



**Thanksgiving
libations** | Page 21

The Almanac

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

NOVEMBER 18, 2015 | VOL. 51 NO. 11

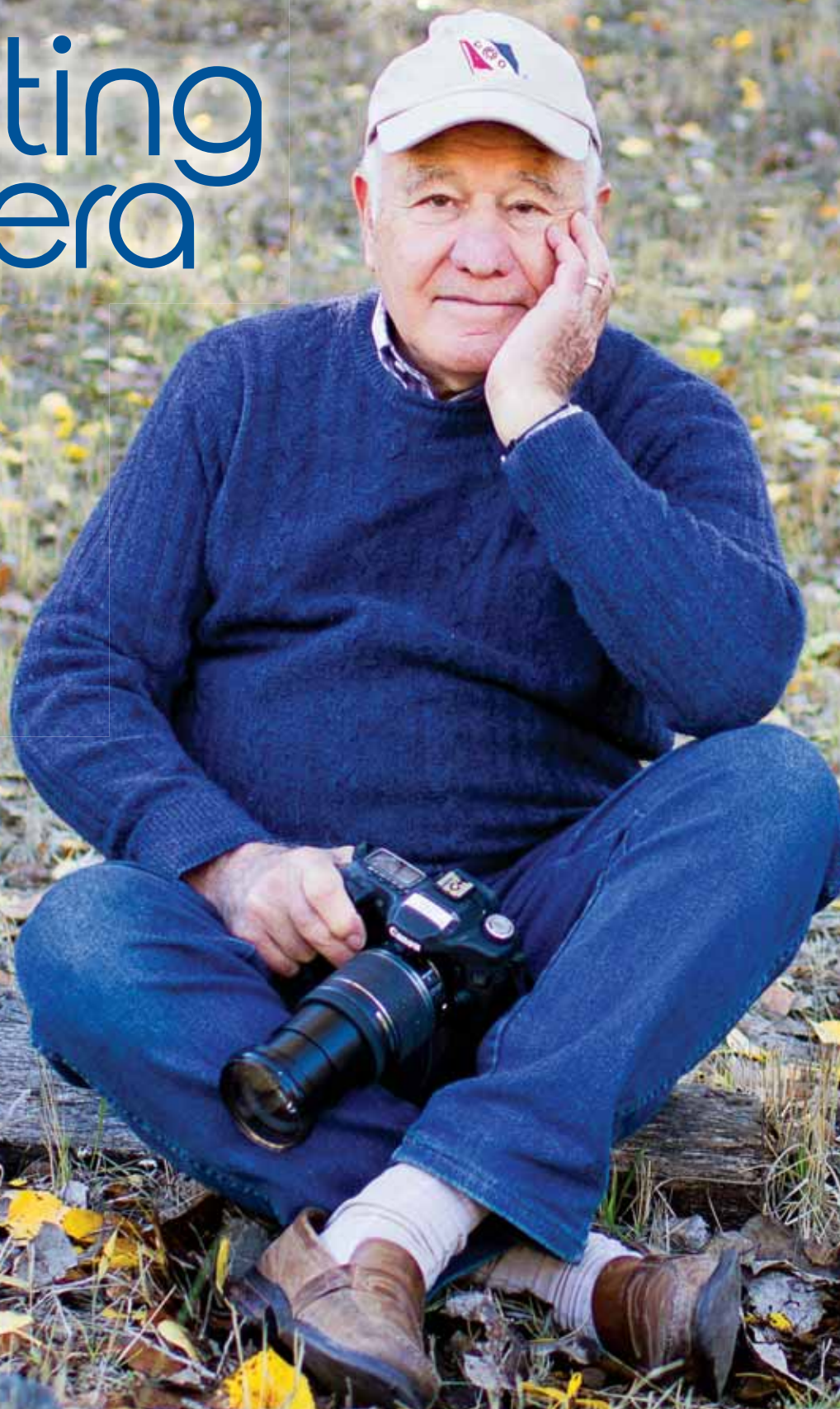


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Section 2



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Photo by Kate Bradshaw/The Almanac

The new sign in front of Menlo Church, formerly Menlo Park Presbyterian Church.

'Menlo Pres' now 'Menlo Church'

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

A local landmark known as Menlo Park Presbyterian Church for 142 years adopted a new name a few months ago.

In front of the large white church at Santa Cruz Avenue and Johnson Street in downtown Menlo Park is a bright, clean-cut sign with a contemporary "M" logo and the new name. The church that has been known as "Menlo Pres" for generations is now Menlo Church.

The church is the same, only the name has changed, said Scott Scruggs, Menlo Church's executive pastor of ministry, strategy, and design. He explained that the church had previously used different names for its four campuses — Menlo Park Pres, Open Door Church San Mateo, Open Door Church Mountain View and Menlo San Jose — and this had confused some worshippers.

However, Pastor Scruggs said, "we are still Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, we are still part of (the) Presbyterian denomination (and) we still operate under the same form of church governance."

The name change took place in August, when Menlo Park Presbyterian Church went through a

rebranding process. Its name was shortened at its four campuses to simply Menlo Church, and a new logo, a new website (menlo.church) were launched, said Mark Swarner, central ministry leader and missions pastor.

The church is the same, only the name has changed, said Menlo Church Pastor Scott Scruggs.

The "dot church" is a relatively new website domain name option, launched in September 2014. The aesthetics of the website, too, bespeak the tech savvy one might expect from a church in the heart of Silicon Valley: bold, clear letters, overlaid on vivid photographs, with not too much text.

The church did make a big change in March 2014, when it left the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) — or PCUSA — denomination and joined a newer denomination within the Presbyterian tradition known as ECO ("A covenant order of Evangelical Presbyterians").

An overwhelming majority of Menlo Park Presbyterian Church members supported the change: 2,024 members voted for it and

only 158 were opposed, even though it came with a \$8.89 million price tag to transfer the church's land title from PCUSA to local ownership. Menlo Church now owns its property, and can go about expanding to new sites more easily.

One of the issues that has divided Presbyterian denominations is same-sex marriage.

According to a Presbyterian website, Layman.org, while the PCUSA celebrated this year's U.S. Supreme Court decision making same-sex marriages legal in all states, three other Presbyterian denominations did not. The website quotes an ECO church executive as saying: "In ECO, we affirm that marriage is a gift from God between one man and one woman."

The Menlo Park church opened a new location in San Jose in March and, according to Pastor Scruggs, plans to open at least four new sites in coming years.

The church has been in its current location since 1950 after the old church was torn down. The Menlo Park Presbyterian Church was organized in 1873 and constructed its first building in 1875 on Santa Cruz Avenue near Chestnut Street, according to the Menlo Park Historical Society. As of 2014, it had 3,400 members. ■

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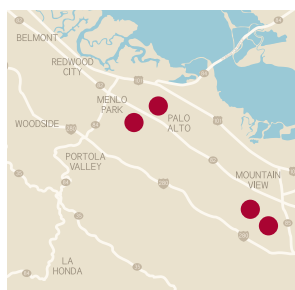


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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Filoli executive director departs abruptly

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

Apparently things are still not right in paradise. Volunteers at Woodside's historic Filoli estate learned Nov. 11 that Cynthia D'Agosta, Filoli's executive director through a recent upheaval in volunteer ranks that saw hundreds resign rather than sign a controversial volunteer agreement, is no longer working for Filoli.

Only a few days earlier, volunteers were informed of a change to their volunteer handbook prohibiting them from speaking to the media about Filoli or sharing information that came from Filoli. That did not stop volunteers from forwarding the email that had informed them of D'Agosta's departure within an hour after it was sent.

The email from the executive committee of Filoli's governing board does not explain the departure, or say if it was voluntary, but simply states: "Cynthia D'Agosta is no longer with Filoli."

The email says that Carolyn Daley, who heads the governing board's finance committee "will oversee Cynthia's direct reports" until an interim executive director is named.

The email says Filoli plans to "immediately retain" an interim executive director from a professional agency, and then search for a permanent replacement.

"During this transition period

the Governing Board Executive Committee will provide continuing oversight of all Filoli operations and ongoing projects," the email says.

Filoli closed to the public on Oct. 24 for its regular winter break, but on the day after Thanksgiving will begin its annual Holiday Traditions program, which is a major fundraiser for the organization. Holiday Traditions runs Nov. 27 to Dec. 5.

The email says the board is "confident that this change will not impact the continuing operations of Filoli or Holiday Traditions." It says the event is "fully organized, staffed and in the final stages of preparation with a confident momentum of its own."

Filoli, located on Canada Road a few miles north of Woodside,



Cynthia D'Agosta

was originally built by William Bowers Bourn II and Agnes Moody Bourn between 1915 and 1917.

The property was sold to William P. and Lurline Matson Roth after the Bourns both died in 1936. The Roth family donated Filoli to the National Trust for Historic Preservation (the house and gardens) and the Filoli Center (the remaining acreage) in 1975, and it opened to the public in 1976.

In an interview in January of this year, Ms. D'Agosta said Filoli



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac (January 2015)

Volunteers play a large role at the historic Filoli estate in Woodside.

has 1,300 volunteers, 60 employees and a \$7 million annual budget and has 120,000 visitors a year in the nine months it is open.

Unhappy volunteers

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

After the Almanac posted a story about the controversy, Filoli's governing board met and said volunteers could cross out the

most objectionable clause, which states volunteers will not make "a claim of any negligence, personal injury, wrongful death or property damage against Filoli" in connection with the volunteer's work at Filoli.

By late March, Ms. D'Agosta said 1,060 of Filoli's 1,300 active volunteers had signed some form of the mandatory agreement. At that time she said 80 of those who had left were part of a group that leads students on nature walks at Filoli. A volunteer said the nature docents who had left had more than 250 collective years of experience as Filoli volunteers.

Filoli has not had good luck

retaining executive directors in the recent past. In an interview in March, Ms. D'Agosta said there had been five executive directors in 10 years. "That amount of change is hard on the staff; it's been hard on the volunteers," she said then.

Ms. D'Agosta began working for Filoli on Dec. 1, 2012. She formerly served as the executive director of the Committee for Green Foothills, and was the first executive director of the San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority.

A Bay Area native, Ms. D'Agosta grew up in San Jose. She received

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The Filoli executive committee does not explain the departure, but simply states: 'Cynthia D'Agosta is no longer with Filoli.'

City sets trial run of longer free parking for holidays and beyond

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

From Thanksgiving Day through Jan. 4, downtown Menlo Park will give drivers longer free parking time in the plazas, as the city has done in the past. This time, however, the lengthened free parking limits won't end come January, except for the Draeger's parking lot.

On a 3-2 vote, the Menlo Park's City Council on Nov. 10 approved a six-month trial of

extended free parking hours downtown, starting Jan. 4. On-street parking will be extended to 90 minutes (it's currently one hour) and free plaza parking will be extended to three hours (it's currently two hours).

The holiday time extension applies only to the plazas, where people will be able to park free for three hours.

During the six-month trial, the city will gather information about parking turnover and other factors for the City Council, which will decide

whether to make the changes permanent.

One of the city's eight downtown plazas, the Draeger's parking lot, will be exempt from the trial. One of the owners, Richard Draeger, said the time extension would adversely affect the number of people who could park and shop there.

In an email to the council, he said Draeger's customers are "mostly female housewives and many with kids in tow, and simply cannot successfully conduct the transporting of an 80

to 120 lb. shopping cart loaded with groceries beyond a reasonably short distance."

Council members Rich Cline and Kirsten Keith voted no on the trial. Mr. Cline opposed the Draeger's exemption, pointing out that it might set a precedent for other case-by-case exemptions. He also opposed the street parking extension to 90 minutes.

Ms. Keith said in the Oct. 20 council discussion that she'd like to see additional parking time available for downtown

visitors, but believes people should pay for it. She cited "The High Cost of Free Parking," a book by Donald Shoup, that claims that free parking is actually subsidized by everyone.

"Everyone (pays for parking), even if they don't drive," reads one passage in the book. "Initially the developer pays for the required parking, but soon the tenants do, and then their customers, and so on, until the cost of parking has diffused

See PARKING, page 6

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Bruce Wellings named Kiwanis Club president

Bruce Wellings, a CPA and financial adviser with Wellings & Company in Menlo Park, has been named president of the Kiwanis Club of Menlo Park.

Mr. Wellings has long ties to Menlo Park: He has been a member of the club for 21 years, and he points out that his father founded Wellings & Company in 1974.

His goal as president, he said, is to increase Kiwanis Club membership. "We are looking for men and women who want to be part of Menlo Park and who want to give back to community organizations that enrich the city," he said.

Outgoing president Charlie Porter, an insurance and financial services agent with Farmers Insurance, said of Mr. Wellings: "There's no one more enthusiastic and energetic about expanding Kiwanis."

The club meets Tuesdays at noon at Allied Arts Guild in Menlo Park. There is a gen-

eral membership for those who can attend weekly meetings, and a service membership for those who can attend only once a month.

The club's next project is its Christmas tree lot, which opens after Thanksgiving Day on El Camino Real at Embarcadero Road in Palo Alto. "The club has been selling Christmas trees for over 45 years, and it is our largest fundraising event each year," Mr. Wellings said.

One of 16,000 Kiwanis clubs around the world, the Menlo Park club supports many local programs and organizations, and funds scholarships for Menlo-Atherton High School graduates.

Go to menloparkkiwanisclub.org for more information.



Bruce Wellings

D'AGOSTA

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a master's degree in landscape architecture from Harvard's Graduate School of Design and a bachelor's degree in science and fine arts from the University of California, Santa Cruz.

According to Filoli's tax forms, which must be publicly filed because the organization is tax-exempt, in 2013, the last year for which the tax forms are available, Filoli had \$5.7 million in income, including gifts, grants, gift shop sales, contributions, membership fees and admissions.

That year Ms. D'Agosta made \$172,219, and the organization had 31 members of its governing body (who are not compensated), 82 employees and 1,442 volunteers.

The tax forms for 2011 and 2012 show that Ms. D'Agosta's

predecessor as executive director, Jane Risser, made \$185,000 in 2011 and that she was paid \$165,000 in severance pay when she left in 2012.

The latest Filoli policy regarding publicity states:

"Media may not be invited on the property by volunteers for any reason without the prior approval of the Executive Director. All media inquiries should be routed to the Public Relations Associate for coordination. Volunteers may not circulate or publish confidential or proprietary information that relates to Filoli. Proprietary information includes but is not limited to confidential staff and volunteer interactions, guest interactions, and Board or Executive activities.

"Communications by volunteers, as private citizens, cannot be restricted, as long as they do not publicize any official connection to Filoli." ■

PARKING

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everywhere in the economy. When we shop in a store, eat in a restaurant, or see a movie, we pay for parking indirectly because its cost is included in the prices of merchandise, meals, and theater tickets."

Though the Draeger's lot will be subject to the city's policy of the extended three hours of free parking during the holiday season, the lot will revert to its current parking limits at the close of the holidays. At the

request of Councilman Peter Ohtaki, the city will gather data about the lot's occupancy during the holiday months in lieu of that lot's participation in the six-month trial.

The City Council unanimously approved spending \$65,000 for the six-month pilot project and directed city staff to investigate transferable parking permits (which would allow employees in a business to transfer the permit among each other) and discounted individual parking permits for low-income people. ■

Good news and bad news from Caltrans on herbicide spraying

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

Caltrans has given San Mateo County residents some good news and some bad news about the state's plans for spraying herbicides alongside local state highways.

Part of the good news is that after years of requests from local residents, Caltrans officials say they will post message boards along the highway warning when they are about to spray herbicides.

The bad news on that subject: The signs may not actually mention herbicides or spraying until the spraying is over.

Caltrans spokeswoman Gidget Navarro said Caltrans will post at least two changeable message boards on Highway 84 (Woodside/La Honda/San Gregorio Road) and will probably also post signs on Highway 35 (Skyline Boulevard) near its intersection with Highway 84.

"The message will probably say something like 'Weed Abatement/Moving Closure/Possible Delays' with the date, she said.

The message boards will go up three days before the spraying and stay until one day after the work has been completed, Ms. Navarro said. After the spraying is completed the message board will say the herbicide spraying has been completed.

More bad news from Caltrans is that despite recent reassurances that it would not do so, the agency plans to spray herbicides within the town limits of Woodside.

"Caltrans does not have a maintenance agreement with the town of Woodside, therefore it is Caltrans' responsibility to maintain State Route 84" in the town, Ms. Navarro said. "There will be spot spraying in the town of Woodside in 2016."

Paul Nagengast, Woodside's deputy town manager and town engineer, said he had "always believed (Caltrans') herbicide program started at Skyline Boulevard and went west." Mr. Nagengast said he is not sure if spraying within

Woodside town limits by Caltrans is new or if the town has "just never been advised before."

Woodside "does not use herbicides to control weeds," Mr. Nagengast said. "Town staff trims, mows and cuts as part of our vegetation management program adjacent to roadways."

Residents attending a public workshop on Nov. 5 also learned that despite years of public assurances that Caltrans does not spray where residents post "No Spray" signs, the agency does not actually honor the signs.

As recently as Oct. 23, in an email to the Almanac, Ms. Navarro said Caltrans would not spray within 25 feet of private property "if a no spray sign is posted."

At the Nov. 5 meeting, however, residents learned Caltrans will spray on its right-of-way, despite no spray signs, unless residents have signed an agreement stating that they will eliminate any weeds in front of their own property.

"The consent form is tailored per property owner, meaning it would need to be created as it is requested," Ms. Navarro said.

In addition, unless the property owner has an encroachment permit from Caltrans, taking on all liability for maintenance issues, the consent form must be signed each time Caltrans sprays, Ms. Navarro now says.

Responding to recent requests from a wide array of local groups, farmers and ranchers, and public officials to stop broadcast spraying herbicides along San Mateo County highways, Caltrans said in September that it will start a pilot program on Highway 84 between Portola Road in Woodside and the coast in which broadcast spraying of herbicides will occur only on the westbound side of Highway 84 while mechanical mowing and other manual weed control, including mulching, will be used on the eastbound side.

A map on a flier about the program shows herbicide

spraying for a little less than 14 miles from Portola Road in Woodside to El Corte Madera Road past La Honda, with a few areas as "no spray" zones.

More bad news may be the chemicals Caltrans plans to spray. Many of the residents who live near the area to be sprayed use local creeks and ditches for irrigation or drinking water and have wells near creeks. A list of chemicals to be applied on Highway 84 includes Esplanade 200-SC, made by Bayer. The Esplanade 200-SC label says it is "toxic to fish, aquatic invertebrates, and plants. Do not apply directly to water, or to areas where surface water is present."

The label also advises that the chemical "may leach into ground water in areas where soils are permeable, particularly where the water table is shallow."

"This product is classified as having a high potential for reaching surface water via runoff for several months or more after application," the label says.

Others who live near the areas to be sprayed are organic farmers, whose crops could be ruined if the chemicals drift onto their property. Much of the area is near the coast, where there are frequent winds. The label says: "Drift potential increases if wind is in excess of 10 mph, gusty, or below 2 mph (due to inversion potential)."

Another chemical on the list is Milestone. It warns not to use "inside banks or bottoms of irrigation ditches, either dry or containing water, or other channels that carry water that may be used for irrigation or domestic purposes."

Other chemicals on the Caltrans list for use along Highway 84 include Accord XRT II, Activator 90 and Matrix SG. ■

For more information about the Caltrans pilot program or a no-spray agreement, contact Gidget Navarro at gidget.navarro@dot.ca.gov or (510) 286-5574.

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LET'S DISCUSS:

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

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Why Is It Taking Longer to Close Escrow?

Dear Monica: I want to make an offer on a property and will be getting a loan to purchase it. My lender has told me it will take 35-45 days to close the escrow, which is much longer than they told me when I made an offer on a property a few months ago. Why will it take so long? Sally G.

Dear Sally: As of October 1st there are new rules in place called "TILA-RESPA" rules aimed at making mortgages more understandable and transparent for buyers/consumers. All loan details, and any changes to these details, must be given to consumers in a timely manner, and consumers then have a three-

day right of rescission on this new information. The new home mortgage disclosure regulations are meant to benefit borrowers by simplifying loan documentation, and clarifying loan terms and fees.

Thus for the next several months, buyers/borrowers will have to wait additional days to close on their homes. The regulations impose new waiting periods in which lenders must submit disclosure forms to borrowers, thereby extending the time between application submission and closing. Once the new system is fully understood, these timelines should get shorter, although we will not return to the 15-21 day closing periods we saw earlier this year.

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DAVID MOSELEY

He holds a Bachelor's in Economics from Stanford University and a Masters in Sports Management from the University of San Francisco.

He was a member of the Stanford basketball team that won two Pac 10 Championships and played in the 1998 Final Four. He played professional basketball internationally for 7 years.

He believes in challenging students in both mind and body, to prepare them to perform at their best.

His favorite quote is: "Be strong in body, clean in mind, lofty in ideals." -James Naismith

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Town engineer reflects on career in public works

By Dave Boyce

Almanac Staff Writer

Woodside Deputy Town Manager and Town Engineer Paul Nagengast has said more than once to an Almanac reporter that he has room for improvement. Maybe now that he has decided to bring his career in public works to an end after 30 years — he is 58 and has been in Woodside Town Hall for eight years — he'll be able to concentrate on those improvements he said he has room for.

As a longtime government employee responsible for the condition of key systems like sewers, roads and bridges, Mr. Nagengast has had room to develop a skill in evenly articulating the issues when interacting with the public. It's most important, he said, that communications about issues are accurate.

Also important is knowing when and when not to speak, he said. When Town Hall employees gather for Town Council meetings in Independence Hall, Mr. Nagengast and his colleagues spend much of the time with their mouths closed, speaking for the most part only when asked to, and then with an emphasis on neutral fact-based language.

The public has reservoirs of misunderstanding and mistrust of government, Mr. Nagengast

said, then provided an example of how such an attitude might be expressed: "No matter what, if you're government, you're in my way."

It's a big challenge, he said, to persuade people to be comfortable with government. His message to the public: "We're actually here for you. You are our customers. Yes, we're the only show in town, but we're here for you. How can we help you?"

Cleaning the garage

Mr. Nagengast, who retires Nov. 17, is a native of Dayton, Ohio. He spent 10 years in finishing college, he said, first at Miami University of Ohio, where he focused on psychology, and then the University of Southern Maine, where he studied ocean engineering. In that decade, he also found time to hitchhike across the country and work as a short-order cook, he said.

His public works career began in Los Angeles, and then led to Beverly Hills, Yucaipa, Half Moon Bay and Woodside. As public works director at Half Moon Bay, he was interviewed in 2005 by NPR for his take on a dead humpback whale that had washed up on a beach.

Mr. Nagengast lives in Half Moon Bay, is married and has a son. Asked what he plans to do in retirement, he said, metaphorically, that he'll be cleaning out his garage. "I don't know what I'm



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Paul Nagengast is retiring after eight years as Woodside's public works director and, more recently, also its deputy town manager.

going to do," he said. "You throw out old things and you definitely make room for new things."

Public engagement

Asked about Woodside residents and their participation in local government, Mr. Nagengast called them engaged, knowledgeable and passionate.

Asked whether his Woodside experiences informed him about the human condition, Mr. Nagengast offered the notion that people are unpredictable. "Just when you think you know (something), you find out you don't know," he said.

An example: To correct a long-standing safety issue for elementary school students walking along

narrow Mountain Home Road, a traffic analysis proposed a crosswalk at Cedar Lane. The idea had community support, Mr. Nagengast recalled.

But differences emerged in the details. Equestrians said they wanted a diagonal crosswalk, but traffic engineers said such an orientation would put students' backs to traffic. Others said an up-to-date crosswalk, with its bright warning signs and road markings, would undermine the town's claim to rural character. Cedar Lane residents said a crosswalk could complicate their entry to Mountain Home Road. In the end, the idea was shelved.

"It's hard to predict what out-

comes you have," Mr. Nagengast said. "That's why it's important to have a process, a public process. It's very important."

Some of that process has found its own path: social media. People can have a full-blown discussion before they even get to the public hearing, Mr. Nagengast said. Figuring out how Town Hall can take advantage of this is a challenge, he said. People can come to a meeting having already made a decision. "I'm not saying that's wrong," he said. "It's just the way it is."

Accomplishments

During his tenure in Town Hall, Woodside has markedly improved its permitting process, which had been viewed as inconsistent, biased, punitive, lengthy and unfriendly, Mr. Nagengast said.

With the new system, known as TrakIt, applicants can monitor staff comments online, he said. Reviews of permit applications have been shortened dramatically, consistency in interpreting town code has become a priority, and Town Hall now has a table and chairs for applicants and staff to discuss issues "in a more relaxed environment," Mr. Nagengast said.

He was also instrumental in crafting a \$12 million five-year capital improvement plan for the town's latest budget. Among the plan's top priorities: repair and/or rehabilitate four bridges, the storm-drain system and a path along the south side of Woodside Road between the elementary school and Roberts Market. ▣

Menlo council likes green energy plan

By Kate Bradshaw

Almanac Staff Writer

Enthusiasm for the Peninsula Clean Energy program was very clear during a Nov. 10 study session by the Menlo Park City Council.

Peninsula Clean Energy is a San Mateo County-initiated community choice energy program that would give residents in participating cities within the county the chance to get a greater percentage of their electricity from renewable sources at prices competitive with PG&E rates.

The council discussed what mix of clean energy might work best for Menlo Park. One idea is to adopt a default option that would not raise prices for customers and provide less than 100 percent of the electricity from renewable sources. Another idea

is to set as a default 100 percent renewable energy, which would cost the average customer an additional \$1.80 per month, according to a study.

Increasing the cost of energy at all might increase the number of consumers and businesses who might opt out, Mayor Catherine Carlton said.

"Let's go all the way," said Councilman Ray Mueller, quoting a Sly Fox song. "Some people think (the song) is about sex. It's not," he said. "It's about politics."

He added that the added cost is the equivalent of two Snickers bars. That kind of discretionary spending is minimal to the average household and could have a strong impact on reducing greenhouse gases, he said.

"I think it's the right move and the right time and I'm excited to see this move forward," said

Councilwoman Kirsten Keith.

Details of the renewable energy options for customers may not be known for months, with plans to be rolled out across participating jurisdictions in October 2016. However, cities must decide whether to join Peninsula Clean Energy by the end of February to have a say in determining what those options could be.

Since it was a study session, the council did not vote on the proposal.

Pay raises

At the meeting, the council approved a 3 percent pay increase for 148 city employees who are members of the Service Employees International Union. Under the agreement, the city will pay for vision insurance and increase its contributions to employee benefit plans by 3

percent plus \$500 a year.

After the results of a study on pay ranges for city job classifications is released, the city will re-enter negotiations with the union. If agreement is not reached on the pay ranges, the employees will receive an additional 2 percent pay increase in July 2016.

Other business

In other business, the council:

- Approved spending up to \$200,000 for the city's storm preparedness plan, which includes providing free sandbags for Menlo Park residents. The city agreed to share emergency resources with Palo Alto in cases of flooding and to join the San Francisco Creek Multi-Agency Coordination Agreement and Operational Plan.

Noted that the city has received a \$20,000 grant to build bicycle racks in downtown Menlo Park.

Issued proclamations recognizing: Menlo Park Police Officer Louis Tommei on his retirement after more than 25 years of service to Menlo Park; law enforcement clerks by declaring Nov. 12 as Law Enforcement Records Professionals Day; and Hefernan Insurance and Ducky's Carwash for becoming San Mateo County-certified "green" businesses.

Nikki Nagaya, the city's transportation manager, told the council that the city is investigating the logistics of installing two Tesla-compatible electrical charging stations downtown. ▣

'I think it's the right move and the right time and I'm excited to see this move forward.'

COUNCILWOMAN KIRSTEN KEITH

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Shaw elected to council as write-in candidate

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

WOODSIDE

Write-in candidate Chris Shaw has won a seat on the Woodside Town Council in a victory over Nancy Reyerer, who had been running for the District 3 seat unopposed.

The final count shows Mr. Shaw with 663 votes, or 53.1 percent, and Ms. Reyerer with 585.

With 3,796 registered voters in Woodside and 1,462 ballots cast, the turnout for the Nov. 3 election was 38.5 percent, well above the 29.5 percent in the county as a whole, according to Elections Office data.

Elections Office procedures require a manual count of write-in votes, which delayed the report of results for this race until Thursday, Nov. 12.

Asked to comment on his victory, Mr. Shaw

recalled telling the Almanac that if he were elected, it “would be the result of the community rising up and spreading the word that there was to be an alternative on election day. ... My goal as a member of the Town Council is to be a voice of moderation with a measuring stick of common sense.”

This election generated heat. Mr. Shaw said he would not have filed had Ms. Reyerer not been running unopposed. He said her stances as a member of the town’s Architectural and Site Review Board were overly subjective and that she would bring that subjectivity to the council. He had the open support of three council members.

In a statement, he wrote: “A key role of the Town Council is to be the common-sense backstop against radical swings of agendas and to provide consensus leadership that represents all of the interests within the community, while respecting the rights of all its’ citizens, including rights related to property.”

Mr. Shaw’s backers put together a campaign that included yard signs, a banner and a direct-mail piece. He disassociated himself from these efforts, but later organized a campaign after an

email created the perception that he may have acted in coordination with his backers.

Mr. Shaw is 52 and the chief executive of H2ORS, an Orinda-based maker of products related to cancer treatment. He has not served on town committees, but said that over the last six years he attended Town Council, Architectural and Site Review Board and Circulation Committee meetings.

Ms. Reyerer, 60, is a former real estate agent and has been a member of the ASRB for five years. She is also on the Open Space Committee. Ms. Reyerer campaigned by sending out a mailing asking for votes,

and establishing a website.

“I understand local government,” she wrote on her website. “Our Town’s need for careful guidance with regard to circulation issues, fire safety, budget, and water use can all benefit from my input. Because of my recent building experiences and history working with the Town, I also bring an important perspective to the table to balance residents’ needs for construction efficiency while maintaining our town’s rustic charm.”

Asked for a post-election comment, Ms. Reyerer said she was proud of her campaign and humbled by “the wonderful outpouring of support I received by the community. ... My campaign was run on the values of community involvement and my professional and volunteer experience and did not depend on personal attacks, fear-mongering, or referencing rumor and innuendo.”

Candidates names were on the ballot in three other Woodside council districts, but all three ran unopposed. The latest count shows District 1 candidate Daniel Yost received 915 votes, District 5 candidate Tom Livermore received 939 votes, and District 7 incumbent Peter Mason received 893 votes. ▣



Chris Shaw



Photo by David Cruz

Peter Fortenbaugh is executive director of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula, which has clubhouses in Menlo Park, East Palo Alto and Redwood City.

Why one Harvard MBA pursues career to narrow opportunity gap

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

Thirteen years ago, Peter Fortenbaugh, who holds a Harvard MBA and a Princeton bachelor’s degree in economics, left the job he had been groomed to do as senior vice president of strategic planning at Exodus Communications and went to work full-time at the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula as its operations director.

Two years later, he was named the club’s executive director, a role he has worked at for 11 years now. He was recently named a “Local Hero” by the Midpeninsula Media Center, an award given to five local residents this year for “outstanding achievement or contribution to the community.”

That step he took 13 years ago, though it may appear abrupt, was the result of careful reflection, said Mr. Fortenbaugh in an interview. At the time, he hadn’t been feeling very inspired by his job and wanted to transition to a more “mission-driven” line of work. Before he dove into the nonprofit sector, though, he had two big questions: What issue did he want to dedicate his career to tackling, and how was he going to do it?

He said he contemplated going to work at a foundation, or getting involved with philanthropy, but through a long series of informational interviews, he realized that the people in the nonprofit world he most looked up to and wanted to be like were nonprofit CEOs. They were, he said, “the guys on the front line making decisions and running (organizations) that were mission-driven.”

During this research, he discovered that “the issue that kept resonating with me was supporting the opportunity gap,” he said. The opportunity gap, he emphasized, is the problem, not the income gap, though the two can be connected, he said.

He asserts full faith in capitalism on his LinkedIn page, where he writes, “I’m not striving for full equality; the American system of free enterprise and capitalism mostly works.”

However, he said, as the income gap widens and the middle class dissolves, people are being so

‘We’re not giving anything to these kids. (We’re) providing them with the circumstances ... where they can reach for their potential.’

PETER FORTENBAUGH

squeezed at the lower end that “all they can do is survive.”

The solution, he said, is to make sure kids from low-income families are offered the same access to opportunities as their more affluent peers. It’s up to them, he said, to make the most of it.

“We’re not giving anything to these kids,” he said. “(We’re) providing them with the circumstances ... where they can reach for their potential.”

His background in business and consulting help him as a nonprofit leader to look at things from a “return on investment standpoint,” he said. “It helped

me to never be satisfied with what we’re doing,” and to always think: “Can we do it better?”

Since he began working at the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula, he said, he has seen big changes in both the quality of the staff and the role of the organization. Instead of simply being a safe place where kids can go after school, the clubhouses have taken on an expanded role to help kids succeed in school.

The organization has three clubhouses and six school sites in Menlo Park, East Palo Alto and Redwood City. More than 1,800 active members participate in Boys & Girls Club activities an average of four days a week, according to a recent report.

The staff works with local schools on such goals as improving literacy for younger students. During after-school programs, kids get extra instruction in literacy. Over the summer, the organization hires certified teachers and the kids get seven hours of academic support each day. As a result, he said, “summer learning loss” has been eliminated for its students.

His proudest accomplishment? “Seeing (the students) leave here, go on to have successful lives and become self-sufficient,” he said, citing examples of former students who are now in law school, working in the high-tech field, and employed at nonprofits. Some of the students, he said, have returned to work at Boys & Girls Clubs and are continuing the cycle of preparing today’s kids for future success.

“It feels very hopeful to me,” he said. “I’m an optimist. It’s not a charity, what we’re doing here.” ▣

Moms vs. dog owners: Battle over Nealon Park's open field

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

It's a brisk Tuesday morning, and the air is clean and fresh. Menlo Park's Nealon Park is humming with energy. An all-women exercise group, led by an enthusiastic instructor, is roused into step-ups on the softball bleachers, exertion evident in the tiny clouds exhaled. The adjacent daycare is full of toddlers happily engaged by their caretakers.

Across the park, two people stand talking with their dogs. They are Gary Kenworthy, a dogwalker from Redwood City with dogs Pepper and Mango, and Kathy Schoendorf, a longtime resident of Menlo Park with her dog, Cassidy.

They are two of what they say is a crowd of at least 30 dog owners who flock to the softball field for the two hours each weekday morning it becomes a dedicated dog park. Over the years, Ms. Schoendorf says, she's developed a strong network of friends among the other dog owners at Nealon Park.

"It's like therapy for us," she said.

■ MENLO PARK

The ethos of community at the dog park, she said, shows when it comes to doo-doo duty.

"You just pick it up," she said, even if the droppings don't belong to your dog.

Parents aren't sure they're ready to give up an open field, which their kids play on, for a dog park.

She says she's lived in Menlo Park for 30 years, never had kids, and has always paid her taxes. "All I want," she said, "is someplace to take my dog."

Before Nealon Park, she says, she used to take her dog to La Entrada Middle School on Sharon Road, where she had problems with her dog running away.

The Nealon Park dog area trial began in 2003 to give the city's canines a place of their own. The city designated cer-

tain times and areas at Willow Oaks Park and Nealon Park for dogs to be off-leash.

However, the park now has \$250,000 in city funding budgeted for renovations, and Menlo Park Community Services Director Cherise Brandell said a priority is establishing a permanent dog park area. Sharing the softball field with dogs was a temporary fix, and while it lasted more than a decade, she said, it creates certain, well, hygiene hazards. The dogs should really have their own space, she said, so athletes using the softball field don't have to constantly watch their step.

Preliminary designs for the dog park place it on an open field adjacent to the Nealon Park playground. However, local parents aren't so sure they're ready to give up that area, which their kids play on, for dogs to be there.

A survey and input meeting held Nov. 10 sparked a number of territorial emails to the City Council from neighborhood residents and frequent park-goers, particularly mothers of young children.

Atherton may offer no-cost solar permits

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

Atherton's City Council is considering offering no-cost permits to install new solar systems.

The move wouldn't cost the town a lot of money, or affect a lot of people, since solar installation permits are now \$526 and only about 27 are granted each year. At an earlier meeting, however, council members said waiving the permit fees might encourage more solar systems and more environmental awareness.

The staff report says that five of 11 nearby communities offer solar permits at no cost and three others subsidize

part of the cost.

The solar permit fees will be on the agenda when the council meets on Nov. 18, starting at 7 p.m. in the town's council chambers, 94 Ashfield Road.

Also on the agenda are:

■ Awarding contracts for two previously approved projects — installing a pedestrian-controlled stoplight on El Camino Real at Almendral Avenue, and painting and signs for a network of shared car/bicycle routes.

■ A public hearing on proposed changes to garbage and recycling rates, including establishing a minimum flat service fee of \$25 per month even if no service is provided. The proposal is to reduce the

rates for 64-gallon garbage containers by \$8 and the 96-gallon containers by \$12. The cost of a pickup of more than two green waste containers would go up by \$4 for the third and fourth containers and by \$2 for carts five and above. All other rates would remain the same.

■ A report on the status of the civic center project. The staff report says that at a recent meeting, members of the Civic Center Advisory Committee told the architects that they prefer architecture that is "traditional, understated, elegant, timeless and attractive, with design elements emulating" the historic council chambers.

■ Consider adding a little less than \$15,000 to the town's budget to allow for additional work by consultants on the town's climate action plan for reducing greenhouse gas emissions. ■

Several said that their kids ought to fulfill a place for play, learn to walk, and even have birthday parties there. The loss of the open field, some said, would have a negative impact on their children's play.

"Having dogs run around with their droppings and chaos will make that area unsafe for young families like ours," wrote Alison Wong.

Annley Dempsey wrote that many children, including her own, have learned to ride their bike in this open field, with the grass cushioning their fall. "I guess if this place were lost, my youngest son will need to experience the harsh reality of living in an urban world and crash on asphalt while pedaling," she said.

Yee Yie Fogarty wrote: "I do not think that the interests of dogs/dog owners should supersede the vital role of play and exercise in children's lives."

While some might argue that the adjacent playground

ought to fulfill a place for play and exercise for children, other parents say the open space is important for fostering "unstructured play" for children.

"While the playgrounds are so beloved in our family, it's the open space that invites (my daughter) to use her imagination and learn how to interact with the world on her own terms," mother Lauren Uye-shiro said.

During a City Council meeting Nov. 10, several others added their two cents' worth of feedback: "Give children more weight than the dogs," said Knute Ream. "This is a big deal to parents in the community," said Sarah Speakman. Both are parents of small children.

Mayor Catherine Carlton told the speakers the council would listen to dog owners, parents, users of the softball field and nearby residents before making any decisions. ■

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Voter turnout rises in 'all-mail' ballot election

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

■ ELECTION 2015

Voter turnout was 15 percent higher for the Nov. 3 election in San Mateo County than it was in November 2013, the last off-year election that can be considered as a fair comparison, county election officials say.

Of the 357,191 registered voters mailed ballots this time, 105,325 returned them, mostly by mail, according to the final semi-official tally released by the county Elections Office on Nov. 12. That's a turnout of 29.5 percent compared to 25.4 percent in 2013, according to Elections Office records.

The principal difference this time, according to Jim Irizarry, San Mateo County's assistant chief elections officer: the 2015 election was held by mail. Accommodations were made for in-person voting, but the county mailed ballots to all registered voters in a package that included return envelopes with prepaid postage, Mr. Irizarry said.

This method of voting — sending mail-in ballots to all registered voters — is being tested in two California counties: San Mateo and Yolo, which are authorized by

state law to hold three such off-year general elections between 2015 and 2017. The results will be reported to the state Legislature, which will decide whether to adopt the method statewide.

San Mateo County's Elections Office officials will prepare a report for the state Legislature and the Secretary of State's office, Mr. Irizarry said.

Voting by mail

In all, 102,710 voters, about 98 percent, mailed their ballots (or dropped off their mail-in ballots), while 2,415, about 2 percent, voted in person at 32 universal polling places and two election centers in the county, according to Elections Office data. In the 2013 election, those numbers were 76 percent using mail-in ballots and 23 percent voting in person.

For the Elections Office, there were clear benefits to so many mailed-in ballots, Mr. Irizarry said. By their nature, elections are intense, laborious and, with 357,000 registered voters, logistically complex, he said.

On Election Day, in a typical

election with a polling place in every precinct, the Elections Office deploys 1,700 to 1,800 poll workers and 1,400 voting machines, he said.

For this election, the number of voting machines was reduced to a few for each of the 32 universal polling places (including one polling place each in Menlo Park, Woodside, Portola Valley and Atherton), and the number of poll

workers was reduced to 135.

While ballots differ significantly from one community to another and from one public jurisdiction to another, each of the universal polling stations could provide an accurate ballot to any voter in the county.

The county spent \$72,000 to mail 357,000 ballots, and \$52,000 on paying the postage for the 105,000 ballots mailed back, he said.

Adding to the overall efficiency was lead time, Mr. Irizarry said. By the time Election Day rolled around, the Elections Office had been receiving and processing ballots in a database for 29 days. On Election Day and night, he said, it "was not even close to the normal level of intensity."

"It's been a fun election," he said. "Definitely the preferred method of voting is all-mailed-in ballot." ■

Shakespeare festival actors take local stage

Two Oregon Shakespeare Festival actors will take the spotlight on the Portola Valley Theatre Conservatory stage on Monday, Nov. 30, presenting a 90-minute performance that includes excerpts from Shakespeare's work and other classical and contemporary literature.

The performance begins at 7 p.m. at the PVTTC theater at Valley Presbyterian Church, 945 Portola Road in Portola Valley.

The featured actors, Susana Batres and Eddie Lopez, are part of the Ore-

■ BRIEFS

gon Shakespeare Festival's School Visit Program, which tours schools throughout California, Oregon, Washington and Kansas from October through December. Based in Ashland, Oregon, OSF has sponsored the school program since 1971, according to a news release from the acclaimed theater company.

Tickets to the Nov. 30 performance are \$9, and can be purchased at pvtc-ca.org.

M-A big band dance

The Menlo-Atherton High School Big Band dance will be held Saturday, Nov. 21, in the Ayers (the old) Gym on the school's campus. The annual event benefits M-A music programs.

Doors open at 7 a.m. for senior citizens only (free admission). General admission is at 8 p.m. (\$10 students, \$25 adults). The high school is at 555 Middlefield Road in Atherton.

The evening will feature free dance lessons. Tickets will be available at the door.



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Contributions to the Holiday Fund go directly to programs that benefit Peninsula residents. Last year, Almanac readers and foundations contributed \$172,000 for the 10 agencies that feed the hungry, house the homeless and provide numerous other services to those in need.

Contributions to the Holiday Fund will be matched, to the extent possible, by generous community corporations, foundations and individuals, including the Rotary Club of Menlo Park Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. No administrative costs will be deducted from the gifts, which are tax-deductible as permitted by law.

All donations to the Holiday Fund will be shared equally among the 10 recipient agencies listed on this page.

Boys & Girls Clubs

Provides after-school and academic support and activities for 1,750 at-risk K-12 youth at nine locations in Menlo Park and the North Fair Oaks neighborhood of Redwood City. Members attend at least twice a week during the academic year and receive essential tutoring, mentoring, and academic support.

Ecumenical Hunger Program

Provides emergency food, clothing, household essentials, and sometimes financial assistance to families in need, regardless of religious preference, including Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for more than 2,000 households.

Project Read

Provides free literacy services to adults in the Menlo Park area. Trained volunteers work one-on-one to help adults improve their basic reading, writing and English language skills so they can achieve their goals and function more effectively at home, at work and in the community. Volunteers also help students acquire basic keyboard and computer skills.

Ravenswood Family Health Center

Provides primary medical and preventive health care for all ages at its clinics in Belle Haven and East Palo Alto. It also operates a mobile clinic at school sites. Of the more than 17,000 registered patients, most are low-income and uninsured and live in the ethnically diverse East Palo Alto, Belle Haven, and North Fair Oaks areas.

St. Anthony's Padua Dining Room

Serves hundreds of hot meals six days a week to people in need who walk through the doors. Funded entirely by voluntary contributions, St. Anthony's is the largest dining room for the needy between San Francisco and San Jose. It also offers emergency food and clothing assistance.

Second Harvest Food Bank

The largest collector and distributor of food on the Peninsula, Second Harvest Food Bank distributed 52 million pounds of food last year. It gathers donations from individuals and businesses and distributes food to more than 250,000 people each month through more than 770 agencies and distribution sites in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

InnVision Shelter Network

Provides shelter/housing and supportive services across 18 sites in Silicon Valley and the Peninsula. Serves thousands of homeless families and individuals annually on their path back to permanent housing and self-sufficiency.

StarVista

Serves more than 32,000 people throughout San Mateo County, including children, young people, families with counseling, prevention, early intervention, education, and residential programs. StarVista also provides crisis intervention and suicide prevention services including a 24-hour suicide crisis hotline, an alcohol and drug helpline, and a parent support hotline.

Fair Oaks Community Center

This multi-service facility, serving the broader Redwood City community, provides assistance with child care, senior programs, citizenship and immigration, housing and employment, and crisis intervention. Programs are available in Spanish and English.

Health Connected

Serves over 5,000 students and their families each year through comprehensive sexual health education programs. Students learn to have on-going communication with parents and to make informed decisions which will apply to their lives, now and in the future.

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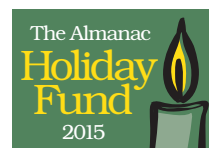
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School adds local twist to innovative learning

By **Kate Bradshaw**
Almanac Staff Writer

The multipurpose room at Laurel Elementary School in Atherton was abuzz with excitement on a recent Monday morning, as 43 third-graders stood behind desks, presenting their ideas for what Stanford developers should do with the public space that will become Middle Plaza, located at 500 El Camino Real in Menlo Park.

Parents and real-life Stanford developers wandered the project displays, each featuring a to-scale design poster paired with a written justification for each of the features these students wanted. Highlights of these budding designers' proposals included:

- A laser tag facility.
- Segway rentals.
- A jumbo screen.
- A parking lot for ice cream vendors and food trucks.
- A dog park.
- A fireplace.
- and bathrooms, which came with perhaps the wisest written rationale of all: "You don't want people to wet there (sic) pants, do you?"

The students in the two third-grade classes, taught by Steffany Cressey with co-teachers Priscilla Seely and Andi Denhe, had spent the past six weeks learning about Menlo Park's history and development process and preparing their designs.

In preparing to teach about the city's history, the teachers

did research, including compiling old photographs from the online archives of the Menlo Park Historical Association.

They taught students about historical figures such as Leland Stanford and Charles Burgess, and discussed changes in transportation, schools and stores.

The teachers brought in three longtime Menlo Park residents to share their stories with the classes. Sydnee Journal, Stanford's assistant director of community relations, performed a skit for the students to explain how land gets developed.

Next, the two classes went on a field trip to explore three local parks. Students took pictures using shared iPads to document the parks' various landscapes, features and amenities.

According to Ms. Cressey, students spent at least an hour each day on the project.

One parent in attendance, Peter Brown, said that although there were clearly some far-fetched suggestions, as a whole, "these kids collectively have got it nailed for the community."

Mr. Journal said the children's plans offer glimpses of not just "what's feasible, but what's outside the box."

The posters were on display during two community open houses hosted by Stanford to hear feedback on its Middle Plaza designs.

What is perhaps more surprising, however, is that this community-integrated project is only one of three concurrent

The children's plans offer glimpses of not just 'what's feasible, but what's outside the box,' says Sydnee Journal of Stanford.



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Architect Gary Laymon listens to student presentations at Laurel School in Atherton.

pilot studies on innovative student learning being conducted among third-graders at the school.

According to Theresa Fox, Laurel Elementary School's educational technology innovation coach, the six third-grade classes at the school have been divided into three groups, each tasked with implementing a different learning paradigm to teach Menlo Park history: project-based learning, design thinking, and the international baccalaureate approach. Each pilot study will then be evaluated by student, teacher,

and parent surveys.

The Middle Plaza design project is the project-based learning pilot.

The design thinking pilot, which will prioritize teaching students empathy, has involved teachers role-playing various figures in Menlo Park's history, including Jane Stanford, a Chinese railroad worker and an Italian immigrant. The third-graders' assignment in the design thinking pilot, Ms. Fox said, is to "figure out a community where all three can interact."

Finally, the third-graders in the

international baccalaureate pilot will be taught through a more "global" and "service-oriented" lens, Ms. Fox said. These third-graders will unearth and study an imaginary time capsule filled with artifacts from Menlo Park citizens from 1880. Then, they will decide what to put in their own time capsule, which will follow them to their new school site, Upper Laurel, when they become that school's first fourth-graders. The new site, which will host third- through fifth-graders, is located at 275 Elliott Drive in the Willows and is set to open in the fall of 2016. ■

Four named Eagle Scouts

Four members of Troop 109 were awarded Eagle Scout status in a Court of Honor held recently in Menlo Park. Each of the scouts earned at least 21 merit badges, acquired leadership and outdoor skills, and completed service projects.

Alek Elcavage, 15, started scouting in fifth grade and earned 25 merit badges. His project, "Bat Sanctuaries in Adobe Creek," entailed constructing five bat sanctuaries where bat colonies can safely nest along the watershed. Alek is a sophomore at Gunn High School and enjoys wilderness survival camping and water polo.

Andrew Tan, 15, has earned 42 merit badges. His Eagle project entailed developing and expanding a garden at Belle Haven Elementary School. Andrew, a sophomore at Menlo-Atherton High School, runs cross country and track, plays tenor saxophone in the band "Blues by Five" and enjoys scuba diving and writing.

Hunter Thompson, a sophomore at Menlo-Atherton, has been active in scouting since the second grade and has earned 32 merit badges. His project, "Edgewood Park Culvert Reconstruction," entailed designing, building and organizing his team to replace a large drainage pipe and construct new retaining



Photo by Dr. Manwah Tan

New Eagle Scouts from Troop 109 are, from left, Alek Elcavage, Andrew Tan, Hunter Thompson and Drew Wadsworth.

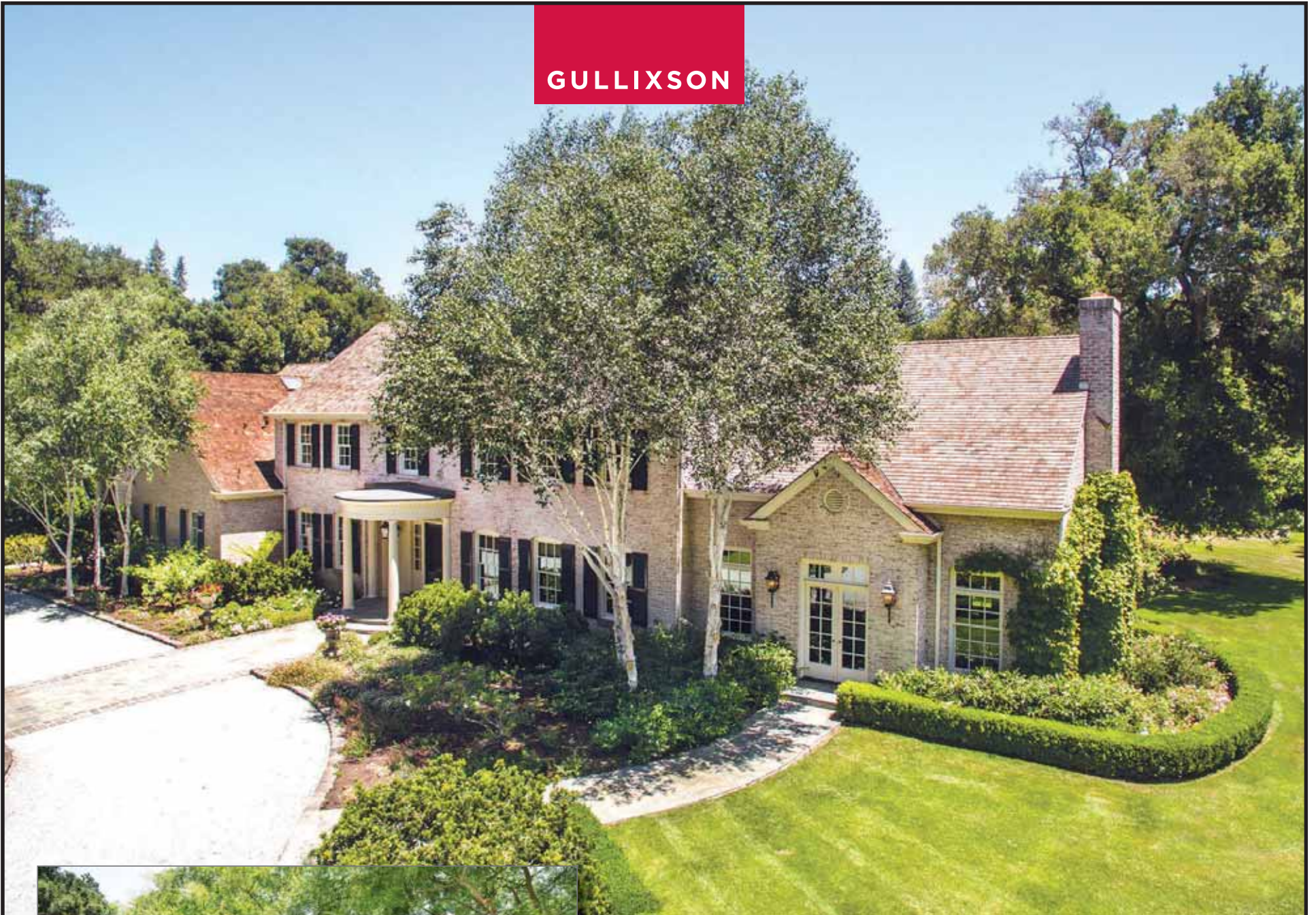
walls. Hunter, 15, is on the NorCal varsity crew team and enjoys camping, biking and basketball.

Drew Wadsworth, 16, is a sophomore at Menlo School and has been in scouting since

the first grade. He has earned 30 merit badges. His project, "Solar Food Dehydrator for Stanford Education Farm," involved leading a team to build a large-scale solar food dryer to be used as an

education tool and as a means to dry and preserve excess harvested produce. Drew runs cross country and track and enjoys scuba diving, sailing, and outdoor adventures.

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Two Woodside town officials retiring

Woodside threw a party on Nov. 17 at Independence Hall to celebrate the retirements of Woodside Town Clerk Janet Koelsch and Deputy Town Manager and Town Engineer Paul Nagengast.

It's been 27 and a half years for Ms. Koelsch in Town Hall, and eight years for Mr. Nagengast, whose last day at work was the day of the party. Ms. Koelsch is set to leave Dec. 18.

"In their respective roles, they have been invaluable members of the Town Hall team and valuable members of the Woodside community," Town Manager Kevin Bryant said.

"I know that the council and community join me in congratulating them on outstanding public service careers and wishing them the very best as they move on to the next chapter of their lives."

Commission rejects deputy's appeal

The county Civil Service Commission on Nov. 10 unanimously upheld disciplinary

BRIEFS

action against Deputy Juan Lopez of the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office in connection with allegations that he violated jail policies and procedures.

An internal-affairs investigation in 2014 concluded that Mr. Lopez inappropriately hugged an inmate, provided inmates with food from outside the jail, and lied to investigators.

The five-member commission met to hear Mr. Lopez's appeal of punishment that included a 150-hour suspension and designation as an officer who could not be relied on to tell the truth.

Several Sheriff's Office employees testified, much of it recounting events of Nov. 5, 2013, during a transfer of an inmate from one cell block of the county jail to another.

Mr. Lopez is also accused of conspiracy in the smuggling of cellphones into the jail and of fraud in connection with his run for sheriff in the June 2014 election.

The Almanac was unable to reach Mr. Lopez for comment.

POLICE CALLS

This information is based on reports from the Menlo Park and Atherton police departments 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.

MENLO PARK

Residential burglaries:

■ A shotgun, a handgun, a safe, jewelry and documents were stolen from a house on Central Avenue. The burglar entered the house by smashing a bathroom window. Estimated loss: \$12,700. Nov. 6.

■ Someone entered a house on Carlton Avenue by forcing open a rear window, then ransacking the interior, stealing jewelry, flatware, a purse and sunglasses. Estimated loss: \$8,990. Nov. 3.

■ A burglar entered a house on Mills Street through a bathroom window after prying open the screen, then stole a flat-screen TV, shoes, a blanket, tools and two bottles of wine. Estimated loss: \$1,895. Nov. 3.

■ **Commercial burglary:** After cutting the cables on two video surveillance cameras in the parking lot of Memry Corp. on Campbell Avenue, burglars cut a lock on a fence into an area containing metal materials. It's not clear whether anything was stolen. Nov. 9.

Thefts:

■ While the driver of a pickup truck was down in a manhole, someone stole a hand-held electronic device from the open back of the truck. Estimated loss: \$1,000. Nov. 2.

■ A man and a woman walked out of the Safeway supermarket at 525 El Camino Real with a bag of personal hygiene items and vitamins without having paid for them. When confronted by the store manager, the man apologized, said he didn't have the money to pay for the goods, and said they would wait while the manager called police. But when police arrived, the man and woman had gone, along with the merchandise. Estimated loss: \$600. Nov. 9.

■ Someone stole a locked bicycle parked in front of the public library on Alma Street. Estimated loss: \$530. Nov. 3.

■ A locked bicycle was stolen from a carport on Sharon Road. No estimate on losses. Nov. 7.

■ A package containing two T-shirts

and a belt were stolen from the doorstep of a house on Stanford Avenue. Estimated loss: \$87.50. Nov. 8.

■ Someone opened a mailbox on Laurel Street, stole \$10 in cash from each of two envelopes and returned the opened mail to the mailbox. Nov. 3.

■ A man in his late 40s or early 50s, about 5 feet 7 inches tall, weighing about 175 pounds and wearing a black jacket, gray-and-white camouflage shorts, black leggings and light-colored shoes is suspected of stealing a sling-shot from Big 5 Sporting Goods at 700 El Camino Real. Estimated loss: \$8.99. Nov. 8.

■ Someone removed a piece of mail from the front porch of a house on Artisan Drive. No estimate on losses. Nov. 8.

■ **Stolen vehicle:** A white 1999 Chevrolet Cheyenne pickup truck from Sharon Park Drive. Nov. 10.

WOODSIDE

■ **Residential burglary:** A wallet was stolen from a job site on Foxhill Road. Estimated loss: \$300 to \$500. Nov. 5.

■ **Auto burglary:** Someone broke a window on a vehicle parked in the 3000 block of Woodside Road and stole a laptop computer, a watch and clothing. Estimated loss: \$2,380. Nov. 3.

■ **Stolen vehicle:** A resident of Moore Road left a vehicle parked in the driveway, unlocked and with the keys inside, and the vehicle was gone the next morning. Nov. 2.

WEST MENLO PARK

■ **Residential burglary:** Someone attempted to break into a house on Camino de los Robles through a rear window. The resident reported nothing stolen. Nov. 4.

ATHERTON

■ **Thefts:** Four students performing in a play on the campus of Menlo School on Valparaiso Avenue returned to a classroom serving as a temporary dressing room to find four laptop computers had been stolen. Estimated loss: \$5,000. Nov. 6.

■ **Fraud:** Using an ATM machine on Wilshire Boulevard in Los Angeles, someone withdrew \$303 from the account of a resident of Irving Avenue. Oct. 15.

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Menlo Park debuts holiday wine walk

By Jane Knoerle
Special to the Almanac

The first "Taste of the Mountains Wine Walk" in downtown Menlo Park will be held from 2 to 5 p.m. Saturday, Dec. 5. The event is part of a holiday weekend that includes a Friday night tree lighting and a Saturday morning breakfast with Santa.

The wine walk, sponsored by the Greenheart Land Co. and the Santa Cruz Winegrowers Association, will benefit the Menlo Park Atherton Education Foundation. Tickets are \$45 in advance and \$55 at the door.

Downtown shops and restaurants will be open during the

wine walk and people under 21 may attend the tasting areas. You must be 21 to purchase wine tasting glasses and wristbands. Pouring locations will be located up and down Santa Cruz Avenue.

The 12 participating wineries are Bargetto Winery, Big Basin Vineyards, Burrell School Vineyards, Byington Vineyard and Winery, House Family Vineyards, Kings Mountain Vineyards, Mindego Ridge Vineyard, Portola Vineyards, Russian Ridge Winery, The Mountain Winery, Thomas Fogarty Winery, and Woodside Vineyards.

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Thanksgiving libations

Give thanks this year for cocktails, mocktails as well as the food

by Elena Kadwany

Thanksgiving planning is typically all about the food — what to make, how to make it, whether to stick with the classics or try something new.

What you're drinking, consequently, can end up as an afterthought. This year, don't neglect the libations. Thanksgiving food and fall flavors yield excellent cocktail (and mocktail) combinations. Get your wheels turning below with ideas and recipes from local bar managers and beverage directors.

The Poinsettia

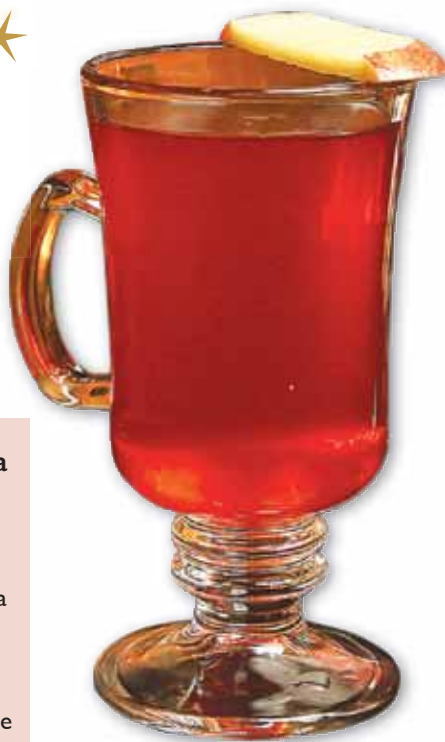
Adam Chick, lead mixologist at Quattro at the Four

How to make a Poinsettia

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 ounces of Applejack brandy
- 5 ounces of pomegranate tea (1 tablespoon of tea, three red apple slices, one cinnamon stick and two cloves)
- 1 ounce of pomegranate juice

Steep the tea with aromatics for two minutes. Pour the brandy into a tall glass, and add the steeped tea and pomegranate juice. Then garnish with a red apple slice.



Veronica Weber

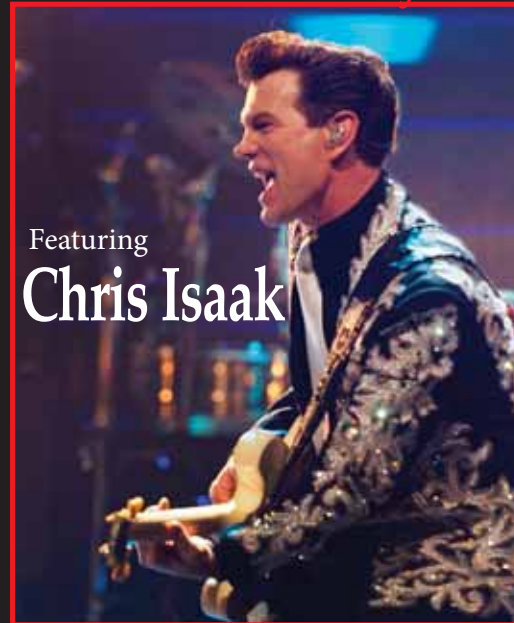
"The Poinsettia" cocktail at Quattro features tea steeped with cinnamon and apples mixed with pomegranate juice and brandy.

Seasons Silicon Valley, likes to make what he calls the "Poinsettia," a cocktail made with pomegranate tea as its base. Brew up some tea (Chick

makes his own, but store-bought would do the job), add some fresh pomegranate juice

Continued on next page

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HAPPY HOLIDAYS



Michelle Le

Pizzeria Delfina's lead bartender Daniel Bishop pours the Abella cocktail, made with apple brandy, apple butter and rye whiskey, into a glass cup.

Continued from previous page

and fall ingredients like apple slices, cinnamon and clove. Then, "hit it with some brandy to spike it up."

For those who aren't consuming alcohol, the Poinsettia still works without the booze. "Omit the brandy and you can have a refreshing cooler maybe while you're entertaining guests or starting turkey in the morning," Chick said.

The Abella

Palo Alto's Pizzeria Delfina's fall cocktail menu features what they call the "Abella," in homage to the ancient Roman town of Avella in Campania, Italy, which was famous for its "luxurious apples," said beverage director Sally Kim. The drink is made with rye whiskey, apple brandy, lemon juice, ginger honey, apple butter and bitters.

How to make the Abella

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 ounce of Rittenhouse Rye
- 1/2 ounce of apple brandy
- 3/4 ounce of lemon juice
- 1/2 ounce of ginger honey
- a teaspoon of apple butter
- a dash of angostura bitters

Put all ingredients into a shaker with three ice cubes and shake for 30 seconds. Strain and pour into a Nick and Nora glass, and garnish with a dehydrated lemon chip and clove. The garnishes should just float on top.

Apple Orchard

Can making cocktails be as much of a family affair as Thanksgiving dinner? Seems impossible, but Shawn Reza-zadeh, bartender at Madera at the Rosewood Sand Hill in Menlo Park, said it can be. For the restaurant's "Apple Orchard" cocktail, which really sounds more like dessert than a drink, start by taking the core out of an apple. Save the core to use to muddle the cocktail ingredients.

Take fall-friendly ingredients like brown sugar, raisins, pecans and cinnamon, and stuff them inside the apple and

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How to make spiced and baked apples

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 medium apples
- 1/4 cup of brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon of cinnamon
- 1/4 cup of chopped pecans
- 1/4 cup of raisins
- 3 tablespoons of butter
- 3/4 cup of boiling water

Mix together brown sugar, cinnamon, pecans and raisins. Core four apples and stuff

them with the spice mixture. Place the apples on a baking pan at least an inch apart and pour boiling water into the bottom of the pan, surrounding the apples. Bake the apples at 375 degrees for 30 minutes. Let cool for at least one hour. Cut each apple along the stuffed core into quarters.

★ bake it for a mid-day treat or dessert that guests of all ages can enjoy.

“It almost tastes like an apple pie,” Rezazadeh said. “It’s something to do with the family, with the kids.”

How to make the Apple Orchard cocktail

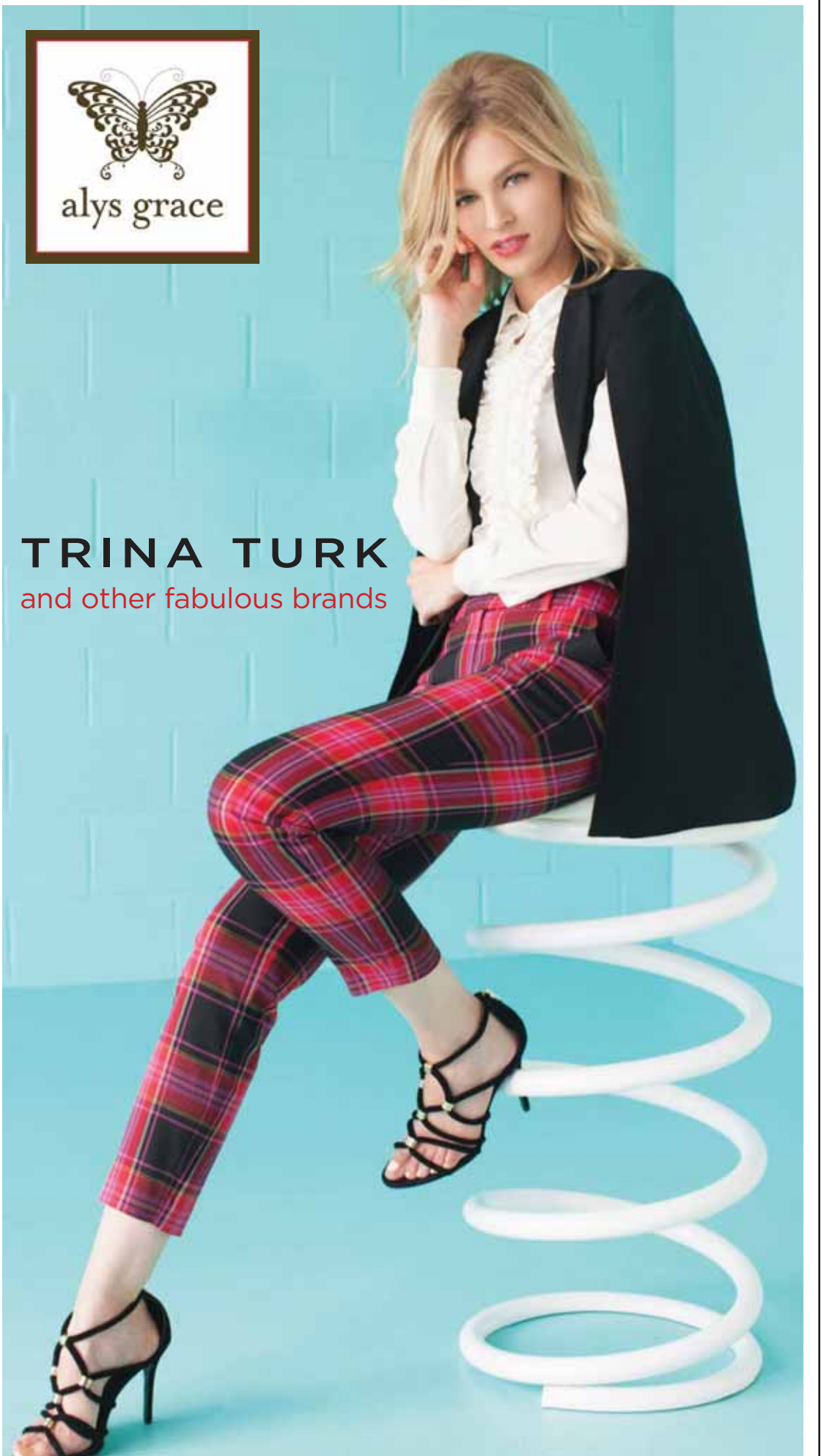
INGREDIENTS:

- 1/4 teaspoon of brown sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon of cinnamon
- two apple wedges
- 1 1/2 ounces of apple brandy (Calvados is recommended)
- 1/4 ounce of lemon juice
- 1/4 ounce of simple syrup

Combine all ingredients into a metal shaker. Muddle until thoroughly mixed. Add ice and shake vigorously. Pour mixture through a mesh strainer into a rocks glass with one large ice cube. Garnish with a cinnamon stick and an apple slice.



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