The end of an era: Ann’s Coffee Shop to close

Downtown diner was a Menlo Park mainstay for 75 years

By Kate Bradshaw

After 75 years, Ann’s Coffee Shop, known for its 1950s atmosphere, bottomless carafes of coffee and homemade soups and pies, is set to close April 19, according to Nicki Poulos and George Paplos, the mother-son duo that has run the diner for the past 13 years.

The building housing the 772 Santa Cruz Ave. coffee shop, along with the adjacent Menlo Bazaar at 780 Santa Cruz Ave., has been sold by Allan Aldrich, a landlord who kindly didn’t collect rent in the months that the shop was closed over the past year due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and reduced rent when the shop faced reduced capacity due to limited outdoor dining availability, Paplos said.

The pandemic hurt the vintage cafe, which is as old as the San Francisco 49ers and has been open during nine decades — from the 1940s to the 2020s, Paplos said. The coffee shop was only able to keep one cook and one waitress on staff, and could seat less than half of its indoor capacity outdoors, he added. But the final nail in the coffin was the building being sold, he said.

Because of the skeleton crew still working at the cafe, including Paplos’ grandchildren, visitors coming to say goodbye to the coffee shop and the family that runs it are encouraged to be patient and accept a more limited menu than usual, Paplos said.

Poulos said the family asked whether the coffee shop might be permitted to remain open while the new owners decided what to do with the property, but the request was declined.

According to the Menlo Park Historical Association, the shop was first opened in 1946 at the Bazaar at 780 Santa Cruz Ave., along with the adjacent Menlo coffee shop, the diner for the past 13 years.

Nicki Poulos, co-owner of Ann’s Coffee Shop, talks to customer Steve Mercer on April 7. The 75-year-old diner, a mainstay in downtown Menlo Park, is closing April 19.

San Mateo, Santa Clara counties in race against virus mutations

Health leaders encourage residents to seek COVID-19 vaccination appointments despite short supply

By Sue Dremann

In a continued race to vaccinate residents quickly and stay one step ahead of the mutating coronavirus, health officials from Santa Clara and San Mateo counties are urging patience and a renewed effort to follow safety guidelines.

Both counties are struggling to receive adequate COVID-19 vaccine doses from the state to meet the needs of currently eligible groups. On Tuesday, April 6, health leaders expressed concern about what will happen when the state unleashes eligibility to all adults ages 16 and older on April 15. As the counties seek to reach a 70% to 80% population vaccination rate to attain herd immunity, they also face the reality that some people won’t choose to be vaccinated — or might give up.

Anticipating frustration by the public, Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian on Tuesday urged staff to find ways to encourage people who don’t find a vaccination appointment right away to “please keep trying.”

Health leaders in both counties said the number of administered vaccinations is rising, but positive virus cases have been flattening in the past two weeks, a sign that forward progress in weakening the virus’ onslaught could stall.

Health leaders are hopeful that people will continue to follow protocols for mask wearing and social distancing to avoid another infection surge.

They are also in a race against time before the virus further mutates and potentially renders the vaccines less effective, county health staff told their respective boards of supervisors on Tuesday.

The variants currently in Santa Clara County that are on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s “variants of concern” list include the United Kingdom B.1.1.7, which is 50% more transmissible and causes more severe symptoms than the original strain; the South Africa-originated B.1.351, which is 50% more transmissible; the Brazil-based P.1; and two variants originally found in California, B.1.427 and B.1.429, which are about 20% more transmissible, county Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody told the Board of Supervisors on April 6.

“I think it’s really the variants that threaten to undo the progress that we’ve made,” she said.

“The good news is that so far, the vaccines that we have deployed are performing well against these variants. But we just have to continue to be watchful because, of course, it’s the virus’ job to evade — whatever it is that we put up. And so the goal here is to vaccinate as many people as quickly as possible, particularly in communities that have been hardest hit, where the virus has amplified most prominently over the pandemic.”

An additional 300,000 Santa Clara County residents will be eligible for the vaccine starting April 15, said Dr. Marty Fenstersheib, the county’s COVID-19 testing and vaccine officer.

“Countywide, 40.3% of people ages 16 and older have received at least one dose of the vaccine and 25% have completed their vaccinations, he said. Santa Clara County’s allocation, which includes community clinics and other county health care entities, received a total of nearly 72,000 vaccine doses this week compared to 58,670 last week. The number excludes retail pharmacies, Kaiser Permanente and Sutter Health/ Palo Alto Medical Foundation, according to county health data.

San Mateo County

In San Mateo County, health officials also continue to face a shortage of doses. They were forced to curtail their mass
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Local News

Portola Valley School District asks voters for a smaller parcel tax in special election

By Angela Swartz

A parcel tax measure will again come before those who live within Portola Valley School District’s boundaries this spring after voters failed to renew a soon-to-expire tax last March.

Measure S is the only item on San Mateo County’s all-mail ballot May 4 election. The district is asking for less money this time around: $471 per parcel annually versus the current rate of $581.

It would raise $997,000 annually for the district and requires two-thirds of voters’ support to pass. It has an eight year term and would expire in 2029.

District officials are asking taxpayers for less because the district has made $1.3 million in cuts over the last three years, said district Chief Business Officer Connie Ngo. The district saved money by eliminating an assistant principal position at Corte Madera School; eliminating a district office classified staff position; freezing the hiring of the director of learning and innovation; eliminating 30 telephone lines; and reducing its workforce by seven teachers and classified staff positions through attrition, Ngo said.

“The reduction in parcel tax (rates) reflects us listening to the community,” Ngo said. “It’s what we have determined we need.”

Ngo said the district must continue to be prudent and is asking for what it “needs today.”

The current parcel tax, Measure O, expires in June and raises about $1.2 million annually for the district. It funds advanced math, science and technology, reading, writing, art and music programs; reduced class sizes; and retention of teachers for the district’s two schools, Ormondale and Corte Madera, according to the district website. The tax also covers 17% of district teachers’ salaries, according to the ballot measure.

Measure P failed to pass last spring just as the pandemic hit. Many people did not go out and submit ballots because of fears they would contract COVID-19, said school board trustee Anne Fazioli-Khiari. Voters are also no longer contending with a “chaotic stock market” and presidential...
Menlo Park house damaged in fire

A house in the Stanford Weekend Acres neighborhood sustained significant damage in a fire that broke out April 1, according to the Menlo Park Fire Protection District.

The fire district received a report of a fire at the rear of a house in the neighborhood along Alpine Road. An engine arrived on scene at 1:52 p.m. and reported that the fire involved the rear and side of the building and had pushed into the eves of the home. Firefighters tackled the fire on the outside of the home, and then went inside. While the fire appeared to not have damaged much of the interior space, firefighters found damage in several attic crawl spaces. They had to cut holes in the roof to let the smoke and heat escape and pull down ceilings to extinguish the fire, according to the district.

By 2:20 p.m., the fire was reported to be completely knocked down. Elements that helped the district battle the fire so quickly were the lack of wind, a drone used to fly over the scene, and the fact that it’s not yet fire season, fire Chief Harold Schapelhouman said.

Investigators with the fire district later determined that the fire had started near the mechanical and electrical equipment for a swimming pool and hot tub on the property. In addition, there was an earlier report of a PG&E power outage that coincided with the reported time of the incident, which district officials said they were looking into.

See CRIME BRIEFS, page 10

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Atherton traffic management plan workshops

The town of Atherton is working on an action plan to address residents’ concerns about traffic-related issues, according to a town newsletter.

The town will host two identical virtual workshops on April 14 and 22, both at 6 p.m., to share proposed traffic calming measures and strategies, as well as discuss priorities. Go to athertontrafficmanagement.com to RSVP and read more about the project. For more information, contact Public Works Director Robert Ovadia at rovadia@ci.atherton.ca.us.

Bygone Portola Valley roadhouses talk

Tune in Sunday, April 11, for a webinar on the history of Portola Valley’s reputation as the “Roadhouse Valley,” a reference to the lineup of restaurants and hotels in town, according to event organizer Bo Crane.

Some of the more notable bygone roadhouses that opened in Portola Valley after the Prohibition era included Mama Garcia’s La Casa Blanca, The Portola Club, Jan’s Valley Inn (briefly Maloney’s), and Mangini’s (briefly Rudy’s), according to the Palo Alto Historical Association, which is hosting the event. Their “once existence seems almost mythical,” members write on the association’s website.

The free webinar is from 2 to 3 p.m. on April 11 at tynylr.com/magmagracias.

Atherton hosting e-waste event

The town of Atherton will be hosting a recycling event on Saturday, April 17, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Holbrook-Palmer Park, 150 Watkins Ave.

Acceptable e-waste items include TVs, computers, printers, monitors, laptops, cables/cords, cellphones, MP3 and DVD players, and more (working or not). Residents may come pick
Police put Menlo-Atherton High on lockdown due to threat

Caller claimed to have guns to ‘shoot up the school’ on the second day students returned to classrooms

By Angela Swartz

Menlo-Atherton High School was put on lockdown on Tuesday, April 6, after a man called Atherton police, threatening to “shoot up the school,” said Atherton Police Department Chief Steve McCulley. It was students’ second day back in classrooms in over a year after the Atherton campus closed due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The caller told the police dispatch operator around 2:10 p.m. that he was in an unused classroom on campus with “guns and ammo.” Around the same time, police believe the same person called Menlo Park’s police dispatch and said he was holed up in a residence in the 2300 block of Tioga Drive with a gun and had shot someone in the home, according to Police Department spokesperson Nicole Acker. It turned out to be a false “swatting” call, she said.

When officers arrived, they found a family at their residence with “no suspicious activity or any extraordinary events taking place,” Acker said. The officers determined it was swatting, a term coined because the false reports are meant to trick police into mounting a huge response that includes SWAT teams.

There was a prior swatting call at the same address last year, she said. Police suspect it may be due to an “online gaming dispute,” but this has not been completely vetted, Acker said.

Police released one classroom, or space, at a time, according to an email administrators sent to parents around 3:30 p.m. There were 60 students on campus for zero period (which is the last class held on Tuesdays, from 1:25 to 2:35 p.m.), Principal Simone Rick-Kennel said. There were also about 60 students there for athletic practices. About 120 staff were on campus, which included classified staff, certificated staff, coaches and administration. Teachers are able to work remotely during prep periods and office hours so not all were present for the zero period if it was their prep time, she said. The school is at 25% capacity during its initial reopening.

The school resource officer, KC MacDonald of the Atherton Police Department and other Atherton officers, in coordination with the Menlo Park Police Department and the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office, were able to secure the campus, Rick-Kennel said. Police went “room to room” checking for any threat, as well, she said.

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Students were dismissed from the front of the school, according to an email sent to parents.

Email Staff Writer Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com.

Alexander Pfistner, a Menlo-Atherton High School sophomore, completes a health screening before entering the school on April 6.

Teachers say Sequoia district promised, then denied, remote work accommodations

By Angela Swartz

Sequoia Union High School District administrators violated a memorandum of understanding with teachers by denying employees who have extenuating health or family circumstances that affect their ability to return to work the ability to continue to work from home when district classrooms reopened on Monday, April 5, a frustrated Sequoia District Teachers Association president told the district’s governing board last month.

The denials came via what teachers described as “impersonal” mid-March emails. The emails instructed employees to work with their site administrators to find a solution if it was a child care issue, according to a copy of the email obtained by The Almanac. If it was related to a medical accommodation, documentation would need to be resubmitted.

The MOU, signed in early March, states: “regardless of the county tier that the district is in, the district will work with employees who have extenuating health or family circumstances that may affect their ability to return to work. SDTA and the district will work together to determine the application process and criteria for applications to work remotely for reasons other than medical condition or disability.”

“At this point we have members under great mental and emotional stress,” teachers union President Edith Salvatore said during a March 24 meeting. “These were members who voted for our MOU because we assured them that the district agreed to this. It’s in writing (that) they will live up to their end of the bargain. ... It is very difficult to look forward to the very heavy load we will carry knowing the district doesn’t have our back on this.”

The union filed grievances on March 22 and 23 “to hold the district accountable” for the language in the agreement the district violated. Salvatore said. The district has denied the first of the two grievances, claiming in its response that officials did not “blanket deny” all accommodation requests, though they have not provided any documentation to corroborate that claim despite the union’s request for a list of the names of all applicants and whether they were approved by the district, she said. On Tuesday, April 6, Salvatore shared an update from the district: of the 174 applications...
for accommodations, the district indicated it approved nine requests. None was for child care purposes; all were for the health of a family member or other reasons, according to Salvatore. Seven were for certificated employees (SDTA bargaining unit members plus a few administrators) and two were classified staff, she said. Four of the applications were for medical reasons (those applications were supposed to be submitted to and handled by the individual sites), 26 were due to concerns for the health of a family member and 88 were for child care purposes. There were an additional 56 that were listed as “option 4: other.”

Salvatore said the board commended the union’s 91% approval of the MOU, but to her the approval was “embarrassing” because the union normally ratifies agreements with 98% approval.

“Apparently those 9% knew better than we did about who we could trust,” she said, noting that she feels as if the union members were naive.

During the meeting, Woodside High School Principal Diane Burbank and Menlo-Atherton High School Principal Simone Rick-Kennel said that there haven’t been blanket denials of teacher accommodations at their school sites. Burbank said at least two were approved by the district for lack of child care or someone in their household who had medical issues.

“It was not our intention to appear that we do not care about our teachers and staff,” said Jacqueline McCroy, assistant superintendent of human resources and student services, during the meeting. She apologized if teachers thought their applications were not read and she said the lack of teachers’ trust in district administrators “saddens (her) greatly.” “We read each application. ... As we went through those documents, we realized that as a team of three (people), that it was difficult for us to make decisions regarding flexibility because teachers' schedules are different, their needs are different. ... Based on the information we had, we couldn't make a lot of decisions about flexibility.”

She noted that for every teacher who works remotely, there is another person, a substitute teacher, paraprofessional or an instructional aide, who needs to be in the classroom with the students. “That is a huge human resource cost — financial and human cost,” she said. School site administrators have a better ability to determine if they have enough substitutes to cover staff members who want accommodations, she said.

Trustee Chris Thomsen said the district needs to acknowledge the “real hurt feelings” teachers have. Board Vice President Carrie Du Bois said there’s healing that needs to take place in the community.

Trustee Shawneece Stevenson said the district is going through a difficult transition of “going back to normal” with the reopening. There needs to be different communication styles with staff and students going forward to be more sensitive to the crisis the community is enduring, she noted.

“The more you are divided, the more you are conquered,” she said.

Accommodation denials

Some teachers went into spring break not knowing if they would be required to return to campus or could continue to work remotely.

As of the early afternoon on Thursday, April 1, Pablo Aguilera, a social studies teacher at Sequoia High School, said he was still awaiting word if he could take a leave instead of returning to his classroom after his accommodation request was denied by the district. By 3 p.m. he heard back from a school administrator that he could work remotely.

Aguilera’s 5-month-old daughter’s pediatrician said her age range would be at high risk of getting sick if he was exposed to the virus at school. He is vaccinated, but it’s still unclear if vaccinated people can spread the virus to people who are unvaccinated. He also lives in the Belle Haven neighborhood of Menlo Park, where he is already facing increased exposure to the virus, and the majority of his students live in North Fair Oaks, which would put him at higher risk of getting infected and spreading it to his daughter. Both communities have been hard hit by the virus.

Conversely, his wife, a high school teacher for the Mountain View-Los Altos High School District, emailed her district’s HR department at the same time, with the same letter from their pediatrician, and got a response back in 12 hours saying she was approved to work remotely.

Aguilera said it is hard to have faith that the district will provide a safe learning environment during the pandemic when teachers had to buy their own tissues and hand sanitizer for their classrooms for weeks before remote learning started last March.

Glenda Ortez-Galan, the head counselor at East Palo Alto Academy, said during the meeting that her principal was able to accommodate her request to continue to work at home since she has two children continuing with distance learning, including one who has a disability. Her initial request to work remotely was denied via a “canned email” from the district, she said.

“While I’m thankful our principal will accommodate me, I worry about my classified and certified staff throughout the district whose administrators are not willing to accommodate them and are left to figure it out on their own,” she said.

Other teachers advocated for their colleagues at the meeting. Ellen Jacobson, a district teacher, said she was “disheartened” to hear the district has denied her colleagues the ability to continue to work from home because of their lack of child care and that site officials are having to handle the “fallout.” Another teacher said she was horrified by the violations of the MOU and that the denials made teachers feel that they are not valued by the community.

Video of the meeting can be viewed at tinyurl.com/sequoia-march24.

Email Staff Writer Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com.
California sets June 15 goal for full reopening

By Ana B. Ibarra and Barbara Feder Ostrov

As the pace of vaccination picks up, California state officials on Tuesday announced the date they plan to fully reopen the state's economy: June 15.

Reopening by then will largely depend on two criteria: Vaccine supply must be sufficient for anyone 16 and older who wants a shot and hospitalization rates must remain low and stable. The mask mandate would remain in place, however.

"It is incumbent upon all of us not to state mission accomplished, not to put down our guard, but to continue with vigilance that got us to where we are today," Gov. Gavin Newsom said April 6 from San Francisco.

The move would eliminate the complex web of county-by-county tiers and replace it with a statewide reopening of businesses. Businesses would open up to full capacity, although individual counties can still opt to have more restrictions depending on their circumstances.

Schools would be allowed to reopen to all in-person learning; however, the school districts will maintain control.

"I want kids back in school safely, and on June 15 we anticipate there will be no barriers to getting kids back in person, not just K-12 ... (also) including institutions of higher education," Newsom said.

Dr. Mark Ghaly, the state's health secretary, said he feels comfortable allowing businesses to operate at full capacity in mid-June because the state will continue to track local conditions.

"What we could see is fully occupied settings, but yet still with masks," Ghaly said Tuesday.

Until at least Oct. 1, events at large settings like convention centers will only be allowed if organizers can show that attendees are either vaccinated or are tested. There is still no plan, however, for large, multi-day events like music festivals to take place.

As of Monday, April 5, the state had administered more than 20 million vaccines — more than entire countries. That includes 4 million doses in the state's hardest-hit ZIP codes. This progress allows the state to move forward and leave behind its colored

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

continued from page 6

up to 1 cubic yard of compost for free during the event. The town will provide shovels and bags while supplies last. Proof of residency is required.

For questions about the community e-waste collection, paper shredding and compost giveaway, contact Anthony Suber at asuber@ci.atherton.ca.us or Francesca Reyes at freyes@ci.atherton.ca.us or call 650-752-0500.

Portola Valley company announces $350 million in investments

Portola Valley-based venture capital firm Canvas Ventures announced March 30 it is investing $350 million to fund investments for early stage fintech, digital health, marketplaces and logistics companies, according to a press release.

Clients of Canvas, which was founded in 2013, include Thrive Global, Arianna Huffington's business that provides health and wellness tips for companies' employees; Zola, an online wedding registry; and Casetex, a legal research tool.
vaccination events at the San Mateo County Event Center to just one this week, which was "very disappointing," Health Chief Louise Rogers told the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday morning.

The county is making considerable progress on its goals to vaccinate the most vulnerable groups and communities through more targeted events. Dr. Anand Chabra, the COVID-19 mass vaccination section chief, said 48.6% of the county's eligible population has been vaccinated; 39.8% of vaccinated residents live in places that fall in the lowest quartile of the Healthy Places Index. The county has recorded inoculations among more than 65.6% of people of color, 29.1% of white residents and 5.3% of unknown race. The county has also vaccinated 83.8% of residents ages 65 and older and 87.4% of those who are 75 and older, he said.

But "we still do not have sufficient supply to meet the demand," he said.

Of more than 101,000 first and second doses managed by the county, 91.4% have been administered or distributed. The county plans to hold six targeted, first-dose vaccination events this week in highly impacted communities and several second-dose events.

One first-dose, mass vaccination event for 4,100 people will take place at the San Mateo County Event Center and 4,400 people will receive second doses, he said.

Last week, all San Mateo County jail inmates were offered vaccines, resulting in 325 adults and 13 juveniles receiving shots. Newly booked inmates are being offered vaccines as they enter the facility, he said.

The county also has vaccinated more than 300 residents and staff at homeless shelters. Last week, 120 unhoused homeless people also were vaccinated.

"We’ve seen enormous progress in reaching out with the vaccine to all the corners of our county, and we still have a ways to go," Rogers said.

The county expects to have offered all adults vaccinations by early summer. Vaccinations for children are not likely to roll out until early 2022, Rogers said.

"We’re really at a point of transition. This is not over yet," she said. Both counties’ health officials offered a carrot of sorts: the possibility that if people remain patient and continue to maintain social distance, wear masks and follow other health protocols, the counties could soon move into the state Blueprint for a Safer Economy’s least restrictive yellow tier.

Santa Clara County has a testing positivity rate for this week of about 1%. Its ranking in the state’s lowest Healthy Places Index census tracts based on testing positivity rate is just above 2%, Cody said. The county has an adjusted case rate of 2.4%.

San Mateo County has a COVID-19 positivity rate of 0.8% and a rate of 1.4% in the lowest Healthy Places Index census tracts. The adjusted case rate is 2.4%, Rogers said. If it maintains a sufficient vaccine supply and hospitalization rates stay low.)

There are a few hopeful signs. To move into the yellow tier, counties must have been in the previous orange tier for three weeks and then meet a set of factors, including a low adjusted case rate and a testing positivity or “community transmission” rate. The state lowered the threshold for the adjusted case rate on Tuesday after reaching a vaccination goal of 4 million people living in its lowest vaccine equity quartile, which represents the 25% most vulnerable communities. To move into the yellow tier, a county must demonstrate that it has a testing positivity rate and adjusted case rate of less than 2% for two consecutive weeks prior to moving to the less-restrictive tier.

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San Mateo County has a COVID-19 positivity rate of 0.8% and a rate of 1.4% in the lowest Healthy Places Index census tracts. The adjusted case rate is 2.4%, Rogers said.

Structural damage was estimated at $125,000, and other damages were estimated to be about $32,000.

“We were very fortunate that the fire was quickly called in by the resident,” Schapelhouman said.

—Kate Bradshaw

Child pornography arrest

A Redwood City man who worked at Palo Alto schools was arrested April 1 for allegedly possessing and distributing child pornography.

Alex Jessup, 32, was placed into custody after the sheriff’s Detective Bureau received a tip from the Internet Crimes Against Children task force about child pornography associated with his address on Feb. 2, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office said in a press release.

On April 1, detectives served a search warrant on his home in Redwood City’s Emerald Hills neighborhood after an investigation. They recovered what they said are allegedly several pornographic images from his computer and phone. He was arrested away from his home on suspicion of possession of child pornography and distribution of child pornography.

Jessup was actively seeking employment as a teacher, coach and babysitter, the Sheriff’s Office said.

His LinkedIn and Facebook profiles list jobs at various schools and programs over the past decade, including the Palo Alto Unified School District, Keys School, Palo Alto Family YMCA, Avid4Adventure, CCLC and the Palo Alto Family YMCA.

Jessup previously lived in Palo Alto, according to his Facebook profile.

Superintendent Don Austin said information on Jessup’s LinkedIn page regarding his employment at Palo Alto Unified School District is inaccurate. Anne Le, school district director of classified human resources, confirmed that Jessup was an hourly campus supervisor who worked from Aug. 16, 2017, to Nov. 30, 2018. Every employee and volunteer goes through U.S. Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation background checks before they are allowed on campus, she said.

The Sheriff’s Office is conducting an ongoing investigation and is encouraging anyone who has information about Jessup to contact Detective Wang at 650-363-4055 or email at jwang1@smc.gov.org.

—Sue Dremann

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—Sue Dremann

VIRUS MUTATIONS continued from page 1

CRIME BRIEFS continued from page 6

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www.menlofire.org
728 Santa Cruz Ave., where Le Boulanger is now. The shop relocated to 772 Santa Cruz Ave. around 1962. Pete Pappas bought the location in 1992, where his son Nick and cousin Danny Kevetos ran it for many years, according to the association.

In 2008, Poulos and Paplos bought the cafe.

“I always wanted to run a coffee shop,” Poulos said. Over time, her son went on to pursue other work opportunities, leaving her to run the coffee shop.

“It was exciting,” she said. “I would go and listen to the regular customers there.”

Over its decades of operation, it has developed a following of loyal regulars that spans generations. “It was like a home to them,” Poulos said. “It was a loud place, a gathering place.”

On Wednesday morning, April 7, the diner was bustling as families, couples and individuals were served hearty breakfasts with pancakes, bacon and eggs.

Julie Mercer was there with her son and two grandsons from out of town. “It’s a gem of a place to come to,” she said. “I feel nostalgic to be here.”

Her husband and his friends had a long tradition of going there every week to talk and pray together, she added.

“I needed to come and experience it one more time,” she said.

Dorothy Hersey, another regular who has been coming to Ann’s for six years, said she likes the unpretentious atmosphere, the friendliness and the service. It’s somewhere she’s felt comfortable dining alone and called it her “favorite breakfast stop.”

Diners Patty and Terry, who have been frequenting Ann’s since 1994, described as the last of the old-school diners in Menlo Park following the closures of Ken’s and Jason’s Cafe. Ken’s Pancake House on El Camino Real shuttered in 1999, and Jason’s Cafe closed in 2019 after being hit with lawsuits claiming the facility did not comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Poulos described another regular, a woman over 100 years old whose family brings her to the coffee shop several times each week. Faced with its closure, the family has asked to buy a booth and place settings from Ann’s to install in their grandmother’s garage, Poulos said.

She added that the place has long been popular with mothers who called first thing in the morning to order breakfast for their kids before school.

There have also been plenty of high-profile visitors to the shop, she noted: Shirley Temple Black, Congresswoman Anna Eshoo, former quarterback Y.A. Tittle and football coach and former quarterback Jim Harbaugh.

And several years ago, she said, the cafe also worked with a security detail to serve then-Speaker of the House of Representatives John Boehner.

The diner has also been a mainstay for generations of Poulos’ family.

Vasilis Panagiotopoulos, Poulos’ grandson who grew up around his family’s diner since he was 3 years old, said it’ll be “strange not having it in my life.”

“It’s very, very bittersweet,” said A’lex Paplos, Poulos’ granddaughter, about the closure of Ann’s Coffee Shop.

She began working at the shop at age 16 — now she’s a lawyer nearing 30. She said she enjoyed interacting with the wide spectrum of seniors, young people and families who were customers. She especially liked working at the 1950s-style counter, where she’d often fall into conversations with customers.

“It’s going to be hard to say goodbye.”

A’LEX PAPLOS

“It was always like, every day I got a new story from someone,” she said. “You just get to hear a lot of interesting things from the community.”

“It’s been a big part of our lives. We feel very much like a part of the community. It’s going to be hard to say goodbye,” she said. At the same time, she added, she’s looking forward to seeing her grandmother, who is almost 76, take the opportunity to retire.

For what’s next, Poulos said she plans to travel to her country of origin, Greece, and spend time with her family.

Email Staff Writer Kate Bradshaw at kbradshaw@almanacnews.com.

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中文諮詢請聯繫Audrey Sun, DRE #0193274 電話: 650.785.5822 | www.deleonrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
Robert L. Baldwin was born on September 30, 1927, in Madison, Wisconsin, the son of Ira Lawrence Baldwin and Mary Lesh Baldwin. He was called Buzz because an older sister couldn’t pronounce “brother,” and the name stuck when there were four Roberts in his first-grade class.

Buzz was drafted into the army at the end of World War II and trained in code-breaking school. Following the war, he reentered college and received a B.A. in Chemistry in 1950 from the University of Wisconsin. Buzz went on to become a Rhodes Scholar, and earned a D. Phil in Biochemistry in 1954 from Oxford University in England. During the subsequent five years, he served as a postdoctoral fellow and then faculty member at the University of Wisconsin, and as a Guggenheim Fellow in Copenhagen.

In 1959, Buzz joined the newly created Department of Biochemistry (chairied by the late Arthur Kornberg) at Stanford University School of Medicine. He was promoted to Professor in 1964 and served as Chairman of the Department from 1989 – 1994. He became Emeritus in 1998, but continued to work actively in his field for another ten years.

During his first year at Stanford, Buzz lived in an apartment in Mountain View. While visiting a friend for lunch in Los Trancos Woods one weekend, he looked around at his beautiful surroundings and thought to himself, “What am I doing in Mountain View?” Soon after that, he bought the house in which he lived until he died, and in which he and his wife, Anne, raised their two sons. He and Anne had been married next door in the garden of George and Myrtle Baldwin, who he said very much valued the Los Trancos Woods community, with neighbors who were also good friends and supportive of each other.

Buzz was a gentle person, who loved the woods. He knew the local wildflowers by their Latin names, and loved to hike, and to garden. He also enjoyed skiing and rock climbing. He took his family on backpacking trips to the Sierras, and also annually took a gardening. He also enjoyed skiing and rock climbing. He took his family on backpacking trips to the Sierras, and also annually took a

Buzz thought deeply about many things, and enjoyed art and music, but he was first and foremost a scientist. He devoted his life to thinking about the important unsolved problems in biochemistry. His career spanned the years when fundamental questions about life were becoming accessible to experiments at a molecular level, and he often remarked how lucky he was to be a scientist at just this time.

The structure of DNA, which led to the solving of the genetic code, was only the beginning of this explosion of knowledge. Each gene defined the amino acid sequence of a protein, and the activity of the protein depended on its three-dimensional, folded shape. The subtle factors that determined the fast and reproducible folding process were the subject of Buzz’s research over much of his career. In the process, he trained many students who went on to successful careers of their own, and to whom he was devoted. He advised them to focus on important problems, and they took his advice to heart.

Buzz was elected to the U.S. National Academy of Sciences in 1980 and to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences in 1981. He received the Stein & Moore Award from the Protein Society in 1992, the Weizmann Award from the Chemistry from the University of Chicago in 1995, the Merck Award from the American Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology in 1999 and the Founder’s Award from the Biophysical Society in 1999. He has been an editor of the Journal of Molecular Biology and of Biochemistry.

He is survived by his family of 55 years, Anne Norris Baldwin; two sons, David N. Baldwin of Seattle, WA, and his wife, Jen Johnson, and Eric L. Baldwin, of Urbana, IL, and his partner, Sarka Petranova; three grandchildren, Elias A. Baldwin, Julian N. Baldwin, and Kasper J. Baldwin; and two step-grandchildren, Al and Twyla Johnson. He was preceded in death by his immediate family, and also to the family of his sister, Helen Gustill, who predeceased him. He will be greatly missed by all.

HIGH SCHOOLS

Erika Zelaya shows Woodside High School freshman Brady Payne, where to go on a campus map on April 5, the first day back in classrooms.

There are challenges. Trying to try to keep the students on Zoom and the ones in the classroom engaged is exhausting, he said, and the air purifier is really loud.

“It’s well worth it. The kids in the classroom don’t have to be on any device; the kids in the classroom are getting as close to the old experience as they had,” Kryger said.

M-A Mental Health Support Specialist Shionda Nickerson said returning to campus should help some students struggling with isolation during the pandemic, but for others it won’t be a fix.

“Some students had mental health concerns present before the pandemic, which only exacerbated them; those things are not going to go away,” she said. “Some issues were solely around isolation; for those students, coming back will absolutely impact their mental health in a positive way. It will look different (to be on campus): They can only walk one way, their wearing masks, sitting behind a partition — it’s not normal, but it is something.”

But for some students, it’s going to take more than just coming back to school to improve their mental health, she said.  

Email Staff Writer Angela Swartz at awertz@almanacnews.com.
the city's decision” and that they “were forced to file a lawsuit challenging the city's illegal approval of the sidewalk plan.”

“We hope the city will reconsider its decision and adopt a context-sensitive solution for each ‘complete streets’ project,” he added.

In the statement, Patterson criticized the volunteer Complete Streets Commission that advises the City Council.

“The Complete Streets Commission has indicated that it is focused on ‘creating a contiguous network of biking and pedestrian infrastructure, sustainability and safety from having to undergo an analysis for environmental impacts under the California Environmental Quality Act.”

Email Staff Writer Kate Bradshaw at kbradshaw@almanacnews.com.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on N/A.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of San Mateo County on March 29, 2021.

(ALM Apr. 9, 16, 30, 2021)

NATIONWIDE CAPITAL MANAGEMENT CLIMATE COALITION

U.S. CLIMATE COALITION

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File No. 287183

The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: 1.) NCLM Capital Management, 2.) Climate Coalition, 3.) U.S. Climate Coalition,

This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of San Mateo County on March 29, 2021.

(ALM Apr. 9, 16, 30, 2021)

Public Notices

995 Fictitious Name Statement

WHAT THE BIKE

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File No. 288986

The following person(s) is (are) doing business as: What The Bike, located at 1271 Bellway Way, Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s): SHEPHER TADDION

1271 Bellway Way

Menlo Park, CA 94025

This business is conducted by: An Individual.

The registered owner(s) listed above on Not Applicable.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of San Mateo County on March 29, 2021.

(ALM Apr. 9, 16, 30, 2021)

Public Notices

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Local residents who died recently include Max A. Capenstein, 87, a longtime Menlo Park resident and OB-GYN at Kaiser Permanente in Redwood City, on Dec. 17; and Robert Lesh “Buzz” Baldwin, 93, a Portola Valley resident and founding member of Stanford University’s biochemistry department, on April 6.

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

CalAqua Santillan at 650-223-6578 or email asantillan@pawweekly.com for assistance with your legal advertising needs.
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April 9, 2021 | AlmanacNews.com | The Almanac | 17
Vote yes on Measure S
Portola Valley district’s tax measure lowers the current rate and supports schools at a crucial time

According to district officials, eight teachers would need to be laid off and programs cut should Measure S not receive the necessary two-thirds support from voters. The current parcel tax, Measure O, raises about $1.2 million annually and helps pay for teacher salaries, reduced class sizes, and programs such as advanced math, science and technology, and art and music.

District officials say the new parcel tax initiative is indicative of an effort to listen to the community and only ask for what’s necessary, as Measure S would implement a tax of $471 per parcel annually versus the current rate of $581. So for $130 less per year, Portola Valley district voters can help local schools retain the renowned programs and teachers, which benefit the entire community regardless of whether you have a child in the district. One could argue that it’s more important than ever before to keep class sizes small, have teacher continuity and fund academic programs that have enriched the lives of so many children, especially ones like science and music that heavily rely on in-person interactions and have been harder to engage in virtually.

Opponents of the measure argue that the parcel tax is unnecessary because enrollment has declined in the district, meaning there should be fewer expenses. But the enrollment decline will not necessarily continue, nor does a decrease in enrollment automatically translate to a decrease in expenses at a time when schools are spending money on air filters, cleaning supplies and personal protective equipment to help create a safe environment for students and staff amid the pandemic.

It’s hard to complain about being overtaxed by the district when voters are being asked to approve a decrease from the current rate, and the well-respected local schools are a big factor in keeping the town’s property values high. The Almanac recommends a yes vote on Measure S.

By Jay Siegel

Menlo Park Municipal Water (MPMW) provides water to roughly half of the city of Menlo Park and is planning to introduce new water rates. A water service rate public hearing was held last year after mailed to all property owners and mailboxers in the MPMW district. They are proposing a new three-tier set of increasing water rates as “…the best compromise between fairness and the promotion of water conservation.”

The tiers were built upon assumptions of household water consumption: Tier 1 is based on the assumption that individuals in a family each use up to 55 gallons per day for normal indoor use. Tier 2 represents excess indoor plus outdoor usage of up to 110 gallons per day per persons in the family. Tier 3 represents outdoor usage that results in water usage greater than the maximum of Tier 2. The critical reality is that MPMW’s residential customers are not families but water meters. For single-family residences this is not an issue — one meter measures the water usage of one family. However, for multifamily residences — condominiums and apartments — this is a serious difference as one meter measures the water consumption of many families, depending on the size of the structure.

For example, I live in a condominium complex that has one meter measuring the water usage of 57 families. For our tier 2 customers, multifamily residences, tier 2 for the month, every single person in the 57 families would have to use less than 2 gallons of water a day (110/57), or just one flush of a low-flow toilet per day! This is clearly not possible and in fact, our water meter goes into “requirement for each of the usage tiers. Taking stage 3 as an example, customers in tier 1 are required to reduce consumption by 2.0%, tier 2 by 5.5%, and tier 3 by 40.3%. If residential water customers were families, these requirements would be reasonable to reach an overall reduction of 30% for stage 3. However, in reality MPMW customers are water meters, not families.

As noted above, virtually all multifamily residences’ water meters will be in tier 3. This means that every family living in a multifamily complex will have to reduce their water consumption by almost seven times more than single-family residences to reach the water reduction goals of the district. Families living in apartments and condominiums have a smaller footprint in terms of land use and water consumption than families living in single-family residences and should not shoulder a significantly larger water use reduction requirement.

The Menlo Park City Council will vote on adopting the new water rates at a public hearing on Tuesday, May 11, starting at 5 p.m. The meeting link is available at menlopark.org/waterrates along with other background information. You can oppose the new water rates by filing a protest, available at menlopark.org/waterrates. A protest in writing (or digitally signed email) can protest. However, it is the City Council that will vote to accept or reject the proposed new rates and you, whether you are a renter or home owner, can email all the council members via a single email address, city.council@menlopark.org.

Jay Siegel is a Menlo Park resident.
Local roots and global dreams: The Song Gardeners grow their sound

Los Altos band releases new ‘New Age pop’

By Karla Kane

It’s been a difficult year for artists, but for a pair of Los Altos songwriters, singers and multi-instrumentalists, it’s also been a fruitful time to watch their music blossom. The Song Gardeners (Mary Gospe and Corrie Dunn) have been hard at work writing, recording and releasing original songs with empowering messages, in a genre they call New Age pop.

“It is our intent to bring peace, beauty and harmony into the world through our music,” Dunn said. “Songwriting is our therapeutic creative outlet.”

The band (which also previously included Mountain View musician Chris Day), has released a number of well-received singles and plans to release an album in the coming months, with producer and fellow Los Altos David Scheibner at the helm. With titles including “Love Flows,” “Warrior of Light” and “Love is the Magic of Change,” their songs offer uplifting and affirming lyrics set to chill grooves and danceable beats, with vocal harmonies and more of a contemporary-pop sensibility than one might usually associate with the “New Age” tag. It’s a natural association for Gospe, though, who teaches meditation, among other spiritual pursuits, while also having roots in rock, folk and jazz.

“We’ve really found an audience in the New Age genre,” Gospe said, noting that both The Song Gardeners and her solo songs have found success on New Age radio charts, critical acclaim from international listeners, and even earned several honors. The jazz-harmony infused “Love Is the Magic of Change,” written by Dunn, recently won the “One-ness” award from One World Music radio station, for the song “that best represents the hope and love that is out April 8 on all streaming platforms. With a world-beat flavor, a chant sung by Gospe in Farsi, Spanish and English, and lead vocals by Dunn, the song “is an invitation for women across the globe to break free of outdated patriarchal, religious and cultural norms that keep them silenced and hinder their choices and freedom of expression,” according to a press release by the band.

Gospe and Dunn both grew up in music-loving families. They met 20 years ago, when their sons were in kindergarten and have been friends ever since, with a mutual love of organic gardening (hence the band name). They played together in the Los Altos cover band Cool Fire, then formed The Song Gardeners to nurture their original material.

Dunn has long been involved with music professionally; she holds a degree in music from Foothill College multiple times, with music on the back burner, although she, too, dabbled in songwriting, taking a class at Foothill College multiple times, “until I maxed out,” she said with a laugh. In 2018 she decided to take a short sabbatical to follow her heart’s true delight. A fortuitous introduction to producer David Vito Gregoli led to the recording and release of an album of original music, “Time to Soar,” in 2019 and before she knew it, “My six-month sabbatical turned into a forever sabbatical,” she said, transitioning to an “encore career” as an independent musician.

“I always dreamed of being in a band or doing something with music but I don’t know if I ever thought it would take off,” she said. “I’m kind of living my dream right now.”

Obviously, the year of pandemic restrictions have put a damper on Gospe and Dunn getting together to play, record and perform, but they’ve kept up with their collaborations from a (short) distance.

“We all are really close physically but we each record our own parts at home and then send tracks to the producer,” Gospe said. “I’d say the biggest challenge in home recording is the leaf blowers!”

When writing, Gospe said she often starts with the lyrics. “I’ve had a few songs drop in while I was meditating,” she said. For the song “I Choose Love,” the words struck suddenly mid-meditation as a sort of divine download: “In this moment I get to choose. No one else is standing in my shoes. It’s up to me how I want to be” she recalled. “That was really cool. Those are like gifts, when that happens.”

The band marked its return to live, in-person performance with a gig as part of downtown Los Altos’ First Fridays event on April 2.

“We feel really good about developing their songs and keep the positive vibrations humming. “We feel really good about the messages we’re putting out,” Gospe said. “The songs are healing, I think we’ve found a niche for ourselves.”

More information is available at thesonggardeners.com.

Email Arts & Entertainment Editor Karla Kane at kkane@paweekly.com.

April 9, 2021 | AlmanacNews.com | The Almanac | 19
By Elena Kadvany

I have some bittersweet news: This marks my farewell as the Peninsula Foodist. After putting out 47 Peninsula Foodist newsletters and spending eight years covering restaurants and education for the Palo Alto Weekly and our sister publications The Almanac and the Mountain View Voice, I’m taking a job as a food reporter at the San Francisco Chronicle.

I’ve felt the full emotional weight that comes with starting a new life chapter after a very formative one, and it feels particularly difficult to leave behind this newsletter and the community behind it. When I first started the Peninsula Foodist column many years ago, I had no idea what it would turn into. I just wanted to write about restaurant news and do justice to the food of the region I grew up in. Fast forward to today, and there’s the column, a newsletter and thousands of passionate people who are as obsessed with the ins and outs of local food as much as I am.

One of my editors suggested I put together a list of my favorite stories from over the years for my last newsletter. It’s almost impossible to do that since, at the risk of sounding really sappy, they’re all my favorite in different ways. My reporting took me into local kitchens and bakeries and gave me access to some of the Bay Area’s most interesting and important culinary characters. It gave me an excuse to start basically my dream series — asking local chefs out to lunch at a restaurant of their choice for an interview (the photo above, taken pre-pandemic, is from the first conversation in that series with the former Maum co-chefs). But I’m going to list a few stories below that have stuck with me and illustrate the driving force behind the Peninsula Foodist: to be the most comprehensive, compelling source for food news in this region, and, most critically, to tell the stories behind the food on our plates.

It’s hard to express how rewarding it is to build something from the ground up, especially in the media world. I’m so grateful to parent company Embarcadero Media for supporting this passion project and investing in restaurants as a serious beat in and of itself, which wasn’t the case for a long time (maybe ever) at our newspapers. In that vein, the Peninsula Foodist will continue on with a new writer.

Thank you so, so much, for all of your support over the years — every email, tip and interview. You always reach me on social media at @ekadvany on Twitter and lena21 on Instagram.

Here are seven of my most memorable stories:

**How San Jose became America’s Vietnamese food mecca**

For Vietnamese refugees, restaurants provided economic opportunity and community. Today, they offer a delicious case study in regional flavors. At San Jose’s venerable Vung Tau, soup is history.

The restaurant serves eight noodle soups, each of which starts with the same broth but tells its own story about Vietnamese history through toppings, condiments and serving style.

Read more at tinyurl.com/sjviet.

**Silicon Valley’s underground food movement is driven by Instagram and COVID economics**

There’s an underground food movement booming on the San Francisco Peninsula. It’s not happening at restaurants, but in the homes and backyards of out-of-work cooks, high school coaches, mothers and fathers — people who have turned to selling food to make ends meet during the coronavirus shutdown. On any given day, if you’re clued into the right Instagram and Facebook pages, you can find homemade quesabirria tacos, fresh tamaleas, lumpia, pupusas, smoked brisket, smoothies, boba tea and otai (a Polynesian drink made from fresh fruit).

Read more at tinyurl.com/penUnderground.

**Peninsula Foodist Elena Kadvany**

speaks with Meichih and Michael Kim, former co-owners of Maum restaurant in Palo Alto which received a Michelin star, over lunch at Orchard City Kitchen in Campbell on Aug. 5, 2019.

**Ghost peppers and legal waivers: Our search for the spiciest dishes on the Peninsula**

At first, I thought the waivers were funny, almost a gimmick. I mostly skimmed them, signing my body rights away with much thought at two restaurants that required them before serving me the hottest dishes their kitchens can muster. I just wanted to get to the spicy part.

Then I found myself at the bar of The Swinging Door in San Mateo ordering the “Habanero Burger XXX,” which the British pub claims is “the hottest burger in the nation.”

Read more at tinyurl.com/spicywaiver.

**Desperately seeking soft serve: Chasing down Mister Softee on the Peninsula**

It wasn’t easy finding Mister Softee.

For someone used to food trucks with fixed locations, chasing one down was new to me. Sure, you can use the iconic East Coast soft serve company’s smartphone app to track the trucks in real time, but they’re constantly in motion. Every time I put in a location on the Peninsula, eating out of ceramic dishes filled with chicken Parmesan, pasta, Caesar salad and garlic bread. Welcome to family meal.

Read more at tinyurl.com/ManresaStaffMeal.

Follow the Peninsula Foodist at almanacnews.com/blogs or sign up for the newsletter at almanacnews.com/express.

**Food trumps hate: Inside the Peninsula supper club celebrating immigrant cuisine**

Lalita Kaewsawang was 10 years old, and obsessed with chicken fat rice. Growing up in Nonthaburi, Thailand, she’d return to the same street vendor over and over to watch him make the khao mun gai, a deceivingly simple yet technically challenging dish. She offered to wash dishes for an hour just to be able to watch him pour chicken stock into a vat of rice at the exact right moment.

Read more at tinyurl.com/TapestrySupper.

**Behind the scenes at Manresa’s staff meal**

Just after 4 p.m. at Manresa Restaurant in Los Gatos, you’ll find some of the kitchen staff in an unlikely setting: sitting in a nondescript parking lot behind the three-Michelin-star restaurant, eating out of ceramic dishes filled with chicken Parmesan, pasta, Caesar salad and garlic bread. Welcome to family meal.

Read more at tinyurl.com/ManresaStaffMeal.

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Read more at tinyurl.com/searchforsoftee.

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166 OLIVE LANE, is one of Woodside’s most coveted streets | Private compound, built in 2010, comprised of a three-story main residence with elevator, along with a 1-bedroom guest house, built in 2019, and an enchanting casita, both with full kitchen and bath Chef’s kitchen, 5 bedrooms plus 2 offices, fitness center, recreation room with projection screen and large wine cellar in the main house Beautifully landscaped 3-acre grounds with 250+ roses, raised garden beds, an orchard and offering views of the western hills Wood-burning fireplace terrace with outdoor kitchen | Solar heated pool and spa | Two koi ponds connected by cascading waterfalls | Backup generator | Crestron home automation | Radiant heat and dual-zone air conditioning | 2-stall barn
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