Bay Area is back in the purple tier

By Sue Dremann

San Clara and San Mateo counties returned to the state’s most restrictive COVID-19 level, the “purple” tier, after California health officials lifted statewide regional stay-at-home orders on Monday. The return to the purple tier under California’s Blueprint for a Safer Economy was expected. It is the same level that will be maintained in all counties statewide except for four in the northernmost part of the state.

Under the purple tier, outdoor dining, personal care services and professional, college, adult and youth sports may resume with modifications. Mandatory travel restrictions, which require a 10-day quarantine for most persons who return to Santa Clara County after traveling farther than 150 miles, will stay in effect, Santa Clara County Counsel James Williams said during a press conference on Monday, Jan. 25.

Businesses and individuals must follow both the state and county orders, and where there is a conflict between the two, the stricter rules must be followed. “Santa Clara County continues to experience very high rates of COVID-19 transmission. Our collective actions to date have saved lives and helped protect our health care system from collapse. I encourage all residents to remain vigilant, wear a mask any time you leave your home, maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from anyone outside your household, and get vaccinated when it is your turn,” county Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody said in a press release issued prior to Williams’ appearance.

The county is keeping the travel restriction order in place due to the high infection rate in other parts of the state, particularly in Southern California, where three variants of the coronavirus that are spreading throughout the state have been found. The travel restrictions also appear to have reduced the amount of travel, which is one of the main ways the virus has spread, Williams said. “We are still nowhere yet out of the woods,” Williams said, noting the county still has high hospital rates.

Williams said that the most significant impacts of returning to the purple tier will be on restaurants, which can now resume outdoor dining. Personal care services, such as nail and hair salons, can have indoor and outdoor clients. Outdoor family entertainment centers and outdoor card rooms also can reopen, and gatherings of up to three households can resume outdoors only. Places of worship also can resume outdoor services.

The county’s local directives, which predate the state’s regional stay-at-home order, are still in effect. Noncontact youth sports can resume if they are outdoors, but contact sports are still prohibited. The San Jose Sharks can resume play at SAP Center provided they adhere to

San Mateo County creates ‘financial lifeline’ for eateries

By Elena Kadvany

San Mateo County has created a $2.3 million relief fund to help struggling independent restaurants, breweries and wineries offset the “significant adverse financial impacts” they’ve suffered during the coronavirus shutdown.

On Tuesday, Jan. 26, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved $1 million for the fund, matching a $1 million grant from the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative to support small, local restaurants. The program describes public health restrictions, such as the ban on indoor dining and the off-and-on prohibition of outdoor dining, as threatening the viability of local restaurants, and says that it is “in the public interest” to keep them alive.

“This program is a financial lifeline to help our great San Mateo County restaurants, breweries and wineries stay afloat while we await a more stable health and business environment,” Supervisor Don Horsley, who co-sponsored the proposal with Supervisor Warren Slocum, said in an announcement. “I look forward to the return of our crucial hospitality industry.”

Local “brick and mortar” businesses will be able to apply for grants up to $10,000 starting in February. The funds can be used to cover payroll, rent, health and safety updates they’ve had to make during the pandemic, and other costs. Horsley noted that not all businesses have been able to adapt equally during the shutdown, like restaurants or wineries that don’t have the space to build parklets for outdoor dining and tastings, such as parts of East Palo Alto, stretches of Middlefield Road in North Fair Oaks and the industrial section of San Carlos.

“They don’t all have the same abilities to essentially pivot and change their business model,” he said.

The Chan Zuckerberg Initiative’s donation is specifically for independently owned restaurants in East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, unincorporated Menlo Park and North Fair Oaks as well as Palo Alto. The San Mateo Credit Union Community Fund and the Silicon Valley Community Foundation have also contributed $384,000 for restaurants, breweries, and wineries located in other parts of San Mateo County.

To qualify for the relief funds, restaurants, breweries and wineries must have a physical location in San Mateo County, been open at the start of the pandemic last March and been “adversely economically impacted” by the shutdown. Restaurants are

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Prestigious Allied Arts
Outstanding opportunity for a delightful three story single family home located in the secluded Allied Arts location just blocks from downtown Menlo Park, Stanford and Palo Alto. The living room/dining room features cathedral ceilings and large picture windows. There is an updated kitchen with a dining area framed by a gas fireplace with views of the rear garden. Sliding door leads to decking and patio areas. The main floor has two bedrooms, full bath with tub/shower and lovely quartz countertops. The second floor retreat area has the master bedroom with a walk-in closet and spacious master bath with separate shower and elegant tub. The lower level has the fourth bedroom and bath in addition to a family room and separate laundry room.
The private rear yard is lovely for entertaining with newer Trex deck, built-in benches, and dining area.

Additional Highlights Include:
• 4 Bedrooms, 3 Bathrooms
• Family Room
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• Living Space: 2,285 +/- Sq Ft Lot Size: 4,050 +/- Sq Ft
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Data from BrokerMetrics® based on MLS sales from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, in San Mateo County, residential properties, with no off-MLS sales included in the rankings.

Michael Repka, DRE #01854880 | 650.900.7000 | michael@deleonrealty.com

中文諮詢請聯繫: Audrey Sun, DRE #01933274 電話: 650.785.5822 | www.deleonrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
Must-See Hillside Contemporary

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Surrounded by nature’s beauty on more than 3 acres, this custom contemporary home blends art with architecture. Views reaching out to the foothills take center stage across majestic oaks and sun-swept terraced grounds and patios. A perfect showcase in synergy of home and nature.

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**Local News**

**Menlo Park | Atherton | Woodside | Portola Valley**

**Record-breaking coach Tara VanDerveer on pandemic play and social justice**

By Julia Brown
Almanac Assistant Editor

On Sunday, Jan. 24, Stanford University women’s basketball coach Tara VanDerveer did something she’s done over 1,100 times in her storied career — she coached her team to a win.

But for VanDerveer, who in December passed the late University of Tennessee women’s basketball coach Pat Summitt to become the coach with the most wins in Division I women’s college basketball history, the victory over University of Southern California was one in a stretch of games that have been unlike any others in her career.

It was a home game for Stanford, but with coronavirus restrictions at the time prohibiting live sports in Santa Clara County, the game was played at Kaiser Permanente Arena in Santa Cruz, home to the NBA G League affiliate of the Golden State Warriors. Gone was the crowd, replaced by cardboard cutouts of Stanford Cardinal fans accustomed to congegating together in Maples Pavilion — including a cutout of VanDerveer’s mother.

Stanford, with a 12-2 record as of Wednesday and ranked No. 6 in the country, is more than halfway through its regular season schedule with an eye toward March Madness. Last year, tournament play was canceled for men’s and women’s college basketball.

See VANDERVEER, page 31

**Mass vaccination center for Sutter/PAMF patients to open**

By Sue Dremann

The larger site would enable PAMF to begin vaccinating a greater number of its patients — with the caveat that the vaccine supplies allow it to do so, Louise Rogers, chief of health for San Mateo County, said during an update to the county Board of Supervisors on Jan. 26.

A Sutter/PAMF spokeswoman said Jan. 27 that the medical provider is actively working to expand capacity and “large-scale vaccine clinics are an important part of our strategy to continue to deploy as much vaccine as possible to eligible patients.”

The vaccination clinic at the San Mateo Event Center is

See VACCINES, page 29

**After fierce debate, Menlo Park council approves controversial sidewalks on Sharon Road**

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

The stretch of Sharon Road between Alameda de las Pulgas and Altschul Avenue was the topic of a heated City Council debate Jan. 26. The debate revolved around a seemingly simple question: What kind of pathway should be built to accommodate children walking to school?

The Menlo Park City Council heard sharply divided opinions over which type of pedestrian walkway should be added on the street’s north side to make it safer for kids walking to and from La Entrada Middle School.

Ultimately, after roughly five hours of hearing public concerns and deliberating amongst themselves, the council members voted unanimously to approve a raised sidewalk alongside the road.

They also set a 15 mph speed limit around the school when children are present, restricted parking on the street 24/7, and approved narrowing the street — agreeing to work with the Menlo Park Fire Protection District to make sure the narrower street retains emergency vehicle access.

The sidewalk will be between 4 and 5 feet wide and is estimated to cost about $700,000, under the budgeted amount of $850,000.

On one side of the debate were many school parents, safe route advocates, and some seniors and children who argued that a raised concrete sidewalk would be the safest and most user-friendly walkway at all hours of the day.

On the other side of the divide were mainly homeowners and longtime residents of Sharon Road, plus some allies from across town recruited to their cause, who argued that raised sidewalks would hurt the street’s rural feel, that sidewalks might make the road look wider and encourage faster driving, and that the road has seen no major injuries in many years. Many also objected to the fact that adding a sidewalk would mean removing the roughly 11 street parking spots from that stretch of the road.

The Sharon Road residents favored another alternative, which had also been vetted and approved by city staff as a safety improvement over the current conditions: installing an asphalt strip to the side of the road with a drainage gutter and restricting parking there during the day. Parking would still be allowed at night.

“I don’t think we can make a conclusion one is safer than the other based on industry research," said Public Works Director Nikki Nagaya. While both options met the guidelines to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the asphalt strip option would not be able to guarantee complete

See SIDEWALKS, page 8

**Sharon Road**

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

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**San Mateo County Event Center will be used for COVID-19 vaccines**

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The vaccination clinic at the San Mateo Event Center is

See VACCINES, page 29
NOTICE INVITING BIDS
TOWN OF ATHERTON, CA

The Town of Atherton will accept bids for construction of the following public work:

2021 SPRING PATCHING PROJECT
Grind and replace approximately 25,000 square feet of asphalt to a 6-inch depth of pavement failures. Some hand work around utility access-hole covers will be necessary.

Plans & Specifications may be obtained at http://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/bids.aspx at no cost. The Contractor shall be responsible for any addendums that may be posted on the Town’s website.

SEALLED BIDS will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 150 Watkins Avenue, Atherton, California 94027, until 1:30 p.m. Pacific Standard Time on Wednesday, February 10, 2021, at which time bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.

Bids must be for the entire work, and shall be submitted in sealed envelopes clearly marked: “Bid of (Contractor) for 2021 SPRING PATCHING PROJECT”, along with date and time of bid opening.

Pool design to get another look

Facing a Jan. 29 deadline to decide on the exact design for a pool area to accompany the new community center planned in Belle Haven, the Menlo Park City Council was almost set to vote on a final design nearing midnight on Jan. 26. Then, Jennifer Johnson, a parks and recreation commissioner, said in a public comment that the proposed designs hadn’t included recommendations from earlier plans for a feature that’s intended to make the teaching pool accessible to everyone: a beach entry.

“A beach entry, also known as a walk-in pool, has a very gradual slope of about 1 foot of decline every 10 feet of horizontal space,” explained Chris Lamm, assistant public works director.

Johnson said that the feature would make the pool truly accessible for everyone, while other features aimed at accommodating those with disabilities, such as chair lifts, are not able to be used by everyone. About 1 in 10 people in the community have disabilities, she said, adding that anybody can become disabled at any time, and most people eventually will be.

“One problem I have, as you might be able to tell, is that projects in Menlo Park rarely consider accessibility for people with differences,” Johnson said. “It’s frustrating to not have that lens being looked through regularly. We are talking about equity in a number of different ways but I have yet to hear a discussion initiated by staff or council that places the need of people with all abilities as a priority.

“I understand that I don’t get to decide if there’s a beach entry or not,” she continued. “That’s not the big issue here. The big issue is that staff weren’t considering ways to make these the most accessible to the most people.”

Staff members said the new pool site is constrained due to the boundaries set by the new plans for the community center, set to be funded by Facebook. Beach entries take up a lot of space due to their very shallow slope, Lamm said.

In advance of the deadline, council members Cecilia Taylor, Ray Mueller and Vice Mayor Betsy Nash agreed to meet with Johnson to try to come up with a more accessible solution, and all council members agreed to hold another meeting later in the week to approve the current or revised pool proposal.

But it wasn’t clear how feasible it would be for the city to redesign the pool within only a couple of days.

“When I say we need a decision … it’s a go (or) no-go to have a decision by Friday if we’re going to be able to include a pool with Facebook’s construction,” City Manager Starla Jerome- Robinson told the council.

As of The Almanac’s Wednesday press deadline, the follow-up meeting had not yet been scheduled. See the latest council meeting schedule at menlopark.org/agendacenter.

Santa Cruz Avenue closures to continue

The current street closures on Santa Cruz Avenue in downtown Menlo Park to allow outdoor dining space for Left Bank, Bistro Vida and Galata Bistro will remain in place until at least Feb. 23, despite some pressure from other downtown businesses to reopen the street.

Presented with the option to reopen the street in advance of the planned end of the program at the end of February, the City Council deliberated over what to do, given the surprise announcement earlier this week that San Mateo County was reverting to the purple tier under the state’s coronavirus restrictions, allowing outdoor dining once again. When restaurants were only open for takeout, it made more sense to open up the road for vehicles, but when struggling restaurants reopen for outdoor dining, the question becomes more complicated, council members argued.

Councilwoman Jen Wolosin said she was ready to vote to reopen the street, given the input the city had received from business owners eager to see the street reopened, while Councilman Ray Mueller said he wasn’t comfortable with doing so yet because some restaurants may not have weighed in yet, likely because they have been closed or worried about other things.

“We are at such a juncture in this pandemic,” Mueller said. Allowing people to stay distanced while dining outdoors will remain important as the pandemic continues, he said.

The council tentatively rescheduled its discussion of reopening the street to Feb. 23, just before the closure is set to expire.

Kate Bradshaw
A therton Mayor Elizabeth Lewis is forging ahead with a list of goals for her third time as mayor after a year of great personal loss. Lewis, who was reelected for her fourth term on the City Council in November, made the difficult decision to stay in the council race as her husband Joe Lewis battled kidney cancer. He died in December, but had urged Lewis to run because he knew she loved her council work.

“There were complications over the summer of 2020 and all the death and medical geniuses just couldn’t really make him well,” she said. “He died in my arms on Dec. 5 very peacefully. I was really sad.”

And her 2020 council run was unlike any other for Lewis, given the COVID-19 pandemic. There were no election parties, no meet and greets.

“It was mostly a lawn sign campaign,” she said. “It was kind of a public affirmation to get everyone you know to host a lawn sign.” There were about 150 lawn signs on display in support of Lewis and campaigning took place over email, she said.

Lewis said the council work brings her focus, purpose and “the continuation of some normalcy” in her life.

“We’re in a really abnormal environment with this COVID pandemic,” she said. “As I look to 2021, I know it has to be better. I’m hoping that on a community level, COVID gets beaten back.”

Lewis welcomes the addition of recently elected Councilwoman Diana Hawkins-Manuelian as another female voice on the council. Hawkins-Manuelian brings a “forward thinking” and “collaborative” approach, Lewis said.

Lewis said she will miss her former council colleague Cary Wiest, who lost his bid for reelection this fall.

A major priority for the town has been completing its long-awaited $31.6 million civic center revamp, which includes new police, administration and planning offices, and a library. After about two years of construction, around July or August, the town will begin transitioning the police department and other employees into the administrative building because construction workers need to demolish what is left of the police department building to complete the project. The official opening is slated for October.

In addition to providing employees an efficient, new place to work, she hopes the renovated council chambers and library cafe can serve as places for people to socialize. “I’m hoping and praying the (COVID-19) vaccines will be distributed and we can return to some kind of normal society,” she said.

Leaf blowers

Towns and cities on the Mid-peninsula, including Atherton, have explored banning the use of gasoline-powered leaf blowers. After past discussions about limiting the use of gasoline-powered leaf blowers in town, the council took action last week to start a pilot project to purchase battery-powered electric leaf blowers (for a cost of $1,210 in total for batteries, the leaf blowers and chargers, according to a report prepared by staff for the Jan. 20 council meeting) for use in town spaces.

Portola Valley: Town begins public meetings for controversial Stanford housing project

Portola Valley kicked off a series of meetings to review Stanford Universi ty’s proposal to build 39 housing units on part of 75 acres of university property often referred to as the “Stanford Wedge” with a three and a half hour Planning Commission study session on Jan. 20.

In the two years since the project was initially proposed, residents — some of whom were among the more than a dozen people who spoke during public comment at the meeting — have cited potential traffic jams and fire hazards as reasons to oppose the development. More than 60 members of the public attended the online meeting.

Stanford, which has revised plans for the development several times, resubmitted plans on Nov. 20 to develop 27 single-family, two-story residences designated for Stanford faculty and staff, and 12 rental units in three, two-story buildings that would be available for below market rate price, clustered on approximately 7 acres at 3530 Alpine Road.

The project, dubbed Portola Terrace, would mostly be located between Westridge and Golden Hills, which is in the flattest portion of the site, according to a report staff prepared for the meeting. Since the early 1990s it has been designated to be multifamily housing for employees or staff affiliated with the university.

The Planning Commission received a slew of comments both for and against the project via email before last week’s meeting, along with public comments.

Commissioner Nicholas Targ recused himself since he is a Stanford employee. Vice Chair Anne Kopf-Sill also recused herself since she lives close to the site.

During the meeting, resident Nan Shostak, a retired geologist, said residents of the proposed homes could be put in danger during an earthquake since the project lies directly on top of the Hermit Fault line. The damage caused by earthquakes can also heighten the risk of sparking a wildfire, she noted. She said that the town should be more than just looking at development plans are considered further.

Resident Rita Comes said she is concerned there could be indigenous artifacts and burial sites under the proposed development.

Resident Dave Cardinal, who lives near the site, said although he has mixed feelings about the project, overall he supports it. He said that he sees three main pros of the project: more Stanford families living in town, better management of the property if there is a development on it and the potential that the additional residents could spur more transit in town.

Resident Helen Wolter said the project would help create more market-rate housing in town and her preference is for people who work in Portola Valley to secure those units, especially teachers.

“When the average housing price (in Portola Valley) is $3 million, people (who work in town) cannot afford to live here,” she said.

In February, a group of more than 300 residents signed a letter to the town demanding that Stanford withdraw its proposal, citing concerns that the addition of housing would cause a traffic jam on two-lane Alpine Road in the event of a fire emergency and create fire hazards on the property itself. Woodside fire district officials have also expressed concerns that the property around the land that would be developed would be difficult to keep clear of fire hazards.

Portola ValleyNeighbors United, incorporated in January 2020 “to help our local community preserve and enhance its small, rural open space character,” and co-founded by council candidate Mary Hufty, has come...
SIDEWALKS
continued from page 5

William Rodgers Farrar
June 14, 1927 – December 8, 2020

William Rodgers Farrar passed away peacefully at Stanford Hospital on December 8th, on a day and time when he otherwise would have been playing golf at his beloved Stanford Golf Course.

Bill was born in Alhambra on June 14, 1927. He attended Alhambra High School, played football there as a left end and was very proud to make the First Team All-California his senior year.

During high school, Bill and a classmate managed a local Standard Oil gas station. The owner of the station had joined the Army, so Bill and his friend leased the station as they had worked there for a few summers. Standard Oil was skeptical of two high school kids running the business; however, they trained the two young men in lubricating, servicing, salesmanship and courtesy until the company were convinced they could do everything properly. Due to the war effort, the station was allowed to remain open only from 2 pm to 10 pm, so Bill and his new partner were able to work there after school. Standard Oil’s requirements of good salesmanship and courtesy would come in handy later in Bill’s life.

When Bill turned 18 in June 1945, he was inducted into the Navy on his birthday, missing any birthday celebration as well as his high school graduation. After the war ended, Bill was accepted to Stanford University and joined Phi Delta Theta fraternity. He made many wonderful life-long friends from this association.

Bill played Junior Varsity football at Stanford and was coached by Chuck Taylor. He graduated with a degree in Political Science in June 1950 and that summer, he and Nancy Louise Lagomarsino were married at the Carmel Mission. Bill graduated from Stanford Business School in 1953. His first job was working for Container Corporation of America (CCA) at CCA’s plant in Emeryville, where his supervisor was Clint Eastwood’s father. Bill enjoyed a long career in the packaging industry.

Aside from his family, Bill loved two things more than anything: playing golf at Stanford and fly-fishing on the Madison River in Ennis, Montana. Nothing in the world made him happier than being at one of those two places.

Bill was preceded in death by his wife Nancy Louise Farrar, a daughter, Michele Louise Farrar, his brother, Gordon Farrar and his sister, Jeanie Marinin.

Bill is survived by his daughter, Caroline Grey, his son-in-law, Richard Grey, his son, William Farrar, Jr., three grandchildren, Kelly Hitchcock, Tyler Farrar and Dylan Farrar and a great-granddaughter, Louise Hitchcock. Louise, who was named after two great-grandmothers, was born two days before Bill’s 93rd birthday last June.

Bill’s service was held outside last month at Holy Cross Cemetery in Menlo Park with five family members present. The comments below were written by Richard Grey, excerpted from the service:

“Bill leaves a huge hole in our hearts. He was a major positive force in each of our lives, as he fulfilled perfectly inherent goodness, and we could not help our sadness today. However, out of Bill’s goodness, he would always have wanted each of us to carry on. He would never have been so wrapped up in himself that he would want or expect us to live up to his example. But perhaps we can do so on our own, showing kindness, generosity and respect to our family and others every day. In so doing, we would honor his memory.”

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If you wish to send a remembrance supporting the men’s undergraduate golf program, please send a check to Stanford Men’s Golf, 641 East Campus Drive, Stanford, California 94305.

I have been almost run over,” said fifth grader Annika Barman. “It’s scary. I don’t want to die young. … There have been incidents where I’ve been, like, an inch away from a car — an inch! — and I can’t tell you how much that terrifies me.”

Katie Behroozi, a complete streets commissioner, said she favored the sidewalk option too, arguing that “the safest sidewalk is the one that is not shared with cars.”

On the other hand, Sharon Road resident Allison Bird said that she’d never had problems navigating the route because she’d been taught how to walk safely.

“I was not buried in a phone, I didn’t have headphones in. Some responsibility here is needed,” she said, “Nothing happened until a handful of PTA parents bucked a council member.”

As someone who needs a wheelchair, she said, she was worried that sidewalks would be bumpy with all of the ups and downs needed to accommodate driveways. She urged the council to consider doing nothing at all.

“We find ourselves in a highly politicized battle,” said Sharon Road resident Pat Connolly, who presented several arguments in favor of the asphalt path approach.

“It has polarized our community.”

To soften the impact on street residents, the council agreed to encourage staff to reach out to see how they can help with landscaping or sewer lines. Vice Mayor Betsy Nash shared her own experiences from when sidewalks were added on Santa Cruz Avenue near her home several years ago, and how efforts by staff to help coordinate sewer line replacements helped her become more supportive of the project.

“I’m interested in creating the safest, most comfortable, most inviting pedestrian experience that’s always there for people of all ages and abilities,” said Councilwoman Jen Wolosin.

Email Kate Bradshaw at kbradshaw@almanacnews.com

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include Nancy Mary Paolini, 68, a teacher and Menlo Park resident, on Dec. 6; William Rodgers Farrar, 93, a Menlo Park resident, on Dec. 8; Roger K. Parr, 76, an electronic engineer and longtime Woodside resident, on Dec. 22; and Sarks Kouzonjian, 87, a Menlo Park resident, on Dec. 25.

To read full obituaries, leave remembrances and post photos, go to Lasting Memo-
ries at almanacnews.com/obituaries.

Roger K. Parr
October 15, 1944 – December 22, 2020

Roger K. Parr, a long-time resident of Woodside, CA, passed away peacefully at Stanford Hospital on December 22, 2020 after months battling cancer.

Roger received a B.E. electrical from the University of Auckland, New Zealand and was the Recipient of the G.T. Murray Award (1968) for presenting a paper on the development of an HF receiver using the Wadley Loop Approach. He also lived and worked in England.

His specialty was designs that covered DC to microwaves. These included phase locked loops, synthesizers, filters - many at microwave frequencies. He designed a family of high-performance satellite converters that were sold to government agencies, military contractors and private companies throughout the world. He founded and operated his own company, Micro Phase Products, Inc. He was a very successful and highly respected electronic engineer; his designs were sought after. As one of his many friends stated: Micro Phase reflected his talent in both engineering and design.

Roger’s attention to detail from documentation to chassis integration set the highest bar.

One of Roger’s desires was to go back to beautiful Waiheki Island, New Zealand. He was very close to his mother and sister, both of whom predeceased him. It is with sadness that we have lost a true good human being and a caring person. His zest for his automobiles and collecting very sought-after cars gave him joy. He will be remembered by his many friends, car aficionados, and business associates, and will be greatly missed.

Kate Bradshaw
Classic Elegance in Central Atherton

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  – Upper level: 2,480 square feet
  – 3-car garage: 715 square feet
  – Mech room: 20 square feet
  – Shed: 100 square feet
• Main level: foyer, living room with fireplace, formal dining room, 5th bedroom/large office with bathroom, kitchen, family room with fireplace, laundry room with new washer and dryer
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• Attached 3-car garage with wine storage for 900 bottles
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The Almanac 2021
Several changes to The Almanac’s popular reader forum, Town Square, will be implemented over the next few weeks in an effort to reduce disrespectful commentary and encourage broader, more diverse community participation. The new policies build on an experiment last August, when all commenters were required to register as a condition of posting, a change that has now been made permanent. As a result of the registration experiment, the tone of comments improved and some of the more problematic posters stopped commenting, but it had the effect of giving more visibility to those who posted the most frequently, Embarcadero Media President Bill Johnson said. These are often among the comments that are also long and not seeking to have a constructive dialogue with others, he said.

“The registration requirement did significantly discourage and reduce the number of ‘fly-by’ commenters, many not even from our community, from posting snarky, disrespectful and often incendiary comments that our moderators needed to edit or remove,” Johnson said.

After seeking feedback and input from readers and holding two virtual community meetings, the Town Square editors considered additional changes, which are in the process of being implemented. The most significant change, which will be completed in several weeks by the company’s software developers, will create a “pre-moderation” function that will automatically delay the posting of comments by newly registered users until a moderator can review and release them to the site. That preview process will remain in effect until a moderator clears that user to post directly to the site.

Similarly, existing posters can be switched to pre-moderated status if a moderator determines they are undermining the goals of Town Square by attacking other commenters, repeatedly violating the Town Square terms of service or not sticking to the topic.

An added benefit of this new system is that it should virtually eliminate spam, since spam always comes from a newly registered “user” and will be subject to deletion before readers see it. Other changes, which are being implemented on Town Square this week, include a length limit of 2,000 characters (about 200 words), an end to the “like” a comment function and a new requirement that posters use the same screen name for all their comments. At the discretion of the moderator, posters who make consecutive or an excessive number of comments and are dominating a discussion may have their comments deleted.

The “flake” upvoting feature has been removed because of extensive abuse by some commenters who circumvented our automated checks to prevent repetitive voting from the same user.

In explaining the need for the changes, Johnson said that the company felt an obligation to do its part to better manage Town Square’s reputation for the widespread abuse of social media both locally and across the country.

Town Square is intended to be a place residents can share their opinions, debate local issues and give their feedback on our reporting. But like other social media platforms, it is also used by those trying to manipulate public opinion, create false narratives and incite distrust of institutions, including the media,” Johnson said.

On a local level, we had already been evaluating how to improve our Town Square online reader forum and ensure that we weren’t aiding and abetting those who sought to polarize and divide our community through misinformation.”

Johnson said that the substantive content and political views expressed by commenters have never been a factor in moderation decisions and won’t be in the future.

“We don’t care what your position is on local issues. As long as the comments are made with respect for those with differing opinions, aren’t snarky or sarcastic and are not presenting false information, we believe the more diversity of views the better,” Johnson said.

“Moderating is an art, not a science, and we have and will make mistakes. But our collective goal as a community should be to talk about issues with civility and, when appropriate, passion, without attacking those who are honestly and respectfully expressing different opinions,” he said.

Here is a summary of the changes being made:

- All new Town Square posters will automatically be “pre-moderated” before their comment goes live on our site. While this will result in a delay in their posts appearing, it will allow our moderators to review comments for adherence to our rules and guidelines. It will also reduce spam. When the poster has shown that they are willing and able to follow the rules, his or her ability to post instantly will be activated. Similarly, any established commenter who frequently violates the rules may be relegated to pre-moderation at any time as a sort of “penalty box.”

- The “up-voting” function that allows anyone to “like” a comment will be removed. Too many posters are using tools to circumvent our limit of one vote per person and are creating a false impression that their comment has been embraced by large numbers of other people. These abuses have made the voting meaningless.

- “Screen” names of a poster will need to be consistent across all topics. Currently, we allow a poster to comment under different screen names in different Town Square topics, but do not permit them to change names within a single topic discussion. This will be changed to prevent the use of multiple names.

- The length of comments will be limited to 2,000 characters, or about 200 words. This will be automated and no one will be able to exceed this length. This will prevent excessively long posts that can easily dominate or overwhelm a discussion.

- Extremely short comments of 200 characters (about 30 words) will also generally not be allowed. Most of these short comments are emotional outbursts only designed to demonstrate a dismissive or condescending attitude toward another person or an organization. They don’t seek to engage others in a conversation. Deletion for shortness will be at the moderators discretion.

- The frequency of commenting by a poster will be limited. No poster will be permitted to make consecutive comments on a topic. The comment of at least one other person must be made before a commenter may post again, and repeated comments from the same poster that dominate a discussion will be removed. Moderators may make exceptions, such as in the case of a second short post correcting content in the previous post.

Almanac Town Square changes announced

New policies will ‘pre-moderate’ new users, limit length of comments and make other changes to improve quality of reader forum

By Almanac staff

California health leaders lift regional stay-at-home orders

The regional stay-at-home orders across California made up of multiple counties. A drop to below 15% of the available ICU beds in a region triggered the stay-at-home order. Each regional order urged Californians to stay home except for essential activities, which helped lower disease transmission levels and reduced the burden on the hospital system.

ICU capacity projections for all regions over the next four weeks are above 15%, the threshold for dropping the order. The Sacramento region exited the order on Jan 12 and the Northern California region, including Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Mendocino, Marin, Plumas, Siskiyou and Trinity counties, never entered the order.

The majority of state counties are still in the strictest tier, also known as the purple tier. Individual counties could choose to impose stricter rules, state officials noted.

Across the state, the number of available ICU beds is increasing into the double digits despite fears by health officials of a precipitous spike in COVID-19 cases after the winter holidays. Officials imposed the regional order to prevent the spike in cases from overwhelming the health care system. The disastrous increase did not appear to shape as they had feared.

“California has been making progress that we had feared,” Dr. Mark Ghaly, the state’s Health and Human Services secretary, said in the statement.

Because case rates remain high across most of California, the state’s Hospital Surge Order remains in place to prevent hospitals from becoming overwhelmed. The partial lockdown or Limited Stay at Home Order, which limits nonessential activities between the hours of 10 p.m. and 5 a.m., also expired Monday.

While there are positive signs that the virus is spreading at a slower rate, the percentage of intensive-care bed capacity within five sections across California is above the 15% threshold in all regions.

The Almanac is no longer accepting news releases from organizations. However, we are giving free space to folks who are interested in offering a public service and who can ensure their messages are helpful.

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- Robin C.

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expected to open to Sutter patients age 75 and older next week. It has a walk-up format, not drive-thru and will be available only: Sutter patients, which includes patients of the Palo Alto Medical Foundation, who are 75 years or older can make an appointment by calling a hotline at 844-987-6115 or self-books through My Health Online, the Sutter Health patient portal. Appointment availability remains dependent on vaccine supply, the spokesperson said.

Sutter has approximately 3 million patients in its system throughout the Northern California region. It has been experiencing a patient surge in its acute facilities and is testing thousands of patients per day for COVID-19, it said in a separate statement.

“At this time, Sutter is prioritizing the state’s most vulnerable populations including those who are 75-plus years of age and our community health care workers because they are at greatest risk according to CDC guidance. As vaccine supply and appointment capacity expands, we will broaden eligibility and notify our patients. We share in the excitement and hope that comes with the COVID-19 vaccine and are working extremely hard to meet eligible patients’ scheduling requests,” the spokesperson said.

On Tuesday, Santa Clara County opened vaccinations to people 65 years and older. Sutter could not immediately be reached regarding whether it would also open its vaccinations to that age group.

San Mateo County is likely to remain in the state’s most restrictive "purple" tier until the case rate drops below 7 per 100,000 and it remains below 8% for the positivity rate, she said.

Dr. Anand Chabra, county section chief for COVID-19, said San Mateo County has vaccinated 48,826 people, a total of 6% of the county’s total population (a number that includes children, who are not eligible for the vaccines). The county has been allocated 38,750 doses thus far. The number of vaccinations given is likely higher, since the county doesn’t have data on all of the vaccinations given at longterm care facilities, where there are an estimated 12,000 residents. Those doses are administered by pharmacy teams from CVS and Walgreens.

About 30,000 of the county’s 38,000 health care workers have been vaccinated, Chabra said. The county has also vaccinated 16,000 people who are ages 65 and older, which is about 12% of that population, he said.

Rogers acknowledged there are some groups who should be vaccinated that currently fall through the cracks. Some general partners in informal group care facilities aren’t in the county’s licensing database and need access to the vaccines. The county is also working on a plan to reach homebound seniors, who might need public health nurses to visit them at home. The county also offers transportation for its Health Plan of San Mateo patients to get to its vaccination centers, she said.

To further address equity issues, the county is looking at working with local pharmacies and if needed partners to administer vaccines at neighborhood sites that people can walk to. However, sub-zero freezers, which are required to store the vaccines, pose a challenge to this localized approach, Rogers said.

The main concern is still supply. Counties and medical providers don’t know when they will receive vaccines, nor the amount they will receive, in a timely manner, which doesn’t allow for planning. Rogers said she is hopeful that the logistics and communication will improve under the administration of President Joe Biden.

Some issues could also arise over other necessary supplies. Kaiser has expressed concern about having enough needles, for example.

“Everyone is constrained, except for Sutter/PAMF, for supplies,” Rogers said.

Some supplies, such as needles, come with the vaccines, but there have been five-dose vials from Pfizer that actually have six doses worth of vaccine in them, Chabra said.

The county also added a new data dashboard related to the vaccines Tuesday morning on its website at tinyurl.com/smc-dashboard.

Email Sue Dremann at sdremann@paweekly.com

Your COVID-19 vaccine questions — answered

We’ve compiled a list of who can currently get vaccinated in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, plus answers to common questions and links to resources. Access the page at tinyurl.com/COVIDVaccinequestions. Have a question? Send it to editor@paweekly.com and we’ll do our best to answer it.

The Almanac

CORONAVIRUS continued from page 7

coronavirus vaccine doses have been administered statewide as of Tuesday, according to the California Department of Public Health, and 4.7 million doses have been shipped to local health departments and multicity county health systems like Kaiser Permanente.

State and local officials, including those in Santa Clara County, have also lamented just how much demand is outpacing supply so far, pleading with the federal government to make more doses available and the timing of vaccine shipments more predictable.

“We continue to hear that being a problem, predictability’s certainly something we would all like to know,” Richardson said.

Also on Tuesday, President Joe Biden’s administration announced plans to boost the federal government’s weekly vaccine allocation to states by 16%, give governors a three-week allocation forecast and purchase approximately 200 million more doses from vaccine developers Pfizer and Moderna. The increase in allocation would make some 10 million doses available to states each week. Richardson said it is still unknown what California’s share of that allocation will be.

“ unpacking vaccinate evolve“

“We are grateful for any additions that we get in the vaccine so that we can definitely meet more of the supply needs that we know have been a challenge for our providers,” she said.

Shift to age-based vaccine distribution

On Monday, Jan. 25, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced that the state will change its vaccine distribution hierarchy to an age-based system, once all health care workers, people over age 65, food and agriculture workers, teachers and school staff members are vaccinated.

The age-based system “will allow us to scale up much more quickly and get vaccines to impacted communities much more expeditiously,” Newsom said.

Newsom argued that the state’s current average number of vaccinations per day puts the state on track to meet President Biden’s goal of 100 million vaccinations across the country in his first 100 days in office.

The state would only have to average around 110,000 vaccinations per day to meet that goal, Newsom noted.

“Even if things were static — they will not be — but even if things were static, we would more than exceed the goal that was laid out by the Biden administration,” Newsom said.

Newsom also acknowledged the state’s lackluster vaccination rate so far, ranking in the bottom half of states by the percentage of vaccine doses administered.

Around 130,000 state residents are being vaccinated each day as of Jan. 15, according to the California Department of Public Health. As of Jan. 17, roughly 3.2 million vaccine doses have been shipped to local health departments and multicity county health care systems.

Public health officials in many counties, including some in the Bay Area, have argued they don’t have access to enough doses to efficiently vaccinate large numbers of people.

Likewise, the state’s original framework of which demographics to vaccinate and when likely contributed to the lag, Newsom said.

“We realize we have got to increase throughput here,” he said. “While we are proud of the framework we put out ... we recognize it has advantages and it has disadvantages as it relates to speed and efficiency.”

The state also plans to reallocate some vaccine doses that go unused to ensure every possible dose is utilized.

“We have tripled our rate of administration of the vaccine,” Newsom said, noting that daily vaccinations were at just 43,459 on Jan. 4. “We’re just getting going.”

Comprehensive COVID-19 coverage

View interactive charts tracking the spread of the coronavirus in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties online at paloaltoonline.com/coronavirus, or check out our COVID-19 coronavirus coverage video.

The Almanac

PURPLE TIER continued from page 1

regulations, Williams said.

San Mateo County health officials said in a press release on Monday afternoon that effective immediately, outdoor dining and personal services could remain up to 25% capacity as the "purple" tier is lifted.

“This is encouraging news, but we must caution the public that COVID-19 is still very much widespread across the nation as nearly 420,000 Americans have died from the virus in less than a year,” San Mateo County Board of Supervisors President David Canepa said.

“That being said, I’m ready to enjoy a meal outdoors again and receive a haircut without having to contaminate the barber. This is a huge sigh of relief for our struggling small businesses, but we’ve got a ways to go until we get to normal,” he said in the statement.

“Science and data tell us that wearing our masks stops the spread. So will repeat once again, wear your damn masks.”

Email Sue Dremann at sdremann@paweekly.com

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HOUSING PROJECT

contd from p7

out in opposition to the project. With state housing mandates that could require the town to build 200 to 300 new housing units in the next decade, the council has also been weighing the concept of adding housing while also preserving Portola Valley’s treasured rural character and not creating more wildfire risk in the process.

In November, council members Craig Hughes and John Richards penned a letter to the Association of Bay Area Governments, following a council discussion on the state Regional Housing Needs Allocation process, stating that the town will remain highly susceptible to wildfires and that it would like to engage “on the sensibility of significant numbers of new homes in high-fire danger areas.” They also said that, as the smallest stated city in San Mateo County, “it is improbable that there would be an ability to hire enough staff to ensure a transparent and equitable entitlement process for any future applicants and that a separate methodology is implemented.

In contrast, resident David Beaver voiced support for the project in a Jan. 8 email to the Planning Commission. He noted that Stanford owns the property and said that they have a fundamental right to use it as they see fit, within town and state laws.

“We all need more housing, affordable or un (affordable),” he wrote. “I believe the traffic impact will be minor compared to the number of cars already on Alpine Road (which I know well as someone who already has to pull out onto Alpine). I will passionately stand up against the expected ‘This will change the character of our community!!!’ arguments. Every house in Portola Valley was at one time a change to the character of our community.”

Portola Valley residents Susan Light and Edward Kovachy wrote to the Planning Commission in February that they were “sorry to hear all of the organized money going into stopping this project.”

“We need more housing, ideally affordable housing,” they said. “I believe this can work and the objections can be dealt with, I am afraid that most of the people objecting are looking for excuses because of classic NIMBY (Not in My Backyard). Know that many of us do support this project.”

John Donahoe, director of planning and entitlement at Stanford’s Land, Buildings and Real Estate office, said the added housing would help the university recruit and retain faculty and staff. Top-tier schools often like Stanford “until they start to look at housing prices” in the Bay Area, he said. Plan specifics

The homes would be painted in muted colors and be all-electric and zero net energy producing, according to a presentation prepared by Stanford for the meeting. The homes would include fire-resistant exterior materials; metal roofs, cement fiber siding and stucco.

There would be fire-resistant landscape materials, a fire-safe surface for a play area in the development and underground power lines. There would also be a 200-foot fire break buffer at the homes and a fire maintenance road would be built. A preliminary Woodside Fire Protection District review indicates that the proposed plans — including all roadway widths, materials and circulation design details — are conditionally accepted.

The remaining land, approximately 64 acres, would be preserved as open space and is not eligible for development in the future. Alpine Rock Ranch, a horse boarding facility with stables, occupies a portion of the property and would be removed as part of the proposal. A new public recreational trail approximately 1.2 miles in length and 6 feet in width would be constructed along the western edge of the development area, connecting to the existing horse trail along Alpine Road. The entire site would be subject to a vegetation management plan to address fire safety.

Project background

The proposed project area has been zoned for residential use since the 1980s, according to Stanford’s presentation for the meeting. Stanford first submitted a pre-application for the development in July 2019 and submitted a formal application in September 2019.

Commission Chair Craig Taylor noted that reviewing building projects in town can at times “seem long and arduous,” but having everyone participate in that process is “what makes Portola Valley special.”

This is just the beginning of the public process for this project, which will include numerous meetings of the town’s committees and commissions, and an environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

A draft environmental impact report (EIR) should be released for review in the spring. The topic came before the Architectural and Site Control Commission earlier this week as well. No final decisions were made at these January meetings.

The proposed plans and supporting materials are available at portolasvalley.net/building-plan/projects. More information can be found at portolaterrace.stanford.edu.

Email Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com

ATHERTON

contd from p7

— Holbrook-Palmer Park and public streets. (The council opted not to pursue an ordinance to restrict leaf blower use in town at this time.) The council will work with the Environmental Programs Committee to develop communications and information for the public relating to two- and four-stroke engines and the benefits of electric leaf blowers. It also directed town maintenance crews to not use leaf blowers on the Air Days.

As part of the fiscal year 2019-20 midyear budget in February 2020, an adjustment in the amount of $38,000 was allocated for development and implementation of a leaf blower ordinance. Such funds would account for staff time developing the ordinance and any future public education program. Costs to the town would be associated with both staffing resources and equipment costs. The town surveyed local institutions about their leaf blower use. The Menlo Circus Club indicated it uses both gas and electric blowers every day for varying lengths of time, according to the staff report. Menlo School mostly uses gas blowers daily in the mornings and Sacred Heart Schools uses both gas and electric blowers every day, both for varying amounts of time. Menlo College said it uses gas-powered leaf blowers three to four days a week and/or as needed, for about 24 hours a week.

In nearby Portola Valley, officials implemented a ban on gas-powered leaf blowers this month. Portola Valley has created a transition plan to a specific version to electric leaf blowers. If residents buy a new, electric leaf blower, and bring in their old gas-powered model, the town will give them 40% off the cost of the electric leaf blower up to $120.

The town has partnered with a local recycling/repurpose agency that will responsibilities recycle the gas-powered leaf blowers.

Housing element

Atherton will need to put together a new housing element, a state-mandated plan for providing housing to people of all income levels. The town is in the midst of developing its latest plan for the next housing element cycle, which runs 2023 through 2031 and is required to be certified by the state by Jan. 1, 2023, according to a town staff report.

“For this cycle, the town is required to plan for the development of 298 new housing units. Some 74 would need to be very low-income housing, 43 low-income, 51 moderate-income and 130 for above moderate-income, according to the report.

In November, then Mayor Rick DeGolia submitted a letter to the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) on behalf of the City Council expressing concerns with RHNA calculations and methodology used to determine the town’s Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). He said that Atherton is a small, residential community with public and private schools and aside from local school operations, the town’s primary land use is residential, and does not allow commercial development.

As the town does not anticipate growth, let alone job growth within the town limits, this methodology is not applicable to Atherton, he wrote. As a result, there are very few jobs outside of the limited number of town employees and employees of local schools,” he wrote. “It is also important to note that Caltrain no longer serves this community and transportation options are very limited. The RHNA methodology relies heavily on proximity to jobs as a factor. Neighboring jurisdictions regularly approve large scale commercial developments that result in job growth, demands on local resources, and a demand for new housing in those communities. Those community, also benefit from the resulting tax bases and should be required to provide their fair share of housing and resource amenities to meet a healthy job-to-housing ratio.”

Of the 93 units allocated in the current housing element cycle, for the period of 2014-2019, Atherton has reported production of 126 housing units, of which 34 are very low-income; 12 low; three moderate; and 77 above moderate.

The ABAG executive board finalized its draft allocation methodology at its Jan. 21 meeting. Allocations are anticipated to be finalized in the spring.

Traffic calming measures

Over the summer, the council continued to gather resident input on ways to mitigate traffic throughout Atherton.

In 2021, the town will look at beginning to implement yet-to-be-determined calming measures — from installing stop signs to speed bumps. A 2020 town survey found that most residents saw speeding as the greatest traffic issue, following by pedestrian safety. Residents said Stockbridge Avenue is the corridor of town that has the most traffic issues.

Lewis said there has been a small reduction in traffic during the pandemic with more people staying at home and not driving to work, but there are more people outside walking. But neighborhood streets don’t have sidewalks, she said.

“It’s hard for people driving to understand that,” she said.

Email Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com

The Portola Terrace project on the Stanford Wedge property, which would include 39 housing units, is illustrated in this rendering.
required to have full-service kitchens on-site. Wineries must have an active Alcohol Beverage Control Type 2 license for wine growers and breweries, a new grant funding.

Any eateries that have billed for their participation in San Mateo County’s Great Plate Program, located at 1885 East Bayshore Rd., #82, East Palo Alto, CA 94303.

The Midnight Raven, located at 1885 East Bayshore Rd., #42, East Palo Alto, CA 94303.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

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VANDERVEER continued from page 5

teams amidst the onset of the pandemic in March. VanDerveer, a Menlo Park resident, has led the Stanford women’s basketball team for more than three decades, guiding many athletes who have gone on to have success at the professional level, including 2016 WNBA MVP Nneka Ogwumike and sister Chiney Ogwumike, Candice Wiggins and Jayne Appel. VanDerveer has accounted for over 80% of Stanford’s victories since its first varsity season in 1975 and has led her Stanford teams to two NCAA championships, 12 NCAA Final Four appearances, 22 Pac-12 regular-season titles, 13 Pac-12 Tournament crowns and 31 trips to the NCAA Tournament. In 1995-96 VanDerveer served as head coach of the USA Basketball National Team, leading the team to an Olympic gold medal.

In an interview earlier this month, VanDerveer talked about reaching the milestone of leading the all-time coaching wins list, what it’s been like coaching amid coronavirus restrictions and protocols, and social justice activism in basketball.

Q: You’ve had so many accomplishments in your career. Where does passing Pat Summitt for the coaching wins record rank among them?
A: The fact you’ve coached that many games shows longevity, but it’s not a record I was trying to set because I’ve taken a year off from Stanford and I’ve changed schools. I’m proud of the fact I’ve been at Stanford this long and our team has been successful, but I don’t really focus on that (the record) at all.

Q: How did you celebrate the milestone, given the COVID restrictions?
A: There were no fans. It was pretty much just the whole team. We had some cupcakes and basically went back to the hotel, we took pictures with the team — that was pretty much just a team celebration. The team got me a Comfy sweater that says T-DAWG on it and it was fine. It was great to be with the team and have that experience. It would’ve been fun to have my mother around. She was a big fan of our team. It would’ve been fun to celebrate with our fans, but I got a lot of text messages, emails and letters. ... Our fans are a big part of the success of our team and my success so I did miss that, to be able to celebrate with them.

Q: The team hasn’t been able to play on its home court for months due to local coronavirus restrictions prohibiting live sports. (Editor’s note: Santa Clara County lifted the restriction on live professional sports this week; the team’s next scheduled home game is Thursday, Feb. 5.) To what degree has that had an impact on and off the court?
A: It’s challenging, but I think our team is flexible. They’re a very resilient group and we recognize this is what it is this year. In order to play, this is what we have to do. It is challenging. We’re excited to play. And every team is going through some challenges. Ours probably is the most challenging, no doubt.

Q: How would you characterize the pandemic’s impact on this season?
A: Because the tournament was taken away from us last year I think people are excited to train and be with each other. We know at the end of the pandemic we’re going to get through it, but it’s more fun to be playing and practicing under those tough conditions than sitting at home.

Q: Have you adopted any routines or creature comforts during this season?
A: When we bus over to Santa Cruz I bring a spin bike; trying to keep your routine for me is working out. It’s challenging, it’s very different but we are flexible, and we are around each other all the time and I’m really grateful (the players) get along well with each other. They’re a very close team, they care about each other and they’re helping each other get through this.

Q: What was your reaction to seeing the Atlanta Dream and fellow WNBA players coming out in support of Georgia Sen. Raphael Warnock and being credited with generating momentum for his victory against then-Dream co-owner Kelly Loeffler in November?
A: The WNBA has been a league of deep thinkers and serious social justice leaders, (including) Nneka Ogwumike, Layshia Clarendon. I’m proud of them for finding their voice and leading the way when we need that.

Q: What do you think when you hear people who believe athletes should be seen and not heard — that they should just, as one news anchor famously directed toward LeBron James, “shut up and dribble”?
A: That’s not the world we live in. Athletes have a visible platform with social media and all kinds of attention that’s brought to them and they understand they have a voice and they use it. I think that’s great that they do.

Q: What are your hopes as the team heads into the last month or so of the season and where do you think the team could stand to improve?
A: We definitely have a lot of room for improvement and it is challenging when our practice situation is very limiting. We try to do the best we can in watching video but our defense was very lacking in our Colorado game (and) we fouled too much. ... And I credit Colorado every time we play we have a bull’s-eye on our back and we have to understand every team is motivated to beat us and we have to come out and rise to that challenge. ... It is challenging what we’re doing, but it’s nothing compared to people that have lost jobs or lost family members or friends because of COVID. We’re doing the best we can and we miss being in Maples (Pavilion). We miss just the regular little things about going to the gym, having a locker room — things you take for granted. I think we’ll appreciate all those things more and our fans more. We miss our fans tremendously.

Email Julia Brown at jbrown@almanacnews.com

995 Fictitious Name Statement

THE MIDNIGHT RAVEN

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File No.: 286417

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The Midnight Raven, located at 1885 East Bayshore Rd., #42, East Palo Alto, CA 94303, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s):

ZOE YOUNG

1885 East Bayshore Rd. #42

East Palo Alto, CA 94303

This business is conducted by: An Individual.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on Jan. 19, 2021. This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 19, 2021.

(ALM Jan. 29, Feb. 5, 12, 19, 2021)

EATERS

continued from page 1

required to have full-service kitchens on-site. Wineries must have an active Alcohol Beverage Control Type 2 license for wine growers and breweries, a Type 23 small beer manufacturer license. Distilleries are not eligible.

The program is targeting small, independent restaurants. Applicants can’t run more than five restaurants, breweries and/or wineries in San Mateo County, eliminating larger chain operations. Corporate-owned franchises are also ineligible.

Restaurants inside hotels that don’t have separate business licenses aren’t eligible for the relief program, nor are catering companies, cottage food operators or people who run micro-enterprise kitchens out of their homes.

Businesses that already received or have been approved for grants through the San Mateo County Strong Fund will be grandfathered into the new grant program, however, are ineligible. Any eateries that have billed the county $200,000 or more for their participation in San Mateo County’s Great Plate Program, which delivers free meals to older, high-risk individuals, cannot apply for the new grant funding.

“Restaurants are often minority- and women-owned and they employ immigrant residents. We have to help them until the surges subside and vaccination efforts make it safer to reopen,” said David Canepa, president of the Board of Supervisors. “We understand small businesses are devastated and it’s an impact on the business community due to the pandemic and restaurants are among the hardest hit.”

The program will accept applications at smcstrong.org during a window from late February into early March. Eligible businesses will be grouped into pools by location and then chosen at random, county staff said.

The county is also hopeful that other cities, towns and community partners contribute more matching funds to maximize the number of businesses the program can support.

Email Elena Kadvany at ekadvany@paweekly.com

Stay-at-home orders

continued from page 10

slower rate across the state, it is still spreading, state officials said.

“It is still critical that Californians continue to wear masks when they leave their homes, maintain physical distance of at least six feet, wash their hands frequently, avoid gatherings and mixing with other households, follow all of the local health department guidance and get the vaccine when it’s their turn,” they said in a press release.

Gov. Gavin Newsom said on Monday that the state will move to an age-based prioritization after health workers, first responders, essential workers and people ages 65 and older have all received at least one dose. And KTVU reported that Newsom noted that people ages 65 and older make up 75% of the deaths from COVID-19. He did not say what the prioritization system would look like.

Email Sue Dremann at sdremann@paweekly.com

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Vaccine rollout needs to improve, but so does communication about it

Friday, Jan. 27, marks seven weeks since the Food and Drug Administration authorized the first COVID-19 vaccine in the United States. The Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine, followed by another from Moderna, made its way to local health care workers and long-term care facilities starting in December.

Those who have received the vaccine are among the lucky few, as California ranks in the bottom half of states in percentage of vaccine doses administered. In San Mateo County, 38,750 doses had been administered to 48,826 people as of Jan. 25 — or 6.3% of the population, according to a newly released data dashboard.

Santa Clara County as of Jan. 26 had given out 169,776 first and second doses; the countywide population is estimated to be 1.9 million.

A lack of supply is the chief barrier to more widespread vaccination, according to health officials. The Trump administration reportedly did little planning with its “Operation Warp Speed” rollout, and health officials learned earlier this month that second vaccine doses that they thought were being held in reserve by the federal government had in fact already been distributed. To this day, counties and medical providers still don’t know when they will receive vaccines or the amount they’ll receive in this manner, which inhibits planning. As San Mateo County Health Officer Dr. Scott Morrow said in a statement Jan. 19, “We all want to go faster, but until this supply issue is ameliorated, we won’t be able to.”

Some have also pointed to the state’s tiered vaccination plan as something that, while intended to ensure equity, has slowed the rollout.

“In a well-meaning effort to achieve equity, we are creating systems so complex and messy that they can thwart the goal of equity. Simpler is better,” Dr. Robert Wachter, chair of the department of medicine at University of California at San Francisco, recently told CalMatters.

This week, federal and state officials took steps to address these concerns. President Joe Biden announced that his administration is working to purchase an additional 200 million doses of the COVID-19 vaccines, which would increase the total vaccine order for the country by 50%. And on Jan. 25, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced that the state will change its vaccine distribution hierarchy to an age-based system once all health care workers, people over age 65, food and agriculture workers, teachers and school staff members are vaccinated. Doing so “will allow us to scale up much more quickly and get vaccines to impacted communities much more expeditiously,” Newsom said.

“We realize we have got to increase throughput here,” he said. “While we are proud of the framework we put out… we recognize it has advantages and it has disadvantages as it relates to speed and efficiency.”

While talk of ramped-up vaccine distribution is encouraging, it will still take months to get a large swath of the population vaccinated. As millions wait, they shouldn’t be left in the dark by lack of clear information.

But that’s just what’s happened so far. When state officials announced earlier this month that they were opening COVID-19 vaccine appointments to all residents 65 and older, people called and emailed their health care providers in droves, waiting on hold for hours and combing through websites in search of an answer — and a vaccination appointment. Some took to social media, seeking information by messaging county health Twitter accounts — or just an opportunity to vent.

“The level of confusion Californians are getting left with in this process is absurd,” Twitter user Rob Lion wrote in response to a tweet from San Mateo County Health on Jan. 14, one of several replies from exasperated residents.

What wasn’t immediately clear was that the state’s new guidelines would be up to the counties and health care providers to implement. Santa Clara County decided to offer vaccines to those 75 and older (and on Wednesday widened eligibility to those 65 and older), while San Mateo County in recent days began vaccinating priority residents over 65 who receive medical care through its clinics.

“The balkanization of the distribution of the vaccine has contributed greatly to the consternation and chaos the general public feels,” Dr. John Swartzberg, an infectious disease specialist at University of California at Berkeley, told CalMatters. “What county you’re in is what determines what age group is getting the vaccine… What health system you’re in will determine if you get the vaccine. The questions just go on and on.”

Compounding the confusion, San Mateo County announced on its website Jan. 17 that it was transitioning to its next vaccination phase, which would include residents 65 and older, but it wasn’t clear to our journalists until a call to the county Jan. 19 that the county did not yet have sufficient doses to actually do so.

While we certainly appreciate the difficult task facing San Mateo County health officials, we do see room for improvement in their communication about vaccine availability and COVID-19 in general.

The county has rolled out an interim website where residents can sign up to receive COVID vaccine-related updates, including on vaccine eligibility. We stumbled across it (find the link at smchealth.org/covidvaccine) while perusing the county’s vaccination program webpage; if there has been any promotion of this sign-up page, it appears to be scant. While the state is piloting a similar sign-up site in Southern California that it plans to launch statewide in the coming weeks — something that should have been ready when vaccinations began — we think county residents would appreciate knowing about the local option.

San Mateo County also could adopt some strategies from its neighbors in Santa Clara County. Santa Clara County’s public health department regularly posts the most up-to-date data on COVID-19 cases, with links to its data dashboard, on social media. It regularly livestreams press conferences and relevant Board of Supervisors items, making them accessible to someone scrolling through Twitter or other social media sites; San Mateo County recently livestreamed an information session on Twitter, but it does not typically promote County Manager Mike Callagy’s weekly media briefings or health officials’ COVID-19 updates to the Board of Supervisors on social media, nor does it post the latest information on case trends. San Mateo County officials regularly post pandemic-related health and wellness tips, which are definitely useful, but putting more information out about the question on the minds of many — when can I get vaccinated? — could help ease some of the anxiety.

But state and local officials, in relying heavily on technology-dependent tools to get vaccination information in the hands of its most vulnerable residents, have underscored the existing technology divide. It’s not just students doing distance learning who are struggling. There are an untold number of senior, relatively rural and low-income households throughout the Midpeninsula that don’t have reliable internet or computer access or don’t own smartphones, or who may struggle to use the technology even if they have access to it.

Some medical providers, like Kaiser Permanente, have indicated they will contact patients directly when they’re eligible for the vaccine, but what about those who can’t easily access the internet or a smartphone and are told to sign up online for vaccination appointments? Or to even find out when they’re eligible, they must rely on someone else to help them? Health care providers and officials should recognize that people should make targeted efforts to reach out to our most vulnerable populations through other means so that those getting the vaccine aren’t just the people who are most tech-savvy.

In his statement earlier this month, Morrow addressed peoples’ inherent dislike for uncertainty and ambiguity, acknowledging that they “create anxiety” while also positing that “uncertainty and ambiguity are always going to accompany the implementation of an endeavor at this scale, especially in the early phases.”

The vaccine rollout has certainly been wrought with uncertainty and ambiguity, and we do understand that this is an unprecedented moment and how much this pandemic is straining our resources. But better communication from government and health care officials and medical providers in the meantime will help dispel false information about the vaccines, improve equity and access, and bring some comfort to those anxious for clear, accurate information.

LETTER

Our readers write

Stanford Wedge project

Portola Valley has a long tradition of NIMBY regarding affordable housing. Rusty Day maintains that tradition in spades as he goes on about the “jeopardy” of building 27 homes on a parcel of land along Alpine Road near Westridge Drive (‘A very dangerous place for fire’ in Portola Valley,” Jan. 22).

He ignores the realities: As reported widely, “the project would consist of 27 single-family homes for faculty and three apartment buildings with 12 low-income apartments. The buildings would be on 7.4 acres of the 75 acres that make up the wedge.” This plan does not build in the ravines. 2. 27 single-family homes on 7 acres is actually a density similar to Ladera, a development that is more fire safe than Portola Valley. When PG&E imposes power outages, the town has suffered; whereas, Ladera has not had the power cut yet by PG&E for wildfire safety. 3. Poor maintenance of landscape and lack of natural fire is a systemic problem in Portola Valley and much of the rest of California. This risk is not seen in higher housing densities around the area, so this extends to much higher density housing than proposed.

Thus, the plan more likely reduces overall fire risk for your town.

Ed Mocarski
Professor emeritus
Stanford University
Erica Way, Ladera

What’s on your mind?

Tell us what’s on your mind by sending your letters to letters@AlmanacNews.com. Or snail-mail them to: The Almanac, 450 Cambridge Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94306. Letters should be no longer than 300 words.

Questions? Email editor@AlmanacNews.com, or call 650-223-6537.
By Sheryl Nonnenberg

Pace Gallery offers
a joyous ride on the color wheel

I f you are experiencing mid-winter blues brought on by recent political events, the ongoing pandemic and gray skies, a visit to Pace Gallery in Palo Alto may be a much-needed antidote. This outpost of the New York City-based conglomerate has succeeded in bringing blue-chip artists to our midst and, quite often, lesser-known work by these significant figures.

The current show, “Kenneth Noland: Flares,” is a colorful, upbeat and fun exhibition that will surprise and delight even the art aficionados who think they know the work of the Color Field painters. Also known as the Washington Color School, these artists used fields of a single color of paint with no visible traces of traditional application, such as brush strokes.

On view until Feb. 27, the show consists of 15 paintings that were undertaken during Noland’s time in Santa Barbara, California, in the early 1990s. They may have been inspired by the landscape, the ocean, the weather, perhaps even by the surfers who frequented this part of the California coast. What is obvious is that the artist continued working in his signature manner: large, shaped canvases coated with acrylic paint but here, instead of being limited to targets, chevrons, stripes or diagonal bands, Noland has embraced broad, gestural strokes of color in a wildly expressive manner.

Of course, color was Noland’s stock in trade. The now-legendary story is that, in 1953, Noland and his friend and fellow artist Morris Louis visited the studio of Helen Frankenthaler where they were first introduced to the idea of paint applied, via pouring, to unprimed canvases. The result was a sort of staining effect that stressed the interaction of colors. Years before, Noland, who was born in 1924 in Asheville, North Carolina, had attended the experimental Black Mountain College and studied under Josef Albers. His nested color squares have been joined by happenstance but, in spite of their age, they look like they could have come out of a contemporary studio.

“I feel like the show looks very fresh, as though the works could have been done yesterday,” Pace Director Elizabeth Sullivan said. “They really reflect the notion that less is more, and I like the way they relate to each other. There is a certain musicality to them.”

The gallery’s center wall is home to “Rise and Fall,” a gorgeously scarlet painting that consists of three separate pieces. The irregularly shaped canvases, which Noland referred to as “constructed pictures,” reminded me of the sea, a wave and the distant horizon.

Additional depth to the piece is provided by an interesting visual trick: Noland has placed a strip of colored plexiglass to the sides of the shapes. Here, turquoise blue and golden yellow add contrast and volume.

This placement of the narrow strip of Plexiglas is used in each piece with great effect. Whether it is red adjacent to black or canary yellow next to red, there is not a single misstep; they complement each other and enhance the whole.

All of the pieces are given suggestive titles by the artist. “A Secret,” “Hot Times” and “La Luna” are all sturdy, stacked horizontal elements that could call to mind books on shelves. “Wind Driven” is an appropriate title for three long, narrow bands that look as though they are collapsing against one another. Similarly, “Midnight Madness” consists of one vertical swath painted a deep black that abuts a cerulean blue shape, then one painted a brick red.

Whether you find reference points when looking at these paintings is not important. What you will take away from the experience is the simple joy of color — bold, bright, riotous colors that may look like they have been joined by happenstance but, make no mistake, were carefully planned and executed by Noland. These works are color studies in action — the color wheel and all of its theoretical properties in solid form. Warm colors advance, cool colors recede and their interaction creates. These are the strong, assured works of a mature artist (Noland died in 2010) who was not afraid to explore the rich visual language of color.

This is the first presentation of Noland’s work at Pace Palo Alto (you can see an example of his better-known target series, “Rose,” at the Anderson Collection at Stanford University) but hopefully not the last. We need all the color we can get in our lives these days.

Pace Gallery is open by appointment only (229 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto) and with COVID-19 protocols in place. More information is available at pacegallery.com.

Freelance writer Sheryl Nonnenberg can be emailed at nonnenberg@aol.com.

Exhibition features rarely seen series by Color Field painter
Kenneth Noland

The colorful work of the late artist Kenneth Noland is on display at Pace Gallery in Palo Alto through February. Pictured left to right are “Flares: Rise and Fall,” “Flares: Midnight Madness,” and “Flares: Wind Driven.”

Courtesy The Kenneth Noland Foundation/Artists Rights Society (ARS)
From Hokkaido uni and wagyu beef to NYC-style pizza with a California twist

By Elena Kadvany

Pizza by the slice has all but disappeared during the pandemic, but a new pizzeria in Palo Alto that opened Monday is the exception: State of Mind Slice House is here for all your single-serving cravings. If cooking with top-notch Japanese ingredients sounds tempting, wholesaler Kiyoi has expanded its business during the pandemic and is now offering an online store with delivery or pickup to regular folks, not just restaurants and grocery stores.

State of Mind Slice House

Lars and Andrew Smith grew up in the blocks surrounding their newest pizzeria at 3850 El Camino Real in Palo Alto’s Barron Park neighborhood.

Lars Smith has fond memories of eating at the same space decades ago when it was still a Taco Bell. Their father Jim, who still lives in the neighborhood behind the restaurant, had always wanted to open a business there on what once was Palo Alto’s “restaurant row.” His father ran the El Camino Veterinary Hospital down the street for more than 50 years. Smith got his start making pies as a high schooler at Pizza My Heart (where he met his wife as well as State of Mind co-owner Amy Betz.)

“This is our stomping grounds,” Smith said.

State of Mind Slice House opened for business on Monday, the owners’ second act to the State of Mind Public House and Pizzeria in downtown Los Altos. The newest restaurant is their ode to New York City slice shops, with their own West Coast stamp. As at their first pizzeria, all of the slow-proofed pizzas are made from organic California flour and topped with made-from-scratch sauces and ingredients like housemade chorizo, chevre, local vegetables and hot honey.

State of Mind fans will see familiar menu items, plus some pizzas that have gone on and off the Los Altos menu but will be permanent fixtures at the Slice House, like the “po-tay-to” with mozzarella, Point Reyes toma, bacon, potato, green onion and cream. All of the pizzas are baked in high-heat electric Cuppone ovens from Italy.

Although other local pizza shops have discontinued slices during the pandemic, the Slice House will remain true to concept and have as many as 15 pizza slices available when things are fully up and running. Several will be available in square slices or as whole pan pies — State of Mind’s take on the “grandma pie” made famous by Umberto’s on Long Island. State of Mind’s version is thicker than Umberto’s, Smith said, and has been refined over, “no exaggeration,” hundreds of hours of tinkering. All whole pies can also be ordered as rectangular pan pizzas instead.

“We’ll continue to chase the best pizza and the best product we can make,” he said.

State of Mind Slice House also offers gluten-free pizzas, vegan cashew cream and plant-based Impossible Foods sausage. Unlike the Los Altos restaurant, there are no wings or burgers here; just pizzas and a few salads. Like the arcade and pinball machines at State of Mind in Los Altos, Slice House’s decor will pay homage to their upbringing in the 1980s and 1990s. Smith plans to install custom booths that look like ’90s fast-food booths and an old-school vacuum-formed sign out front.

For dessert? Peak nostalgia with It’s-Ice cream sandwiches. State of Mind Slice House is open for takeout only for now but the Smith patriarch is building tables for outdoor dining (which resumed in Santa Clara County the day the restaurant opened).

The pizzeria is open daily from 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. and taking orders online at stateofmindslicehouse.com.

Japanese wholesale foods from Kiyoi

Thanks to a pandemic pivot, you can now buy the same high-quality tuna, Hokkaido uni and wagyu beef served at some of the Bay Area’s top sushi restaurants.

Before the coronavirus, Kiyoi, a family-run wholesale business in San Mateo, supplied restaurants throughout Northern California with primarily Japanese nese ingredients, including fresh seafood flown in twice a week from Tokyo’s famed Toyosu Fish Market. Kiyoi’s restaurant customers include the Michelin-starred Sushi Yoshizumi and Sushi Sam’s Edomata in San Mateo and Ebisu, Wako and Omakase in San Francisco (the latter two have Michelin stars).

The company also supplies Japanese markets like Mitsuwa Marketplace and Nijiya Market. While Kiyoi’s core business, restaurants, struggled to stay afloat last year, supermarket sales surged, co-owner Jeffrey Su said. So they leaned into the retail side of things and decided to start selling directly to consumers.

Kiyoi’s online store includes everything from abalone and fatty tuna to rice, jidori eggs, fresh ramen noodles, salmon roe and cooking gear like a personal Ishi Yakinku grill. Su said they plan to offer meal plans, such as all the ingredients to make sushi or bento boxes at home, and cooking videos from chefs they work with.

Su’s parents started what he said was one of the area’s first Asian wholesale companies after immigrating to San Mateo from Taiwan in the late 1970s. They realized most Chinese restaurants were purchasing ingredients from American companies that didn’t speak their language or have specialty items. They started by selling canned goods out of their garage to local Chinese restaurants.

“My parents happened to find that niche market. They could speak the same language with all the incoming immigrants,” Su said. “Our business was thriving.”

Kiyoi delivers to the 650, 415, 510 and 408 area codes, or customers can pick up their orders between noon and 6 p.m. at 1222 South Amphlett Blvd., San Mateo. Orders placed before 11 a.m. can be picked up the same day.

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