



Unspoiled Peninsula now on display in Woodside Town Hall

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The Almanac

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

NOVEMBER 4, 2015 | VOL. 51 NO. 9



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Section 2



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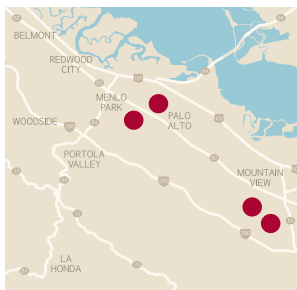


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Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Maintenance Supervisor Antonio Corgas, left, and maintenance worker Ignacio Hernandez place one of 11 black-and-white photos by Robert L. Buelteman Jr. on the wall at Woodside Town Hall. This photo is part of a series called "The Unseen Peninsula."

Unspoiled Peninsula now on display in Woodside Town Hall

By **Dave Boyce**
Almanac Staff Writer

Robert L. Buelteman Jr., a Woodside native and practiced maker of fine art with a camera, is also an admirer of the B-2 stealth bomber, that airborne manta ray with the spider eyes and the deadly payload.

Mr. Buelteman's extraordinary black-and-white photos of serene and unspoiled open space now adorn the walls of Town Hall, and yet he has an appreciation for this highly sophisticated long-range weapon of war.

"I do see beauty in the stealth bomber," he said when asked for an example of something man-made that might approach the beauty and evolutionary complexity of, say, a leaf of grass. As an expression of the efforts of thousands of people and at a cost of billions of dollars, "the beauty of the design of that (bomber) is truly some-

thing to behold," he said.

The Boeing 747 passenger jet is another such object. "It is a kind of pinnacle of human achievement that is really quite beyond description," he said.

With his cameras, Mr. Buelteman captured beauty of another kind, images that might also be considered quite beyond descrip-

Photographer Robert Buelteman donates his 'Unseen Peninsula' series of photographs to the town.

tion. Over a period of 10 years, he had unfettered access to the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission watershed, 23,000 acres of otherwise inaccessible open space located south of Pacifica and north of Woodside.

The result was "The Unseen

Peninsula," a collection of 11 images now on display at Town Hall. "Reeds and Water" depicts reeds and their reflections on a gray day. The scene could hardly be more evocative or more elusive to description. "Montara Mountain in the Morning Fog" is also spare in its elements: an elevated view of dark forested ridges, with fog shrouding the valleys in between and the landscape beyond.

Simple scenes and yet sublimely beautiful. Perhaps they're so compelling because modern humanity is only a few thousand years removed from our hunting and gathering ancestors, Mr. Buelteman said. "I think it's very fundamental that that which



Robert Buelteman

See **BUELTEMAN**, page 6

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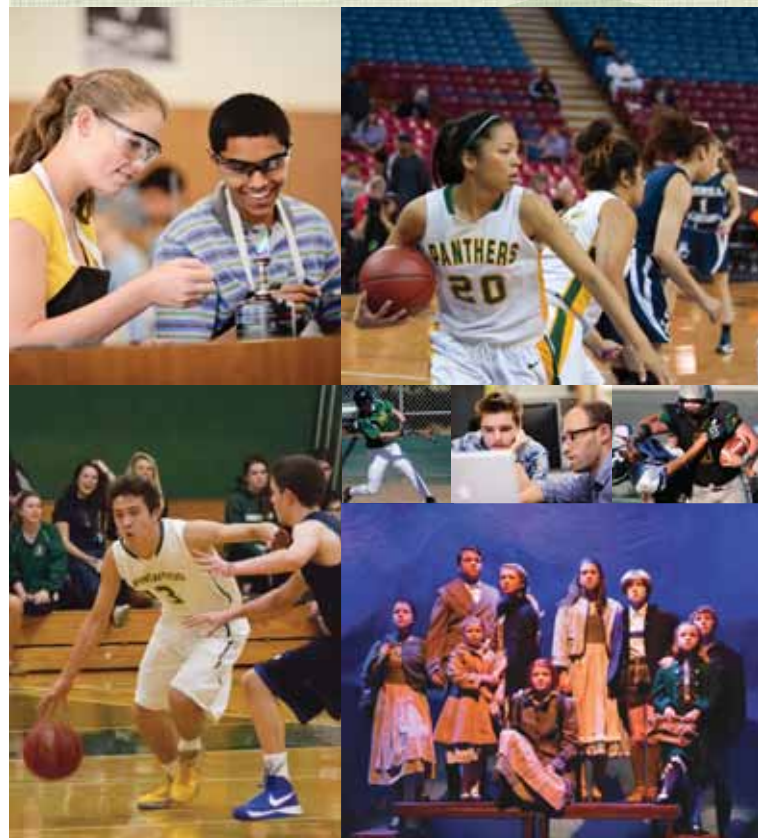
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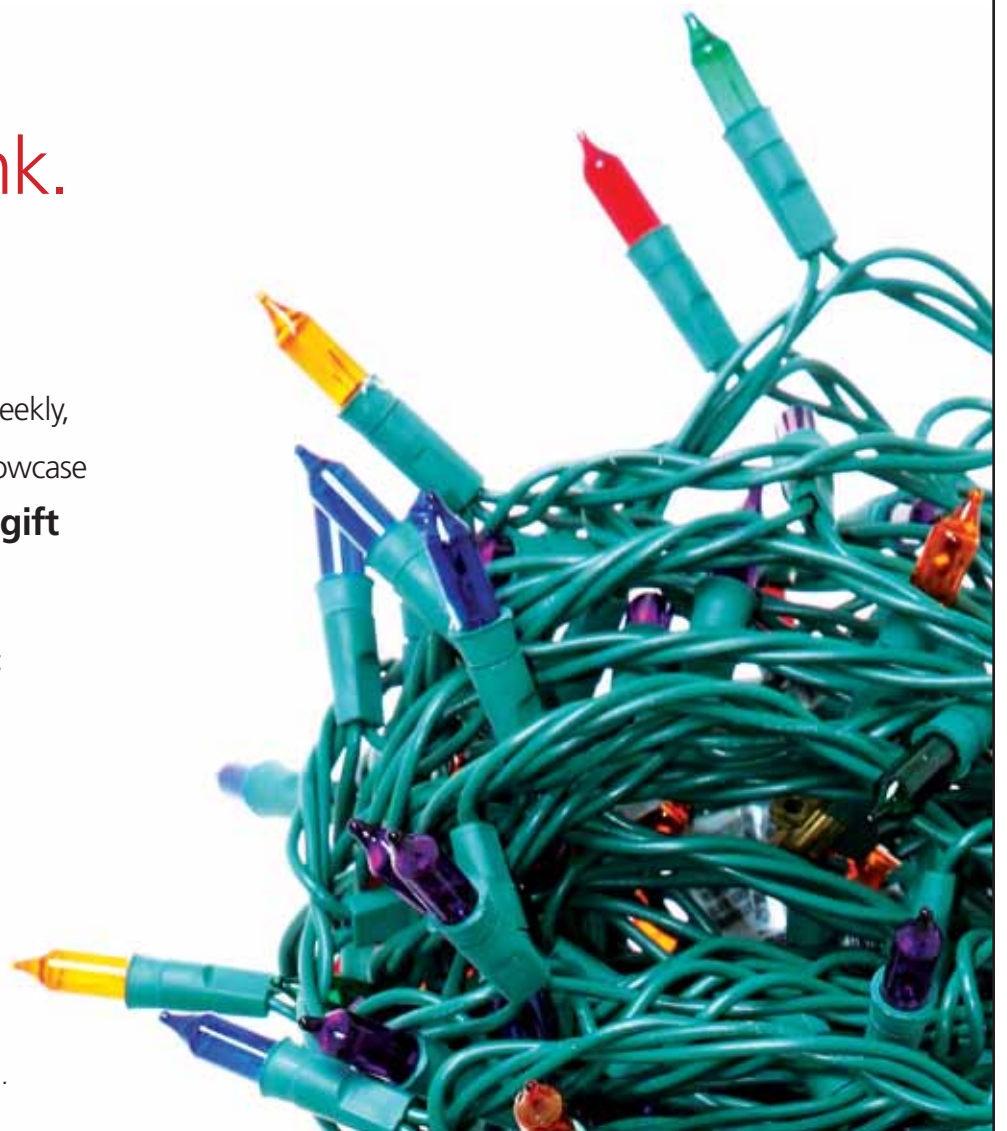
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Local News

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Election results

Go to AlmanacNews.com to see election results. The paper went to press before the results were released.

Sunset's gardens now closed to the public

By Kate Bradshaw

Almanac Staff Writer

Sunset Publishing Corp., which has been at 80 Willow Road in Menlo Park for 63 years, permanently closed its gardens to the public on Friday, Oct. 30.

Sunset will move its operations on Friday, Dec. 4, to two locations, according to Sunset's Racquel Dela Cueva. Editorial and business operations will move to Oakland's Jack London Square. Sunset's test garden beds and kitchen will move to Sonoma and operate there in partnership with Cornerstone Winery.

According to a blog post by Peggy Northrop, editor-in-chief of Sunset Publishing, the move mirrors readers' increasing preference for urban life, just as the magazine's move from San Francisco to Menlo Park in 1951 then mirrored readers' preference for suburban life.

"Now the trend has reversed and Westerners — young people starting careers and empty-nesters alike — are opting to live where we can walk, bike or take public transit to work and experience new restaurants, shopping and culture out our front doors," Ms. Northrop wrote.

She added that the Sunset staff is looking forward to the amenities of urban life, such as convenient public transit, and the burgeoning food scene at Jack London Square.

In addition, she said, "amidst all the shiny new stuff, we love



Michelle Le

A woman takes a tour of Sunset Gardens on Oct. 29.

that the location connects us to our history: Jack London was a regular contributor to Sunset back in the day, and the cabin-style bar that was his regular haunt will be at our doorstep."

Sunset's seven-acre campus

was purchased by Embarcadero Capital Partners in December 2014, after Menlo College had briefly explored the option of buying the land to preserve and use for additional student housing.

Embarcadero Capital Partners

has not yet submitted plans for the site. When the property was sold, Jim Cogan, the city's economic development manager, said the city would need to see some plans to preserve the historical value of the site, and, since it is zoned for commercial

use, it would be very difficult to build a high-density residential development.

The Sunset offices in Menlo Park were designed by Cliff May, the "father of the California ranch-style home," Sunset says. The doors opened in 1952. ■

Local customers continue to exceed water-saving mandates

By Barbara Wood

Almanac Staff Writer

Water customers in Menlo Park, Woodside and Portola Valley exceeded their water saving goals in September, and came close in Atherton. But the California Water Service's Bear Gulch district as a whole is not doing so well — it only reduced water use by 29 percent in September from 2013 levels.

Cal Water's Bear Gulch District director Dawn Smithson said the district is doing better cumulatively, though, and is at a 35.7 reduction from the

same period in 2013. Between June this year and February of next year, the district has been ordered by the state to reduce water use by 36 percent from the same months in 2013.

"We want to thank our customers for their ongoing efforts and encourage them to keep it up as we go into the fall and winter months, when conservation tends to be more difficult, given less outdoor use," Ms. Smithson said.

"We are encouraging our customers to contact us if they need assistance reducing their use," she said. The district has a "robust conservation program

with multiple tools, programs, and rebates available for them, and we can help determine what may meet their needs."

In Woodside, customers cut their water use in September by 43 percent from September 2013, to an average usage of 58 units (a unit is 100 cubic feet or 748 gallons of water). Woodside customers have cut back by a cumulative 43 percent since June, according to district figures.

In Atherton, customers cut their water use in September by 33 percent from September 2013, to an average usage of 54 units. Atherton customers have

cut back water use by a cumulative 39 percent since June, according to district figures.

In Portola Valley, customers cut their water use in September by 44 percent from September 2013, to an average usage of 28 units. Portola Valley customers have cut back water use by a cumulative 44 percent since June, according to district figures.

In Menlo Park, the customers who get their water from Cal Water cut their water use in September by 39 percent from September 2013, to an average usage of 16 units. Menlo Park's Bear Gulch customers have cut

back water use by a cumulative 39 percent since June, according to district figures.

Menlo Park customers of the city's municipal water district did the best of all, cutting their water use by nearly 56 percent in September, according to figures from the city. The State Water Resources Control Board has ordered the district to reduce its water use by 16 percent from 2013 levels.

Ms. Smithson said 22 percent of the Bear Gulch District's customers received surcharges in September because they exceeded their monthly water budget. ■

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Atherton considers strict 'green' building regs

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

Just how "green" should Atherton be?

The Atherton City Council will hold a study session on Wednesday, Nov. 4, to discuss the Environmental Programs Committee's recommendations that the town adopt far-reaching greenhouse gas reduction measures, including requiring new buildings to produce their own energy.

The study session starts at 4 p.m. in the town's council chambers at 94 Ashfield Road.

A climate action plan stating how the town will reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by at least 15 percent from 2005 levels by 2020 is required under a 2007 state law. However, when a draft plan was brought to the City Council a year ago, council members asked for revisions that would go beyond the state's minimal requirements.

The proposal returned by the Environmental Programs Committee says Atherton could reduce its greenhouse gas emission by 30 percent by 2020 and by 50 percent by 2030.

To do so, the town would have to require new residential and commercial buildings, including the civic center now under design, to be "zero net energy," generating their own energy by methods such as solar, wind or geothermal.

The staff report on the proposed climate action plan says

it would cost the town between \$30,000 and \$50,000 to develop a zero net energy program, plus an additional \$100,000 to \$200,000 to either train staff to implement the program or to contract it out.

Other recommendations in the plan include:

- Requiring 10 percent of commercial parking spaces to have electric vehicle chargers and 50 percent to be capable of being retrofitted with chargers. The regulations would apply to the new civic center, private schools and the Circus Club.

- Promoting the recapturing of water with rain barrels, permeable pavers and gray water systems.

- Requiring that yard waste be recycled by landscapers and landscape maintenance businesses, organic waste be recycled by businesses, and food scraps be collected from residences, businesses and schools, with the goal of composting the organics locally.

Also on the agenda is a presentation on Peninsula Clean Energy by Jim Eggemeyer of the San Mateo County Sustainability Office. The county wants San Mateo County cities to join it in the clean energy project, a cooperative effort to purchase renewable energy that would be available to customers at a competitive rate through PG&E's existing power network.

Go to tinyurl.com/A-Climate to see the staff report on the Climate Action Plan. ■

BUELTEMAN

continued from page 3

gave rise to humankind still calls to us," he said.

And the point of capturing it on camera? "What's the point of dancing? What's the point of music?" he replied. "The observation of nature is about being somewhere, not getting somewhere." When you're playing or listening to music, the goal is not to get to the end, he said. "My photography is an expression of being somewhere, not getting somewhere."

Mr. Buelteman, 61 and living with his wife Julie Buelteman in Montara, went to Woodside public schools and worked as a bag boy for five years at Roberts Market, he said. The idea of donating to his hometown a high-end collection of his photos had been a dream, he said, and one seconded by his sisters Anne Buelteman and Jane Ganahl, and by his father, Robert Buelteman, a former captain

for Pan American Airways who now lives at The Sequoias in Portola Valley.

While Mr. Buelteman's photos at Woodside Town Hall don't show humans or their handiwork — an image of Interstate 280 being one exception — humans can embody natural beauty, he said. A mother working two jobs to raise her kids without a father — that mother's integrity, honor and dignity are qualities of beauty, he said. "You scratch anybody deeply enough and you will find their beauty," he said.

Asked if he has favorite poets, Mr. Buelteman said he likes the work of E.E. Cummings and T.S. Eliot, in particular Mr. Eliot's phrase, "At the still point of the turning world," from "Four Quartets." "Except for the point," Mr. Eliot says, "the still point, there would be no dance, and there is only the dance."

"I have found great peace and great refuge by trying to be at that still point in a turning world," Mr. Buelteman said. ■



Image courtesy of BAR Architects/Lane Partners/Menlo Park

A rendering of the proposed office building at 1010 to 1026 Alma St.

Developer proposes new benefits for Alma Street office project

By **Kate Bradshaw**
Almanac Staff Writer

What public benefits should the city of Menlo Park require in exchange for allowing a developer to exceed building size limits?

That question, raised once in a study session last May, was due to be discussed again this week at the Nov. 2 meeting of the Menlo Park Planning Commission.

Under the proposed development plan by Lane Partners, existing buildings at 1010-1026 Alma St. — including those that house Iberia Restaurant, Los Salonez and Cindy Nails Spa II — would be demolished. The developer plans to build a 25,156-square-foot, three-story office building with two levels of underground parking.

According to provisions in

■ INFORMATION

Go to AlmanacNews.com for news updates. The Planning Commission meeting was held after the Almanac went to press.

the El Camino Real/downtown specific plan, developments over a certain size must provide public benefits. In this case, the developer's proposal to exceed the baseline level for the site by 5,750 square feet means it must provide these benefits.

According to Menlo Park Associate Planner Jean Lin, Lane Partners has made several changes in the public benefit bonus proposal.

Initially, Lane Partners proposed building a retail and cafe pavilion with outdoor seating and a one-time payment to the city of \$180,212.

Now, the firm proposes substantially increasing one of the public plazas to 3,201 square feet from 970 square feet to incorporate a heritage oak tree, and slightly decreasing the east public plaza from 870 square feet to 790 square feet.

The developer would expand a coffee pavilion from about 200 square feet to 324 square feet and add a restroom. The firm would keep the pavilion open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. on weekdays, and from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. on weekends.

Two public electric vehicle charging stations and three public bicycle racks along Alma Street are also proposed. In addition, the proposed one-time financial contribution to the city for below-market-rate housing increased to \$185,816 from \$180,212. ▀

Woodside may lift limit on house sizes

By **Dave Boyce**
Almanac Staff Writer

When the Woodside Town Council convenes with three new members in December, the agenda may include proposals on two changes that would have a significant effect on residential construction in town.

The current council met on Oct. 27 and agreed in concept to increase the allowable floor area of main residences, proportional to the size of the lot, and to have the planning director, rather than the entire Architectural and Site Review Board, review certain small projects, such as new structures with floor areas of 1,000

square feet or less. In deference to the new council, the current council — which does not meet at all in November — did not act on these proposals. The town's municipal code prohibits its council meetings after an election until the results have

See **WOODSIDE**, page 8

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



When the Seller is a Foreign Person

Dear Monica: We are buying a home and the seller is a non-resident and not a U.S. Citizen. We have been told that we will be responsible for withholding an amount for the seller's capital gains tax and sending it to the IRS. Why are we the ones responsible to do this? Shouldn't the title company be responsible to do this? Dorothy R.

Dear Dorothy: Unfortunately for you, the IRS requires that the buyers of property where the seller is a non-resident alien be responsible for withholding an amount for capital gains and sending it in a cashier's check to the IRS. The buyer can appoint the title company to make the

payment, which should be equal to 10% of gross proceeds, to the IRS on the buyer's behalf. If the buyer does this, no further payment is required.

The reason for making the buyer responsible for this is because the buyer can be reached more easily should the IRS need to communicate further with the foreign seller who lives outside the U.S. Buyers are usually not happy being responsible for this task, but it is the law in all states and easy to comply with. In certain cities where there are more and more foreign, non-resident property sellers, this situation will be more common. Buyers should be aware of it in case it happens to them.

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



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Education leader Margaret Draper dies

Margaret “Marge” Draper, a 40-year Menlo Park resident and a former member of the Menlo Park City School District Board of Trustees, died on Oct. 10 at the age of 74.

Ms. Draper was born in a Chicago community rich with Polish immigrants and culture, and Polish was her first language. Her family moved to Michigan when she was 8 years old, and set up a household with extended family on a farm. It was there that she developed an enduring interest in and love for gardening, bird-watching and identifying plants, according to her family.

After graduating with a degree in education from Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo, Ms. Draper began a 12-year teaching career.

While still in Michigan, she met and married John Draper in 1966, and continued teaching while her husband pursued his education. They eventually moved to North Carolina, where Mr. Draper worked toward his doctoral degree. The Drapers eventually moved to California, first to Monterey then, in 1975, to Menlo Park.

Their son, John, was born in 1981, and Ms. Draper became a force in her son’s schools, volunteering with the PTA at

the elementary school level, and with the PTA and Site Council at Menlo-Atherton High School.

She also was elected to the Menlo Park City School District board, and served two terms from 1988 to 1996. It was during that period that the board approved creating a single middle school at Hillview, an issue that divided the community, according to her friend and former board colleague Karen Canty.

The Drapers traveled extensively, even after their son was born, including him in trips to Europe, Costa Rica and Mexico, according to the family. During the last 15 years, they traveled to Mexico often, prompting Ms. Draper to study Spanish. Most recently, she was studying Portuguese, her family said.

In addition to her travels and studies, Ms. Draper was a real estate agent working for Seville, Coldwell Banker and Keller Williams — a career that began in 1997, her family said.

Ms. Draper is survived by her husband and son. A celebration of her life is planned for a later date.



Margaret Draper

Portola Valley workshops on energy alternatives

Two informational workshops on an alternative energy program proposed for San Mateo County are set for Thursday, Nov. 5, at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 21, at 10 a.m. at the Historic Schoolhouse at 765 Portola Road in Portola Valley.

The program would provide residents with alternatives to buying electricity from Pacific Gas & Electric Co., allowing them to decide how much of their electric-

ity should come from renewable sources. Mayor Jeff Aalfs and Councilman Craig Hughes are set to lead the workshops.

The program will be offered to participating cities and towns in the county and is meant to enable residents to lower their emissions of greenhouse gases.

For more information, contact Interim Town Manager Debbie Pedro at dpedro@portolavalley.net or (650) 851-1700, ext. 218.

City may boost employee pay by 3%

The Menlo Park City Council may approve at its Nov. 10 meeting a tentative agreement with 148 city workers that includes a 3 percent raise and improved benefits.

The deal with employees represented by the Service Employees International Union Local 521 includes the addition of city-funded vision insurance and a 3 percent increase — plus \$500 a year — in city contributions to a fund that allows employees to use pretax dollars toward the purchase of health insurance.

If ratified by the council, the contract will extend through June 30, 2017.

The contract also includes a three-month time limit for the city and the union to negotiate changes in salary ranges for individual employee job classifications after the release of a study expected in early 2016. If an agreement cannot be reached in three months, all employees will get an across the board 2 percent raise in July 2016.

— Bay City News Service

New barbershop to open in West Menlo Park

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

■ IN BUSINESS

Contrary to what overeager holiday decorators might think, the new red and white striped pole spotted at 2100 Avy Ave. in West Menlo Park is not a premature candy cane, but is, in fact, a permanent fixture signaling Menlo Park’s newest barber shop.

The Menlo Park Barber Shop, which opened Nov. 3, has three veteran barbers from Golden Shears, the 52-year-old barber-shop in downtown Menlo Park. Owner Sam Valero, worked at the Golden Shears for 14 years, Woody Jackson spent seven years there, and Yvonne Soliz worked there for 25 years.

For years, Mr. Valero had dreamed of owning a barber shop. “I wanted to provide the town a place that has a mix of modern and vintage barbering,” he said.

Between five and six weeks ago, he decided the time was right to start his own. After he mentioned the idea to Mike Gardner, one of his longtime customers, Mr. Gardner decided he would step in as a volunteer project manager. As a real estate manager, Mr. Gardner had all the right connections, Mr. Valero said, and soon helped him find the location. They have been working night and day to ready the shop for customers.

The location of the shop at 2100 Avy Ave. near Alameda de las Pulgas, was good, Mr. Valero said, because it was outside the boundaries of what he called the “high cost of doing business” in downtown Menlo Park. This site, he added, would

have free unlimited parking, creating a more relaxed experience for customers. The location is also near Starbucks and across the street from the Dutch Goose, and closer to the “folks on Sand Hill Road” and many of the barbers’ existing customers. The site was formerly the location of Express Cleaners, a dry cleaning business.

The “modern” amenities the

‘This will be a
place where all are
welcome.’

WOODY JACKSON

barber shop will offer include two TVs, mounted on opposite corners of the shop, ideal for watching sports, Mr. Valero said. iPads will also be available for customers, especially kids, to use while their hair is being cut. Barber services will be targeted toward men and children.

However, the barber shop will also retain “old-fashioned” attention to quality over speed, Mr. Valero said, with all the trappings of traditional barber treatment, complete with straight razors, talc and aftershave. Despite the added technology inside, Mr. Valero said, the chairs will be arranged in two rows, designed to facilitate conversation throughout the barber shop.

Mr. Valero and his colleague, Woody Jackson, both grew up in Strathmore, California, a town of approximately 2,800 people in California’s Central

Valley, where they were both the children of field workers and attended the same high school. Each influenced the other to get into the barbering business.

“We went from the valley of fruit to the valley of silicon,” said Mr. Valero.

Their transition from living in a town that relied little on technology to living in one of the “world’s most influential” areas for technology, he said, was an adjustment, even as a barber, but he added that neither he nor Mr. Jackson has forgotten the value of a “small town” neighborhood atmosphere, which they plan to foster within the shop.

“This will be a place where all are welcome, a place where young children will build fond memories, a place that will faithfully serve the community for many years to come,” said Mr. Jackson.

The first scheduled customers of the shop will be Mike Gardner and the barbers’ colleague, Wayne Slocum, who worked at the Golden Shears for more than 40 years.

Bidding goodbye to the Golden Shears to begin work at the Menlo Park Barber Shop is bittersweet but exciting, Mr. Valero said. “It’s hard to leave it for all of us,” he said. “It’s a tough decision, but it’s the right decision at the right time.” ■

Menlo Park Barber Shop at 2100 Avy Ave. will be open Tuesday through Saturday, from mid-morning to late evening. Call (650) 391-9008. Mr. Valero is seeking to add barbers. Call him at (650) 485-2001.

WOODSIDE

continued from page 7

been certified.

Town Hall staff will be redrafting an ordinance meant to streamline ASRB processes, including proposing which small projects the planning director would review. Those reviews would be held during public meetings with advance notice, and the planning director would have the option of referring a project to the ASRB.

Another provision of the new ordinance would shrink the ASRB to five members from the current seven, a

change intended to speed up project reviews.

The council also agreed in concept to allow an increase in the floor area of a main residence of up to 10 percent beyond the maximum size now allowed. The change would include houses granted exceptions to size and/or height limits by the Planning Commission. The total floor area for a given parcel would not increase.

This proposal came about after residents of Woodside Heights made a case for larger homes to accommodate changing times, with more people working at home and

the Bay Area cost of living pushing families into providing space for relatives. The change is not likely to take effect until the spring, officials said.

With one vacancy on the ASRB, the council also interviewed three applicants to fill that seat — residents Bengt Henriksen, Scott Larson and Greg Raleigh. Mayor Tom Shanahan asked council members to rank their choices, then vote on the leading candidate.

With Dave Burow and Dave Tanner dissenting, the council chose Mr. Larson on a 5-2 vote. ■

New bike routes for Menlo Park proposed by city commissions

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

The Menlo Park Environmental Quality Commission during its meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 28, discussed several topics near and dear to Menlo Park's "green" interests: new bike lanes, renewable energy, and the city's trees.

Bike routes

Jonathan Weiner and Bill Kirsch of the Bicycle Commission presented a plan to create bike routes from Menlo-Atherton High School and through downtown Menlo Park. They said they will urge the Menlo Park City Council to conduct a one-year pilot study of the bike route.

The proposed route would create bike lanes on both sides of several streets, narrowing driving lanes from 12 feet to 10 feet in some areas to create space.

Heading from east to west, a bike route would start at Menlo-Atherton High School, with 7-foot buffered lanes, and continue along Oak Grove Avenue, past El Camino Real to Crane Street, where the lane would narrow to 5 feet.

Riders would take Crane Street to Santa Cruz Avenue, where they would have to deal with a 530-foot stretch where the bike lane would disappear in favor of "sharrows," lanes marked by white bicycle signs painted on the road that tell drivers that they are sharing the road with bicyclists.

From there, bicyclists would have access to the existing bike lanes to continue down Santa Cruz Avenue.

Heading from south to north, another bike route is proposed to stretch from Middle Avenue to Valparaiso Avenue, beginning on University Drive, then jogging east along Live Oak Avenue to Crane Street.

By creating these perpendicular routes, bikers would have a safe way to get through downtown Menlo Park, said Mr. Weiner.

According to Mr. Kirsch, the pilot would be fairly low-cost, as it would require some street painting and "wayfinding" signals to be placed along those streets, plus a stop sign at Crane Street and Menlo Avenue.

The commissioners said the aspect of the proposal they expect to be the hardest sell to residents and businesses is the street parking that would have to be removed to create those bike lanes.

In total, the proposal would require an estimated 112 parking spots to go: 55 unrestricted spaces, 40 soon-to-be three-hour parking



Image courtesy of Jonathan Weiner, Menlo Park Bicycle Commission

This map shows proposed bike routes from Menlo-Atherton High School and through downtown Menlo Park.

spots, and 17 soon-to-be 90-minute parking spots. (The City Council recently decided to run a trial, starting in January, to extend free parking in two-hour parking plaza spots to three hours, and to extend one-hour street parking limits to 90 minutes.)

Mr. Weiner said that although 112 spots may sound like a lot of parking to eliminate, there are actually nearly 1,600 parking spots available throughout downtown Menlo Park. Environmental Quality Commissioner Andrew Barnes added that if an above-ground parking structure were to be built, it would further consolidate downtown parking and clear the street for bike lanes to be developed.

One metric for the program's success could be to see how full a new bike parking area planned at Menlo-Atherton High School would become by the end of the proposed one-year trial. To respond to the high school's increased enrollment, between 130 and 160 new permanent bike parking spots will be created to replace temporary parking facilities, using funding from school resources and parent donations, said Mr. Weiner.

The commission voted on two motions: to draft a letter of support for the Bicycle Commission's plan, which was approved by all members except Andrew Barnes; and to state support for the plan, which was unanimously approved.

Clean energy

The Environmental Quality Commission voted to recommend that Menlo Park participate in the formation of San Mateo County's proposed Peninsula Clean Energy program, which would combine

the forces of the county and participating cities to buy renewable energy at competitive prices?

The proposed joint powers authority would purchase renewable energy on behalf of participating cities and unincorporated areas in the county and deliver it to households through the existing Pacific Gas & Electric power grid.

Households would be automatically enrolled in the program, which would distribute a baseline percentage of energy from renewable sources. However, people will be able to opt out and keep their existing PG&E electricity service. The program has been well-received in Marin and Sonoma counties.

Arborist's update

The Environmental Quality Commission received an update from Menlo Park arborist Christian Bonner. Between October 2014 and October 2015, Mr. Bonner reported, 156 trees were planted and 130 trees were removed on city-owned land, leaving the total number of public trees in Menlo Park at 20,086.

Also, 518 heritage trees were approved for removal, up nearly 70 percent from the previous year's 305 trees. Forty-two heritage trees were denied removal requests, compared with eight the previous year.

He said that between drought stress and an increase in proposals to remove trees for development purposes, more trees were removed this past year than city officials would have liked.

"We're still planting more trees than we're removing," Mr. Bonner said, but "we're barely keeping up." ▀

Jose Diaz

March 20, 1926 – October 28, 2015

Jose Diaz, a resident of Menlo Park since 1957, died October 28, 2015, after a brief battle with mesothelioma. He was 89.

Born in Almedral de la Cañada, Spain, on March 20, 1926, he came to Menlo Park in 1957 after marrying his childhood sweetheart, Pauline Diaz, who had come to California in 1948 with her family. They were married for 55 years until her death in 2011. They raised two children on Valparaiso Ave, Irene Diaz Oncley of Long Beach, and Peter Diaz of Redwood City.



Jose worked for 35 years as estate gardener for the Heller family of Atherton. Upon retiring in 1992 he traveled to Spain several times, including 2006 when he and Pauline celebrated their 50th anniversary by renewing vows in the same church where they married, officiated by Monsignor John Rodriguez of St. Denis in Menlo Park. Jose was a loyal member of St. Denis Church, and a 49er fan. He loved to grow his vegetables and roses, and would often be seen taking his daily walk along Altschul and Alameda.

A funeral mass will be held at 10 am, Saturday, November 14th at St. Denis Church, 2250 Avy Ave, Menlo Park with interment at Holy Cross Cemetery. Flowers may be sent to Sneider-Sullivan-O'Connell Funeral Home in San Mateo on the 13th, or donations to Pathways Hospice Foundation, 585 N. Mary Ave., Sunnyvale, CA 94085, 408-730-1200, www.pathwayshealth.org

PAID OBITUARY

Anna M. Gubatayao

November 18, 1927 – October 25, 2015

Anna passed away Sunday, Oct. 25 at Grant Cuesta Skilled Nursing in Mountain View. She was born in San Francisco to the late Ignacio Rodriguez & Concha Salazar and was a resident of Menlo Park for over 80 years. Anna attended Fremont & Central grammar school and graduated from Sequoia High. Anna received her AA degree from San Mateo College. She worked for various companies on the Peninsula and retired from Hewlett Packard in 1993.



She was preceded in death by her husband, Thomas Gubatayao, Grandparents Antonio & Virginia Rodriguez, brothers, Joe & George Rodriguez and sister, Aida Morrissey. Anna is survived by her brothers, Xavier (Gerry) Rodriguez, Robert (Martha) Rodriguez, brother-in-law, Thomas Morrissey, nieces; Tammy Morrissey & Patti Morrissey, nephews; Chris Rodriguez, Greg (Kelly) Rodriguez, Tony (Kristen) Rodriguez and several grand & great nieces and nephews. She is also survived by Roseanne Turner and Tom Gubatayao of Alaska.

Anna was highly skilled in composing literature in English & Spanish and loved gardening. She was a lifelong member of the Church of the Nativity and St. Raymond's Catholic Church in Menlo Park.

Family and Friends are invited to Rosary and Mass of Christian Burial on Nov. 5, 2015 at 10:00 am at St. Raymond's. Visitation will begin at 9:30 am. Burial will follow at Holy Cross Cemetery in Menlo Park.

PAID OBITUARY



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home is also near Sand Hill Road, Woodside's Horse Park, and top

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More phone failures at local schools

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

With a hoped-for wet winter ahead, officials at the Menlo Park City School District say they are urging AT&T to do something to assure their phone system doesn't continue to fail, as it has twice in a little more than two weeks.

Ahmad Sheikholeslami, the district's chief business and operations officer, said the phones were out for two days last week, Oct. 28 and 29. This time, because a piece of equipment that is part of the district's internal Internet network failed at the same time, the Internet was out as well, he said.

The district has a back-up phone emergency phone system for such incidents, set up after the phone system failed about a year ago, in November 2014.

"The majority of issues we've been having since last year ... have had to do with our AT&T connection that's coming into the school district," Mr. Sheikholeslami said. The line runs along Middlefield Road and then into the dis-

trict offices on Encinal Avenue. "They've had issues like squirrels eating the line and water coming in," he said.

"We've gotten to the point of frustration with AT&T," he said. "This is really not acceptable for us to have so many problems with their lines."

Part of the frustration comes from the fact that teachers and administrators rely more and more on technology, he said, including accessing and storing information on "the cloud" (off-site computers). When something like this happens, "we're down and it affects us immensely," he said. "We're more and more relying on the cloud."

Mr. Sheikholeslami said the district is looking at backups for its phone and Internet systems, especially because cell phones don't get good reception in the district offices.

The district said these emergency numbers, all in 650 area code, should work during a phone outage: Encinal School, 327-0854; Laurel School, 323-0374; Oak Knoll School, 854-0179; and Hillview Middle School, 325-3861. ■

Woodside candidate identifies funders of campaign mailer, signs, banner

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

Chris Shaw, a write-in candidate for the Woodside Town Council, has formed a campaign committee and filed campaign finance reports identifying who funded a mass mailing, yard signs and a banner in support of his candidacy.

The finance report lists the following entries as non-monetary contributions for the period Oct. 16 to 26:

■ Dave Burow, a Woodside resident and Town Council member, contributed services with a fair market value of \$960 for the mass mailing.

■ Annie Kaskade, a Woodside resident and member of the Sustainability and Conservation Committee, contributed services with a fair market value of \$800 for yard signs.

■ Susan Doherty, a Woodside resident and member of the Public Safety Committee, contributed services with a fair market value of \$200 for a banner.

Mr. Burow, Ms. Kaskade and Ms. Doherty have not responded

INFORMATION

Go to AlmanacNews.com for updates on the election. The results were announced after the Almanac's press deadline.

to requests for comment.

The mailer, signs and banner did not identify who paid for them.

Mr. Shaw said he was relying on word of mouth to get write-in votes in his challenge to Nancy Reyerer, the only candidate listed on the ballot for the District 3 seat on the council.

The mailing, signs and banner were the work of others, he said. However, he said, he decided to form a campaign committee and identify those who funded the materials after he contacted the California Fair Political Practices Commission on Oct. 26 and 27 for guidance.

Mr. Shaw said he made the decision after he reconsidered the contents of a series of emails that included an exchange in which he "could be construed, very very thinly, as exerting

control over people's actions."

The commission makes distinctions between campaign spending under the control of a candidate and independent spending by others not under the candidate's control. The commission also regulates the content of the election materials, including requirements to note sources of funding on items such as yard signs, banners and direct mail.

Mr. Shaw's campaign committee, "Write In Chris Shaw District 3 2015," has two members: himself and treasurer Sheri Brooks, a resident of the Woodside Glens neighborhood.

The report shows no monetary contributions to the committee for the reporting period.

Both Mr. Shaw and Ms. Reyerer initially filed reports with the town clerk on their assets and economic interests, their declarations as candidates for the council, and information on campaign committees.

Both candidates left blank the sections on committee formation, but Mr. Shaw amended his report after forming his committee. ■



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Photo by Kate Daly

Woodside volunteers plant native seeds on Village Hill in honor of the late Nancy Gonzalez.

Flowers are memorial for Nancy Gonzalez

By **Kate Daly**
Special to the Almanac

The spirit of longtime local resident Nancy Gonzalez lives on in a beautification project on Woodside Road, a swath of Village Hill that volunteers sowed with native flowers and grass seed on Halloween.

With enough rain, the flowers should bloom in the spring, a year after Ms. Gonzalez died at age 84. She was active in conservation efforts and clean-up day drives in Woodside.

Her family had asked that memorial donations be sent to the group she founded, the Woodside Landscape Committee. The committee took the \$3,600 that was donated and sought an expert in local

ecological restoration, Craig Dremann, to map out a test plot next to the bronze horse sculptures on the town-owned open space along Woodside Road, between Whiskey Hill and Canada roads.

The first step was to test the soil, which he describes as “nutrient poor due to grazing for hundreds of years.”

The next step was to mow and create mounds out of the dried up wheat grass straw “because it has natural herbicides, and when it rains it will make a tea” that he says will prevent weed growth.

Last, he concocted a mix of fertilizer (super soil, bone meal, blood meal and ironite) with purple needle grass seeds and six native flower seeds (California poppy, Coast California poppy, tidy tips, lotus, gumplant, and ruby chalice clarkia).

Peggie MacLeod, Nita Sierke, Anne Kasten, Patsy Kahl, Sarah Swinerton, Marsha Bon-Durant, and Tina and Walt Dreyer then went to work planting the seeds in rows over a 1,200-square-foot area.

Mr. Dremann has offered to help them create their own plots at home, so the restoration movement may spread to other locations soon.

Go to woodsidegiving.org (the Woodside Community Foundation website) for more information and to contribute to the project. ■

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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

Residential burglaries:

■ Someone broke through a glass door into a rear bedroom of a house on Portola Road, damaged the window of another rear door and rummaged through cabinets, jewelry boxes and closets. No estimate on losses. Oct. 23.

■ A man hired to clean a house on Raymundo Drive reported that he found the home with a broken rear window and the interior ransacked. The residents said that nothing was missing. Oct. 23.

■ Someone rummaged through the master bedroom and bathroom of a house on Lindenbrook Road that had been left with a door open and unlocked. No reported losses. Oct. 19.

Traffic accidents:

■ A person in a vehicle backing out of a parking space in front of the Woodside Bakery "hit the gas pedal" instead of the brake, drove back into the parking space just exited, and struck a planter box and a pedestrian on the left foot. The pedestrian refused medical attention. Oct. 4.

■ A cyclist fell and injured his shoulder after rear-ending a vehicle parked on the shoulder of Whiskey Hill Road. Medics took the cyclist to the hospital. Oct. 18.

■ A woman sideswiped a tree while driving on Jefferson Avenue and reaching for something inside her vehicle, taking her eyes off the road. Oct. 15.

Vandalism: Someone removed covers from water meters and may have pushed sand bags down a creek bank, possibly breaking a valve handle. Oct. 5.

Fraud:

■ Someone claiming to be a "Mexican official" called a resident of Summer Hill Lane wanting to know how much she would pay to ransom her son. The resident said she could hear a child crying in the background, and that when she said she didn't know anyone in Mexico, "heard a gunshot" and the line went dead. Her son was in school and fine, she said. Oct. 7.

■ A Rocky Way resident discovered a bank account depleted of \$15,000 through the illegal use of an ATM card number. Oct. 26.

MENLO PARK

Residential burglaries:

■ A thief pried open a back door to a home on Robin Way and stole a laptop computer, an Apple iPad and jewelry,

including earrings, watches, rings and necklaces. Estimated loss: \$24,150. Oct. 22.

■ Someone stole a locked bicycle from a carport at an apartment complex on Mills Street. Estimated loss: \$400. Oct. 24.

■ A resident of Sharon Park Drive found the latch broken on a storage locker in an underground carport, but nothing missing from the locker. Oct. 23.

Commercial burglary: A 3-D printer was stolen from ForSight Vision on Jefferson Drive. Estimated loss: \$5,000. Oct. 26.

Robbery: In connection with a robbery of the Walgreens pharmacy on Santa Cruz Avenue, Menlo Park police arrested Justin Courtland Parfet, 25, of Arcata, on suspicion of robbery and being under the influence of a controlled substance, and Andre Morales, 23, of Redwood City on suspicion of being under the influence. Mr. Parfet allegedly stole four electronic razors and a tooth-care set from the store and "used physical force" to leave with the stolen merchandise. The pair were observed by witnesses and later stopped by police, arrested and booked into jail. Oct. 31.

Thefts:

■ A customer of Ducky's Car Wash at 1436 El Camino Real told police that someone stole her pearl necklace while her vehicle was being detailed. An investigation is in progress. No estimate on losses. Oct. 29.

■ Someone stole \$495 in cash from a safe at Le Boulanger bakery on Santa Cruz Avenue. An investigation is underway. Oct. 30.

■ A resident of Pierce Road told police that a package containing two wallets was stolen from the house's porch. Estimated loss: \$162. Oct. 26.

Arson: Someone set fire to Halloween decorations on the front lawn of a home on San Mateo Drive. Estimated loss: \$4. Oct. 30.

Fraud:

■ A resident of the 2100 block of Santa Cruz Avenue transferred \$5,000 to a bank account as a security deposit and first month's rent for a house she saw advertised on Craigslist.com, but later found the house not to be for rent. An investigation is underway. Oct. 30.

■ A man tried to cash a check for \$1,475 at Bank of America on Santa Cruz Avenue, but fled out the back door as a teller was checking on the validity of the check. No losses. Oct. 29.

Stolen vehicles:

■ A green 1996 Jeep Cherokee from the 1100 block of Willow Road. Oct. 27.

■ A black 2010 Mercury Milan from the 700 block of El Camino Real. Oct. 19.



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■ BIRTHS

Emerald Hills

■ Christine and Nicholas Schneider, a son, Sept. 22, Sequoia Hospital.

Menlo Park

■ Diane and Charles Schwalbach, a daughter, Sept. 26, Sequoia Hospital.

■ Zhanna Sardaryan and Brian Gilmer, a daughter, Sequoia Hospital.

Woodside

■ Carly and Ismael Rivera, a daughter, Oct. 2, Sequoia Hospital.

Woodside entrepreneurs create talking toy for kids

By Kate Daly
Special to the Almanac

So you grow up in the land of startups and major in mechanical engineering in college. You're in your 20s and tired of working for someone else. What do two childhood friends do next? Move back in with your parents in Woodside to save money and launch your own startup.

That's a stripped-down version of Jack Miller and Brenden McMorrow's story as they nervously watch to see if their Kickstarter campaign will bring in enough pledges to fund Jabber, the talking toy they describe as "the first smart toy designed to be tossed, kicked, smashed and hit" as you play games with it.

They have until Nov. 7 to reach their fundraising goal of \$45,000 and at press time still had a way to go. Their plan is to raise enough money to start the manufacturing process and ship product to Kickstarter supporters by spring, and then sell the toy to the public for \$39.95 in the 2016 holiday season.

Both entrepreneurs graduated from UC Santa Barbara. Mr. Miller, 28, worked in green tech for four years before earning his master's in engineering at UC Berkeley. Mr. McMorrow, 24, did product design work for a company in Palo Alto before forming SKWRL Design (Stuff

Kids Will Really Love) with Mr. Miller.

Being engineers, they began with several ideas, "prototyping them, and then deciding they were pretty terrible," Mr. Miller says with a laugh.

In May they decided to develop a hybrid, combining the interactive playfulness of Furby with the competitive games of Bop It.

Their biggest challenge was learning how to code. They largely taught themselves by watching Youtube videos.

They came up with more than 50 games and landed on the simpler ones aimed at ages 5 and up: egg toss, sky ball, dance party, noise grenade, freeze tag and crazy tag.

On the design side they came up with a small soccer ball-sized foam shape with feet. "We went through all the Disney and Pixar movies to get a popular face structure," Mr. Miller says.

The end result is panda-like with features "heavily borrowed from Titan," his family's malamute, Mr. McMorrow adds.

They then 3D modeled the toy and shared it with their friends, families and a test group of kids to get feedback.

The toy is embedded with a microprocessor that detects movement and emits programmed sounds through a speaker. They hired someone to become the voice of Jab-



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Brenden McMorrow, left, and Jack Miller work in the McMorrow family's garage in Woodside on Oct. 28.

ber and then their childhood friend, Garrett Georgakas, added to the mix on his synthesizer.

The men enlisted Mr. McMorrow's brother, Ryan, to help with manufacturing in China, where he lives. Mr. Miller's brother, Ted, is the photographer for their Kickstarter page and website, Jabbersworld.com.

A lot of the hands-on creation has taken place in the McMorrow's garage. Otherwise the men use Mr. McMorrow's dad's

rent-free office space on Woodside Road. There their walls are covered with Jabber drawings and about 50 Post-its of new product ideas.

Right now they are talking to three people about possibly licensing Jabber, and if something comes through, it could free them to do what they really want to do — create more of their own products.

Meanwhile, the entrepreneurs are doing some product design consulting on the side to

make ends meet.

Kickstarter campaigns last a month. According to the company, close to half of them reach their goal. Kickstarter takes 5 percent if the fundraising is successful, and nothing if it's not. There's an option to sign up for additional rounds.

Mr. Miller and Mr. McMorrow hope they can get by with just one round and have Jabber ready to showcase to buyers at the New York Toy Fair in February. ▣

Mayor paints vibrant future for city

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

■ MENLO PARK

Who would want to live anywhere else?" asked Menlo Park Mayor Catherine Carlton during the mayor's annual "State of the City" talk Oct. 29.

The rhetorical question fell on the ears of those gathered in a full ballroom at the Rosewood Sand Hill Hotel in Menlo Park, where guests ate complementary hors d'oeuvres (flatbread topped with ricotta cheese and apple, fried bites of macaroni and cheese, etc.) and bellied-up to an open bar offering wine and beer.

The event, which was open to the public, cost the city at least \$4,500, though the final bill has not been received, according to Clay Curtin, the city's interim finance director.

Mayor Carlton's talk, titled "Investing in Menlo Park," mentioned a wide range of initiatives and updates from the past year.

Two new developments in Menlo Park's downtown area promise sustainability, she said. A mixed-use project at 1295 El Camino Real will be LEED Silver certified and a development across the street, at 1300 El Camino Real, proposed by Greenheart Land Co., is planned to be LEED Platinum certified.

New hotels will give a boost to city revenue, she said. The planned Menlo Gateway hotel will generate about \$3 million a year in hotel tax revenue, developer David Bohannon estimates.

Movie nights hosted in Sep-

tember on the city's pop-up "paseo" or mini park on Chestnut Street attracted people downtown, many of whom made purchases from merchants there, Ms. Carlton said.

Menlo Park is expanding its reach globally, she noted. The city has approved cultural

Mayor Carlton's talk cited a wide range of initiatives and updates from the past year.

exchanges with Xinbei, China, Kochi, India and Bizen, Japan. Mayor Carlton traveled to China over the summer as part of a cultural exchange program for mayors.

Representatives from Bizen, Japan, including that city's mayor, traveled to Menlo Park to visit and tour City Hall.

Next year, Bizen will host 10 kids from Menlo Park, and the exchange is expected to continue on a biennial basis, Ms. Carlton said.

In 2014, the number of crimes committed in Belle Haven dropped 42 percent from 2013, and 12 percent city-wide, according to a city report.

Four city parks are undergoing a pesticide-free pilot study, and a class of pesticide called neonicotinoids plus some rat traps were banned across all parks.

A total of \$6 million is budgeted this year for infrastructure and streetscape improvements, including plans to create safe bike and pedestrian routes to the schools.

As part of local efforts to combat bullying, the city will screen the documentary, "Bully," on Dec. 2 at Hillview Middle School. The director, Lee Hirsch, will participate in a discussion and question-

and-answer session.

Mayor Carlton said she will lead a campaign to get Menlo Park kindergarteners from the Ravenswood Elementary School District enrolled in college savings accounts. According to research, she said, kids who have a college savings in kindergarten are seven times more likely to graduate from high school, and the amount of money in the fund had little effect on that outcome. Leveraging funds from Facebook and developers within the city, the first \$50 invested in these accounts would be matched.

After spending the past year focused on water conservation, the city is now urging people to prepare for heavy rainfall in the coming months. The city will have free sandbags available for residents and is readying an emergency response team with representatives from community organizations, businesses, churches and nonprofits. ▣

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'Clean energy' initiative is the right choice for local towns

County Supervisor Dave Pine calls it “the biggest single step to reduce (cities’) greenhouse gases for decades to come.” And a Menlo Park environmental group asserts that signing on with the plan “is the single most significant step our city can take to reduce its carbon footprint.” They’re referring to an initiative, preliminarily approved by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors last month, creating a joint powers authority (JPA) that would enable residents of participating cities to get their energy from renewable sources such as solar, wind and bio-energy at what is likely to be a lower cost.

Called Peninsula Clean Energy, the JPA would create a Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) system to bypass Pacific Gas & Electric, which has failed to meet the growing and increasingly urgent demand to provide energy from renewable sources; the new CCA system would use the PG&E grid to deliver “clean energy” to customers.

Cities across the county are being asked to sign on with Peninsula Clean Energy, and have until the end of next February to do so. The Atherton City Council will discuss the initiative at a Nov. 4 study session, and the item is on the Menlo Park City Council’s study session agenda for Nov. 10. Portola Valley will discuss it on Nov. 21. Cities that join the clean-energy initiative will play a role in determining the JPA’s path forward — for example, deciding on the mix of energy sources and the percentage of renewable power available to participants.

Leaders of the new environmental organization Menlo Spark are in full support of joining Peninsula Clean Energy, saying in a prepared statement that the initiative “gives Menlo Park the opportunity to get clean, renewable power at no additional cost, while allowing anyone who wants to remain with PG&E to eas-

ily do that.” The group, founded earlier this year, aims to help Menlo Park become “climate neutral” by 2025, and executive director Diane Bailey says joining the JPA would put the city “on a sustainable, low-carbon path.”

The county and participating cities will not have to re-invent the wheel in launching this initiative. The first community-choice aggregation system in the state was put in place in Marin County in 2010, with powerful resistance from PG&E. Known as Marin

Clean Energy, that program has resulted in some 125,000 customers being supplied with electricity from renewable sources, according to the program’s website. And, for customers who choose a plan that guarantees that half of their

electricity is from clean sources, the price tag is about 18 percent cheaper than if the energy had come from PG&E. More expensive plans provide electricity entirely from clean sources.

Since Marin County launched its CCA five years ago, similar programs have been put in place in Sonoma County and in at least one Southern California community. And about 20 additional counties and numerous cities in the state, including San Francisco and Santa Clara County, are vigorously exploring creating their own programs.

Cities in San Mateo County have an opportunity to join a growing force for change in how energy is produced and consumed in the state. By joining the county clean-energy initiative, they would help move not only their own communities but the entire state toward creating an energy-supply model that supports a healthier environment and keeps the pressure on PG&E to develop its own renewable energy options that would be available to customers where CCAs might not be feasible. Cities should embrace this opportunity. ■

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

Let’s build an effective east-west bike corridor

By Dana Hendrickson

A resident and an avid cyclist, I support making significant improvements to Menlo Park’s existing bike network. I also believe more residents need to provide their input well before our city approves them because — whether they drive, walk or bike — all residents will feel impacts from any big changes, not just bike enthusiasts like me. Now is an important time for residents to express their needs, concerns and preferences. Let me explain why.

The Menlo Park Bicycle Commission has recently proposed the idea of adding bike lanes on Oak Grove Avenue. While I strongly favor a better east-west bike connection, an Oak Grove solution is suboptimal.

Ravenswood and Menlo avenues are more convenient locations for an east-west bike corridor, as these streets are centrally

located and close to popular destinations such as downtown, the Civic Center, various facilities at Burgess Park, the train station, and neighborhood schools.

Oak Grove Avenue, on the other hand, introduces unnecessary and inconvenient detours.

So why not make Menlo-Ravenswood a safe and comfortable bike corridor for most bicyclists? I realize many residents believe this is an impossible task. However, I have submitted a design proposal that illustrates how a combination of state-of-the-art bike facilities on Menlo and Ravenswood avenues and El Camino would offer bike riders an attractive, safe, convenient and comfortable way to travel between the east and west sides of our city. I encourage the City Council to hire a bike network consultant to thoroughly evaluate this option before it approves any major new bike network investments, and hope residents will

broadly express their opinions. We need community input and expert advice to improve our decisions before it’s too late.

My proposed solution combines protected two-way bike lanes on the south side of Menlo Avenue

between Crane Street and El Camino Real and on Ravenswood between El Camino and Alma Street, a well-marked bike crossing on El Camino, and a separate bike path across the beautiful Civic Center property between Alma and Laurel streets. The path connects to the existing buffered bike lanes on Ravenswood between Laurel and Middlefield. All these bike facilities appear feasible with only small changes to short sections of sidewalks and vehicle lanes.



GUEST OPINION

Dana Hendrickson is a 30-year resident; he and his wife Lisa have raised their family in Menlo Park. He is an avid cyclist, active community volunteer, founder of the disabled veteran support nonprofit Rebuild Hope and the editor of Re-Imagine Menlo Park.

A copy of the proposal can be downloaded at bit.ly/mpbikecorridor on the Re-Imagine Menlo Park website. Please read it, carefully consider its merits and share your views with other residents and our City Council.

This east-west bike corridor design offers Menlo Park residents many important benefits.

■ Ravenswood and Menlo avenues are already the most popular streets for bicyclists crossing

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El Camino. New bike facilities would not only provide current users a much safer and less stressful environment, they would also attract many more bicyclists, especially middle school and high school youth who now either use inconvenient bike detours or travel to school and local activities in vehicles rather than on bikes.

■ Motorists would no longer need to stressfully share vehicle lanes with bicyclists on busy Menlo and Ravenswood avenues and University Drive.

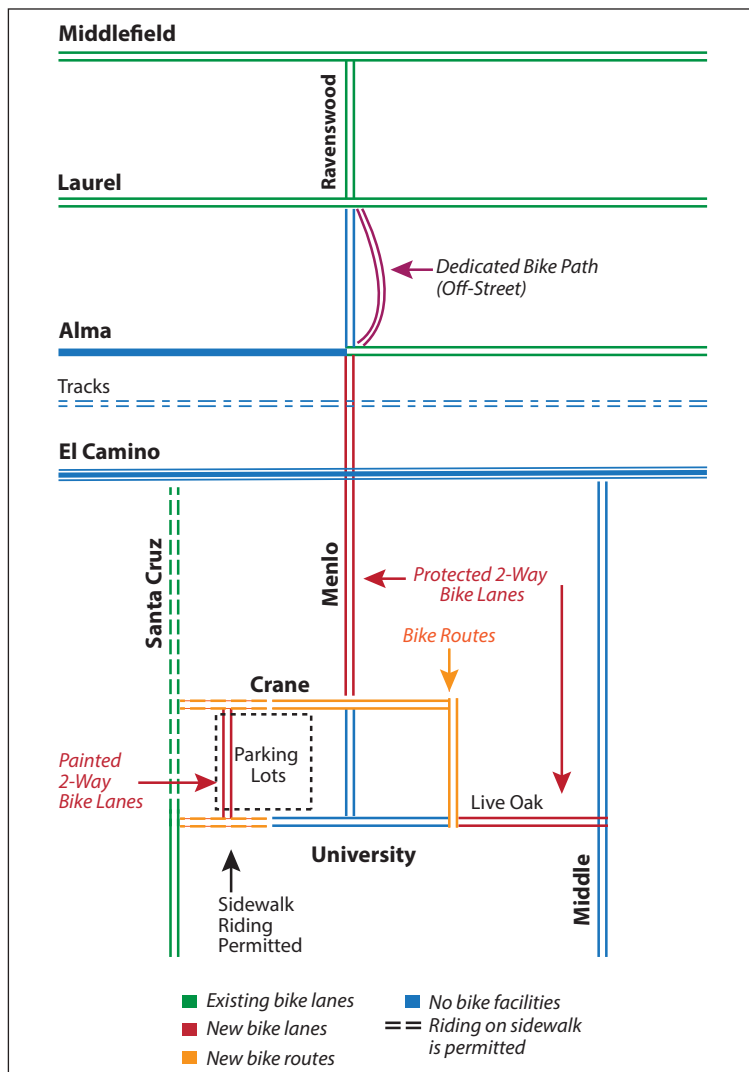
■ A bike path at the Civic Center would provide a peaceful and attractive way to avoid a busy section of Ravenswood.

■ The use of protected two-way bike lanes would minimize the number of lost street parking places on Menlo Avenue and University Drive, and simplify the crossing of El Camino Real, especially on the east side where three vehicle turn lanes exist.

■ The addition of protected two-way bike lanes on one side of University and short bike routes on Crane and Live Oak enable bicyclists to easily travel on continuous bike facilities from either Middle Avenue or Santa Cruz Avenue to destinations on the east side of El Camino.

■ The Santa Cruz and Middle approaches to Menlo Avenue bypass both the busy Menlo/University intersection and the dangerous section of University between Santa Cruz and Menlo avenues.

■ Finally, these improvements would send a strong signal that Menlo Park is committed to becoming a bike-friendly community and Caltrans would likely have only a small impact on



Dana Hendrickson's proposal for bike network changes.

the city's implementation plans, budget and schedules.

Also, it is *not* too late for residents to influence the field trial study of bike lanes on El Camino. Before conducting one the city needs to enlist bike network design expertise so residents better understand the benefits, costs and impacts, and the city needs to establish clear success criteria.

I am currently conducting an online survey at bit.ly/mpbikennetwork about both El Camino bike lanes and east-west bike connectivity and encourage you to participate and share your needs, concerns and preferences with our City Council, planning staff and volunteer commissions. It's time your voices and interests are heard.



Menlo Park Historical Association

Looking back

Leland and Jane Stanford made many contributions to the Peninsula, the university being the most well-known. But Jane Stanford was also engaged in efforts to establish kindergarten programs in the United States, according to the Menlo Park history book "Beyond the Gate" by Michael Svanevik and Shirley Burgett. Her efforts contributed to the 1885 creation of a Stanford-supported kindergarten in Menlo Park, the historians write. This photograph from the book shows kindergartners in front of the "small, well-equipped house with a grassy lawn on which the children played," they write. It was known as the Free Kindergarten; the exact location of the school is not included in the book.

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