoy pony rides, bouncy house, a haunted house and petting zoo while you find the great pumpkin for your little one at the Mounted Patrol Grounds. Hamburgers, hot dogs, beer, wine, soft drinks are available. A portion of the proceeds benefit schools and equestrian causes in the area. Daily horse events in the arena. 9 am to 5 pm. Free admission.

[www.Woodsidepumpkinfestival.com](http://www.Woodsidepumpkinfestival.com)

Look it up on Facebook!

Saturday/Sunday • Oct. 17 & 18

Woodside Pumpkin Festival • Continues

Only 2 minutes from downtown Woodside. Why drive for 2 hours to Half Moon Bay? A portion of the proceeds benefits schools and equestrian causes in the area. Mounted Patrol Grounds. 9 am to 5 pm. Free admission.

[www.Woodsidepumpkinfestival.com](http://www.Woodsidepumpkinfestival.com)

Saturday/Sunday Oct. 24 & 25

Woodside Pumpkin Festival • Final weekend

Final days of the festival. Enjoy quality family time while searching for the pumpkin that is perfect for you. Help support local schools and equestrian activities in the area. Mounted Patrol Grounds. 9 am to 5 pm. Free admission.

[www.Woodsidepumpkinfestival.com](http://www.Woodsidepumpkinfestival.com)

Events are held at the Mounted Patrol Grounds, 521 Kings Mountain Road, Woodside.

See map at <http://www.mpsmc.org>

The Mounted Patrol Foundation, a 501c3 supports all of the events above, and is assisting in the advertising of events.



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For video tour & more photos, please visit:

[www.1199NorthLemon.com](http://www.1199NorthLemon.com)



Ken DeLeon  
CalBRE #01342140



Michael Repka  
CalBRE #01854880

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## 155 Sunrise Drive, Woodside Offered at \$3,498,000

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For video tour & more photos, please visit:

[www.155Sunrise.com](http://www.155Sunrise.com)



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CalBRE #01342140



Michael Repka  
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# Challenger gives incumbent poor grades for attendance

■ Data is disputed; moderator warns of inappropriate comments.

By Barbara Wood  
Almanac Staff Writer

A challenger for a seat on the board of the Woodside Elementary School District is accusing an incumbent of poor board meeting attendance.

During an Oct. 1 League of Women Voters election forum, challenger Joel Hornstein brought up incumbent Kevin Johnson's attendance record in response to a question from the audience about how the candidates saw their board roles.

"Frankly, Kevin hasn't been a part of a lot of board meetings," Mr. Hornstein said. "He has missed just about one in three board meetings over the entire term and is running at just over 50 percent this year." Those figures, however, appear to be exaggerated.

Mr. Johnson denied that he had missed so many meetings, and sought his attendance record from the district office the following day. Board attendance records

supplied by Mr. Hornstein, and separately by the district, show Mr. Johnson has been absent on nine meeting dates in his four years on the board, or a little more than 16 percent of the 54 meetings over that period.

In the 2014-15 school year, Mr. Johnson missed two meetings out of 13, or 15 percent. Since January 2015, Mr. Johnson has missed two board meetings out of 10, or 20 percent.

The discrepancies appear to be in how Mr. Hornstein counted "missed." Both sets of records say Mr. Johnson attended three meetings via conference call, which Mr. Hornstein counted as missed meetings. Mr. Hornstein says Mr. Johnson also left three meetings and two phone meetings early and "missed multiple votes," and he included those meetings as "missed" as well.

Mr. Hornstein's figures also did not include four meetings that the district said Mr. Johnson attended, and he counted him absent twice on one day with two meetings.

A few questions later in the forum, after the candidates were asked if Woodside's middle school is comparable to other area middle

## ■ WOODSIDE

schools, Mr. Hornstein said: "As many of you know, Kevin sent his elder two children to private school for sixth grade," adding that Mr. Johnson's middle child is "now back with us."

At that point Mr. Johnson interrupted Mr. Hornstein, saying that his oldest child, in fact, attended Woodside Elementary from the third grade, when the family moved to Woodside, through eighth grade. He also emotionally denied Mr. Hornstein's comments about his middle child, a son.

Mr. Johnson said his son had stayed at Nueva School when the family moved from San Mateo. But this year, his son chose to attend Woodside for eighth grade, Mr. Johnson said, to go to school with his fourth-grade brother and Woodside friends, and to prepare for high school in a more traditional middle school environment.

Mr. Hornstein later called the Almanac and said: "I made an error in judgment," in singling out Mr. Johnson's son and repeating incorrect information. He said, and Mr. Johnson confirmed, that he called him and apologized.



Photo by Barbara Wood/The Almanac

The three candidates, from left, are incumbents Silvia Edwards and Kevin Johnson and challenger Joel Hornstein.

Following the exchange about the middle school, League of Women Voters moderator Ellen Kitamura made her own interruption. "I want to stress that we are trying to inform the audience about your positions on the issues, and the personalization of some of these issues is not appropriate in this forum," she said. "These are the league's rules."

### Three candidates

There are three candidates running for two seats on the board of the one-school district.

All the candidates have children at the school, and all said they have unique skills to bring to the board.

Silvia Edwards, who was appointed to the board in May, said her background in construction is valuable as the district completes several major construction projects. She serves on the Woodside board's facilities committee and its collective bargaining committee.

Like the other two candidates, she has a law degree. She worked as a special assistant U.S. attorney from 2001 to 2003; she is not currently practicing law.

Mr. Johnson is a practicing attorney with Quinn Emanuel in Redwood Shores and is completing his first four-year term on the board. He said his experience as a

See **CHALLENGER**, page 14



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## Cops win statewide award for crime-reduction work

By **Kate Bradshaw**  
 Almanac Staff Writer

In recognition of its community policing efforts in the Belle Haven community, the Menlo Park Police Department has been awarded the statewide Helen Putnam Award for Excellence in Public Safety.

The award, presented Sept. 30 by the League of California Cities at its conference in San Jose, recognizes the work the department has done in the Belle Haven area over the last two years.

From 2013 to 2014, the number of crimes committed in Belle Haven fell by 42 percent and in all of Menlo Park by 12 percent, the police department says. Traffic collisions fell by 15 percent during the same period, according to a city report.

In 2013, Belle Haven was home to serious gang-related violence. By analyzing crime data, the police department learned that most shootings came from three neighborhood properties. The police worked with community members to help the tenants of these places find other housing. Within six months, the shootings stopped, the report says.

The department also collaborated with residents and business owners to form a community advisory group, which hosted monthly meetings and encouraged people to voice their concerns to law enforcement officers.

The advisory group took a leadership role in developing new plans to enforce traffic around Menlo Park schools and strengthen neighborhood watch groups. The members also created volunteer "Citizen's Academy" and "Youth Acad-

emy" educational programs to inform residents about local government and police operations.

Building relationships with members of the community has been a crucial part in boosting communication and trust between residents and the police department, said Police Chief Robert Jonsen. Now, he said, "Belle Haven neighborhood relationships are the best I've experienced in a long time."

The department also partnered with Facebook in 2014, which helped the department pay for a new police service center on the east side of Menlo Park. Their former service center, on Newbridge Street and Willow Road, had bars on the windows.

Chief Jonsen at the time insisted that they immediately begin searching for a new site.

"If the police department needs bars on their windows, then we have issues," he said. The new space, located at Hamilton Avenue and Willow Road, opened in April 2014, and was designed to emulate Facebook's "open, friendly, feel," Chief Jonsen said.

Facebook also funds a full-time police officer, Mary Ferguson, to work with at-risk youth, making Menlo Park the first law enforcement agency in the county to have a full-time officer funded by a private company, the department says.

Chief Jonsen said he takes most pride in the lack of gang shootings in Menlo Park since November 2013. He gives primary credit to the Belle Haven community for its role in creating change and reducing crime. "That doesn't just come from law enforcement," he said. "That's from the community." ■

**From 2013 to 2014, the number of crimes committed in Belle Haven fell by 42 percent.**

### CHALLENGER

*continued from page 12*

litigator has come in handy during his term because the district has had legal issues on almost every board agenda.

Mr. Johnson also has a degree in electrical engineering. "I'm a critical thinker and a strategic thinker," he said. "What I think I bring to the board is pragmatic, practical risk assessment."

Mr. Hornstein said his background in finance could fill a

board gap. He also has experience on other boards, both non-profit and for-profit. He serves on the school's site council and technology committee and is often on the campus and available, he said.

He has "a great deal of flexibility in how I manage my hours, which is really important to me," he said. ■

*Read more about the candidates and the Almanac's endorsements in the Oct. 14 Voter's Guide.*

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**BUILDING BRIDGES**

*continued from page 8*

TE Connectivity buildings, starting with those closest to the MPK-20 building. The first building, MPK-21, is projected to be 513,000 square feet and include an event space for up to 2,000 people. The next building, MPK-22, would be 450,000 square feet of offices, with a possible hotel of up to 200 rooms and 175,000 square feet also on the plan.

The buildings could be up to 75 feet tall, with the main access from a new signal on Bayfront Expressway, near the proposed pedestrian bridge. The total size of the three buildings, if all are built, would be 1.138 million square feet, which is less than allowed under current zoning.

The buildings would have a total of 4,055 parking spaces, including 275 for a hotel; which Facebook says is 2,365

more parking spaces than currently on the property.

The 58-acre site now has 10 buildings and 1.02 million gross square feet of industrial, warehouse, office and research and development uses.

The construction of the buildings is still many public meetings and approvals away, however.

Menlo Park officials must agree to rezone the site so buildings can exceed the current M-2 zoning height, change the text of the zoning ordinance to allow a hotel, negotiate a development agreement, approve removing some of the site's 250 heritage trees, negotiate a below-market-rate housing agreement, adjust the lot lines, complete and approve an environmental review, and analyze the fiscal impact of the development on the city and other agencies.

That means, the city says, multiple public hearings with the Planning Commission and



Photo courtesy city of Menlo Park/Facebook

**This model** shows the possible placement of a public pedestrian bridge that could be used to get from the Facebook campus and the nearby Belle Haven neighborhood across the Bayfront Expressway to the Bay Trail.

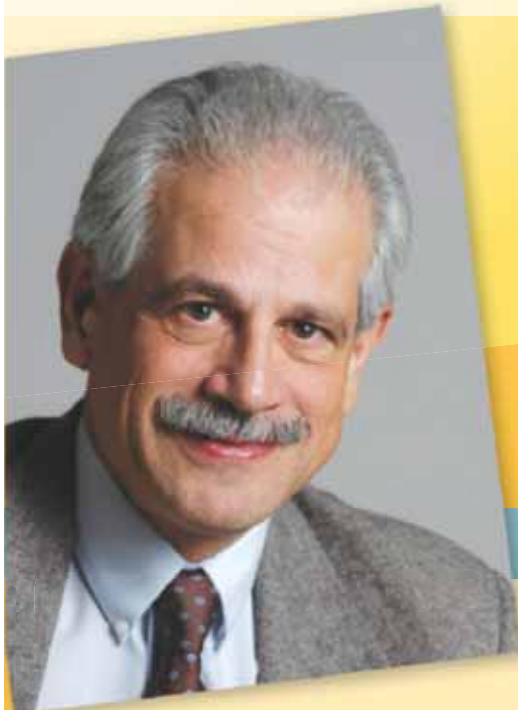
City Council, a public outreach meeting, and reviews by the housing, environmental quality, bicycle and transportation com-

missions.

Menlo Park Associate Planner Kyle Perata says the City Council will probably consider giving

final approval to the project next summer and only after that could Facebook get its building permits and start construction. ■

## Wireless Technology and Public Health: Health and Environmental Hazards in A Wireless World



### Are wireless devices making us ill?

Join **Dr. Joel Moskowitz**, Director of the Center for Family and Community Health, U.C. Berkeley School of Public Health, along with other experts to learn about the current scientific research regarding electromagnetic frequencies and their impact on biological systems. We will hear why 200 international scientists recently called for safer wireless radiation standards. Panelists will discuss links to autism, cancer, infertility, effects on wildlife, as well as best practices with cell phone safety and wi-fi precautions. Refreshments served.

### SPEAKERS

**Keynote Joel Moskowitz, PhD**, Director, Center for Family and Community Health, U.C. Berkeley School of Public Health, associate producer of the movie "Mobilize", will discuss new research related to wireless technology, public health and policy.

**Suruchi Chandra, MD**, Harvard trained Integrative Psychiatrist who will discuss stressors on the developing nervous system, childhood developmental delays, research related to microwave EMF and other toxic exposures and how this knowledge has changed her approach to clinical care.

**Victoria Dunckley, MD**, award-winning child psychiatrist and author of "Reset Your Child's Brain," will discuss the identification and management of screen-time's physiological effects on mood regulation, cognition, sleep, and behavior in children.

**Toril Jelter, MD**, Pediatrician and General Practitioner who treats children and adults with electrohypersensitivity will discuss her clinical experience with autism and behavioral changes related to electromagnetic radiation.

**Loretta Lynch**, One of California's most influential lawyers and former President of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). She served the CPUC through California's energy crisis fighting manipulation of energy sellers. She will discuss corporate influence in government, profiteering and the smart

meter issue at the CPUC.

**Martin Pall, PhD**, Professor Emeritus School of Molecular Biosciences, Washington State University, author of numerous scientific papers on oxidation and inflammation, will discuss the cellular mechanisms of action that explain the adverse biological effects of wireless devices on the human body.

**Katie Singer**, Author of An Electronic Silent Spring, will report on the impact of EMR exposure on wildlife.

**Peter Sullivan**, founder of Clear Light Ventures, Silicon Valley computer scientist who will discuss his personal family experience with autism spectrum disorder and how he improved the health of his family through EMF reduction.

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# Facebook's first farmers' market

By **Kate Bradshaw**  
Almanac Staff Writer

Lines formed beneath a floating blue and white balloon archway as Facebook's first farmers' market, held in the company's transformed parking lot, launched on Sunday morning, Oct. 4.

Children hopped around the bounce house, picnic tables quickly filled with food truck fare and conversations, and approximately 35 to 40 local vendors sold their wares, many offering free samples to visitors.

There were more than 1,000 market visitors, according to an estimate by Alexandria Gahagan, manager of global events and amenities at Facebook. She said that even though Facebook

is a global social media company, it's looking for ways to integrate and connect with the community and its neighbors as it continues to expand.

The market, planned to take place weekly, was hosted by West Coast Farmers' Market Association. In addition to standard payment for goods, vendors accepted EBT credits, according to Jan Taylor, director of market operations; that means that visitors who are eligible for federal food assistance are able to convert those credits to tokens to buy market produce.

For vendors like Donna Tubbs and her son Jason, of Tantalizing Toffee, the farmers' market stood out for its friendly atmosphere. Mary Ann Vlcek of Grandma's Gardens, who sells

handmade aprons and plants, said the market was a "great setting," and that she "came out to enjoy the day."

Ko Ota, who was visiting the farmers' market with her family, said she appreciated the opportunity to relax with her two children in a "good area." She said she plans to return to the market.

Menlo Park Mayor Catherine Carlton, who was there with other parents from her child's soccer team, said she was "absolutely delighted" with the turnout, and was happy to see a community-building event like a farmers' market in the area.

"I haven't seen an unhappy face yet," she said.

The farmers' market will take place each Sunday in the Facebook parking lot at 1 Hacker



Photo by Kyle Owen

**A toddler** appears entranced by the music at Facebook's first farmers' market in Menlo Park.

Way from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Visitors can use the Facebook entrance at Bayfront Expressway and Willow Road. ■

# Atherton reviews plan for civic center

The recommended conceptual plan and budget for Atherton's new civic center will be reviewed by the Atherton City Council when it meets Wednesday, Sept.

7, starting at 4 p.m. in the town's council chambers, 94 Ashfield Road.

If the council is happy with the plan recommended by its Civic

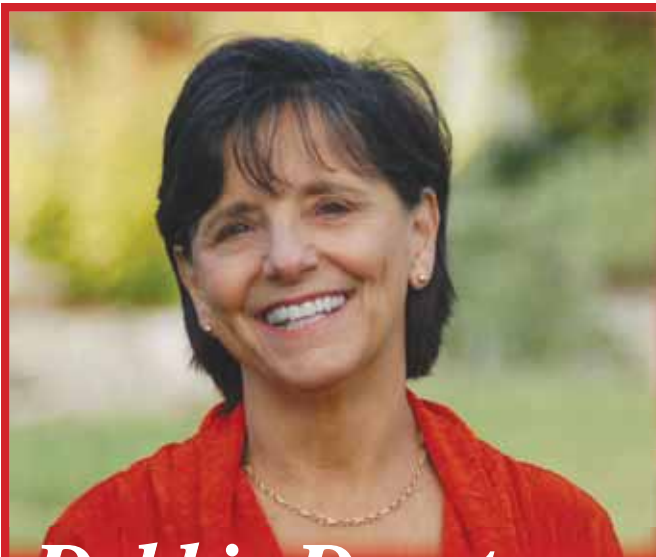
Center Advisory Committee, it can authorize the architect, WRNS Studio, to move on to the next phase of designing the town's new library, and

the administrative and police offices.

The council also plans to review the charter of the Civic Center Advisory Committee.

In other business, the council will discuss asking the Menlo Park Fire Protection District for

a contribution to the new civic center. The contribution would be in exchange for the fire district's use of a new emergency operations center in the civic center or the use of the civic center as a place to stage fire equipment.



## Debbie Devoto

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**Debbie Devoto**, who for 35 years was a teacher and counselor at Hillview Middle School, has retired and moved to Sonoma County!!! She has teamed with her sister and niece and is now selling real estate in **Oakmont**, an active adult community in the heart of the wine country. ([www.oakmontvillage.com](http://www.oakmontvillage.com)) Located between Santa Rosa and Sonoma in what Jack London called "The Valley of the Moon," Oakmont boasts spectacular views, two - 18 hole golf courses, three recreation centers, and miles of hiking in 3 adjacent State Parks (Annadel, Hood Mountain, and Sugarloaf), not to mention dozens of wineries, spas and activities! Debbie would love to hear from former students and families, and if, by chance, you are considering a retirement property, please feel free to give her a call. She'd love to show you around her new home!

### TEAM DEVOTO: SOLD TO DATE IN 2015

116 Oak Island Place	259 Oak Shadow Drive	192 Oak Shadow Drive	444 Meadowgreen Drive
440 Deerfield Circle	7019 Fairfield Drive	6751 Avenida Cala	404 Oak Mesa Court
7707 Pythian Court	6359 Meadowridge	8250 Oakmont Drive	7017 Overlook Drive
255 Mockingbird Circle	7403 Oakmont Drive	401 Meadowgreen Drive	207 Mountain Vista Ln.
7409 Oakmont Drive	8014 Hansen Court	6317 Meadowridge Drive	187 White Oak Drive
	444 Twin Lakes Circle		

### TEAM DEVOTO: CURRENT LISTINGS (and in Escrow)

353 Singing Brook Circle	5985 Stone Bridge Road	451 Crestridge Place	7301 Oakmont Drive
451 Meadowgreen Drive	7577 Oak Leaf Drive	349 Singing Brook Circle	349 Pythian Road
8822 Hood Mountain Circle	59 Aspen Meadows Circle	7302 Oakmont Drive	

### TEAM DEVOTO: COMING SOON

7309 Oakmont Drive	461 Hillside Drive	188 Mountain Vista Circle
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# Peninsula College Fund helps scores of students

By **Kate Daly**  
Special to the Almanac

**P**eninsula College Fund has lots to celebrate at its upcoming 10-year anniversary party.

The program has grown about tenfold based on the number of high school students participating in the Mid-peninsula area.

What started in 2005 as an effort to help three low-income high school students be the first in their families to go to college has turned into a multi-tiered push to provide college scholarships for 30 students next spring and ongoing mentoring and job-search training to dozens of others.

High school teacher Charles Schmuck of Menlo Park is the founder and chairman of the nonprofit, which now serves students in nine public, charter and private schools located in Redwood City, East Palo Alto, Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Woodside.

So far, out of a total of 136 participants, more than 90 percent have achieved the goal

of either completing, or being on track to graduate from, a four-year college, the nonprofit says.

Mr. Schmuck says that rate is almost three times higher than the national average for low-income students who enroll in four-year colleges and finish in six years. He attributes a lot of the Peninsula College Fund's success to the one-on-one mentoring support that each student receives for four years.

As for the program's 51 students who have graduated from a four-year university, he is proud to talk about their continued success at graduate schools or working at places like Google.

"The organization has gotten so much bigger than I ever dreamed," he says, looking over the nonprofit's first decade.

Approximately 80 students apply to the program each year. Once accepted, the student is awarded \$3,000 each year for four years of college. They also receive help with summer internship placements, and lessons ranging from handling finances, writing a resume and cover letter, and interviewing

**The founder attributes much of the Peninsula College Fund's success to one-on-one mentoring support that each student receives for four years.**



**The most recent** Peninsula College Fund scholars to graduate from college, with PCF founder Charles Schmuck. The students, from left, are Genecis Cerna of Woodside High and UCSC, Gonzalo Alvarez of Menlo-Atherton High and University of San Diego, Magali Molina of Sequoia High and UCSC, and Karina Lira of East Palo Alto Academy and UC Santa Barbara.

for a job.

The Peninsula College Fund has several people on staff but relies heavily on volunteers and donors. Some active supporters such as Mark Flegel, president and CEO of Flegel's Home Furnishings in Menlo Park, are involved to connect

with the community. Others, such as board member Eric Hartwig, come from an educational background. The former principal of Menlo-Atherton High School retired as superintendent of Las Lomitas Elementary School District in 2011. ■

## ■ ANNIVERSARY

The public is invited to attend the Peninsula College Fund's 10th anniversary celebration and community breakfast at the Menlo Circus Club in Atherton at 7:30 to 9 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 15. The deadline to RSVP is Oct. 7. The event is hosted by Facebook and includes NBC Bay Area News anchor Jessica Aguirre speaking about her experience growing up as a child of immigrants and seeking an education. Go to PeninsulaCollegeFund.org for more information.

## Are you curious about Curious.com?

continued from page 3

views.

A couple of years ago, Curious.com came to her and asked her to be a teacher. Her husband, Scott Stohler, is a video producer, so she already had a lot of material on hand. Curious.com provided the format and some suggestions to get her videos into shape. On Sept. 15, a search of her profile shows she had 202 lessons posted, 53,117 views and 5,876 enrolled students.

After some search engine optimization research, she recently developed an "advanced class" that is now on Curious.com, an 11-part course on how to make a prom dress out of duct tape.

She's used to reaching tweens and teens via her own website and YouTube. Feedback on Curious.com leads her to think she's tapping into an older audi-

ence. For example, a volunteer from a nursing home thanked her for her creative ideas on making crafts. "There's something for everyone," says Curious.com employee Jody Kramer. Her kids, ages 7 and 16, sometimes watch Curious.com for the history lessons.

"Learning is the way to keep your mind growing," says Mr. Kitch, who studied education technology at Stanford. After college he wrote a programming language for kids, and then co-founded Home-

stead, a small business website platform that was acquired by Intuit in 2007. He worked there until 2010.

This past summer he experienced his own learning curve with the launch of Curious Conversations, live interviews he is doing in front of an audience in the company's studio with experts on

various topics. He recently spoke with Denise Pope from Stanford about her new book on stressed-out students, and the talk is available on Curious.com.

When asked about competition, Mr. Kitch said other sources of online educational courses — such as Coursera, Udemy, Udacity and Skillshare — don't pose as much of a threat as Facebook, Angry Birds and Snapchat in terms of competing for online

time. "I'm very afraid if you raise an entire generation of people on this," he says.

He grew up in Kansas, where he and his twin brother were only allowed to watch 30 minutes of TV a week. He and his wife, a high school math teacher, live in Palo Alto with their three children, ages 12 and under. They are limited to 30 minutes of screen time a day.

Ironically, he foresees putting his lessons on many more screens in the future. Someone just asked

about running CuriousTV in an office lobby. Other potential outlets could be taxicabs and airline seat screens.

"The audience continues to grow," he says. "We're in the process of building. We're very fortunate to be well-funded and backed."

Published reports show the private company is backed by \$22.5 million from Redpoint Ventures, GSV Capital and three individuals: Mr. Kitch, Bill Campbell and Jesse Rogers. ■

**The public is invited to Curious Conversations, live interviews in the Menlo Park studio with experts on various topics.**

## Junior League resale shop holds 'sapphire sale'

The Junior League of Palo Alto-Mid Peninsula invites the public to its newly renovated resale shop in downtown Menlo Park for its sapphire anniversary sale. The 25 percent-off sale, taking place Monday, Oct. 12, celebrates The Shop's 45 years in the community.

Since its founding in 1970, The Shop has raised more than \$5 million to fund Junior League community projects, grants, and services. Customers can find clothing, accessories and household items donated by League members, local retailers and others. The Shop is known for its designer clothing and hand-

bags, as well as china and crystal.

The Shop moved to Menlo Park in 1995, after 25 years in Redwood City. The recently completed renovation, guided by interior designer and League member Melissa Badger, transformed the resale destination from its original "shabby chic" design to a contemporary boutique, with expanded inventory, including new shoe and children's departments.

The Shop welcomes donations Tuesday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at The Shop's back door.



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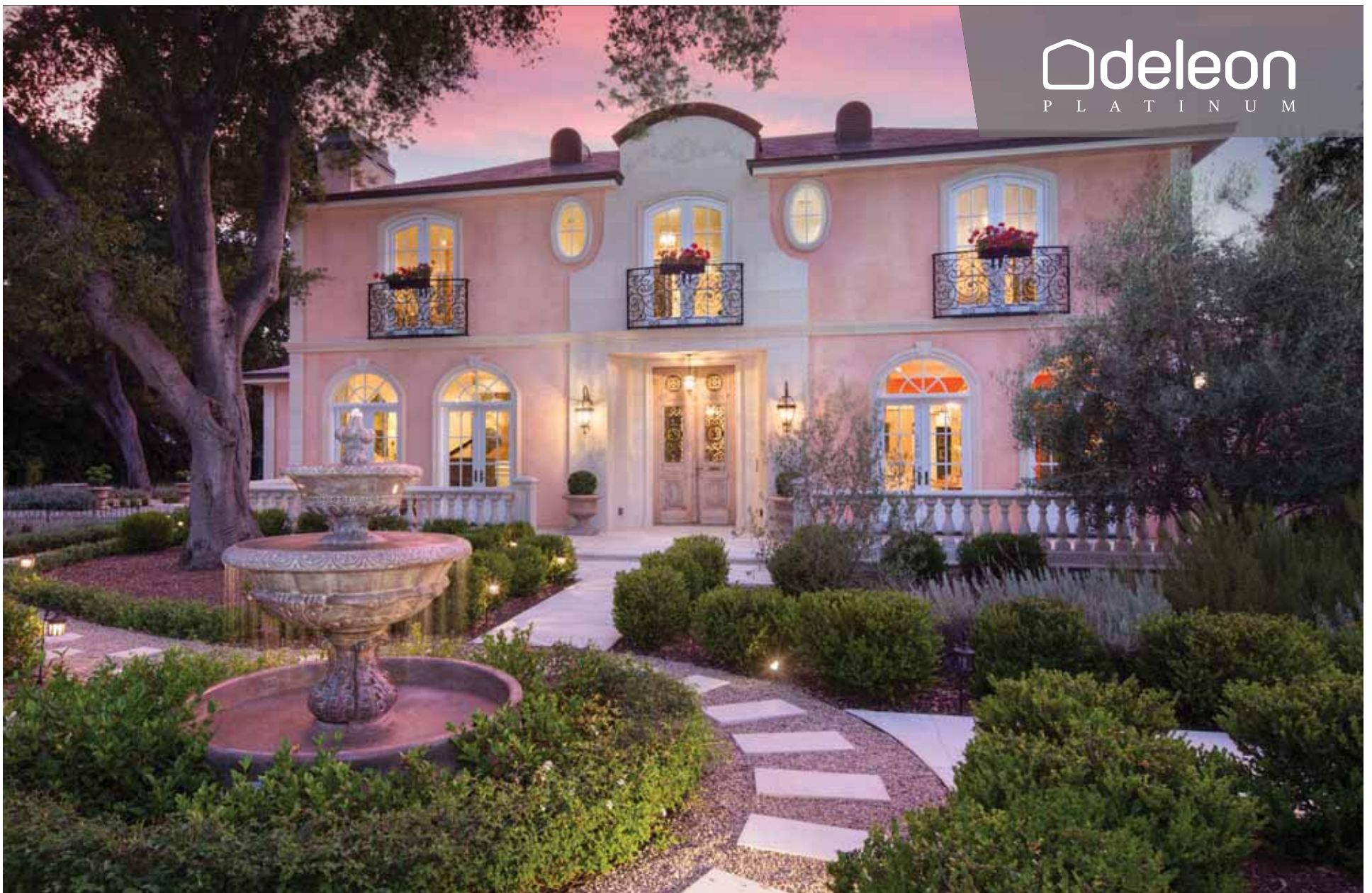


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Appreciating the unique heritage of the communities we serve is so important. That is why we applaud WHOA! for the countless hours spent preserving Woodside's equine legacy for local residents and future riders alike.



## 185 Fair Oaks Lane, Atherton

### Romantic French Estate with Every Modern Amenity

This stunning home of approximately 5,854 square feet (per plans) sits on a manicured 1-acre+ lot (per county) and represents the best of both worlds - striking newer construction with incredible old-world charm. The owner, a well-respected local designer, personally sourced many of the property's details from Europe, creating an environment that is remarkably elegant, while still remaining warm and inviting.

Hickory floors, frieze molding, and intricate wall and ceiling treatments mingle with chandeliers, antique doors, and marble mantelpieces imported from France, to create a wonderfully sophisticated environment. The interior includes formal living and dining rooms, four fireplaces, a wine cellar, and a sumptuous kitchen. A family room opens to a columned loggia, while a gorgeous master suite awaits upstairs. The grounds include water-conserving landscaping, while a breezeway connects to a three-car garage and a spacious studio. This home features easy access to Holbrook-Palmer Park, Sacred Heart and Menlo School, plus excellent public schools like Encinal Elementary (API 930), Hillview Middle (API 950), and Menlo-Atherton High (buyer to verify eligibility).

For video tour & more photos, please visit:

[www.185FairOaks.com](http://www.185FairOaks.com)

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