June 15 reopening isn’t a ‘light switch’ for businesses
California’s pandemic milestone is another step toward normalcy

By Lloyd Lee

For weeks since COVID-19 vaccines became more accessible and health restrictions decreased, businesses have been experiencing a healthy influx of customers — in numbers they haven’t seen since the pandemic began.

“We already bounced back three months ago,” said Nina Nguyen, owner of Palo Alto Fit, a fitness studio on Portage Avenue that specializes in personal training.

So with California’s official “reopening” on Tuesday, allowing fully vaccinated people to take off their masks in most settings and for indoor places to lift all capacity restrictions — businesses didn’t suddenly return to a pre-pandemic “normal.”

Instead, June 15 set off small but significant shifts for customers, most of whom no longer have to wear masks, and businesses, which can get closer to serving a true full house of patrons.

Having capacity limits at 100% isn’t a major turning point for Palo Alto Fit, which has suffered from but ultimately weathered the pandemic because its business model focuses on appointment-based, one-to-one personal training sessions. But the update does give back clients the comfort of exercising without a sweaty mask on.

“We’re very excited,” Nguyen said. “We have a little more freedom now especially if everyone is vaccinated.”

Nguyen, who opened the studio in 2015, said her gym would verify every client’s vaccination status and have them sign a liability waiver if they want to train without a mask on. For the unvaccinated, clients will have to keep their mask on or exercise outside, she said. All clients, however, will still have the option to do virtual training sessions.

Menlo Uptown development proposal reaches key milestone

By Kate Bradshaw

A proposal by the development company Greystar to build 441 apartments and 42 townhomes near the Bay in Menlo Park hit a milestone when the final environmental studies evaluating the project were released June 11.

The proposed project, located at 141 Jefferson Drive and 180-186 Constitution Drive, would be an average height of 62.5 feet tall and include 553 parking spaces and 21,700 square feet of public open space, according to city staff.

In addition, the developer would set aside 67 rental apartments and six townhomes to be designated as affordable to people earning less than the median income, in accordance with city policies.

The exact breakdown of whether the below-market-rate apartments would be designated for very low- and low-income households only, or whether some moderate-income households could be eligible for the program has not been decided yet, according to city staff. However, all six of the below-market-rate townhomes would be affordable to moderate-income households.

The developer has also proposed two ideas for community amenities to provide for the public in exchange for greater development allowances than would otherwise be permitted. Those proposed amenities are to either dedicate the planned commercial space at the development — less than 3,000 square feet — to be used by a nonprofit, or to be used specifically by a health care nonprofit to operate an urgent or express care center. In either case, the developer would contribute additional funds to a community land trust or health care network.

One of the most vocal groups raising questions about the environmental impacts of the proposal is the Sequoia Union High School District, because the proposed development is across the street — or as the environmental impact review (EIR) notes, 85 feet away — from the district’s recently launched TIDE Academy, a Menlo Park high school focused on STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and math) education set to serve around 400 students across four grades.

A 23-page letter from the district’s law firm Lozano Smith in response to the draft EIR raises concerns that the proposal could add around 1,240 new residents to the neighborhood, including an estimated 100 new high school students that the district would have to serve. The rapid increase in student population could require the district to add portable classrooms, the letter noted. It also raised concerns that the proposed development would worsen traffic and vehicle-related safety for students at the school. A separate letter directly from the district raised similar points, including concerns about the noise and air quality impacts of the proposed development.

The authors of the final environmental analysis pushed back on the school’s requests, saying that the impact fees the developer would be expected to pay, along with existing regulations aimed at minimizing impacts to schools, would reduce the impacts to a “less than significant” level. In addition, the analysis notes that while the total number of students in all grades at the development would be around 270, based on certain assumptions used in earlier environmental analyses to determine zoning for the area, that is likely a high estimate. That’s because about 220 of the proposed units in the development would be one-bedroom housing units.
The pandemic has shown us the true power, precision, and innovation of Stanford Medicine in researching and fighting COVID-19. It has also proved that Stanford Medicine—made up of Stanford Children’s Health, Stanford School of Medicine, and Stanford Health Care— is at its strongest when backed by a community committed to keeping everyone safe.

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Construction begins on Portola Valley school buildings this week

By Angela Swartz

On a blustery June day, Portola Valley School District community members gathered at the town’s two public schools to celebrate groundbreaking ceremonies for the district’s $49.5 million bond measure project.

This week, new construction funded by Measure Z commenced at Ormondale and Corte Madera schools. Former superintendent Eric Hartwig, who headed the district when the measure passed in 2018, spoke at the ceremony and said it was gratifying to see the project coming to fruition. He gifted Chief Business Official Connie Ngo a framed pipe that had leaked in Corte Madera’s government buildings and made her laugh.

Corte Madera Principal Kristin Shima, who is wrapping up her first year heading the school, said at a June 7 groundbreaking ceremony that she was excited to celebrate the occasion in person after over a year of sheltering in place.

“Over the past three years, we have come together as parents, neighbors, district staff, school board members, and our construction planning partners to design campus improvements that will continue PVSD’s heritage of respecting our town’s unique beauty while updating our schools and providing the 21st century classroom experience to our students,” she said.

Shima asked audience members to pause and take in the scenery of Portola Valley.

“The (construction) plans really have us opening this space up, so we can really look up and look out,” she said.

Ormondale, which serves students from transitional kindergarten through third grade, will gain a new entry, courtyard and makerspace patio, according to a June 10 note from Superintendent Roberta Zarea in the town newsletter. Ormondale will have a sensory garden, including plants for play therapy, interactive play spaces, outdoor seating and a new greenhouse, she wrote.

Corte Madera, which serves grades four through eight, will gain a new atrium with a view to Windy Hill, a new fourth and fifth grade classroom that looks out over the Frog Pond, an amphitheater, new landscaping and new lunch seating, she said.

“Over the past three years, we have come together as parents, neighbors, district staff, school board members, and our construction planning partners to design campus improvements that will continue PVSD’s heritage of respecting our town’s unique beauty while updating our schools and providing the 21st century classroom experience to our students,” she said.

See CONSTRUCTION, page 20

Woodsiders to vote on measure aimed at adding outdoor community spaces

By Angela Swartz

Woodsiders are set to vote on changing zoning to allow for more outdoor community gathering spaces in a Sept. 7 special election. The citizen initiative qualified when San Mateo County verified 447 signatures out of the 678 signatures on a petition started by resident Alex Tauber to change zoning regulations so a parking lot behind Buck’s Restaurant in Woodside can be developed, according to a report prepared by town staff for a June 8 council meeting. The measure would also allow for a parcel of land next to the Woodside Community Museum to be developed into an outdoor amphitheater. The measure needs a simple majority in favor to pass.

Tauber started the effort in February in search of safe ways to bring community members together outdoors. Current land use regulations limit two residentially zoned pieces of land adjacent to the Town Center, a town-owned complex along Woodside Road from Whiskey Hill Road to Roberts Market that includes government buildings and commercial businesses, and Cañada Corners at the Cañada Road intersection (owned by Roberts Market). To overturn these rules, established by

See WOODSIDE VOTE, page 18

Enjoying Foothills Park after dark

By Kate Bradshaw

It wasn’t a great day to go camping. It was the Thursday night of a long week, and my boyfriend had a last-minute work meeting come up. Then a friend I’d invited to join me at the last minute notified me she had a class to attend, while another friend also canceled for work reasons.

So the roster for the May 6 expedition to overnight at Palo Alto’s Foothills Park would be just me — and my trusty canine companion, Willa. I arrived at the park around 5 p.m., hours after the check-in time of 2 p.m.

Unsure of just where the campsites were, I parked at the bottom of the hill at the Orchard Glen parking area and started hiking in toward the Towle Campground. The campsites were a solid half-mile away from the parking area, and upon arriving, I realized that there was abundant parking there, and that I could have just driven in along the gravel path the whole way.

While setting up my tent, I was met by a park ranger who walked me through the rules, established by these rules, established by

See FOOTHILLS PARK, page 17

See CONSTRUCTION, page 17

Principal Kristin Shima speaks to the assembled crowd at a groundbreaking event at Corte Madera School in Portola Valley on June 7. Work funded by the $49.5 million Measure Z bond started this week.

See CONSTRUCTION, page 17
The Architectural and Site Review Board reviews and makes recommendations to the Planning Director regarding community character, site planning, building design and landscape elements on residential and commercial applications. During COVID-19, the ASRB meets virtually on the first and third Monday of the month at 4:30 p.m. Interested residents may request information and applications from the Town Clerk, Jennifer Li, by e-mailing jli@woodsidetown.org.

APPLICATION DEADLINE:
Friday, July 2, 2021, by 5:00 p.m.

INTERVIEW AND APPOINTMENT BY TOWN COUNCIL: Tuesday, July 13, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.
Menlo Park: Council hashes out budget, city recovery plan

By Kate Bradshaw

A
ter cutting tens of millions of dollars from the city of Menlo Park’s budget last year, the City Council tentatively agreed to add back the equivalent of 24.5 full-time staff members at a cost of $3.75 million beyond what the city currently funds.

The City Council’s discussion of the proposed budget on June 8 provided additional feedback on a number of proposals relating to which services to bring back after pandemic-related budget cuts last year. However, the 2021-22 budget isn’t formally scheduled for approval until the council’s June 22 meeting.

Access the draft budget at is.gd/mpdraftbudget2122.

The format for the proposed budget for the upcoming 2021-22 fiscal year started by establishing a baseline option, setting forward a plan to fund the remaining services that weren’t cut during the pandemic. From there, city staff developed a tiered list of options that the City Council could select to enhance services beyond the current level.

After working through those four tiers of options, which included at least 18 service proposals, the City Council tentatively agreed, via straw poll, to move forward with plans to approve 24.5 new staff members and $3.75 million to fund those service additions.

Among the service additions are:

- Restoring planning staffing — $300,000
- Adding an economic development manager — $250,000
- Adding a sustainability staff member to implement the climate action plan — $150,000

Council members were a “maybe” on whether to add five full-time employees to maintain the city’s downtown area and implement the city’s updated Heritage Tree ordinance for $630,000, a “no” on collaborating with the Menlo Park Fire Protection District on an emergency preparedness initiative for $100,000, and a “no” on two proposals related to the police department: to add two full-time employees for traffic enforcement and two civilian public safety personnel members.

Councilwoman Betsy Nash said she opposed the police additions because she wanted staffing discussions to take place when the city goes through an expected process to “reimagine” public safety services.

The council also discussed how to use the $8.3 million the city is expected to receive in federal funds authorized through the American Rescue Plan Act or ARPA, which possible additional revenue sources to consider using, and which possible service enhancements should be funded among four different tiers of priority.

A previous report underestimated the expected surplus expected in the city’s 2021-22 operating budget, according to Dan Jacobson, assistant administrative services director. Instead of $9,430, which was reported earlier, the surplus is actually expected to be $549,430.

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

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Boys basketball

The Sacred Heart Prep boys basketball team did everything it needed to do to win its first Central Coast Section title in seven years, beating visiting The King’s Academy 62-48 in capturing the Division IV crown Saturday night.

Offensively the Gators needed to play at their own pace. “They tried to slow us down,” SHP senior post Harrison Carrington said. “We just tried to focus on ourselves.” Sacred Heart Prep (15-7) also need production out of their scorers. Carrington and junior Aidan Braccia combined for 39 points.

The Gators needed to slow down The King’s Academy star athlete Noah Short, who earlier in the day qualified second in the 100 meters at the CCS track and field semifinals in Soquel. The 100 went off at about 3:15 p.m.

Short, who scored over 70 points in his previous two games, was limited to 12 points in his previous two games, was limited to 12 points thanks to a rotating set of defensive players. Short, headed to West Point to play football, among other things, may not have had his legs, but he played at full speed.

“The guy works hard,” Braccia said. “I have no doubt he could do both.” The Gators also handled themselves with distinction in their willingness to take a charge. Braccia and Mat Bucher each took a charge at key moments of the fourth quarter, when TKA was showing signs of gaining some momentum. And SHP did not panic when The King’s Academy rallied from an 11-point halftime deficit to tie the game at 37 with 2:43 remaining to play in the third quarter.

Braccia hit a 3-pointer, grabbed a key rebound and then hit another basket on a backdoor play and the Gators were never in trouble again. “This is a great way to go out,” Carrington said. “I can’t ask for anything better, especially after such a weird year.” Carrington spent most of the past year bonding with his family at home, playing video games and doing a lot of basketball work around the net in front of his house.

“I was always hoping for a season,” Carrington said. “At times I didn’t think it would happen but I wanted to stay in shape in case we got the opportunity to play.”

Carrington has received some attention from college scouts but has decided to spend a year at a prep school in Massachusetts to build up his muscle and his basketball acumen.

Braccia will be spending his summer traveling to basketball events across the country in hopes of gaining further exposure. He’s already received four offers, including one from San Jose State.

That’s a new coaching staff and I love what they’re doing, recruiting locally,” Braccia said.

Until then, the Gators can celebrate a successful end to an eventful year. The West Bay Athletic League was also represented in the Division V boys final, where Pinewood (6-9) fell to visiting Shasta Summit, 68-63.

Menlo boys basketball coach Keith Larsen, meanwhile, looked on the bright side. There’s open gym coming up in a few weeks. “We’ll be fine,” Larsen said after The King’s Academy 67-53 victory in the semifinals of the Central Coast Section Division IV ended Menlo’s season June 10. “We have 16 (of 18 players) coming back. We can play.”

Liking it to a recreation league, Larsen figured this season produced so many turns, twists and curves for most teams that there’s no comparison to a regular season. “First off, I’ve never coached graduates before and never coached in June,” Larsen said, referring to recent Menlo grads Chris Cook and Hunter Riley, who were so busy planning for finals, proms and graduation, they could drop in for a practice or two. “You talk about senioritis in March and now it’s June and they’ve got so many commitments.”

Cook and Riley combined for 23 points. Cook made all five shots he attempted, and Riley added seven rebounds.

“It’s hard when you can’t practice and can’t get the reps,” Larsen said. “The seniors still came out here and gave us everything they had.”

Lucas Vogel, who led Menlo (7-10) with 16 points, sank the 100.

See SPORTS, page 10
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RESTORES

continued from page 8

a pair of free throws to put Menlo ahead 43-42 in the final minute of the third quarter after the team trailed for most of the game.

The King's Academy responded by scoring 23 of the next 28 points to take control. "It's like getting a little taste of playoff basketball," Larsen said. "It's faster, quicker. We'll be fine just as long as we get to next year."

Girls basketball

Aniyah Augmon wanted to spend as much time as she could soaking up everything before heading off to New Mexico to start her girls' basketball career so special before heading off to New Mexico.

The Priory senior, er, graduate joined her new teammates over the weekend for the summer conditioning program. She's also enrolled in summer school there.

"I wouldn't trade this moment for anything," Augmon said after top-seeded Mitty beat the No. 5 Panthers 68-26 in a semifinal game of the Central Coast Section Open Division June 9.

Augmon wasn't, of course, talking about the final score but her overall experience at Priory, which used to be thought of as a nice place to visit but not a sports factory.

It's still not a factory, but both the boys and girls' basketball teams have given Priory some street cred this season, each appearing in the Open Division for the first time in school history.

"Priory used to be a school no one heard of," Augmon said. "We were nothing until Tatiana came, and now we're playing in the Open Division. It's an honor to be here."

That's Tatiana Reese, who graduated from Priory a couple of years ago and went on to Eastern Washington. On June 9, she was back on the bench as the team manager.

Reese took Priory to its first state final as a player but until this year, the Panthers never qualified for the Open Division.

Priory has never been at full strength this year and still managed to finish second to Menlo-Atherton's Alexa Bensoussan reached the championship match of the girls 128 weight class before losing to Swamp Monsters' Janida Garcia.

Swamp Monsters, based in Sacramento, dominated the meet, handily winning the "team" trophy. Bensoussan was the lone M-A wrestler.

Bensoussan reached the final with a technical fall, an injury default in the third period and a 4-1 decision over Central Catholic's Adrianna Turner in the semifinals.

—Rick Eymer

Track and field

Palo Alto's Aaron Kim and Pinewood's Maia Garcia were the top qualifiers Saturday in the boys and girls high jump at the Central Coast Section track and field semifinals at Soquel High.

Kim, the boys season-leader at 6-8, qualified at 6-4. Garcia, the girls season-leader at 5-8, qualified at 5-2.

The CCS finals take place Saturday, June 19, at Soquel. In the boys qualifiers, Palo Alto's Hillary Studdert had the second-fastest qualifying time in the 800 at 2:13.55, just behind Isabella Cairns of St. Francis. Sacred Heart Prep's Luci Lambert (2:16.78), Castilleja's Samira Kennedy (2:17.90), Paly's Katherine Cheng (2:18.16) and Menlo-Atherton's Kendall Olesen (2:22.54) also qualified for the final.

Lambert also has the second-fastest qualifying time in the 1,600, at 5:09.56.

Woodside's Maceo Latimer and Luke Buddie both cleared 6-0 to advance in the high jump. Paly's Rishi Tella qualified in the triple jump at 41-3 1/2 as did Menlo's William Floyd in the pole vault (11-6).

—Glenn Reeves

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**Off The Grid returns**
Off the Grid, a weekly food truck gathering, was set to return to Menlo Park on Wednesday, June 16, after The Almanac went to press. Off the Grid is held in the Caltrain parking lot at 1120 Merrill St. in Menlo Park on Wednesdays from 5 to 9 p.m.
Check to see which vendors plan to attend each week at offthegrid.com/event/menlo-park/.

**Juneteenth celebration honors WWII hero**
The city of Menlo Park is set to celebrate Juneteenth, a day commemorating the ending of slavery in the U.S., with a ceremony in Belle Haven to recognize Karl E. Clark, an African American war hero from World War II and a longtime community activist and mentor.
The ceremony, set for 11 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, June 19, at Karl E. Clark Park at 313 Market Place in Menlo Park, will include the unveiling of a storyboard honoring Clark, for whom the Karl E. Clark Park is named.
Set to speak at the event are Congresswoman Anna Eshoo, Menlo Park Mayor Drew Combs and City Councilwoman Cecilia Taylor. The event is sponsored by the Menlo Park Historical Association, Belle Haven Action and the city of Menlo Park.

**Donate blood, get a gift card**
A community blood drive is scheduled at Tarlton Properties, 1440 O’Brien Drive, in Menlo Park on Wednesday, June 23, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Each donor will receive a $10 Amazon gift card.
Donors are encouraged to make an appointment in advance at stanford.io/350kn8f or by calling 888-723-7831. Donations from people with Type O blood, particularly O-negative, are in special demand. Donors will be required to wear masks.

“In order to help meet patients’ increasing need for blood products at this time, we are working within social distancing guidelines to schedule new mobile blood drives,” said Clayton Toller, Stanford Blood Center account manager.
“It’s the blood that we have readily available that allows us to save a life at a moment’s notice, so we’re urging the local community to please consider donating at the Tarlton Properties blood drive. All it takes is about an hour of your time, and you can help save the lives of multiple patients with a single donation,” he added.

—Kate Bradshaw

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DRE 00927794

122 AMHERST AVENUE, MENLO PARK

$1,249,000 • 2 Bed • 2.5 Bath • 122Amherst.com

Carol Carnevale, Nicole Aron & James Steele Team  
650.740.7954  
DRE 00946687/00952657/01872027

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Price (USD)</th>
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<tr>
<td>3719 Heron Way, Palo Alto</td>
<td>$1,588,000</td>
<td>3 Bd</td>
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<tr>
<td>155 S. California Ave #G204, Palo Alto</td>
<td>$988,000</td>
<td>2 Bd</td>
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<td>23475 Camino Hermoso Dr, Los Altos Hills</td>
<td>$5,988,000</td>
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<td>255 Old Spanish Trail, Portola Valley</td>
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<td>97 Santiago Avenue, Atherton</td>
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<td>1.43 Acre Lot</td>
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</tr>
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</table>
HOW COVID AND PROPOSED TAX CHANGES COULD IMPACT THE SILICON VALLEY REAL ESTATE MARKET

WITH MICHAEL REPKA

Join DeLeon Realty CEO and tax attorney Michael Repka for his first live, in-person seminar in over a year! As we emerge from the COVID era, we are going to see many changes in the real estate industry, and tax proposals on the horizon are going to have a dramatic impact on how people buy and sell properties. Michael will discuss these changes and how they might impact you, your finances, and the Silicon Valley real estate market.

Sharon Heights Golf & Country Club

Scan the QR code to register

Michael Repka, Managing Broker, DRE # 01854880 | www.deleonrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
officials said they would hold off on implementing the guidance until June 15 to determine how to enforce the new rules. On June 9, Ghaly said that enforcement mechanism will be, more or less, an honor system between businesses and their customers, if a business does not require customers to confirm their vaccination status or require all customers to wear a mask regardless of their status. “Business owners will need to post requirements that people who are unvaccinated are still required to wear masks,” he said. “But if somebody comes into their business or their operation ‘required to wear masks,’ he said.

post requirements that people

all customers to wear a mask

their vaccination status or require

between businesses and their

enforcement mechanism will be,

vaccinated or have tested negative

are remarkably effective at pre-

related to the virus.

Making sure that everybody who has decision-making capac-

in COVID has those data and
details is a No. 1 priority of ours
so that we can make thoughtful
and important guidelines,” he said.

Expenses-paid vacation
to travel in

during the state aligning with the CDC’s

packages are the state’s latest
gambit to encourage more resi-
dents to get vaccinated against
COVID-19, along with millions of
dollars in cash prize draw-
ings and food and merchandise
deals with brands like Taco
Bell, Chipotle, the Los Angeles
Clippers and the Golden State
Warriors.

Some 72% of the state’s adults have received at least one vaccine
dose, Gov. Gavin Newsom said Monday during a briefing at the Port of San Francisco.

Earl Seymour Douglass
August 13, 1926 – November 27, 2020

The time of the memorial Mass for Earl Douglass has been changed to 9 a.m. on Friday, June 25 at the Church of the Nativity, 210 Oak Grove Ave., Menlo Park.

Hertha Harrington
October 3, 1931 – May 17, 2021

Hertha Elizabeth Harrington, nee Gauck, passed away May 17, 2021 in Burlingame, CA. She was born in Richmond, CA to F. Otto Gauck and Louisa W. Gauck (nee Taenzler), both immigrants from Penzlin, Mecklenburg, Germany. Raised in Richmond and Berkeley, she was a graduate of Berkeley High School and the University of California, Berkeley. She had a Master of Criminology from UC Berkeley and attended classes at Stanford.

Married to the love of her life, Judge Walter H. Harrington, Jr. from 1974 until he passed away in 2012. They lived for many years in Woodsdale, CA. She was also predeceased by her sister, Margaret (Peggy) Harrison as well as her parents. She leaves behind step-daughters Stacey Harrington (Craig) and Sara Harrington, niece Cathy Durfee (Les), nephew Grant Harrison (Diane), great nieces Erin Durfee and Lauren Durfee, sister-in-law Judith Watkins, god daughter Cynthia Van Kleeck, as well as many friends who were like family to her.

Hertha served as a Probation Officer for the County of San Mateo, Juvenile Division from April 12, 1963 to March 28, 1989. She most recently lived in San Mateo at the Peninsula Regent.

Hertha was dedicated to preserving nature, serving as a board member for many years on the Committee for Green Foothills. She contributed to many causes supporting animals, and supporting women in the developing world.

A celebration of Hertha’s life will be held June 26, 2021 at Huddart Park, Woodside, Redwood Pavilion (ADA access) from 2 to 4 pm. Mention you are joining our memorial and the $6 entrance fee will be covered.
FOOTHILLS PARK
continued from page 5

sign out a key offering emergency-only exit access from the park. After getting set up, Willa and I went out to explore the trails, enjoying the gorgeous dusk, where we saw deer, turkeys and other human park visitors. Back at camp, it became evident that the other party the ranger had told me would be arriving was a no-show. It was just me, alone in this giant park that until pretty recently was off-limits to nonresidents — not the most welcoming of vibes.

Trying not to let my anxious mind get the better of me — though the thought that this would be the perfect setting for "Get Out 2: Rise of the NIMBY Zombies" did still cross it — I cooked my dinner and did some reading. Then, I saw something that really freaked me out: a long row of white lights lined up across the sky. Luckily, there was enough internet signal for me to learn that the lights were just a parade of SpaceX's Starlink satellites, not an imminent alien invasion.

After a fitful night's sleep — Willa kept thinking she belonged inside the sleeping bag too — she repeated her favorite camping routine of pawing at the tent door at 6 a.m. sharp. Not fearing that we might annoy someone by breaking camp so early, I took down the tent and we set off for a trail run along the Los Trancos Trail.

Out on the trails, my anxious mind calmed as I relished the beauty of the open space I had all to myself. Upon leaving the park, I returned the key at a small box at the entrance kiosk, picked up some coffee and muffins at Konditorei on my way home, and made it back for my 10 a.m. staff meeting.

It was the perfect weeknight microadventure — a term coined by British adventurer and author Alastair Humphreys to mean an overnight outdoor adventure that is "small and achievable, for normal people with real lives" — and one I’d highly recommend to anyone looking for some outdoor summer fun.

How to go camping at Foothills Park

Start by making a reservation at is.gd/towlecamps.

Reservations for the camping season, which runs May 1 to Oct. 31, have to be made at least a week in advance, and can be made up to a year in advance. They must be made by an adult 21 or older. Reservations for holidays must be made through one of the community centers, such as Lucie Stern (650-463-4900). Same-day reservations are not accepted. Sites are $40 per night.

In keeping with Foothills Park’s dog policy, dogs are only permitted in the park on weekdays, so dogs are not permitted camping on Friday, Saturday or Sunday nights.

Each tent-only campsite has a picnic table, water, fire bucket, charcoal barbecue, food storage locker, and pad for tents. Each tent pad holds two-person tents. The group sites have two pads for up to four-person tents. There are two campfire circles with benches for use by all campers, but people must bring their own firewood. Fires may also not be permitted depending on fire weather and/or drought conditions.

Campers have to park a half-hour before closing time, and anyone not spending the night at the park is expected to exit the park before closing time. Portable toilets and zero waste dumpsters (for recycling, compost and landfill) are in the parking lot.

Go to is.gd/towlecamps2 for more information.

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

CONSTRUCTION NOTICE

MIDDLE PLAZA
EL CAMINO REAL NIGHT WORK

Starting June 20, the installation of a new main sewer line for the Middle Plaza project at 500 El Camino Real will require night-time construction and temporary closures of two northbound traffic lanes and sidewalk. A new main sewer line is needed to increase the sewer capacity to the area and the project.

Caltrans policy mandates that multiple lane closures only take place at night to avoid traffic impacts, hence work hours will be Sunday – Thursday, 8:00 P.M. – 7:00 A.M.

Traffic control measures will be in place to ensure safety. Noise levels will be monitored to ensure work is performed within necessary compliance levels.

Day-time pavement and asphalt sawcutting will be limited to one lane closure from June 16 – 20. This work will take place from 8:00 A.M. – 4:00 P.M. to limit night-time construction activities. Modern equipment will be utilized to limit noise impacts.

Sanitary sewer line installation will take place from June to September 2021. Water line installation will take place from September 2021 to January 2022.

Roadway repaving will follow through February 2022.

For more details and safety information, please refer to the project website www.middleplaza.stanford.edu.

For questions or concerns, email middleplaza@stanford.edu or call Nic Durham, On-Site Construction Manager, at (650) 725-2960.

Thank you for your patience during construction.
RESOLUTION NO. 2242 - (2021)
RESOLUTION OF INTENTION TO ANNEX CERTAIN TERRITORY TO THE WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT ON-SITE WASTEWATER DISPOSAL ZONE

The District Board of West Bay Sanitary District finds and determines as follows:

A. This Resolution of Intention is adopted pursuant to the District’s “Zone Master Annexation Resolution” (“ZOMAR”), which was adopted by the District Board August 12, 1996. The provisions of ZOMAR are incorporated by reference into this Resolution of Intention.

B. The District has received an application to annex a parcel of real property (the “Parcel”) to the District’s On-Site Wastewater Disposal Zone (the “Zone”). The Parcel is described in Exhibit “A” attached to this Resolution of Intention and the information contained in the Exhibit are incorporated by reference. The name and address of the applicants and the number, type, volume and location of on-site wastewater disposal systems which are proposed to operate on the parcels to be annexed are described in Exhibit “B” attached to this Resolution of Intention and the information contained in the Exhibit are incorporated by reference.

C. The applicants have demonstrated to the satisfaction of the District Board that the Parcel constitutes “real property” for the purposes of Section 2(b) of ZOMAR in that:

[X] All of the conditions described in Subsections i., ii., iii., iv. and v. of ZOMAR Section 2(b) are satisfied; or

Other conditions exist which demonstrate that the Parcel will benefit directly or indirectly from the activities of the Zone. If applicable, those conditions are also set forth in Exhibit “B” and are incorporated by reference.

D. All of the conditions and requirements of ZOMAR Sections 2(a), 2(c), 2(d) and 2(e) have been fully satisfied.

In consideration of the foregoing findings and determinations,

IT IS RESOLVED by the District Board as follows:

1. It is the intention of the District Board to annex the Parcel to the Zone pursuant to the provisions of ZOMAR and applicable provisions of law.

2. 2. In conjunction with a meeting of the District Board to be duly and regularly called and conducted, the Board will conduct a Public Hearing for the purpose of considering all matters pertaining to this Resolution of Intention.

The time, date and place of the Public Hearing are:

Date: July 14, 2021
Time: 7:00 PM
Place: West Bay Sanitary District Offices
500 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA 94025 & via Zoom
Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/98889306440?pwd=OFVyV1NhSGFybytTImQzRUtZ2G2iQQT09
Meeting ID: 988 8930 6440 Passcode: 677645

At the Public Hearing, all interested persons will be heard.

3. This Resolution of Intention shall be published and copies shall be delivered to the persons and entities as specified in ZOMAR Section 2(e)(i).

4. A true copy of this Resolution of Intention shall promptly be filed for record in the office of the County Recorder of the County of San Mateo.

5. District Manager shall cause the matters set forth in Sections 3 and 4 of this Resolution of Intention to be completed as directed.

EXHIBIT A

Date: December 17, 2020
Annexed to: West Bay Sanitary District
Name of Annexation: West Bay Sanitary District

EXHIBIT “A”

<table>
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<th>Date: December 17, 2020</th>
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EXHIBIT B

WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT
EXHIBIT “B”
SITE LOCATION
PORTOLA VALLEY, CA
STEP SYSTEM

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<th>WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT</th>
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<td>SITE LOCATION: PORTOLA VALLEY, CA</td>
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<td>STEP SYSTEM:</td>
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ballot measures J and 1 in 1988 and 1989, respectively, residents must submit a petition to the town for a ballot measure to get voter approval. The measure would allow the property behind Cañada Corners to be outfitted with surface parking to accommodate permanent outdoor dining, trails and play structures, all of which are now prohibited. It would also allow for the possible construction of a public building — an amphitheater or gazebo — for community events in the residually zoned Town Center area.

Local businesses told The Almanac in April they support the petition. Measure J, approved by the voters in 1988, prohibited development of commercial or office space on a then vacant, town-owned parcel near where Town Hall is now located. It also required residential properties within and adjoining Town Center to remain in residential use unless commercial parking on those properties had been permitted prior to June 1, 1988.

Measure 1, approved by voters the following year, created an exception to Measure J’s requirement that residential parcels in Town Center remain in residential use. Upon its approval by the voters, residually zoned parcels in the Woodside Road Whiskey Hill Road Parking Assessment District were authorized to be improved to provide access, parking and open space — as shown in the 1989 Town Center site plan — so long as at least 50% of the residential parcels were maintained in open space. Approval of Measure J allowed the town to construct Town Hall parking and access improvements which now serve Town Hall, commercial businesses in the Town Center and the public.

There have been no further amendments to these land use regulations in the Town Center since 1989, according to the town.

Conditional use permits would be required prior to making any changes to these parcels. Arguments for and against the ballot measure are due to the county on June 22. Instructions for submitting arguments can be found at smcacre.org.

Email Staff Writer Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com.
Nothing Compares.
The District Board of West Bay Sanitary District finds and determines as follows:

A. This Resolution of Intention is adopted pursuant to the District’s “Zone Master Annexation Resolution” ("ZOMAR"), which was adopted by the District Board August 12, 1996. The provisions of ZOMAR are incorporated by reference into this Resolution of Intention.

B. The District has received an application to annex a parcel of real property (the "Parcel") to the District’s On-Site Wastewater Disposal Zone (the “Zone”). The Parcel is described in Exhibit "A" attached to this Resolution of Intention and the information contained in the Exhibit are incorporated by reference. The name and address of the applicants and the number, type, volume and location of on-site wastewater disposal systems which are proposed to operate on the parcels to be annexed are described in Exhibit "B" attached to this Resolution of Intention and the information contained in the Exhibit are incorporated by reference.

C. The applicants have demonstrated to the satisfaction of the District Board that the Parcel constitutes "real property" for the purposes of Section 2(b) of ZOMAR in that:

[X] All of the conditions described in Subsections i., ii., iii., iv. and v. of ZOMAR Section 2(b) are satisfied; or

Other conditions exist which demonstrate that the Parcel will benefit directly or indirectly from the activities of the Zone. If applicable, those conditions are also set forth in Exhibit "B" and are incorporated by reference.

D. All of the conditions and requirements of ZOMAR Sections 2(a), 2(c), 2(d) and 2(e) have been fully satisfied.

In consideration of the foregoing findings and determinations,

IT IS RESOLVED by the District Board as follows:

1. It is the intention of the District Board to annex the Parcel to the Zone pursuant to the provisions of ZOMAR and applicable provisions of law.

2. In conjunction with a meeting of the District Board to be duly and regularly called and conducted, the Board will conduct a Public Hearing for the purpose of considering all matters pertaining to this Resolution of Intention.

The time, date and place of the Public Hearing are:

Date: July 14, 2021
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Join Zoom Meeting: https://zoom.us/j/98889306440?pwd=OFVYWImGBoPhYTMowUHVTZjJZc0Q9
Meeting ID: 988 8930 6440 Passcode: 677645

At the Public Hearing, all interested persons will be heard.

3. This Resolution of Intention shall be published and copies shall be delivered to the persons and entities as specified in ZOMAR Section 2(e)(i).

4. A true copy of this Resolution of Intention shall promptly be filed for record in the office of the County Recorder of the County of San Mateo.

5. The District Manager shall cause the matters set forth in Sections 3 and 4 of this Resolution of Intention to be completed as directed.

Exhibit A

Date: March 10, 2021
Address to: West Bay Sanitary District
Name of Annexation: West Bay Sanitary District

Geographic Description

All the real and personal property known as "Lands of Mitic," being in the City of Menlo Park, Township of Portola Valley, County of San Mateo, State of California being all of Lot 17 and a portion of the right-of-way of Portola Valley Boulevard that abuts the western property line of [blacked out] "The Almanac News" and the western property line of "The Almanac News," being a portion of a portion of Portola Valley Boulevard, San Mateo County, California, being in the Office of the County Recorder of the County of San Mateo on September 28, 1948 in Volume 19 of Maps at Pages 33, 34, and 35, a true map described as follows:

Commencing at the southwesterly corner of West Bay Sanitary District Resolutions Nos. 1137, and said point also being in the Northeast quarter of a half section, 2.30 acres.

Purs and Points of Commencement:

Course 1(A): Along said right of way, North 39°31'00" West, 179.08 feet, thence:
Course 1(B): West 90°00'00" North, 60.00 feet, thence:
Course 2(A): Along said right of way, along a curve to the right with a radius of 60.00 feet, through a central angle of 19°24'54", or an arc length of 10.11 feet to the Point of Beginning, thence:

Course 2(B): Along the southerly line of said lot, North 9°10'00" North, 148.87 feet to the Southeast corner of said lot, thence:
Course 3(A): Along the southerly line of said lot, North 9°10'00" North, 60.00 feet, thence along and right of way and along the prolongation of southerly line of said lot for North 9°10'00" West, 225.39 feet to the northwesterly corner of said lot, thence:
Course 4(A): Along the southerly line of said lot, North 9°10'00" North, 60.00 feet, thence:
Course 4(B): Along and right of way and said line a distance of 150.00 feet, through a central angle of 9°40'00", or an arc length of 78.79 feet to the Point of Beginning, containing 2.30 acres, more or less.

For assessment purposes only. The description is to a legal property description as defined in the Subdivision Map Act and may not be used in the title as an offer for sale of the land described.

Approved:
Sanitary District
Planning Commission
County of San Mateo
County of San Mateo
City of San Mateo

Exhibit B

Sanitary District
Exhibit "B"

Portola Valley, CA

Grinder System

ONSD2 Pump Station
ONSD2 Force Main

Sanitary District
Exhibit "A"


Email Staff Writer Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com.
Indecent exposure arrest

A 36-year-old Mountain View man was arrested by Atherton police on Saturday, June 12, after he allegedly exposed himself inside his vehicle in front of an 11-year-old girl.

The man, identified as Manuel Salazar Camacho, was arrested in connection with an indecent exposure incident in Atherton on May 24, according to a statement by Atherton police. The man allegedly exposed himself in the intersection of Encinal Avenue and Middlefield Road, near Encinal Elementary School, at the time an 11-year-old girl was walking home from school.

Camacho is the suspect in a similar incident that occurred in Half Moon Bay, and was sought by the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office, according to the statement.

Camacho was arrested after police reviewed footage from residential security camera footage in the area as well as data collected by automated license plate readers (ALPRs) operated by the town of Atherton. Camacho was on parole at the time and required to register as a sex offender, allowing police to track him down using GPA data from the California Department of Corrections.

Camacho was required by law to register as a sex offender annually, which he had done, police said. He was booked into the Maguire Correctional Facility in Redwood City on suspicion of indecent exposure and parole violation charges. —Kevin Forestieri

Felon arrested with loaded handgun

Menlo Park police arrested a 26-year-old from East Palo Alto on June 9 after police found that he illegally possessed a loaded handgun, according to a statement from the department.

Officers were investigating falsely displayed license plates when the man became agitated and tried to flee from the officers. While struggling to restrain him, an officer found a handgun in his waistband.

Officers took him into custody and safely retrieved the handgun and passed it along to investigators. —Julia Brown

More burglaries in Atherton

Atherton police reported two burglaries in town in a June 12 press release.

Around 10:20 p.m. on June 11, two suspects entered a home in the 100 block of Greenbriar Drive breaking a rear glass door. The resident was home and yelled at the suspects, causing them to immediately leave. Nothing was taken during the burglary and the resident was unharmed, police said.

Sometime between 4:30 p.m. on June 10 and 8:30 a.m. June 11, someone entered a condo according to a statement from the first block of Melanie Lane by unlocking a combination lock, police said. Once on the site, the suspect(s) stole approximately $1,000 worth of copper wire.

Atherton police reported a spike in burglaries earlier this month, saying that thieves tend to be targeting outbuildings and garages, according to a June 3 news bulletin.

Anyone with information regarding the burglaries is asked to contact the Atherton Police Department, 650-688-6500. —Julia Brown

Human trafficking arrests

A couple was arrested on suspicion of pimping and pandering in connection with brothels in Milpitas, Palo Alto and San Jose, according to police and prosecutors. The Bay South brothels were part of a nationwide network of commercial sex traffickers.

The arrests of David Davies, 57, and Larong Hu, 38, conclude an investigation that started in December 2019, when a Milpitas brothel was identified by Milpitas detectives and Santa Clara County District Attorney’s Office investigators.

Additional broths were found throughout the county and search warrants were served in Milpitas, San Jose, and Palo Alto, Milpitas police said.

Six female victims of human trafficking were rescued, and $2 million was seized in the investigation. The rescued victims were provided services through Community Solutions, an organization that provides critical services for victims of human trafficking, according to police.

The couple’s satellite of brothels trafficked women from China, South Korea and eastern Europe, the Santa Clara County District Attorney’s Office said June 11 in a press release. Over 100 sex workers circulated through “nondescript apartments” in the county before they were taken to other U.S. cities to continue the illegal work.

The multiagency investigation, which visited the apartments for 30 minutes to an hour at a time and proffactics and other sex work paraphernalia left in the residences was unharmed, police said.

Sex workers told investigators that they would see 10 to 15 men a day; the men learned about the service through online advertisements and were paid Hu via Venmo or PayPal, according to the District Attorney’s Office. The workers, who were prohibited from leaving the room, had their passports taken from them and had to pay for their own food and daily necessities.

One woman told investigators that she was working to pay for her mother’s cancer treatment, according to prosecutors.

“People do not have the right to treat other people like pack animals,” District Attorney Jeff Rosen said in the release. “This county will spare no effort to track down those who exploit others for profit and prove them with the full extent of the law.”

Davies, a tech businessman, and Hu were taken into custody in the 100 block of Tiger Lily Drive on suspicion of crimes related to human trafficking, and are being held on $330,000 bail. They were scheduled for arraignment at the Hall of Justice in San Jose on June 11. If convicted, the couple face time in prison, according to the District Attorney’s Office.

The Department of State’s Bureau of Diplomatic Security Services assisted Milpitas police and the District Attorney’s Office in the investigation.

Anyone who is a victim of human trafficking, or knows someone who is, should call 911 immediately or call the 24-Hour National Human Trafficking Hotline at 888-373-7888. Callers can also reach the hotline by texting 23373 to initiate online chats. Human trafficking victims who need support and need a safe place to stay are eligible for services including immigration assistance. —Bay City News Service

High-end handbag heist

A group of 11 people took 36 handbags from the Louis Vuitton store at Stanford Shopping Center on June 7 before fleeing in five awaiting vehicles, according to Palo Alto police. Police estimated that the handbags grabbed in the coordinated heist are valued at more than $100,000, according to a news release from the Palo Alto Police Department. The suspects, who wore face coverings, didn’t use any weapons during the shoplift. They remain at large.

Officers learned about the heist through police dispatch, which received a call from a witness at about 5:30 p.m. on June 7, reporting that a large group had just shoplifted from the store. By the time officers arrived, the suspects had left in the vehicles, which were described as a Lexus sedan, a gray Infinity SUV, a white Audi sedan, a black four-door Hyundai sedan and a red two-door Honda sedan.

A witness took a photo of one of the shoplifters as she fled through the mall with the stolen handbags. The suspects were described as Black males and females who may be in their late teens or early 20s. Palo Alto police are working with regional partners to see if the same group of suspects may be connected to any similar high-end shoplifts in other cities, according to the news release. While comparable to a case that occurred in Palo Alto at Neiman Marcus on May 19, which was used in that incident were different, police said.

Anyone with information about the theft is asked to call the department’s 24-hour dispatch center at 650-329-2413. Anonymous tips can be emailed to palalto@tipnow. org or sent by text message or voicemail to 650–383–8984. Tips can also be submitted anonymously through the police’s free mobile app, downloadable at bit. ly/PAPD-AppStore or bit.ly/ PAPD-GoogPlay. —Cassidy Sheyner

Call Alicia Santillan at 650-223-6578 or email asantillan@pawweekly.com for assistance with your legal advertising needs. The deadline is Monday at noon.
In many ways, the studio reflects how most businesses approach the June 15 update — particularly in how they’ll determine who is vaccinated and who is not, since businesses aren’t legally required to check vaccination statuses.

In a press conference on June 9, state Health and Human Services Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly said that, beyond posting signage that notifies how unvaccinated people must wear masks, businesses can rely on the honor system.

“If somebody comes into their business or their operation without a mask, it should be considered a self-attestation for someone being vaccinated,” Ghaly said. “We are not requiring businesses to, for example, have somebody at the door checking the vaccine status as a way to comply with this.”

But some businesses are opting to check their customers’ vaccination status anyway.

At La Mignolé Salon in Menlo Park, owner Showa Sahle said she likes to pay meticulous attention to the details of her clients’ hair salon experience, providing them small amenities like coffee and making sure they’re comfortable as they get their hair done.

Vaccination statuses will be a major determinant for how Sahle and her hair stylists interact with their patrons.

“‘It’s not like we’re going to refuse a client,’ Sahle said. ‘But we’re going to know how to handle them.’

Vaccination statuses, for example, will help Sahle know if customers can get their hair done without a mask on and if other hair stylists need to maintain a 6-foot distance from the person. Vaccinated people will also be able to wait inside the salon for their appointment, whereas unvaccinated customers will have to wait outside.

‘Not to be mean,’ she said. ‘But just to be cautious. Protect them and protect ourselves.’

Sahle said last week that she would be sending emails to all her clients about how things will shift on June 15.

Business operators seemed to welcome the small changes that June 15 brought, but Paul Brannon, who oversaw operations at MP Mongolian BBQ in Menlo Park, said the reopening date wouldn’t be a “light switch” for businesses. Instead, the date is another social signal for the more trepidatious that things are getting safer and it may be OK to sit down inside a restaurant.

“I think people will use it as a guide and say, ‘OK, now we can start getting ready to go back to normal,’” Brannon said, who has worked at the restaurant for eight years.

That signal could especially be a boon for self-serve style restaurants like MP Mongolian, where customers often have to wait in a line in close proximity and share togs and serving spoons with each other.

It was only about a month ago, according to Brannon, when the restaurant started to allow customers to serve themselves as opposed to having the staff fill up their bowls for them.

MP Mongolian has also seen an uptick in customers since April when indoor dining was allowed by San Mateo County.

For most of the pandemic, the restaurant has depended on takeout, since the location and the format of the business isn’t conducive to outdoor dining. Fried egg rolls, fried rice and sweet and sour pork, remains closed.

Customers can still place an order of eggrolls, for example, but until more clear guidance is given from the state or county on buffets, that part of the restaurant will stay closed.

“I don’t even know if there is a restriction,” he said.

As the state removes restrictions, store operators are eager to move away from the constant state of uncertainty and flexibility they’ve had to adapt during the pandemic, which at one point forced businesses to close indoor operations within weeks of reopening.

The Mountain View Chamber of Commerce is advising local business owners to consider continuing some pandemic protocols, even though they are not required, to make customers feel safe.

“You may want to continue to have workers wear masks so vaccinated workers feel comfortable and taking proper precautions,” the chamber said June 15 in a newsletter. “You may also want to keep seating spaced out.”

One challenge that lies ahead as customers come back? Finding more employees.

Sahle at La Mignolé said having an extra stylist now would be helpful as walk-in customers become fewer. At MP Mongolian BBQ, two employees maintain a restaurant that used to be staffed with six to eight workers.

The work is becoming physically demanding, Brannon said, but he was grateful at least to see customers return.

“It will still be a slow, uphill slog, but just the fact that enough people are coming in for us to keep the doors open is a relief,” he said. “Now it’s hard to find employees.”

Email Staff Writer Lloyd Lee at llee@paweekly.com.

—Jamey Padojino

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

continued from page 6

Ubuntu scholarship finalists selected

The faculty advisers to the Menlo-Atherton Black Student Union have announced the awarding of financial grants to assist graduating African American seniors with their continued education under the school’s new Ubuntu Scholarship Program.

The program, established in 2020, had planned to award two $5,000 scholarships; however, because of the high quality of the five students selected as finalists, supporters of the Ubuntu program provided additional funds to allow the granting of three scholarships as well as one-time $1,000 book/miscellaneous expense awards to the two other finalists.

The scholarship winners for 2021 are Ja Corey Stewart, Daugiae Degraffenreed, and Kellee Shepard, and the two other finalists are Eric Stuart and Kayli Smith. All three scholarship awardees will be continuing their educations at historically Black colleges and universities. Stewart will study criminal justice, Degraffenreed and Shepard will pursue careers in nursing, and Stuart and Smith will continue their educations at community colleges.

The Ubuntu Scholarship Program is seeking additional support to continue to support worthy students with their educations. Donations can be sent to Menlo-Atherton High School, c/o Alex Egbert, Treasurer, 555 Middlefield Road, Atherton CA 94027; checks should be payable to Menlo-Atherton High School Scholarships, with Ubuntu Scholarship Program in the memo line.

For additional information, contact the Ubuntu Scholarship Program at MABearsUbuntu@gmail.com.

Hillview students receive French honors

Nine Hillview Middle School eighth graders were inducted into the National French Honor Society this year; Stefan Perkovic, Zoe Fong, Mei Miyahara, Isaiah Rassbach, Nia Sadradeh, Ella Thomson, Holden Thomson, Callie West and Elsa Teuteberg, according to a Menlo Park City School District press release. To qualify for this honor, students earned an A in French in at least five out of six, or eight out of nine, trimesters at Hillview.

Additionally, Hillview French students took home honors in the 86th annual Le Grand Concours, a competition sponsored by the American Association of Teachers of French. Nearly 30,000 students competed in the March 2021 event. There were 11 medal winners and six certificate of honor winners from Hillview, said French teacher Amy Kingsley.

—Angela Swartz

Pilot program to boost EVs for Lyft drivers

San Mateo County’s electricity provider Peninsula Clean Energy on Tuesday announced a partnership with Lyft on a $500,000 pilot program to provide a rental incentive to ride-hailing drivers that would make the cost of renting an electric vehicle comparable to a gas-powered one.

The program, which will launch this fall with Lyft’s rental car partner Flexdrive, seeks to expand EV use to about 100 Lyft vehicles in San Mateo County while getting more drivers used to using electric vehicles and collecting data that can eventually lead to EV fleets being expanded further.

“Partnersing with Lyft and Flexdrive in this pilot effort represents a big opportunity to reduce a significant source of heat-trapping emissions in our region,” Peninsula Clean Energy CEO Jan Pepper said in a news release. “We believe this could potentially lead to a far greater number of ride-hailing and other drivers on the road who will opt for cleaner electrically-powered transportation options.”

—Bay City News Service

Middle school expansion starts

The Ravenswood City School District officially started its expansion of Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School in Palo Alto after it was celebrated at a groundbreaking ceremony on June 17. The $50 million project is supported through bonds. Once completed, the Calmar Avenue campus will have two new buildings that cover 23,000 square feet and a 10,000-square-foot courtyard.

The district has teamed up with the Forever Young Foundation and Ghiolotti Construction to build a new 8 to 80 Zone Esports Center, a facility for students to build skills in technology, esports, gaming and media, according to the foundation’s website.

The center will be one of a handful established by NFL Hall of Famer Steve Young and his Magical Bridge Foundation. It will be the first of its kind at a middle school, according to the district. It will also include a new playground being created in collaboration with the Magical Bridge Foundation.

“These exciting public-private partnerships will allow us to transform the back of Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School into a restorative, engaging, and active place that our students deserve,” Ravenswood school board President Mele Latu said in a statement.

—Jamey Padojino

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

continued from page 6

Jon Angeles, a personal trainer, guides a client through a set of exercises at Palo Alto Fit on June 11.

“Let’s go!” said Angeles.

“We’re going to do this together,” the client said.

“Okay, let’s do it!” Angeles said, leading the client through a series of exercises.

—Lloyd Lee

NEWS
By Janet Silver Ghent

On Sept. 12, 2001, Ben Harcourt, necktie loosened, sits hunched on the sofa in a Manhattan apartment. While images of catastrophe flash across the screen, the cellphone in his hand keeps ringing. By Los Altos Stage Company, drama brought to your home to form a coherent decision? 

Ben means to, but he doesn’t. Is it post-9/11 shock, survivor’s guilt or something else? Does the crisis present an opportunity to this couple? Can Ben, presumed dead on 9/11, take advantage of his missing-person status and head into the sunset with Abby? Will he phone home and make a clean break with his wife, his children and his mortgage? Will he return to his former life and his office, if it’s still there? Or will he sit paralyzed on his lover’s sofa, unable to form a coherent decision?

“The Mercy Seat,” Neil LaBute’s acrimonious day-after drama brought to your home by Los Altos Stage Company, poses these questions. And since you’re in your own living room, watching this livestreamed play, you have a choice: Sit spellbound, as I did, or walk out of the room, as did my husband.

The hour and a half, two-person drama, played without intermission, is both mesmerizing and unrelenting. Picture Edward Albee’s “Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?” replete with expletives and explicit sex talk but without Albee’s prized comic relief. This is “The Mercy Seat,” ostensibly about redemption, according to the biblical references, yet packed with unremitting heaviness. And if you’ve missed the point, the tragic TV news clips and sirens echo the desolation onstage.

As a newscaster on the screen proclaims, “We are at war,” another war takes place inside the apartment not far from the twin towers. It’s the war between man and woman, and in this case the woman seems to have the upper hand. Melissa Jones plays Abby, a 40-ish alpha female both in her workplace and in the relationship. She may not carry a whip, but she shows no mercy. Her real-life husband Drew Benjamin Jones plays Ben, her nerdy 30-ish subordinate whose difficult choices sink him into inaction.

“’That’s what I like about you, Ben,’ Abby says sardonically. ‘Your absolutely rigid commitment to being a flake.’” She tells him he should change his name to “But” because “there’s always a ‘but’ when you talk to Ben Harcourt.”

Yet in some ways, Ben may have the upper hand. If he were to return to his wife and family in the suburbs, Abby would be alone. And if he were to go AWOL, would she join him, walking away from her high-powered position?


By bringing this dark drama into our homes at the tail end of a pandemic, when audiences are more likely to be ready for something uplifting, Los Altos Stage Company is taking a chance, artistically speaking. This provocative play, pitted with brutal language and graphic sexual references, is not exactly a crowd-pleaser. But the gripping drama, admirably directed by Los Altos Stage Company Production Manager Allie Bailey, is a brilliant theater piece.

Gary Landis, the company’s executive artistic director, takes on the challenges of sound, lighting, set design and livestreaming, adapting a stage drama to the small screen. This powerfully performed play offers a window into the tough choices men and women make, or avoid, amid difficult times.

And if you can’t stand the heat onstage, you’re already home.

Remaining performances of “The Mercy Seat” will be livestreamed Friday, June 18, and Saturday, June 19, at 7 p.m. and at 2 p.m. on Sunday, June 20. Tickets are $30 per device. More information is available at losaltosstage.org.  

Email Contributor Janet Silver Ghent at ghentwriter@gmail.com.

Los Altos Stage Company presents searing 9/11 drama

Livestreamed ‘Mercy Seat’ brings trauma home

Melissa and Drew Benjamin Jones star in Los Altos Stage Company’s current production of “The Mercy Seat,” which is being livestreamed June 18-20.

West Bay Sanitary District Wins CWEA State Award of Excellence

The West Bay Sanitary District has been awarded the California Water Environment Association’s (CWEA) highest award – Collections System of the Year. CWEA President-Elect Arvind Akela recently made the announcement at a District Board meeting congratulating the District on leading the way in the protection and enhancement of the water environment. “I am happy to announce that West Bay Sanitary District has been performing outstanding work,” said Mr. Akela. “With zero overflows, West Bay Sanitary District has demonstrated its excellence in this category and I congratulate all of the staff for doing extraordinary work in protecting public health and the environment and the District Board for supporting the staff’s great work.”

District Manager Sergio Ramirez describes the award, “The Collection System of the Year award was given in recognition of outstanding maintenance programs, regulatory compliance, safety & training procedures. Congratulations, this is truly a TEAM effort!”

West Bay Board President Fran Dehn said, “On behalf of the Board of Directors, I would like to extend my congratulations to everyone at West Bay. We are very proud of our staff. It's always rewarding when those outside the organization recognize the value, dedication, and professionalism that each District employee brings to the team. Congratulations to all on this award.”

West Bay Sanitary District provides wastewater collection and conveyance services to the City of Menlo Park, Atherton, and Portola Valley, and areas of East Palo Alto, Woodside and unincorporated San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. The District conveys raw wastewater, via the Merlo Park Pump Station and force main, to Silicon Valley Clean Water (SVCW) for treatment and discharge to the San Francisco Bay. The District also owns and operates a Recycled Water Treatment Plant in Sharon Heights.

By Janet Silver Ghent

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As many Californians prepare to venture out of their homes this summer with rising vaccination rates and eased COVID-19 restrictions, beer gardens, breweries and outdoor bars are great spots to beat the heat (while also maintaining a bit of social distancing). There are many go-to spots to visit up and down the Peninsula, even as there remains a bit of uncertainty regarding Open Streets programs’ longevity, these outdoor mainstays will remain relevant throughout the summer.

Beer gardens and bar patios are great spaces to indulge in a slice of collective calm following this past year’s storm, and these local favorites will have everything you need in this new stage of 2021 and beyond.

Alice’s Restaurant
A beloved stop along Highway 35, Alice’s has long been a favorite of cyclists, motorcyclists and locals alike. During the pandemic, the team has set up more outdoor seating and takeout options for customers. Weekends can be especially busy. Thankfully, there is a lot of space at Alice’s, from the patio seating (with heat lamps) to the picnic tables on the lawn.

The menu is top-notch road fare, from an always great cheeseburger ($10.75) to our recent preference) their brisket sandwich ($12.95). If (our recent preference) their great cheeseburger ($10.75) to house fare, from an always spacious patio seating (with heat lamps) to the incredible view. Alice’s Restaurant’s breakfast shot is made with Jameson Irish whiskey and butterscotch schnapps and topped with a piece of bacon. It evokes the flavor of a stack of pancakes dripping in maple syrup.

The British Bankers Club in Menlo Park has outdoor patio seating along with its rooftop bar.

From left, Gourmet Haus Staudt’s Weltenburger Dunkel, Weihenstephan Vitus and Kostritzer Schwarzbier.

British Banker's Club, 555 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park; 650-382-3191.

Gourmet Haus Staudt
Located just off the beaten path of downtown Redwood City, this beloved Bavarian favorite continues to serve up beers and pretzels. With an outdoor setup in the parking lot, guests can space out and dig in to boots of Bavarians ($5-$36), rotating drafts and specialties like the curry basket ($10) and the schnitzel platter ($18). Gourmet Haus Staudt Gifts & Cafe, 2615 Broadway, Redwood City; 650-364-9232.

Ludwig’s Biergarten
Another German beer hall for our list, Ludwig’s has used the Mountain View Open Streets program to ensure patrons are able to fully immerse themselves in the experience. Make sure to order one of the restaurant’s delightful appetizers — such as the Jager Pommes ($9) — and get a round of the seven Bavarian drafts ($5-$32). Ludwig’s, 383 Castro St., Mountain View; 650-260-3833.

Oak + Violet at the Park
Located in Menlo Park’s Park James Hotel, the upscale farm-to-table restaurant provides diners with a whirlwind ride of a tasty experience. Currently, the site offers both indoor and outdoor dining options, along with takeout and to go, with spring menu offerings including beet root cured salmon ($18), crispy oysters ($20) and an extensive wine and cocktail list. Oak + Violet, The Park James Hotel, 1400 El Camino Real, Menlo Park; 650-304-3880. Email Writer Grace Stetson at grace.stetson@gmail.com.

By Grace Stetson
Food & Drink
Beer garden
BONAZA
Have a drink (and a bit of space) at one of these local open-air destinations

BONAZA
Grace Stetson

The staff has a knack for getting you seated quickly, oftentimes just a little after getting a tasty margarita ($10) or beer ($6-$10) in the reception area. Once seated on the expansive outdoor patio, your servers will explain the COVID-19 policies and procedures — all ordering and payment from your phone — and you’ll soon be able to dig in to a ton of great eats and drinks.

To get the full experience, we recommend digging in to a ginger paloma ($11), a raspberry lemon-grass fizz ($10), crispy Brussels sprouts ($6.95) and one of the woodfired pizzas ($13.75-$18.75). Alpine Inn Beer Garden, 3915 Alpine Road, Portola Valley; 650-854-4004.

Dutch Goose
When you think of the famous dishes at most bars and breweries, "deviled eggs" may not be your first thought. Yet for fans of this longtime Menlo Park establishment, it's the item that keeps people returning again and again.

First opened in 1966, the family-friendly establishment has been serving up comfort food and 12 beers on tap in the time since. During the pandemic, the team has been diligent about spacing out guests on its two patios, and currently includes indoor dining as well, offering guests the chance to play pool or watch the big games as they wait.

Open daily from 11 a.m. to 12 a.m. (and until 2 a.m. on weekends), make sure to try the moon burger ($9), the tater tots ($6.75) and, of course, the spicy deviled eggs ($2.95). They'll truly enlighten you as to why this spot is still bringing in the big bucks 55 years after it first opened!

Dutch Goose, 3567 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park; 650-854-3245

Steins Beer Garden
With 31 beers on tap, craft cocktails and a wine and rare bottle list, it’s almost impossible not to find what you’re looking for at this Mountain View haunt.

The restaurant elegantly balances its full-scale restaurant status with an impressive menu of modern American gourmet comfort food (courtesy of executive chef Cheke Guzman) and a laid-back German beer hall vibe, inspiring diners and drinkers to stop by for everything from weekday happy hour to late-night weekend drinks. The space is large, especially for a downtown Mountain View establishment, and service is offered both indoors and outdoors on the restaurant’s back patio.

For the full experience, we recommend diving into a Beer Garden Cooler ($13) or one of the famous flights ($14 for five tasters), and chasing it down with a fresh baked pretzel ($12, limited quantity).

Steins Beer Garden & Restaurant, 895 Villa St., Mountain View; 650-963-9568.

British Bankers Club
Of our picks, this Menlo Park establishment is definitely at the top in terms of elegance. Located right off of the main drag of the city’s downtown, the spot can appear unassuming — but once you head up to its rooftop bar, you’ll be blown away.

Open year-round, BBC is committed to making sure its 21+ visitors are able to revel in the beauty and calm of its rooftop space, and in the pandemic safety is of the utmost concern. Although the state’s June 15 reopening lifted many mandatory restrictions, individual businesses may still require face masks, social distancing or ask about vaccination status. Once seated, make sure to try one of the team’s signature cocktails, such as the Killer Bees ($14) or the Liquid Asset ($13), and dig in to the house smoked salmon toast ($19) or the selection of seasonal oysters ($21).

British Banker’s Club, 555 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park; 650-382-3191.

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by Grace Stetson

A father is someone you look up to no matter how tall you grow.

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