



ATHERTONIAN

Quarterly Newsletter for Atherton Residents

Winter 2005

New Mayor and Vice Mayor

At the City Council meeting of December 15, 2004, the Atherton City Council unanimously chose Council Member Bill Conwell to serve as Mayor and Council Member Charles Marsala to serve as Vice Mayor. Annually, the Council appoints two of its members to serve in these important roles. Congratulations Mayor Conwell and Vice Mayor Marsala!

Interim Report of the Atherton Caltrain Corridor Committee

Part A: Caltrain Developments
Part B: High-Speed Rail (HRS) Studied



Winter Storm Preparedness

In order to assist residents with preparing for the winter storm season, the Town has a stockpile of sand and sandbags available to Atherton residents, located between the Public Works Corporation Yard and Town Permit Center at 93 Station Lane.

Just drive behind the Permit Center at the south end of the Atherton train station parking lot. Sandbags are free to Atherton residents, but residents must bag their own sand (don't forget to bring a shovel!). Please limit yourself to 15 bags, unless there is an urgent need for more.

To reduce the risk of damage due to flooding, residents are advised to take the following measures:

- Pick-up sandbags and sand at the Public Works Corporation Yard if needed.
- Clear debris from gutters and down spouts to assure proper water run-off.
- Do not place trash or debris in the gutters, creeks, or drainage ways, in order to keep catch basins and storm drain openings clear of debris.
- Move electrical wires and extension cords off the ground in any area prone to flooding.

As a reminder, property owners and contractors are responsible for keeping vehicles from tracking mud out onto the roadway. Mud that gets onto the

roadway causes the streets to become slippery and unsightly, and the mud can eventually end up in the Bay. All communities in the Bay Area are required by federal mandate to eliminate or minimize erosion and polluted runoff from construction sites to storm drains and other bodies of water. Most mud entering the Bay this time of year comes from construction sites.

Residents should also be aware that they are responsible for keeping roadside shoulders, drainage ways and gutters cleared of encroaching vegetation, leaves and debris. This is necessary to maintain the drainage capacity needed to carry run-off from a winter storm, and to minimize the exposure of public and private property to flooding.

For more information regarding sandbags or winter storm preparedness, call the Public Works Department at 752-0570.

Part A: Caltrain Developments

The Town of Atherton is now facing changes that will affect the Town's relationship with the railroad which has served Atherton since 1864. Changes that have already happened include an increase in the number and speed of trains passing through Town. Despite the increase in the number of trains passing through town, the number of trains stopping in Atherton has been reduced, and could be



reduced even further, with the possibility of Caltrain eliminating all rail stops at Atherton.

For this reason, the Caltrain Corridor Committee has prepared this interim report to provide an overview to residents of the current issues involving the Town and Caltrain, and the Town's possible options for responding to those issues. Please review this report, and then complete the survey, which will be

(Continued on page 4)

Inside...

- CERT Training.....7
- New Fire Sprinkler Ordinance.....9
- Public Works Department.....10

Tree Committee To Offer Winter Workshop

The Tree Committee is pleased to announce a winter workshop that will show you how to save time and money by thinking of your trees' needs before starting a construction project. The workshop will be held on **Friday, February 4, 2005, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon, in the Carriage House at Holbrook-Palmer Park**, located at 150 Watkins Avenue in Atherton. Topics will include the latest preservation techniques, construction practices and details for protecting trees on development projects. Homeowners, general contractors, landscape contractors and architects are encouraged to attend this valuable workshop. Space is limited. Cost is \$25.

To ensure a place at this workshop, please call 752-0526 for reservations. Register and pre-pay in advance by sending your check made payable to: **Atherton Tree Committee, 91 Ashfield Road, Atherton, CA, 94027.**

APOA Purchases Bike Helmets for Kids

The Atherton Police Officer's Association (APOA) recently purchased 100 bicycle helmets in various sizes for students in our community who cannot afford to buy one or have a hardship that prevents them from buying this critical piece of safety equipment. Selby Lane School recently received some helmets to provide to students. The APOA and the Atherton Police Department are strongly committed to the safety of our children and are available to provide bike safety education to individuals and classrooms. **For more information about the APOA's bicycle helmet program, please contact the Atherton Police Department at 688-6500.**

Atherton Heritage Association Seeking Mementos

The Atherton Heritage Room is always looking for information on the history of the residents, homes and properties in Atherton. If you have old pictures, maps, letters and newspaper clippings you would like to donate, the Association would certainly welcome them. We are open on Tuesdays from 10:00 a.m. until noon in the Heritage Room, located next to the Atherton Council Chambers at 94 Ashfield Road, or you can leave items across the street at the front counter at Town Hall. If you share an interest in the history of Atherton or if you want to discover some of the history of your home, stop by and see us! Our phone number is 688-6540.



Free Parking at Caltrain Station Through March 31st

Last September, the City Council approved a plan to drop the 50¢ parking fee at the Town-owned Caltrain parking lot for a six-month trial period. The free parking is intended to help encourage greater ridership and insure the continuation of Atherton's existing Caltrain service.

In addition, at their November 17th meeting, the Council approved a plan for free extended overnight parking for patrons wishing to use Caltrain to connect to SFO and San Jose International airports. The free parking is good through March 31, 2005.



Police Talk Mountain Lions at Annual Town Meeting

Mountain lions were the main topic of discussion at the Police Department's Annual Town meeting held on November 4, 2004 at St. Joseph's School. An estimated 60 people attended including local news reporters.

Speaking at the meeting was Police Chief Robert Brennan, Lieutenant Don Kelly, a ranger from the California Department of Fish and Game, and Debra Bartens, a naturalist from the City of Palo Alto. Chief Brennan explained that the Department of Fish and Game has jurisdiction over what action can be taken after a mountain lion sighting. At this time, the Department of Fish and Game does not consider the lion(s) sighted in Atherton to be a public safety threat and will not go out and capture or dispatch one unless it exhibits aggressive behavior. Lt. Kelly and Ms. Bartens presented information on mountain lion safety and how their agencies are dealing with lion sightings. Residents asked many questions and expressed their concerns about the recent sightings in the western part of town.

To view the responses to the questions asked at the meeting, please visit the Town's website at www.ci.atherton.ca.us and click on "Town News."

TOWN OF ATHERTON

91 Ashfield Road • Atherton, CA 94027

City Council

Meets the third Wednesday of the month at 7:00 pm
Town Council Chambers • 94 Ashfield Road

William R. Conwell, Mayor 368-0994 (wk)
term expires 11/2006 wconwell@ci.atherton.ca.us

Charles E. Marsala, Vice Mayor 328-7113
term expires 11/2006 cmarsala@ci.atherton.ca.us

Alan B. Carlson, Council Member 408-998-4150 (wk)
term expires 11/2006 acarlson@ci.atherton.ca.us

James R. Janz, Council Member 325-8666 (wk)
term expires 11/2008 jjanz@ci.atherton.ca.us

Kathleen McKeithen, Council Member 321-3633
term expires 11/2008 kmckeithen@ci.atherton.ca.us

Helpful Phone Numbers



(All area codes are 650 unless otherwise noted)

Comcast Cable (formerly AT&T) (800) 945-2288
California Water Service..... 367-6800
Pacific Gas & Electric (800) 743-5000

County Services

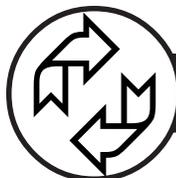
Animal Control.....363-4840
Assessor.....363-4500
Library.....328-2422
Supervisor, Richard Gordon, 3rd Dist.....363-4569
Voter Registration.....312-5222

Menlo Park Fire District

Business/Administration Office.....688-8400
Emergency.....323-2404 or 911

Waste/Recycling

Browning Ferris Industries (BFI) Garbage.....592-2411
Recycling.....637-1411
Fair Oaks Sanitation District.....363-4100
West Bay Sanitation District.....321-0384



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

DIRECTORY

Contacts & Telephone Numbers

Main Number 752-0500
Fax Number 688-6528
e-mail atherton@ci.atherton.ca.us

Animal Control 363-4840

Building

Mike Hood, Bldg. Official 752-0523
Information/Inspections 752-0560
Daily Inspection Schedule 752-0561

City Attorney

Marc Hynes, City Attorney 967-6941

City Manager

Jim Robinson, City Manager 752-0504
Linda Kelly,
Assistant to the City Manager/
Acting City Clerk 752-0529
Greg Sam, Interim
Assistant to City Manager 752-0546

City Planner

Neal Martin, City Planner 802-4330
Lisa Costa Sanders,
Deputy Town Planner 802-4292

Finance

John Johns, Director 752-0531
Paula Pierce,
Assistant Director 752-0519

Library

..... 328-2422

Police

Robert Brennan, Chief 752-0506
General Information 688-6500
Emergency 911

Post Office

General Information 752-0500

Public Works

Duncan Jones, Director 752-0532
Steve Tyler, PW Superintendent 752-0541
Information/Permits 752-0570
Jean Cardona,
Park Program Mgr. 752-0534
Kathy Hughes Anderson,
Town Arborist 752-0526

Heritage Room

Atherton Heritage Association 688-6540

(Continued from cover)

mailed in the near future, to express your views on these issues and continuing rail service in Atherton.

PLANNED AND POTENTIAL CALTRAIN DEVELOPMENTS

Among the possible Caltrain changes are the following:

1. Station Modifications: Caltrain's goal is to eliminate all "hold out" stations, such as the one in Atherton. A "hold out" station is a station with boarding only from one side of the tracks. This configuration requires that when a train in one direction has stopped at the station for passenger boarding or exiting, a train traveling in the opposition direction must "hold out" or wait outside the station, so as not to endanger passengers getting on or off the stopped train.

2. Electrification: Caltrain has announced that it intends to electrify the entire Caltrain line from at least San Francisco to San Jose, to make the line more energy efficient, quieter and less polluting, and to provide faster acceleration and deceleration. However, at this time, there does not appear to be sufficient funds to complete this project.

3. Grade Crossings: With or without high-speed rail, Caltrain and the PUC (State Public Utilities Commission), which has certain regulatory responsibility for Caltrain, would like to eliminate all at-grade crossings of rail tracks for safety considerations. This means that each roadway must either go over or under the tracks, or the crossing would have to be closed off.

4. Service: Caltrain expects to gradually and consistently increase the number of trains on the line. The current 86 weekday trains are projected to increase to 138 by the year 2020. Caltrain has already increased the speed of some of the trains traveling through Atherton to the current maximum allowed of 79 miles per hour. There is no assurance that any increase in general service will include Atherton. Instead, there is a possibility that Caltrain will seek to

reduce or even eliminate all train stops at Atherton.

ANTICIPATED ACTIONS

Atherton Station Track Reconfiguration

The most imminent physical changes in Atherton's station area will be to eliminate Atherton's "hold out" station status by adding:

- A boarding platform area in the Caltrain right-of-way area on the east side of the track immediately south of Fair Oaks Lane, including a minimal weather shelter,

- Pedestrian crossing gates at Fair Oaks Lane (like the kind used at the Menlo Park station), and

- A fence dividing the two tracks which would run from Fair Oaks Lane at the north to south of the boarding platforms.

In addition to the plan to eliminate the "hold out" status, the Caltrain Corridor Committee, PUC and Caltrain are investigating the creation of a "quiet zone," in which trains approaching Atherton would not be required by federal law to sound their horns as frequently. This would require the installation of additional safety measures at the Fair Oaks and Watkins crossings. Specifically, additional crossing gates would have to be installed so that each crossing would have four gates instead of the present two. This would create a complete barrier to vehicles across both lanes of the road on both sides of the tracks, when the signal is activated, to prevent cars from trying to go around the gates. The new crossing gates could hopefully be constructed as part of the project to eliminate the "hold-out" configuration.

It is worth noting that Caltrain's commitment to make these physical improvements to the station also indicates a commitment to maintaining train service in Atherton. These changes are expected to start in 2006, and be completed in 2007.

Electrification

The consequences to Atherton as a result of electrification will be the erection of supporting structures for the electrical lines (catenaries), which will require the cutting back or removal of approximately 80 trees along the Caltrain right-of-way between the northern boundary of the Town and the station.

Grade Crossings

In preparation for the planned increase in Caltrain service along the Caltrain route in the next ten years, the adjacent cities of Menlo Park and Redwood City are considering modifications to the current tracks, either to:

- 1) Drop the tracks approximately 20 feet below ground ("grade") level (very expensive),
- 2) Raise the tracks approximately 20 feet above grade (expensive),
- 3) A compromise of raising the tracks approximately ten feet above grade, and depressing the streets by the same amount,
- 4) Keep the tracks at grade and raise or lower the roadway across the tracks, or
- 5) Block off the street crossing.

Trains on elevated tracks, such as those in southern San Carlos, generate more noise and are far more visible than trains at grade. If tracks were to be elevated through Atherton, the change would almost certainly affect the property values of residents whose homes border the tracks, from which the passing trains would be much more visible and audible. An embankment to carry the elevated tracks may also require condemnation of a strip of land along the tracks.

Any changes to the track bed can be expected to be done in conjunction with changes to the current Atherton grade crossings of the Caltrain tracks at Fair Oaks Lane and Watkins Avenue - the only two grade crossings along Atherton's one-mile stretch of the Caltrain tracks.

Menlo Park's current grade crossings are at Encinal, Glenwood, Oak Grove and Ravenswood Avenues. The first crossing to the north of Atherton is at Fifth Avenue in unincorporated Redwood City. At this crossing, Fifth Avenue was constructed underneath the tracks, which are at grade level. If the adjacent entities responsible for the tracks decide to raise or lower the tracks, Atherton's options will be limited, since there would be an effort to avoid a roller-coaster effect as the tracks travel through various communities.

At the Committee's urging, Menlo Park has initiated a forum where representatives of the various affected cities can discuss their needs and concerns. One meeting has already taken place, attended by representatives of Redwood City, Atherton, Menlo Park, Palo Alto and Mountain View. Monthly meetings of this group are planned. In addition to coordinating actions which affect neighboring communities, this informal group of cities hopes to have more influence over the process by which decisions are made concerning the Caltrain corridor.

Further Reduction or Elimination of Caltrain Service to Atherton

Most importantly, unless ridership at the Atherton station increases, it is quite possible that Caltrain service to Atherton will continue to be reduced even further, as was done this past June, and conceivably even eliminated.

In June 2004, Caltrain implemented a new schedule, which reduced by more than one-third the number of stops at the Atherton station. It eliminated all but one express train stop at Atherton. An October 2004 preliminary count of weekday boardings at Atherton showed that the number of Atherton boardings had dropped by one-third since the February 2004 count. A similar result occurred when service was reduced in 2002.

Caltrain's development strategy is to increase the number of trains and their speed. Eliminating intervening stops can reduce the time length of trips between stations. Train speed can also be increased, in part, by eliminating

stops. Although Caltrain has not yet publicly communicated the specific factors it uses in increasing or decreasing service when timetables are released, stops are usually eliminated based mostly on the number of riders using each stop.

If ridership at the Atherton station does not increase, Caltrain may pressure the Town, and the other communities on the line, to further reduce or even eliminate Atherton service. If that happens, Atherton will continue to experience increased train traffic through Town, without any benefits. The Town is trying to encourage use of the Atherton station by offering free parking at the station, including extended parking for several days, so riders can take Caltrain to the San Francisco or San Jose airports. Increased ridership is needed for better service. If Atherton wishes to maintain or increase its Caltrain service, it will have to increase its ridership.

Part B: High-Speed Rail (HRS) Studied

In addition to the Caltrain developments impacting Atherton, there is a proposal to develop a high-speed rail service (HSR) between northern and southern California. If approved, the high-speed rail could run through the Peninsula in the Caltrain corridor. This proposal will be placed on the state ballot for 2006.

If development of a state-wide HRS system is approved by the voters in 2006, there is a possibility that HSR service would run through the Caltrain corridor and Atherton. However, at this time, the route of any HSR service has not been finalized. An alternative route being considered, called the Altamont Pass route, if selected, could bypass Atherton completely. Atherton, Menlo Park, Sierra Club and many other entities have officially requested that the Altamont Pass route be considered, and it now appears that this route will receive further study.

If HSR becomes a reality, and takes place in the Caltrain corridor, up to 134 trains per day would pass through the Town at speeds of 90 to 124 miles

per hour. This would be in addition to any increase in the number of Caltrain commuter trains. State-wide construction and implementation would occur between 2008 and 2020. The impact on our Town would be significant, including the likely condemnation of land along the corridor to accommodate the addition of two more tracks. Further, HSR would require that railroad/street crossings at grade would be eliminated. The present at-grade crossings of Watkins and Fair Oaks Lane would have to be closed off, or grade separations would have to be built so that the streets would cross over or under the tracks. Alternatively, the street crossings could remain at their current grade, and the train could run on an elevated embankment, or in a trench or tunnel, through Town. The Committee would like to see the trench and tunnel concepts studied further, and we are working on developing support for this concept with neighboring cities.

If HSF becomes a reality in the Caltrain corridor, it would provide the necessary funding for at-grade crossing elimination. This may be the only way that more elaborate and expensive solutions can be developed, such as running the tracks in a trench or tunnel through the heavily developed Peninsula.

Seeking Community Input

Please give us your thoughts and ideas on these Caltrain and high-speed rail issues by contacting Caltrain Corridor Committee Chair and Council member Jim Janz, any Council member or City Manager Jim Robinson (see page 3 for contact information). More information will be provided to residents as events occur.

For further information, please visit the following web sites:

■ Caltrain Corridor Committee: www.ci.atherton.ca.us/caltrain

■ *Athertonian* 2004 Spring/Summer issues: www.ci.atherton.ca.us/athertonian.html

■ Caltrain: www.caltrain.com

■ CA High-Speed Rail Authority: www.cahighspeedrail.ca.gov

November 2004 Election Results

Following are the results of the Atherton General Municipal and Special Municipal Election held on November 2, 2004.

Council Members

For the Office of Council Member (two seats), Council Members James R. Janz and Kathy McKeithen were re-elected, each for a four-year term of office by the following votes:*

James R. Janz	2,798
Kathy McKeithen	2,833

*Even though there were only two candidates for two seats, California law does not allow for the cancellation of the election when a city measure has qualified and is to be submitted to the voters at the municipal election. Since Atherton's Measure "O" was on the ballot, the Council Member candidates' names also were required to appear on the ballot.

Measure "O"

Measure "O" was a measure to renew the Town of Atherton's four-year parcel tax. The balloting results were as follows:

Yes	2,174	(57.21%)
No	1,626	(42.79%)

Measure "O" required a two-thirds (2/3rds) majority vote for passage, or 66.67% of the vote. The measure failed to receive the required number of votes and did not pass.

Since the revenue from the parcel tax is required for the maintenance of the current level of services enjoyed by Town

residents, at this time the City Council is considering the alternatives for a tax measure to appear on the June 2005 ballot. The current parcel tax, which was passed by the voters in June 2001, will expire on June 30, 2005. More information regarding a future election will be forthcoming in the Spring issue of the *Athertonian*.

Any questions regarding elections may be directed to Linda Kelly, Acting City Clerk, at 752-0529.

Disinfecting Water for Emergency Storage

It is recommended that an appropriate amount of tap water be stored in a plastic, airtight, clean container in a cool place in the event of an emergency. Tap water may be stored without the addition of bleach and may be kept for up to six months before it should be replaced. With the introduction of using chloramine to replace chlorine for treating tap water, the San Francisco Public Utility Commission recommends that **at the time of usage, 16 drops of bleach should be added to each gallon of water.** The bleach should be mixed and left to stand for 30 minutes prior to use. For more information, visit: www.sfwater.org



Jennifer Frew

Employee of the Quarter

Congratulations to Jennifer Frew in the Police Department!

Jennifer was recently selected as "Employee of the Quarter" for her outstanding efforts as an Administrative Assistant to the Chief of Police. Jennifer serves as the Department's training manager and assists with various administrative and personnel duties in the Chief's Office.

Here's what her fellow workers had to say about her:

"Jennifer Frew truly provides exemplary service, above and beyond the call of duty, as the Assistant to the Chief of Police."

"Atherton PD is one of only a few agencies in San Mateo County to be fully compliant with POST certification each year and the only agency to retain 100% compliance with all training requirements every year. This has only happened since Jennifer took over as Training Manager . . ."

Congratulations Jennifer! Keep up the great work!

Atherton Police Explorer Earns "Top Cadet" Award

Only one week after being recognized as "Explorer of the Year," Atherton Police Explorer Michael Dries-Coons earned the top honor of "Top Cadet" at the Peninsula Law Enforcement Explorer Academy.

Founded in 1972, Police Explorers from 17 different departments throughout San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties participate in this 100 hour basic training program which teaches them citizenship, history of law enforcement, the law, first aid and CPR, crime scene investigation, report writing, firearms safety and search



Atherton Police Explorer Michael Dries-Coons displaying trophy with his father and Police Chief Robert Brennan.

and rescue, among other topics. The Explorer who earns the highest academic score over this challenging

nine-week program is recognized by the Academy with the perpetual trophy that dates back to the program's inception 32 years ago.

The Atherton Police Explorer Post is sponsored by the Police Department and funded through the Police Activities League (PAL), through generous donations from the community. The program is open to young people 15 through 21 years of age.

For information or questions about the Atherton Police Explorer Program, please call 688-6500.



Menlo Park Fire District Offers CERT Disaster Training

The Menlo Park Fire District, is offering free Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training classes for Atherton residents.

In times of a local emergency or disaster, the Fire District and Atherton Police Department will be busy trying to respond to the needs of the entire community. People who depend on emergency support services may become vulnerable in these situations.

The goal of the program is to help the residents of the Menlo Park Fire District to be self sufficient in a major disaster situation. CERT training promotes a partnership between emergency services and the communities they serve.

After graduation, CERT members are included as emergency response resources for their particular area. If a catastrophic event overwhelms or delays the community's emergency responders, CERT members can assist others by applying the basic response and organizational skills that they have learned during their training. These skills can help save and sustain lives following a disaster until help arrives. CERT skills can also apply to daily emergencies as well.

For the year 2005, we will be organizing the 150 members of our community into CERT Teams, adding communication and resources, so we can work with these teams within our Emergency Command Center.

CERT Training Schedule for 2005:

Menlo Park Council Chambers
Thursdays, 6:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m.
March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31
April 7

Atherton (location to be determined)
Wednesdays, 6:30 - 9:00 p.m.
September 14, 21, 28
October 5, 12, 19

Classes:

Class 1: Emergency and Earthquake Preparedness
Class 2: Fire Safety, Hazmat
Class 3: Basic First Aid, Triage
Class 4: Light Search and Rescue
Class 5: Incident Command System and Refresher
Class 6: Hands-on Exercise
Graduation!

For more information on CERT or to sign-up for classes, please contact Carol Parker at the Menlo Park Fire District at 688-8415 or visit: www.menlofire.org/CERT



Town's Heritage Trees are Carefully Protected

Preservation of the scenic beauty of the Town and protection of

the privacy of its citizens is the principal reason behind the Town's tree ordinance covering removal of and damage to heritage trees. Heritage trees are defined in Chapter 8.10 of the Atherton Municipal Code as a tree located in the tree preservation area of a lot or a native Oak tree located anywhere on the lot which has a trunk circumference of 48 inches or more when measured 48 inches above the natural grade. The tree preservation area is that area outside the building area of a lot. The building area is the area within a lot on which a building or dwelling may be constructed.

Heritage trees may not be removed unless a permit is first obtained from the Town. All heritage trees must be identified and designated on every map required by the Town in connection with any application for a land use or building permit. Additionally, a heritage tree protection and preservation plan may be required with each application. The purpose of this last requirement is to ensure protection of heritage trees during what are often extensive construction projects here in town. The protection plan must be prepared by a certified arborist in order to determine potential impacts to trees and recommend mitigation to reduce those impacts to less than a significant level. Details of the Town's specifications for heritage tree protection and preservation can be found in the Town's tree preservation guidelines standards and specifications and are available from the Building Department.

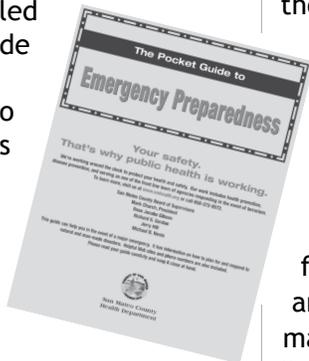
Chapter 8.10 of the Atherton Municipal Code declares it unlawful for any person to damage or harm a heritage tree by any means. This includes, but is not limited to excess pruning, topping, cutting, girdling, poisoning, over watering, unauthorized relocation or transportation of a tree, or excavating, grade alteration, compaction or paving near the tree. Determination of damage is made by the Building Official or Town Arborist.

Any person causing a heritage tree to be removed or damaged in violation of Chapter 8.10 may be prosecuted by a civil action or criminal complaint. A civil action carries potential penalties up to \$5,000. Criminal proceedings are misdemeanors which carry a penalty of up to a \$1,000 fine and up to one year in jail, or both.

Any reported violations of the Town ordinance are promptly investigated with citations being issued if necessary by the Town Arborist. The Town is committed to ensuring that the Town's heritage trees are protected. If you have any questions regarding the operation of the Town's Heritage Tree Ordinance, please contact the Town's Arborist, Kathy Hughes Anderson at 752-0526.

Emergency Preparedness Guide Distributed to Town Residents

Last month, in an effort to educate the public about emergency preparedness, the San Mateo County Health Department mailed the "Pocket Guide to Emergency Preparedness" to county residents in selected zip codes, including Atherton.



The Pocket Guide offers residents valuable information on how to plan for and respond to natural and man-made disasters. Helpful web sites and phone numbers are also included.

The Pocket Guide to Emergency Preparedness was developed by the County Health Department and funded through a grant from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. It introduces several important concepts including how to shelter in place and how to access NETVACs (Neighborhood Emergency Triage, Vaccination and Antibiotic Centers).

Remember, emergency preparedness begins at home. Making a family emergency plan and preparing a kit of emergency supplies are vital to keep your family safe in any emergency. Questions regarding the Pocket Guide can be directed to the San Mateo County Health Department at 372-8572. *An electronic version of the guide has been posted on the Town's website at www.ci.atherton.ca.us under "Town News."*



Learn to Make Your Own TV Show

The Midpeninsula Community Media Center in Palo Alto is the official non-profit community access facility for the community of Atherton, as well as East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Palo Alto and Stanford. Using communication technologies toward the goal of community building, the Media Center makes video production facilities available, production workshops, volunteer studio crews and ongoing technical support for those who wish to utilize the community access cable channels. Hundreds of local individuals, organizations, agencies and schools have made video programs with the help of Media Center staff that are broadcast on local cable channels.

Athertonians can turn their home video footage into a community TV show to be shown on community access Channels 27, 28 and 30. Hands-on workshops on field production and editing are also available. The field production class covers camcorder operation, use of microphones and tripods and basic lighting techniques. The digital editing class, with a maximum of three students, offers a guide to Final Cut Pro software. Students learn to capture footage, put together a simple cut of their movie and add titles, transitions and music.

The popular studio production class gives up to 12 participants the opportunity to operate the professional TV studio and function as a team with crew positions and a director. During the third and last session, students experience the excitement of producing a live show, using the audio board and microphones, computer character generator, video switcher and cameras. Graduates can either recruit a volunteer crew to produce their own show or volunteer to help other community members produce their show.

The Media Center is located at 900 San Antonio Road in Palo Alto. *For more information, call 494-8686 or visit www.communitymediacenter.net.*

Finance Director Recognized by ACIL

Atherton's Finance Director, John P. Johns, was recently recognized by the Atherton Civic Interest League's Board of Directors for his "outstanding contributions to the fiscal integrity of the Town of Atherton."

John was awarded the Order of Merit for restoring public trust in the integrity of the Town's financial system through the implementation of improved internal controls, financial reporting, budgeting and forecasting processes. The last four years in a row, the Town has received a "clean opinion" from independent outside auditors on its financial statements, beginning when John joined the Town staff.



Atherton's Finance Director, John P. Johns

Town Adopts New Fire Sprinkler Ordinance

At their meeting of November 17, 2004, the City Council adopted a new fire sprinkler ordinance at the request of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, which provides fire and emergency medical services to Atherton residents.

The new law became effective on December 18, 2004 (ordinance takes effect 30 days after adoption).

The new ordinance requires automatic fire sprinklers in new buildings that exceed 1,000 square feet in area or new basements that exceed 250 square feet in size. It does not require sprinklers for additions to existing buildings or the existing building itself.

When sprinkler systems are required, they are designed to a standard known as "Uniform Fire Code 13 (d)." This residential system is less restrictive than a commercial sprinkler system because it allows the

use of plastic pipe rather than iron or steel pipe. Also, the number of sprinkler heads for a residential system is less than for a comparable commercial system.

A residential sprinkler system can usually be supplied through a one-inch residential water meter rather than a six-inch minimum dedicated supply line for a commercial system.



Since the Town's new ordinance simply ratifies the ordinance of the Menlo Park Fire District in order for it to be administered and enforced in Atherton, issues with permits, appeals and interpretation of the ordinance will be handled by the Fire District.

For more information or questions, please contact the Menlo Park Fire District at 688-8400.

Get Involved in Your Town!

This Spring, Town residents are invited to apply for membership on Town commissions and committees.

Openings will occur May 1, 2005 on the following: Planning Commission, General Plan Committee, Arts Committee and Audit Committee.

If you are a registered voter of the Town and would like an opportunity to serve your community by participating on a Town commission or committee, contact Linda Kelly, Acting City Clerk, at 752-0529.

Applications are available on the Town website at www.ci.atherton.ca.us under "Town News" and will be accepted in the Town Administrative Offices, 91 Ashfield Road, until Friday, April 1, 2005.

Message from Your Police Department: Living Trust Investments

The Police Department would like to remind Atherton residents to be cautious about a crime industry specifically designed to exploit the financial insecurities of one of our most vulnerable populations - senior citizens.

The Department has received several complaints about companies offering free home meetings to discuss identity theft, Medicare issues and "Living Trusts." The concern is that these companies might be trying to sell inappropriate financial investments for some seniors, namely annuities. These "Living Trusts Mills" use scare tactics to pressure seniors into investing into these annuities, even though these annuities may make the seniors' savings

inaccessible for 15 to 20 years, carry severe tax penalties, have exorbitant "surrender charges," and create complicated estate problems after death. The representatives of these companies misrepresent themselves as experts in estate planning and identity theft. They gain the trust and confidence of the victim, and then misuse that trust to discover the extent of the client's assets under the pretext of determining whether the client can benefit from the living trust.

Please be wary of any uninvited solicitations from people or companies you don't know or trust. One such company, The Gentry Group, has been ordered to desist and refrain from advising

people or selling securities in order to buy annuities until they have secured certificates authorizing them to conduct business as investment advisors in California. This has not stopped them from contacting citizens of Atherton and offering them a home visit.

If you would like to report an incident of an inappropriate solicitation of a senior regarding these "Living Trusts Mills," please contact the Atherton Police Department at 688-6500.

For more information, please read the brochure from the Federal Trade Commission at: www.ftc.gov/bcp/conline/pubs/services/livtrust.pdf



Selby Education Foundation Marks Extraordinary Achievement in First Year

Selby Education Foundation (SEF), a non-profit education organization dedicated to raising funds for Selby Lane School's academic and outreach programs, has successfully finished its first year of operations, achieving all of its initial objectives. Key achievements include:

- Incorporated and achieved IRS approved designation as a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation.
- Formed an active volunteer board and community group.
- Raised over \$50,000 in funds to support the education programs at Selby Lane School.
- Successfully sponsored and funded the prestigious International Baccalaureate Program (IBO) at Selby Lane, enabling school candidacy for the 6th and 7th grade Middle Years Program.
- Conducted successful community outreach programs including the Foundation's public launch, Carnival and Halloween Parade.

Under the leadership of Principal Bernie Vidales, the school has shown dramatic improvement in Academic Performance Index (API) test scores over the last two years, with median score improvements of more than 15 percent each year. The IBO program candidacy, made possible by SEF donations, has also played a major role in attracting new students to Selby. Fifteen 6th grade students transferred into the school this year, compared to zero the previous year to take advantage of the school's academic programs and growing opportunities. Additional improvements at the school include the hiring of a Spanish and language arts teacher and expanded teacher training.

About The IBO Program

The highly-acclaimed International Baccalaureate Program or IBO, is an organization that sets and monitors standards for top academic achievement and enrichment. Introducing IBO's Middle Years Program (MYP) at Selby Lane School will provide a private-school level of education and will leverage the recent infrastructure improvements that have been made, including new classrooms, library and computer learning facilities. The school administration expects that applying and becoming a MYP accredited school will further increase test scores. Children who continue onto the IBO's Diploma Program (through Sequoia High School) and pass the IB exams in 12th grade will receive up to 30 units of college credits at top public and Ivy League schools.

About Selby Education Foundation Founded in June 2003, SEF is a 501(c)(3) independent, community-based non-profit organization managed by a volunteer Board of Directors, comprised of leaders from all segments of the community. SEF's mission is to improve Selby Lane School, which serves portions of Redwood City and Atherton for kindergarten through eighth grade.

Donors can send donations to: **Selby Education Foundation, 50 Woodside Plaza, Ste. 513, Redwood City, CA, 94061.** All donations are 100 percent tax deductible and go towards Selby Lane School.

For additional information, please contact Jenny Redo, President Elect, at 264-9319 or jredo@selbyeducationfoundation.org or visit www.selbyeducationfoundation.org.



Public Works Department On-call 24/7

The Atherton Public Works

Department is on call 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week all year around to deal with emergency situations that arise in town.

During the winter months, the crews will receive numerous calls at all hours to respond to downed trees and power lines, localized flooding, plugged storm drains, potholes and other storm related damage. After hours response

time is usually less than 30 minutes. The staff is trained to take care of most calls on the spot.

During the winter months, our crews concentrate

on preempting storms with the good practice of cleaning up drain grates and gutters prior to the rains. Our department is diligent in taking care of broken or hanging limbs that could become a public safety hazard should they fall or break. You will also spot crews repairing potholes, trimming vegetation to clear signs and performing streetlight repair.

During the worst weather episodes, the Public Works Department is ready to respond as the need arises. If you observe our vehicles with their trademark Town logo and rotating amber lights, please slow down. This could be a sign of a downed tree or flooding, but should also be a caution to you that we have a crew member out of their vehicle.

To report plugged storm drains, downed trees, or other storm damage on public roadways, contact **Public Works at 752-0570.** After hours, you may contact the **Police Department at 688-6500** and if it is deemed an immediate public hazard, a message will be relayed to the Public Works on-call crew member.

For Our Post Office Customers,

As a reminder, our Atherton Contract Station Post Office hours are: Monday through Friday, 8:30 a.m. to Noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., closed weekends and holidays. The Post Office is located in the Town Administrative Office building at 91 Ashfield Road. Current postal rates are provided here for your convenience:

- First class mail up to one ounce: 37¢
- Postcards: 23¢
- Priority Mail up to 1 lb. & Flat Rate Envelope: \$3.85
- Express Mail up to ½ lb. & Flat Rate Envelope: \$13.65
- Express Mail over ½ lb. & up to 2 lbs.: \$17.85
- Certified Mail: \$2.30
- Return Receipt: \$1.75
- Media Mail (formerly Book Rate) up to 1 lb.: \$1.42
- Notary Public Services: \$10 per signature. For prompt service, please call 752-0500 to schedule an appointment.

Questions regarding our post office services may be directed to Kelli Robertson, Office Specialist, at 752-0500.

Don't Forget to Check Your Town Web Site!

Just a reminder that your Town is on the web at www.ci.atherton.ca.us. You can view a listing of the Town's regular and special City Council, Commission and Committee meetings



and special events under the link "Community Calendar." You can also check for the latest Town of Atherton

announcements under "Town News" and read all of the meeting agendas under the link to "Agendas, Minutes, Reports."

Children's Events at the Library - Winter & Spring

Mondays at the Library @ 4:00 p.m.

- February 17 - Storytellers, TOM AND SANDY FARLEY, will tell folktales from the Orient. Ages 4 and up.
- March 7 - MAD SCIENCE will present, "Movie Special Effects." Ages 3 and up.
- April 18 - CELEBRATION OF NATIONAL POETRY MONTH - ACTIVATED STORYTELLERS will present "Activated Poetry." Audience will act out poems. Ages 3 and up.
- May 16 - Magic Show, GERMAR THE MAGICIAN. All ages.

Winter and Spring Storytimes

- **ITSY-BITSY** for ages up to 3
Tuesday mornings at 10:30 a.m.
January 18 - March 15
April 5 - May 24
- **PRE-SCHOOL** for ages 3-6
Tuesday afternoons at 3:30 p.m.
January 18 - March 15
April 5 - May 24
- **MUSICAL STORYTIME** for all ages
Wednesday afternoons at 4:00 p.m.
January 19 - March 16
April 6 - May 25

Valentine J-I-N-G-O

Friday, February 11 at 4:00 p.m.

Join us for exciting, educational and fun-filled games for ages 5 and up. Win prizes! Valentine treats for everyone! Adults can play too! **Registration is required.**

FINAL FRIDAY FLICKS @ 7:00 p.m. **(Refreshments included!)**

February 25 - *Three Lives of Thomasina* (1963). Lovely Disney fairy tale about a young girl and her beloved kitty. 97 minutes. PG Rating.

March 25 - *Winged Migration* (2001). An award-winning film exploring various birds in flight. 91 minutes. G Rating.

April 29 - *Finding Nemo* (2003). A delightful animated film set in an undersea environment. 81 minutes. G Rating.

May 27 - "*Mickey Mouse Shorts*" from "*Mickey Mouse in Living Color*" Vol. II, 1939 - Today (2003). 60 minutes. G Rating.

Sponsored by the Friends of the Atherton Library

CHESS FOR FUN

Classes for Children at the Atherton Library

Wednesdays

6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

February 2, 2005

March 2, 2005



A one and a half hour event for children second grade and older. Participants will learn

about chess strategies and practical techniques and have the opportunity to play one another. **Knowledge of basic chess moves is a must!**

Presented by: Dennis Myers, United States Chess Federation Expert.

To register, call the Atherton Library at 328-2422.

Sponsored by Friends of the Atherton Library

CALENDAR

For information on changes and special meetings call (650) 752-0529 or check the Town Community Calendar at: www.ci.atherton.ca.us

February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28					

March

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

April

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

February

1	Caltrain Corridor Subcom.	7:00 p.m.	Council Chambers
2	Waste Reduction Comm.	10:00 a.m.	Admin. Offices Mtg. Rm.
2	Park & Rec. Commission	6:30 p.m.	H-P Park, Main House
7	City Council Special Meeting	6:00 p.m.	Council Chambers
9	General Plan Committee	6:00 p.m.	Council Chambers
16	City Council	7:00 p.m.	Council Chambers
17	Tree Committee	4:00 p.m.	Admin. Offices Mtg. Rm.
21	President's Day Holiday – Town Offices closed		
22	Arts Committee	1:00 p.m.	Admin. Offices Mtg. Rm.
23	Planning Commission	6:00 p.m.	Council Chambers

March

1	Caltrain Corridor Subcom.	7:00 p.m.	Council Chambers
2	Park & Rec. Commission	6:30 p.m.	H-P Park, Main House
16	City Council	7:00 p.m.	Council Chambers
17	Tree Committee	4:00 p.m.	Admin. Offices Mtg. Rm.
22	Arts Committee	1:00 p.m.	Admin. Offices Mtg. Rm.
23	Planning Commission	6:00 p.m.	Council Chambers

April

5	Caltrain Corridor Subcom.	7:00 p.m.	Council Chambers
6	Waste Reduction Comm.	10:00 a.m.	Admin. Offices Mtg. Rm.
6	Park & Rec. Commission	6:30 p.m.	H-P Park, Main House
12	Transportation Committee	6:00 p.m.	Council Chambers
20	City Council	7:00 p.m.	Council Chambers
21	Tree Committee	4:00 p.m.	Admin. Offices Mtg. Rm.
26	Arts Committee	1:00 p.m.	Admin. Offices Mtg. Rm.
27	Planning Commission	6:00 p.m.	Council Chambers

The Town of Atherton



91 Ashfield Road
Atherton, CA 94027

PRESORTED
STANDARD

U.S. POSTAGE PAID
MENLO PARK, CA
PERMIT NO. 26

ECRWSS

Atherton Resident
Atherton, CA 94027