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THE DAILY JOURNAL

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Schools dodge tax trouble

By Heather Murtagh
DAILY JOURNAL STAFF

To rectify flawed ballot language limiting the San Mateo Union High School District, property owners will pay taxes for an additional 15 years to complete the goals of Measure M after the Board of Supervisors approved the change.



David Miller

Voters passed Measure M, a \$298 million bond measure, in 2006 which included language limiting the debt to 25-year bonds. Ordinarily, dis-

tricts have the option of utilizing up to 40-year bonds. The voter-approved language restricts the district's ability to fund the promised projects, said Superintendent David Miller. Yesterday, the district successfully petitioned the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors to amend the bond language allowing the use of both 25-year and 40-year

bonds. The change will extend taxpayer payments up to an additional 15 years — from 2037 to 2052 — but allow the district to finish the original renovation plans.

"This is a wonderful day for the district. We appreciate the Board of Supervisors listening with an open mind," said Miller.

Supervisors were mostly in favor

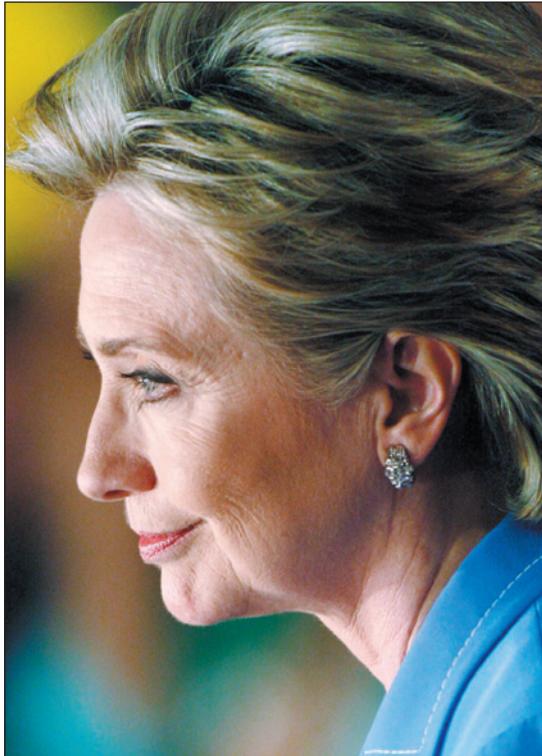
of the proposal calling it a chance to partner with the school district.

"It's about the kids. That's the bottom line. We have to support the children we serve in this community," said Supervisor Jerry Hill.

Board President Adrienne Tissier agreed it is about the children, however, had some concerns.

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SPLIT PRIMARIES



BRENT SMITH (LEFT) AND JASON REED (RIGHT)/REUTERS

Barack Obama, right, swept to a convincing victory in the North Carolina primary Tuesday night and declared he was closing in on the Democratic presidential nomination. Hillary Rodham Clinton eked out a win in Indiana as she struggled to halt her rival's march into history. See story page 7

Jury deliberating wife-killing case

DA: Sons heard mom's final scream

By Michelle Durand
DAILY JOURNAL STAFF

The question of whether Quincy Dean Norton, Sr. ended his tumultuous marriage by fatally stabbing his wife after she filed for divorce boils down to the simple matter of what their two oldest boys recalled of that day, a prosecutor told jurors during closing arguments yesterday.

"Do you believe Dion and Quincy Norton, Jr. heard their mother scream the day she was murdered?" Al Giannini asked the jury.

If so, he continued, Norton, 33, is guilty of murder because Tamika Mack Norton, 31, died of an air embolism within minutes of a knife wound to the neck, according to the pathologist.

The two boys testified during trial about seeing their father in the family's Mira Vista court home on July 22, 2006, the day their mother was

later discovered murdered in the bedroom. Although the children didn't witness Norton harming his wife, Quincy Norton, Jr., then 9, said he went to the room after hearing his mother scream. The younger Norton testified he saw his father holding his mother down before he ordered him back to his room. Shortly after, Norton gathered his name-



Quincy Norton



Tamika Norton

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Legislators' final push for their bills

By Dana Yates
DAILY JOURNAL STAFF

Local legislators are hard at work passing their most important bills — including those examining state contracts, college book costs and street car sales — with the May committee deadline fast approaching and budget hearings heating up.

From investigations into major state contracts, to extending the authority of local law enforcement to keep abandoned cars from streets, local legislators are making strides in their pursuit for new laws that will affect San Mateo County.



Ira Ruskin

However, getting bills that may cost the state money may be a hard sell with a looming multi-billion shortfall.

Assemblyman Ira Ruskin, D-Redwood City, is seeking to save the state money by taking a serious look at "pass through" contracts. Ruskin was recently appointed to the Select Committee on Procurement. On May 15, the committee will hold a



Leland Yee

hearing on state "pass through" contracts after Ruskin began examining a state office supply contract earlier this year. All large contracts must pass on a percentage of their work to smaller businesses. Large contractors may be using fake business instead of honest small businesses, Ruskin suspects.

A recent review of state office

See **BILLS**, Page 24

School cut talks raise emotions

Burlingame district needs to shed \$1.1M

By Heather Murtagh
DAILY JOURNAL STAFF

Deficit spending, less librarians, office staff, custodians and school supplies are part of the Burlingame Elementary School District's tentative plan to deal with \$1.1 million in needed cuts for the next school year.

Next year, Burlingame anticipates \$19 million in revenue, down from

\$19.6 million this year, and \$20.1 million in expenditures. Residents voiced opinions last night on how to cut back the \$1.1 million shortfall. Talks became emotional as those on the chopping block described a school without their presence. Since the loss is an estimate at this point, the Board of Trustees put forward a list to make cuts totaling \$1.125

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