State expands drought emergency to San Mateo, Santa Clara counties
Governor calls for voluntary 15% reduction in residential and commercial water use

By Sue Dremann

As the drought throughout California deepens, the state is extending its April drought emergency to include additional counties, including San Mateo and Santa Clara, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced July 8. He called for a voluntary 15% reduction in residential and commercial water use.

The announcement follows weeks of rising concern among water resources agencies. Members of local and state water resources agencies delivered a “scared straight” message regarding Santa Clara and San Mateo counties’ future water supplies on July 1, pointing to the deepening drought and predictions of more challenging months ahead.

Armed with U.S. Drought Monitor maps showing nearly the entire state in a blaze of red, and bar graphs of dwindling reservoir water levels, representatives said the time for the public to conserve the precious supply is now.

The Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency (BAWSCA), Valley Water, the California Department of Water Resources and the California Water Service discussed the worsening drought at a July 1 community meeting, which was sponsored by state Assemblyman Marc Berman (D-Menlo Park).

The drought has already extended into its second year, and this year is predicted to become one of the driest in terms of water runoff in the state’s historical record. Last year’s water year — from Oct. 1, 2019, to Sept. 3, 2020 — ranked as the 13th driest in statewide precipitation and the fifth driest in statewide water runoff. Much of the low precipitation occurred in the northern half of the state, which supplies the majority of the state’s water supply.

The paucity extended into June-July rainfall year in California, according to data compiled by Jan Null, a consultant meteorologist in the Bay Area and founder of Golden Gate Weather Services.

The CZU fire was the largest fire in the Cal Fire CZU unit’s history, costing $68 million and requiring over 2,400 firefighters to battle the blazes in San Mateo and Santa Cruz counties, said Deputy Chief Nate Armstrong during an April talk on lessons learned from the fire.

“The CZU fire was an inflection point for many of us,” said Portola Valley Mayor Maryann Derwin during a June 3 forum called “Countywide Wildfire Risk and Resilience.” “We realized if that fire jumped the fire line at Old Haul Road, it could have barreled down to Portola Valley, burning up structures, cars and anyone who didn’t get out in time. The good news is, getting scared to the bone is a great motivator and we are now, more than ever, thinning out brush, cutting down flammable trees, ‘hardening’ houses and learning about our zones and evacuation routes.”

A 2019 survey by USA Today and the Arizona Republic of small towns in 11 Western states found that Woodside and Portola Valley have similar fire risk as Paradise, California, where a November 2018 blaze killed 85 people and burned 19,000 structures. Cal Fire’s fire hazard maps were last updated in 2008, but a new update is expected in 2022, according to Portola Valley officials. The maps highlight the risk of wildfire in a particular area with a scale ranging from moderate to very high risk. According to a 2008 map prepared by consultant Ray Moritz, threats rated “very high” exist in many others, based on the proximity and topography of fire-prone forested areas.

Woodside, Portola Valley brace for wildfire season
After dry winters, CZU wildfires, towns channel fears into preparedness efforts

By Angela Swartz

Rita Comes peered out her window alongside her 9-year-old daughter in the early morning one day last summer. They watched “surreal lightning” that seemed like summer. They watched “surreal lightning” that seemed like something in a movie. Comes began to pack her car, prepare emergency go boxes and take photos of important documents for what she thought would be a “scared straight” message regarding Santa Clara and Portola Valley neighborhoods, but a “proof point” of a changing climate.

Statewide, the average precipitation from July 2020 through June 2021 was 49% of average, the lowest ever for any June-July rainfall year in California, according to data compiled by Jan Null, a consultant meteorologist in the Bay Area and founder of Golden Gate Weather Services.

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Menlo Park’s data-driven new police chief aims to bring stability, mentoring to MPPD

By Kate Bradshaw

After 27 years spent working with the San Mateo Police Department, Dave Norris is now at the helm of the Menlo Park Police Department as its new chief.

Over the past two months, he has been quietly settling into a role that was most recently vacated by former Chief Dave Bertini, followed by interim Chief Dave Spiller.

“I’m thrilled to be here in Menlo Park,” he said. “I think the agencies in this county work together better than almost any other in the state ... I’m glad to be taking on a leadership role in an agency in this county.”

Norris characterizes himself as a data- and evidence-driven leader, someone who came to the field of policing after playing minor league baseball for a short time.

After growing up on the East Coast he attended Miami University in Ohio before switching to St. Mary’s College. His family had moved to the San Mateo area and it quickly became his home.

He had initially planned to attend medical school, but after a brief stint in professional minor league baseball, he began looking for a career that didn’t take quite as much time or money to enter. One day his mom, who at the time was also a job seeker, saw an ad for a police service aide in San Mateo, he said.

Intrigued by the opportunity to learn more about the scientific side of policing — forensics and evidence collection — he applied and got his foot in the door in the field of police work. From there, he said, he was encouraged to start exploring other areas of work within the department.

“There was a deep pull from the folks working in the police officer ranks at that department to get somebody like me into a fully sworn officer position,” he said.

They encouraged him to take the officer test, and he said he found that the similarities between the scientific method and investigating crimes fit his personality and mind well.

“I was off to the races at that time.”

By Angela Swartz

Educators are already aware of the “summer slide,” the slowing of learning between school years, but this year summer programs will play a bigger part in helping many catch up both academically and socially after a school year that was completely remote for many San Mateo County students.

Students on average were likely to lose five to nine months of learning by the end of the 2020-21 school year, a McKinsey & Company study from this last winter found.

Parents are concerned about these losses. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of parents of young children said they worry about their child’s ability to socialize with other children, and 74% are worried that their child’s education and development will suffer amid the pandemic, according to a February poll of 600 parents of children ages 0 to 5 in California by the Education Trust-West.

In an effort to address the impacts of the pandemic on student learning, Gov. Gavin Newsom provided districts with grants to bolster their summer programs. School districts and county organizations are hosting additional programming this summer to meet these needs.

Countywide efforts

The San Mateo County Libraries JPA board approved $892,000 in additional funds to support summer school, page 14

Cities make the case for a ‘bicycle superhighway’

Study supports creating a protected connection between Redwood City and Mountain View

By Gennady Sheyner

Few roads better epitomize the frustrations of Peninsula’s bicycle advocates than El Camino Real, a critical north-south connector that offers both the most direct and, arguably, the most perilous route between Redwood City and Mountain View.

Living up to its moniker as “The King’s Highway,” the original connector between California’s network of Spanish missions is today dominated by cars in just about every Peninsula jurisdiction through which it passes, despite years of talk around the region about converting it into a multimodal “grand boulevard.”

And even as each city has been making its own bike-safety improvements (Palo Alto, for instance, is now completing construction of a bike bridge over U.S. Highway 101 as well as planning for further bike improvements along East Meadow Drive and on the Charleston-Arastradero corridor), these efforts have largely steered clear of El Camino.

A recent traffic analysis commissioned by city managers from Peninsula cities concluded that the 12.5-mile stretch of El Camino between Redwood City and Mountain View has a “high concentration of bicycle collisions” and virtually no bike infrastructure.

But even as it poses a steep challenge for city leaders across the Peninsula, El Camino also represents their greatest hope.

During the pandemic, the cities of Redwood City, Menlo Park, Palo Alto and Mountain View collaborated on a Peninsula Bikeway study, a survey of bike amenities in each city with recommendations for further improvements to bike connections between the jurisdictions.

The study, which was released in November, evaluates three different possibilities for separated bikeways that would stretch along the Peninsula. After considering other routes, including Alma Street and Middlefield Road, the study concluded that a bikeway on El Camino, despite the massive challenges it would entail, “represents the most viable opportunity to implement
New children’s book by Midpeninsula native encourages youth activism

By Kate Bradshaw

M arissa McGee, a former elementary school teacher, was out shopping for shampoo one day when she saw something that bothered her. The experience would later spur her to craft a children’s book about it. At this chain retailer, Black hair care products were kept locked up on the shelf.

It was wash day, and a simple errand to pick up shampoo now required her to flag down an employee for help. Curious, she noticed that it was only the Black hair care products that were kept under lock and key.

When she found an employee and asked why the Black hair care products were locked up, she was told that the products were “not just products for Black people.” Yet the faces on the packaging were of Black individuals, she noticed.

She went to several other of the store’s locations around the Bay Area, then one in Washington D.C., and saw the same thing. Only the hair care products traditionally used for Black hair — including those labeled for “multicultural,” “textured” or “natural” hair — were kept locked up. Not every location did this, but a majority of the ones she visited did, she said in a blog post.

At the Washington, D.C., retailer, a Black woman and her daughter were also looking for products for their hair and overheard her conversation with a sales associate and said they’d noticed the same thing.

“To me, that was a turning point,” she said.

As a woman in her 30s, she said, she had her own feelings about the situation, but she began to think about what was going through the young girl’s mind to see products for her hair type kept locked up.

She reached out to the retailer’s corporate headquarters and, in February 2020, wrote a blog post about her research.

She explained in her blog that part of why the practice felt discriminatory was in what it perpetuated stereotypes about a specific group of people, she wrote.

In addition, it can be uncomfortable for a shopper to be watched by the store employee while selecting the desired product, and can create pressure to rush to pick an item, she said in her blog.

The retailer that McGee wrote about is one of several that have recently announced their plans to discontinue the practice. Walmart, CVS and Walgreens all announced in June 2020 that they planned to stop locking up the products, during a time when many companies were facing heightened scrutiny over racial bias.

McGee said she kept thinking about the little girl she’d met at the D.C. retailer and began to think about exploring the issue through her conversation with a sales associate and said they’d noticed the same thing.

“To me, that was a turning point,” she said.

The Kickstarter-funded children’s book “Free the Curls” by Marissa McGee features a 6-year-old girl named Maliyah who goes with her mom to buy shampoo when they notice that products for her hair type are locked up. Readers will have to get a copy to learn what happens next: “Maliyah and her mom must decide — buy the products or take a stand?” the book’s website says.

McGee said she had completed the story and was letting the manuscript sit for a few months when she met with one of her high school mentors, who encouraged her to share the manuscript with her and another author.

“After that, the ball started rolling,” McGee said. After sharing it with a few friends who were supportive, she said that she began to think, “Maybe I do have something here.”

Through one of the social media groups she belongs to, she found an illustrator.

The illustrator’s first sketch of the main character, she said, brought tears to her eyes. “I was like, this is her. This is the character of my head.”

McGee has used the crowdfunding website Kickstarter to self-publish the book, and is planning to have copies of the book prepared by January.

One of the promotions she set up for Kickstarter supporters asks people to buy a book for themselves and support the donation of a classroom copy to a school in East Palo Alto or Oakland.

So far, there are about 150 books earmarked for students in East Palo Alto and a total of about 900 copies pre-ordered, she said. She plans to spend time in East Palo Alto classrooms doing virtual and in-person visits, leading lessons and conversations with students about the book.

“I will be forever indebted to East Palo Alto. It made me the person that I am,” McGee said.

McGee launched the Kickstarter campaign on her birthday this year and so far has raised more than $13,000 in support of the book and her mission to bring it to the community, she said.

“I think the Kickstarter was successful because we’re finally acknowledging the elephant in the room and finally starting to have courageous conversations about racism,” she said.

She said she’s motivated to give back to the community of East Palo Alto in particular because the community shaped her.

“I will be forever indebted to East Palo Alto,” she said. “It made me the person that I am.”

“It’s such a vibrant community of people who are doing amazing things… so I just want to give back to a community that’s given so much to me,” she said.

Go to freethecurlsfc.com for more information.

Email Staff Writer Kate Bradshaw at kbradshaw@almanacnews.com.
County officials voice concerns over COVID-19 delta variant

San Mateo County is seeing an uptick in cases, particularly in the unvaccinated

By Sue Dremann

A s the delta strain jumps to the head of the line of COVID-19 variants, San Mateo County officials are urging unvaccinated residents to take the threat of infection seriously and to get their shots now if they have been delaying vaccinations.

The county has seen more than doubling of the seven-day rolling average of positive cases, from 12 two weeks ago to 27 cases, Srja Srinivasan, county deputy chief of public health, told the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors on July 13. Santa Clara County is also seeing an increase in its seven-day average of cases, from 32 on June 29 to 76 on July 10, according to the coun-

ty COVID-19 dashboard.

Although these numbers seem modest compared to the height of the pandemic, they are likely due to the increasing prevalence of the delta variant, which is spreading through the unvaccinated population.

San Mateo County officials are concerned about limited vaccine uptake and a potential increase in hospitalizations.

"I think what the department is looking for is consistent leader-

ship," Norris said. He plans to stay as chief for at least five more years.

Figuring out how to make the most of a limited budget and staff are also challenges he’s planning to tackle, he said. The department has been short a buttetion unit and special inves-

tigations unit, and its officers are looking for options to keep developing new skills and special-

cities, he said.

However, traffic units and detective bureaus often require a significant amount of up-

front training time, he said. He’s interested in exploring other activities, such as traffic work, but he made the most of it and now sees the position as “one of the most impactful places you can be in a police department.”

Working with youth to help prevent crimes and intervene early in young people’s lives helped him appreciate and value earning the trust of families and kids as a way to deter crime, he said.

Norris went on to work as public information officer with the San Mateo Police Depart-

ment through a transitional time in the field, as information officers pivoted to showing up only "when there was a really crazy scene going on" to the current multimedia approach that police departments now take to interact with the public, presenting information on mul-

tiple social media platforms and working regularly with media outlets to communicate with the public.

Norris says he’s intent on dis-

mantling Menlo Park’s revolving door in the police chief office and bringing stability back to the position.

"I think what the department recently authorized was for the police department to add a staff member back who was working on police-related matters in preparation for a new law that will begin taking effect in Menlo Park in 2022. Called the Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA), it will require the department to provide data on every traffic stop, pedestrian contact, arrest or call for service to the U.S. Department of Justice.

The law was first mandated in cities with larger police departments, and Norris said he expects there to be some learning curve as officers get used to recording police data points from their interactions.

By the time he’s been with the department for five years, he said, he’s hoping that it will be in place and in a more stable place, tuned up to run smoothly for the next 10 years.

He added that a key message he wants to share is that the work police officers do is not about police violence but rather public safety.

“We are looking out for our community,” he said. “The vast majority of what we do when we respond is to help someone.”

He said he also sees opportunity for the police department to be more transparent and active in teaching the community about what it does and how it works.

“I’m doing something that is a culmination of what I have learned and what I have accumulated over the course of my career, and sharing that with the members of this department and members of this community,” he said.

Sue Dremann covers criminal justice for The Almanac and can be reached at sdremann@paweekly.com.
Sports roundup

Olympics

Maddy Price had just arrived in Scotland when she learned she would be competing in the 2020 Tokyo Olympics, as a member of the Canadian track and field team.

Price, an elite 400-meter runner, had been racing in Europe and had just left Germany for Scotland to visit her younger sister, Nikky, who is pursuing her master's at University of St. Andrew's.

The former Menlo School athletic standouts (Nikky played NCAA Division I lacrosse) were together when her childhood dream became a reality.

“It was so special to be with my sister when I found out I made it,” said Price, who shared her recent picture from a recent IAAF meet in Europe, was in Scotland visiting her sister when she heard she was going to Tokyo.

Price hadn't seen her sister for a recent couple of times I ran against her: “Because it’s invite-only, it does make it a little more complicated, a little more uncertain, but that’s just something we’ve all gotten used to with COVID,” Price said in June. “I’m just doing what I can, running as fast as I can and doing all that’s in my control.”

Price, whose parents are Canadian, began her professional track and field career in 2019, competing in the 400 in Tokyo.

“She had gotten second in that Olympic Trials, and instead the veteran sprinter, who will be competing in the 400 in Tokyo, had chosen to retire.

Price made the most of that time in Olympics limbo, taking care of an injury, rehabilitating, and training.

After undergoing foot surgery in the fall of 2020, Price returned to Duke as a volunteer assistant coach, and the Blue Devils, including some of her former teammates, won the first Atlantic Coast Conference title in program history.

Fast forward to a couple of months ago: Team Canada announced that there would be Olympic Trials. For Price and those that train outside of Canada, the two-week mandatory quarantine was tricky.

Athletes were not obligated to compete at trials, and instead the national team was decided by a committee who looked at who made the time standard, who is the top 48 in the world based on an algorithm of head-to-head races, past performances, and trials among other criteria.

“Because it’s invite-only, it does make it a little more complicated, a little more uncertain, but that’s just something we’ve all gotten used to with COVID,” Price said in June. “I’m just doing what I can, running as fast as I can and doing all that’s in my control.”

Price, whose parents are Canadian, began her professional track and field career in 2019, competing in the 400 in Tokyo.

“She had gotten second in that event and was just searching for that gold, and when she won gold, it was a moment I will remember forever,” Price said. “I’ve had a photo of her on my wall since I was a kid. I remember the first couple of times I ran against her: first when I was at Duke and we raced at the Mount Sac Relays and thinking ‘Oh my gosh this is crazy’ and later in the world championships lining up against her in the mixed relay. I think that would be one of my favorite Olympic moments growing up.”

A two-time Central Coast Section champion in the 200 and 400 at Menlo, and a six-time All-American at Duke, Price has been competing for the Canadian national team for years.

Price’s first love was soccer and her ambition ran high before she entered Menlo School. That’s when Menlo track and field coach Jorge Chen urged her to run.

“I always wanted to be at the top of sport no matter what sport that was,” Price said. “Track was starting to get very interesting but at the time, I had always envisioned myself going to the World Cup in soccer, trying to make it to the Olympics.”

Price’s parents exposed the sisters to a high level of sports. Their late father Shawn was a professional race car driver and off-road motorcyclist.

“I always dreamed of that,” Maddy said. “As I came out of Duke it started to become a reality. My younger self would be so excited right now, and I try to always remember that and enjoy and cherish where I’m at because I...
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## Community Briefs

### Vaccination clinic
Bellie Haven Action is hosting a COVID-19 vaccination clinic in Woodside at 450 Woodside Ave. on Saturday, July 17, from 9 a.m. to noon. Call 650-429-1122 for more information.

### National Night Out coming Aug. 3
National Night Out, an event hosted nationally to help neighbors connect with each other and local police departments, is planned for Tuesday, Aug. 3. People are encouraged to register any planned block parties with the city of Menlo Park. Any event involving a street closure also needs a special event permit form to be completed.

### Rent relief available
Rent and utility relief is available to income-eligible renters and their landlords who are affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Go to housingiskey.com or call 833-430-2122 to learn more about rent relief options and see if you qualify. The current set of eviction protections are in effect through Sept. 30.

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### Wildfire Season

“Look, we've had two consecutive dry winters that have left us short 2-3 feet of missing rainfall since 2019,” said Woodside Mayor Brian Dombkowski in a email. “We are facing a long, hot, dry summer. Against that backdrop, I have great concerns about the people, the structures, and the natural beauty of Woodside and its surrounding communities.”

Cities and towns across California are required to update their ad hoc wildfire preparedness committee by Jan. 1, 2023. Updates cover not just fire burns, but earthquakes, floods and other potential disasters.

“When it's in your backyard, it can't help but affect you,” said Woodside Town Manager Kevin Bryant. “I don't think people here took it lightly. (The CZU fires) confirmed people here can be affected, so we're being more vigilant and reinforced those efforts.”

On top of local fire districts' preparation efforts like controlled burns, there are a number of initiatives that have been in the works to get ready for possible wildfires.

### Local changes respond to 2020 fires
Portola Valley officials are spending more on fire services in the 2021-2022 fiscal year budget. There is an increase from $39,000 to $190,000 from the last fiscal year for vegetation management to keep the town's roads clear during a wildfire year over year. Much of their action is dictated by recommendations by its ad hoc wildfire preparedness committee.

Efforts underway that the committee recommended to the Town Council include modifying building codes to require non-combustible deck material, ember resistant vents, dual-pane tempered glass windows and skylights, and mesh screens on operable skylights.

In May, the council adopted one of the committee's recommendations: a ban on planting five flammable trees. Homeowners are also encouraged to remove the five — pine, juniper, eucalyptus, cypress and acacia — since they ignite, burn, and spread fire more readily than other trees, such as oaks. The committee also recommended that owners of any undeveloped property in town larger than 50 acres be required to develop a vegetation management plan, which the Woodside Fire Protection District would need to approve.

“The CZU fire was, for many residents, the first time the reality of wildfire danger revealed itself, and the council’s primary priority this year is continued mitigation and resiliency efforts,” the 2021-22 budget states.

The Woodside Fire Protection District recently presented its desired fire code amendments to the Woodside Town Council for comment.

“While the council is clearly trying to balance a number of competing priorities to find an optimal path forward, those reach code asks include prohibiting combustibles within 5 feet of any underground transformer; a 200-foot defensible space program requirement for any structure on or near a 30% slope; and requiring properties larger than 50 acres to submit a vegetation management plan,” Dombkowski said.

### Countywide plans
Since the CZU Complex fires, Cal Fire CZU, its San Mateo and Santa Cruz counties, as well as other county groups have been working on various wildfire protection projects. Woodside and Portola Valley have both stepped up their fuel reduction efforts, said Denise Enea, former Woodside Fire Protection District fire marshal and president of Fire Safe San Mateo County.

Town Council include modifying building codes to require non-combustible deck material, ember resistant vents, dual-pane tempered glass windows and skylights, and mesh screens on operable skylights.

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In May, the council adopted one of the committee's recommendations: a ban on planting five flammable trees. Homeowners are also encouraged to remove the five — pine, juniper, eucalyptus, cypress and acacia — since they ignite, burn, and spread fire more readily than other trees, such as oaks. The committee also recommended that owners of any undeveloped property in town larger than 50 acres be required to develop a vegetation management plan, which the Woodside Fire Protection District would need to approve.

“The CZU fire was, for many residents, the first time the reality of wildfire danger revealed itself, and the council’s primary priority this year is continued mitigation and resiliency efforts,” the 2021-22 budget states.

The Woodside Fire Protection District recently presented its desired fire code amendments to the Woodside Town Council for comment.

“While the council is clearly trying to balance a number of competing priorities to find an optimal path forward, those reach code asks include prohibiting combustibles within 5 feet of any underground transformer; a 200-foot defensible space program requirement for any structure on or near a 30% slope; and requiring properties larger than 50 acres to submit a vegetation management plan,” Dombkowski said.

### Fire Safe Council
Fire Safe Council is working with San Mateo County’s Office of Emergency Management to coordinate a Countywide plans that includes $8 million in grants. It also is working with Cal Fire to coordinate a wildfire Resiliency Program. The program includes more than $2 million in grants to help educate residents about their risk of wildfire.

### Technology aids
Last summer, the county adopted the Zonehaven platform, designed to give first responders and the public evacuation information. It allows agencies to make decisions on when to evacuate a community or how to zone communities to evacuate while monitoring evacuation route traffic in real time.

Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve, which is located in the eastern foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains on 1,189 acres of land, installed San Mateo County's first ALERTWildfire camera to help firefighters spot wildfires, which is key in containing fires. However, the camera is only a tool to help firefighters in their efforts to contain wildfires.

One of the most significant tools in the fight against wildfires is the ability to predict where a fire might go.

### Community Briefs

**Nicholas Gurr, a California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection firefighter, turns away from the heat while supervising a controlled burn at the entrance of Huddart Park in Woodside on Feb. 18, 2020.**

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**Portola Valley resident wins Tahoe race**

Portola Valley resident Marie Trudelle, 29, won first place in the 5K race in the Run to the Beach Lake Tahoe on July 4, according to the run's website. Her finish time was 20:13.

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$250,000 FEMA grant to participate in a drone program, which it might use to locate fires, Cox said.

Some think the towns should do more

Portola Valley Neighbors United (PVNU) says its town is not doing enough to prepare for possible disasters such as wildfires. PVNU was founded in January 2020 to “respond to several difficult town issues and preserve the town’s rural nature,” according to its website.

Rusty Day, a PVNU board member and resident of Portola Valley’s Westridge neighborhood since 1989, said the Town Council needs to prioritize fire preparedness more than it does. The group would like the town to develop a wildfire prevention and safety ordinance (something it proposed in July 2020) and hold regular disaster drills with public participation.

At the July 14 Town Council meeting (after The Almanac’s press deadline), the council is expected to form a subcommittee to work with state and regional bodies to address housing mandates in areas of high fire danger, the difficulty of obtaining homeowners insurance in high fire danger areas, and the fact that there is not a single, accepted Cal Fire map for all agencies to refer to, Portola Valley Town Manager Jeremy Dennis said.

“Wildfires are a contagious hazard just like a virus,” Day said. “Unless we grapple with that with sound public policy, we are left to suffer the consequences of everyone’s individual choices.”

Comes, who lives in Westridge and is PVNU’s president, said she moved to the area for its beauty and rural character.

“We are rural and that’s why we came here, we want that and we want other people to be able to enjoy that, but we need to be able to have the town have our back in making sure 4,600 residents are safe,” said Comes, who has run through emergency evacuation drills with her daughter to prepare for a wildfire.

Day and Comes also contend that the $190,000 set aside for vegetation management in Portola Valley’s 2021-22 fiscal year budget isn’t significant enough to help protect against a catastrophic wildfire.

Dennis clarified that the primary resource that a municipality spends fire prevention on is staff time to craft ordinances and policies. For instance, Dennis spends about 15% to 20% of his time in any given week working on safety issues like wildfire preparedness. This is true, to different percentages, for the assistant to the town manager, the communications analyst, the town attorney, the planning and building director, and the public works director, he said.

Other fire-related expenditures in Portola Valley in the last year, according to Dennis, include:

- $15,000 for a consultant to write the town’s upcoming home hardening ordinance (tentatively scheduled for council review in August)
- About $20,000 to purchase and implement a virtual emergency operations center (spread over 2020 and 2021)
- $20,000 to support traffic engineering analysis of evacuation issues
- $63,732 for support of the Citizens Emergency Response and Preparedness Program and chipper program
- $20,000 to update the town’s safety element
- $100,000 to study undergrounding the town’s utilities
- A resource grant from Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire (CPAW), with Woodside, the county and Woodside Fire Protection District for the development of additional tools, such as a community wildfire protection plan, in the next year

Dombkowski said he couldn’t be happier that an increasing number of residents are taking advantage of Woodside’s defensible space fund — residents can apply for 50% off their clearing costs, up to $3,000 — to reduce their “collective risk to life and property.”

See WILDFIRE SEASON, page 12

An emergency vehicle passes through the smoke behind the road closure lines in San Mateo County Aug. 23, 2020.

Kate Bradshaw
Defensible space is the area between a house and an oncoming wildfire where the vegetation has been modified and/or maintained in a way that significantly reduces fire fuel loads and the wildfire threat, and makes it easier for firefighters to defend the house, according to the town. Defensible space needs to be established a minimum of 30 feet from the perimeter of the property.

The following activities are examples of how to create defensible space:

- Remove dead brush and woody debris
- Mow annual dry grasses
- Remove of trees for fire protection as recommended by Woodside Fire Protection District
- Reduce of brush for fire safety and its visual and scenic impacts, erosion and slide potential, habitat removal, increased heat resulting from decreased shade, and last but certainly not least, its economic impact on homeowners,” he said. “Conflicts between mutually desirable goals are inevitable, of course.”

“Home hardening” is also covered in the program, which can include:

- Replacing existing wood shake roof with a non-wood shake roof
- Installing non-combustible ember-resistant vent screens and/or chimney spark arrestors
- Installing a seismic gas shut-off device or valve that activates automatically in an earthquake
- Installing non-combustible roof with a non-wood shake roof
- Replacing existing wood shake roof with a non-wood shake roof
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Join Zoom Meeting:

Meeting ID: 896 3030 9146
Weblink: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89630309146

Remote Public Comments:
Meeting participants are encouraged to submit public comments in writing in advance of the meeting. The following email will be monitored during the meeting and public comments received will be read into the record.
Email: sharper@woodsidetown.org

PUBLIC HEARING

3. Lonnie and Graham Kelco ASRB2021-0011; VARI2021-0003; GRAD2021-0003; XMAX2021-0001
4249 Jefferson Avenue Planner: Sage Schaan, Principal Planner

Presentation and consideration of a proposal, requiring Form Design Review (ASRB2021-0011), to construct a new three-story single-family residence, Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), pool, vehicular gate, and other site improvements.

The project requires a Maximum Residence Size Exception (XMAX2021-0001), a Variance to encroach into slopes exceeding 35% (VARI2021-0003), and a Grading Exception for cuts exceeding 8 feet in height (GRAD2021-0003).

Report from Planning Commissioners and Staff on Other Meetings

a. Staff Communications

- June 2021 Director’s Report (end of FY 20/21)
- Independence Hall and Town Hall Conference Room – Zoom Rooms
- Transition to In-person/Hybrid Meetings

b. Planning Commissioners Communications

THE APPLICATION MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW BY CONTACTING SAGE SCHAAN AT SSCHAAN@WOODSIDETOWN.ORG

TOWN OF WOODSIDE
2955 WOODSIDE ROAD
WOODSIDE, CA 94062
PLANNING COMMISSION
JULY 21, 2021, 6:00 PM

This meeting is compliant with the Governor’s Executive Order N-25-20 issued on March 4, 2020, allowing for deviation of teleconference rules required by the Brown Act. The purpose of this is to provide the safest environment for staff and the public while allowing for public participation.

The meeting will be held by teleconferencing. The public may participate via: Zoom meeting or by coming to Independe nce Hall, 2955 Woodside Road, where a microphone and speaker will be available to allow for participation.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS PARTICIPATING BY TELECONFERENCE: BATELDER, BILDNER, DARE, KUTAY, LONDON, ROSEKRANS, AND VOELKE.

N E W S

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‘We all have to be active members of the community’

Dombkowski said residents need to be vigilant and prepared this fire season.

“Create a ‘grab and go’ binder for your important documents,” he said. “Create a checklist of your family heirlooms and collectibles, and understand your evacuation plans, including where your family and animals can reunite safely with friends or family out of the immediate area,” he said. “And when you are asked to evacuate, go early, don’t be the one clogging up the roads and diverting emergency resources when they are needed the most on the front lines. We are all in this together.”

‘I’m seeing what I can do to make (my property) more resistant (to fire),’” said Shostak, who lives in a 6-year-old house. She said the landscape work and tree trimming she needs to do is going to be expensive.

“‘We need a local cultural shift (to removing trees from close to homes),” she said. “Every day I look around and I see fire hazards.’”

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

EDUCATION BRIEFS

National Merit Scholars named

On Monday, July 12, the National Merit Scholarship Corporation announced 1,000 additional scholars named as National Merit Finalists by colleges and universities. Officials of each college selected their scholarship winners from among the finalists in the National Merit Scholarship Program who will attend their institution.

The colleges will provide between $500 and $2,000 annually for up to four years of undergraduate study.

Below are the local winners:
- Joshua E. Lowe of Menlo Park, who attended Menlo School in Atherton. He plans to study computer science at the Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in Indiana.
- Leah E. Strickland of Los Altos, who attended Woodside Priory School in Portola Valley. She will attend Emory College in Atlanta, Georgia. She plans to pursue a career in education.

For more information, go to nationalmerit.org.

Cañada College to host new coding program

On July 8, Cañada College announced it will be hosting a new coding program at its Menlo Park site through tech training program provider, Qwasar Silicon Valley, starting this coming school year. It is being offered at a subsidized rate of $99 thanks to funding from the city of Menlo Park.

The nine-month full stack developer certificate program aims to create a “new, highly tech-skilled diverse workforce to help resolve the talent shortage and diversity challenges in the Bay Area,” according to a press release from the community college, which is headquartered in Woodside. The first cohort will begin the course on Aug. 23 and commit 20 hours a week.

“What makes this initiative unique is that while many private-public programs exist at universities, the vast majority cost upwards of $15,000, only last three months and lack the depth of technical competency required for budding coders to be hired at tech companies in the Bay Area,” the release states. “This new program is the first partnership between a community college and a tech training provider designed to quickly and inexpensively teach students coding skills that are closely aligned with the current job market.”

Many graduates of expensive bootcamps are unable to find employment because the programs didn’t teach the necessary skills to actually begin working at tech companies, the college notes.

Damany Fisher, regional director of special projects for the Bay Area Community College Consortium, said that programs like this are especially needed in light of high unemployment caused by the pandemic.

“Unfortunately, many service-sector workers — those who often lacked the luxury of working remotely — felt the full brunt of the pandemic and shutdown,” he said in a statement. “Programs like this are needed to offer workers an opportunity to reskill and pivot toward a more stable and lucrative career in tech.”

Go to canadacollege.edu/menloparksite/programs/Qwasar for more information or to apply.

—Angela Swartz

—Angela Swartz
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DRE 00870112

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Julie Tsai Law
650.799.8888
DRE 0139462

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DRE 01906976

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Lynn North
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DRE 01490039

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Pamela Rummage Culp
415.640.3293
DRE 00896337

445 FRANCISCO, UNIT F601, SAN FRANCISCO

$2,198,000 • 2 Bed • 2 Bath

Pamela Rummage Culp
415.640.3293
DRE 00896337
student programs this summer. The Library Explorers program has about 325 kids enrolled during June and July, Monday through Wednesday. It’s designed to develop literacy, math and social-emotional skills in preparation for the 2021-22 school year. The curriculum is tailored to the age group — students are divided into groups of rising kindergartners, first and second graders, and third and fifth graders.

“This COVID-19 impacts have exacerbated and deepened the inequities in youth learning achievement and social emotional development already present in our communities, disproportionately affecting youth of color,” according to a county library press release.

First through fifth graders are taking part in the Families CREATE program, which includes both self-paced and guided live, interactive virtual experiences supplemented with English/Spanish kits with activities throughout the summer. Some 1,500 free STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) kits are being distributed at all county libraries. This summer, the library system is also partnering with local parks and recreation departments to provide free books, library cards and hands-on learning materials to youth enrolled in their programs. Additional funding support will be provided to subsidize admission for high-need youth to increase enrollment and access to quality experiences.

Carine Risley, the county’s deputy director of library services, said the Explorers program should make a difference to students who need additional support. Some students are out of practice just with being around adults other than their own parents, she said.

School districts plan additional summer programs

The Menlo Park City School District expanded its summer school offerings this year, offering a monthlong project-based learning program to go along with a program for students who need more academic support. The state gave the district $2.4 million for such programming.

The district has part-day and full-day options. In the past, all three elementary schools fed into one summer school, but each site is hosting its own program this year to meet demand.

The state grant “will allow us to provide a more robust summer program that will help address any unfinished learning from the last 15 months of distance and hybrid learning,” the district website states.

About 160 students enrolled in Hillview Middle School’s summer school program last year, said Jacky Schlegel, a sixth grade humanities teacher at Hillview and director of the summer school. Traditionally summer school is offered to students who need an academic boost, but this year the district opened it up to the entire community. Projects include knot-tying and DIY insect repellent as they answer the question: “How can I survive in the wild?” Schlegel said.

“A lot of families recognized what was lost was socialization and ability to be with their friends every day,” she said. “So if they were allowed to do the program began. “We won’t have stable cohorts; kids will be able to see one another (during breaks). … You can’t just ignore the social aspect that was lost as well.” Marla Bischoff said her daughter, a rising seventh grader, opted to participate in Hillview’s virtual-only academy this past school year and didn’t return to campus with other students who attended some classes in person.

“As the year progressed it was clear that she really missed the in-person contact from schoolmates and teachers,” Bischoff said in an email. “She has been excited to return to in-person learning, and this summer program allows her the chance to transition back to school and to start to create new peer and teacher relationships. Teachers have assembled a project-based learning model to reinforce last year’s standards, ensuring students are ready for next year.”

Larra Olson, a third grade teacher at Encinal School, is the director of Oak Knoll School’s summer school. She said 115 students have enrolled in summer school at Encinal. “(Parents) were very thankful for the opportunity to have the option,” she said. “Some families chose the Virtual Academy all year and this will be their first experiences back in person for over a year.”

Olson said it was hard to find teachers because some are burned out from teaching during the pandemic. Seven teachers, mostly substitute teachers, are teaching at Oak Knoll this summer. Laurel School’s lower campus is hosting the district’s Kick Off to Kindergarten program to help incoming kindergartners who did not attend preschool or are learning English.

The Las Lomitas Elementary School District is offering expanded summer school programs this year, according to Shannon Potts, assistant superintendent of curriculum and instruction for the district. About 8.7% (96) of K-7 students registered for summer school in 2019, while 9.7% (101) students registered for in-person and virtual summer school in 2020. This year 10.2% (93) of K-7 students registered for summer school.

It’s offering a new one-week Kickstart program to incoming kindergartners, first graders and fourth graders. Some 211 students had registered for the program — about 65% of students in those grades — as of June 23.

“We decided to add it because we didn’t have the opportunity for incoming fourth graders to see the La Entrada campus this year,” Potts explained in an email. “Same for incoming kindergarten to Las Lomitas. The 2020-21 kinder(garten) students moving into first grade had already been to campus and they didn’t have the opportunity to do and really didn’t really move outside of the kinder(garten) yard so we thought they would benefit from a preview of the school.”

Some families choose travel, rest over summer school

The Portola Valley Elementary School District, which was open on a hybrid basis for much of the past school year, decided not to expand its summer school programs this year, said Superintendent Roberta Zaremba in an email.

“We have had a lot of conversations during our (governing) board meetings about the very same topic since this very much occurred and appeared to be the case during the early part of the 2020-21 school year (October/December),” she said. “In fact, our board even approved an expansion of our usual summer program to accommodate parents’ learning concerns. Interestingly, when it actually came down to it, many parents whose students were invited to participate in the summer program chose to take a break and go on holiday this summer instead.”

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**IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR DRINKING WATER**

Este aviso contiene información muy importante sobre su agua potable, por favor lea el aviso en español si va aquí incluido. Si el aviso en español no va incluido aquí, contacte al sistema de agua para pedir una copia.

O’Connor Tract Co-Operative Water Company Has Levels of Coliform Bacteria Above the Drinking Water Standard

Our water system recently violated a drinking water standard. Although this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what you should do, what happened, and what we did to correct this situation.

We routinely monitor for drinking water contaminants. We took 12 samples to test for the presence of coliform bacteria during June 2021. Two of those samples showed the presence of total coliform bacteria. The standard is that no more than 1 may do so.

What should I do?

- You do not need to boil your water or take other corrective actions.
- After chlorine was added to the water system, further testing shows that this total coliform problem has been resolved.
- This is not an emergency. If it had been, you would have been notified immediately. Total coliform bacteria are generally not harmful themselves. Coliforms are bacteria which are naturally present in the environment and are used as an indicator that other, potentially-harmful, bacteria may be present. Coliforms were found in more samples than allowed and this was a warning of potential problems.
- Usually, coliforms are a sign that there could be a problem with the system’s treatment or distribution system (pipes). Whenever we detect coliform bacteria in any sample, we do follow-up testing to see if other bacteria or greater concerns, such as fecal coliform or E. coli, are present. We did not find any of these bacteria in our subsequent testing, and further testing shows that this problem has been resolved.
- People with severely compromised immune systems, infants, and some elderly may be at increased risk. These people should seek advice about drinking water from their health care providers. General guidelines on ways to lessen the risk of infection by microbes are available from U.S. EPA’s Safe Drinking Water Hotline at 1(800) 426-4791.
- If you have other health issues concerning the consumption of this water, you may wish to consult your doctor.

What happened? What was done?

A routine sample for coliform bacteria was taken on June 23 from a sampling station, and the sample tested positive for total coliform. Chlorine was added to the system, and retesting on June 25 of 4 samples showed a sample from a near-by hose bib to be coliform positive whereas the sample from the sampling station was coliform negative. Chlorine was added to the system on June 27 and June 28, and retesting of 5 samples were all negative. The sampling station that was positive with total coliform was near where a new valve was installed on a main, and that work is the likely cause of the positive total coliform.

For more information, please contact:
Secretary-Treasurer Telephone 650-321-2723
Email: oconnorwater@gmail.com

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this public notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

Secondary Notification Requirements

Upon receipt of notification from a person operating a public water system, the following notification must be given within 10 days [per Health and Safety Code Section 116450(g)]:

- RESIDENTIAL RENTAL PROPERTY OWNERS OR MANAGERS (including nursing homes and care facilities); Must notify tenants.

This notice is being sent to you by O’Connor Tract Co-Operative Water Co. serving parts of Menlo Park and East Palo Alto (see http://www.oconnorwater.org for map)

State Water System Number: 4110019

Date distributed: July 7, 2021.
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4 bedrooms, dedicated office, and 3.5 baths
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Elevator; fully handicap-accessible upstairs primary suite
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#5 Agent California
#21 Agent Nationwide
SPACIOUS AND STYLISH IN CENTRAL MENLO

On a lot of almost one-quarter acre in the sought-after neighborhood of Central Menlo, this bright and spacious 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom home offers comfortable living space and a convenient floorplan. A brick pathway leads through a garden entrance to the front door flanked by leaded glass sidelights, and inside, stylish appointments include refinished hardwood floors, fine millwork, divided light windows, and plantation shutters. A fireplace centers the expansive living room, the eat-in kitchen offers appliances from Viking, Bosch, and Jenn-Air, and the dining room opens to a covered brick patio perfect for indoor/outdoor entertaining. The sizable master suite enjoys access to the backyard, where privacy hedges line the perimeter and a lush lawn provides great space for outdoor enjoyment. Just moments from the Atherton border, this incredible location is also convenient to downtown Menlo Park, downtown Palo Alto, and Stanford University. Plus, children may attend acclaimed Menlo Park schools including Hillview Middle, which is approximately ½-mile away (buyer to verify eligibility).

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Managing Broker: Michael Repka, DRE #01854880 | www.deleonzrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
Nestled on over an acre amongst the resplendent beauty of Portola Valley lies this bright, inviting home on a peaceful non-through street. A breezy ambiance encircles you from the moment you step inside, with a soaring cathedral ceiling crowning the living room, and a spectacular wall of windows showcasing jaw-dropping views of the Windy Hill Open Space Preserve. Nearly 2,700 square feet of interior space includes highlights such as the kitchen with appliances from Miele and Sub-Zero, the dining room with access to a patio for indoor/outdoor entertaining, and a focal-point fireplace in floor-to-ceiling stone centering the living room. Accommodations include 4 bedrooms and 2.5 bathrooms, with multiple bedrooms enjoying access to the outdoors. And the backyard evokes the mood of a mountainside retreat, accentuated by the pool with views of the home’s verdant, flourishing surroundings. Feel far removed from the fast pace of Silicon Valley, yet still enjoy a location moments to famous Roberts Market, a short drive to Interstate 280, and just over one-half mile to the acclaimed Ormondale Elementary School.

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Data from BrokerMetrics® based on MLS sales from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, in San Mateo County, residential properties, with no off MLS sales included in the rankings.

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Managing Broker: Michael Repka, DRE #01854880 | www.deleonrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
such a vision and help improve safety and connectivity for all bicycle users.’

The Peninsula Bikeway study is an outgrowth of a partnership between city managers from four cities formed in 2016 to discuss stronger connections between their jurisdictions. Known as the Managers’ Mobility Partnership, the effort initially focused on using existing bikeways and routes to design an ‘interim low-stress bicycle connection’ between the north and sound ends of the segment.

The latest effort is far more ambitious. The new study bills itself as “the first phase of implementing a high-impact bicycle superhighway network in the Bay Area helping residents and workers increase connectivity and safety to jobs and activity centers.” Its goal is to offer a “long-term, high-quality, bikeway suitable for bicyclists of all ages and abilities.”

Unlike the interim route — a meandering path that forces riders to cross El Camino Real once and the railroad tracks twice to avoid hazardous road segments in the various cities — the new bikeway would be direct. All three of the study’s options feature a straighter path between Redwood City and Mountain View. One would rely predominantly on Middlefield Road; another would stay within El Camino Real; the third would run along the Caltrain right-of-way and rely on Alma Street in the South Bay section and on Central Expressway and Evelyn Avenue in the southern end.

But El Camino was selected because it offers a “cohesive route” and has ample right-of-way to facilitate the improvements. Middlefield, by contrast, already has some bike lanes, but because they are not contiguous, bicyclists are required to maneuver and mix with car traffic, a challenge for less experienced cyclists. And Middlefield’s existing right-of-way “would not support the implementation of a continuous and seamless separated bicycle facility,” the study states.

The study also concluded that the Aloma Street and Central Expressway route falls short because the corridors along that route “include fences, experience high traffic volumes and speeds, as well as multiple travel lanes making it uncomfortable for cyclists to traverse.” And because there is no continuous bikeway north of Menlo Park, the route is “circuitous and not very functional,” the study concludes.

But the study does acknowledge that El Camino comes with significant barriers: It currently has no bicycle infrastructure; and adding protected bike lanes here would more greatly impact parking, which in turn affects businesses that rely on El Camino for their parking spaces.

Any changes to the corridor’s configuration, the study states, “will need to consider the trade-offs and potential effects on parking supply, loading/unloading, garbage pick-up, and other operational functions associated with retail businesses.”

In the meantime, the study proposes a set of “interim improvements” that each partnering city can undertake to its segment of the current Peninsula Bikeway.

In Menlo Park, the study recommends improved signage and striping at the intersections of Elena Avenue and Valparaiso Avenue; Valparaiso and Crane Street; Laurel Street and Ravenswood Avenue; and Willow Place and Willow Road, an area where the study also recommends a “refuge island” at a place where there is currently a central turn lane.

In Palo Alto, the improvements focus on Bryant Street and target the intersections of Bryant with East Meadow Avenue, Embarcadero Road, Churchill Street and Lytton Avenue. For the East Meadow intersection, the study recommends putting bollards to slow vehicles as they turn and “conflict striping” (a line of green rectangles for bicyclists parallel to the pedestrian crosswalk) to increase visibility.

Near Embarcadero, the study recommends high visibility crosswalks and green bike lanes near the intersection at Church. At Churchill, the study recommends a traffic circle to reduce vehicle speeds. And on Lytton, the city should add a green “bike box” near the street’s intersection with Bryant to improve bike connections between the two streets, the study recommends.

The interim improvements proposed for Mountain View focus on the intersections of El Camino with San Antonio Road, Showers Drive, Rengstorff Avenue and Castro Street. The study calls for “high-visibility crosswalks” and protected intersections in these areas (marked with green paint and flexible delineators) for bicyclists and tighter radii for cars, designed to slow vehicle speeds.

The study acknowledges that even these steps are unlikely to sway a major segment of population to use their bikes for Peninsula commutes. Roughly half of the fraction of potential bicyclists falls into the category of “interested but concerned,” according to a 2016 survey conducted by Jennifer Dill and Nathaniel Storff. These bicyclists are interested in biking more but generally feel uncomfortable on streets with buffered or protected bikeways, according to the study.

“...a bikeway with less separation such as a regular bike lane on a busy suburban arterial road with high speed traffic would provide low stress conditions needed to attract a majority of potential cyclists,” the Peninsula Bikeway study states. “By appealing to the desire of the majority of users’ needs … for increased separation, the implementation of a separated bicycle facility will help the community be more strategic about investments and implementation, while also helping to balance competing network needs, such as for transit and freight.”

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MATTR HINMAN
November 22, 1939 - July 4, 2021

Mallory Fletcher Price, age 57, died peacefully in her childhood home in Atherton from a short illness. Surrounded by her family and friends, she displayed her characteristic courage, concern for others, and zest for life until the very end.

Mallory graduated from Woodside High School in 1981 and received a BS in Journalism from the University of Colorado in 1985. While she brought her skills to different jobs in education, the printing industry, and local government, her resume aptly described her approach to work: “I hope to work somewhere fun, doing something I like, with people who enjoy what they are doing, while making others happy.”

Mallory’s primary loves were her family, friends, and Lake Tahoe, but she was particularly proud of and devoted to her children, Caroline Price (age 22) and Andrew Price (age 20), both of Concord, Massachusetts. She is also survived by her husband, Doug Price, of Concord, MA, her sister, Brooke Fletcher, of Minneapolis, MN, and mother, Evelyn Fletcher, of Ashland, OR. She was pre-deceased by her father, Howard Fletcher of Atherton, CA.

Her family and friends will celebrate Mallory with a Celebration of Life service. Contributions can be made in her name to the American Cancer Society and Keep Tahoe Blue.

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Email Staff Writer Bennady Sheyer at gsheyn@paweekly.com.
SPORTS

continued from page 8

wanted this for so long so enjoying this process is the biggest part of it,” Price continued. “I want to continue to work out in North Carolina before departing for Fijiu, Japan, where Team Canada will gather to acclimate to the time change and weather while training.”

—Pam McKenzie

College athletics

Following a year’s absence, the Capital One Cup returned with the Stanford men’s and women’s athletics programs both finishing first.

Stanford will be awarded $400,000, split evenly between men’s and women’s sports, donated to the Cardinal’s student-athlete scholarship funds.

The Cardinal women contributed dominant performances throughout the year, including their third basketball national championship, and recorded 118 points. USC was second with 108, earning $100,000.

The Stanford men’s performance was highlighted by a seventh national title in gymnastics. The Cardinal also turned in an impressive baseball season that culminated in a College World Series appearance. Stanford recorded 91 points to Alabama’s 87.

The Capital One Cup honors the best Division 1 men’s and women’s college athletics program in the country. The winners are determined by a system that grants points to top 10 finishes in NCAA Division I championships and in final official coaches’ polls across 21 women’s and 20 men’s sports.

Capital One is doubling the total amount donated to student athlete scholarship funds from $400,000 to $800,000 this year. Stanford has been focused on the fate of the_Foothill-De Anza district played at all — leaving some programs in a state of disarray due to transfers and attrition and many starting over with something of a blank slate this coming school year.

The Foothill College men’s basketball program is doing its start-over with a new head coach, Mike Reynoso, who was hired late in June to replace Matt Stanley.

“We only have three guys back from the 2019-2020 team,” Reynoso said. “It’s almost like a new season. I have guys who are excited to be here and want to see where we can go.”

He served as an assistant on Keith Larsen’s staff the last two years at Menlo School.

“We had just had a new baby and Menlo was the perfect fit with its family atmosphere,” Reynoso said. “At Foothill we will be a blue-collar team, tough-nosed, very athletic with versatility. I like one through five to all be able to start the break. I want guys who will put it all on the floor, guys who will run through that brick wall. We will get after it on the defensive end, not necessarily with an extended defense, but we will protect the paint and force teams to try to hit us shooting defended 3s.”

Reynoso named three individuals as his major influences as a coach: Rich Kelley, Chuck Rapp and Mike Legarza.

Kelley, the former Woodside legend who went on to play at Stanford and for 11 years in the NBA, was on the search committee when Reynoso was hired to replace Darrell Barbour at Woodside.

“Coach Rapp is one of the best motivators I ever came across,” Reynoso said. “He puts his all into everything he does.”

Legarza, who played for local legend Bud Presley at Menlo College, coached at Canada before stepping away to start a highly successful group of basketball camps.

“Working his camps helped me a lot to grow as a coach and as a person,” Reynoso said.

—Rick Eymer and Glenn Reeves

Susan Lambert Mein

August 17, 1942 – June 15, 2021

Susan Morey Lambert Mein was born to Jack and Edna Morey on August 17th, 1942 in Atherton. She grew up in the large Morey family and spent much of her time with her numerous cousins. Like many of the Moreys, she attended St. Joseph’s, graduating in 1956, and then went on to graduate from Notre Dame in Belmont in 1960.

From there, she met her husband Michael Lambert of Honolulu when they were introduced by friends. They were married at Nativity Church in 1963 with a reception in her parents’ Menlo Park home.

They welcomed Micaela into the world and then Jeffrey to follow three years later. While raising their children, Sue was active in Peninsula Volunteers as well as volunteering at St. Joseph’s school. Mike and Sue enjoyed going back to Hawaii frequently and enjoyed traveling on cruises with the Morey cousins.

After a long battle with cancer, Mike passed away in 1999. After a period of time, Sue married William Wallace Mein III, of Woodside and Corona Del Mar. The pair welcomed a blended family, combining the Morey-Lamertbs and the Mein families. Sue and Bill loved to travel, with an especially memorable trip to the Great Wall of China. The couple spent much of their married life in Freedom, California as well as their home in Menlo Park. Sue embraced the role of grandmother to Bill’s eight grandchildren. After Bill’s passing in 2003, Sue spent most of her time with her family. She loved caring for her youngest granddaughter, Paige Lambert and was overjoyed at the news that Paige will be attending her alma mater, Notre Dame in the fall. She was anticipating the upcoming wedding of her oldest granddaughter, Rachel Mein in the summer. She passed away peacefully on June 15th surrounded by her family. She is survived by her daughter Kyla Eller, her son Jeff Lambert and his wife, Dawn, as well as her four step children and nine grandchildren.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to Peninsula Volunteers.

OBITUARIES

Isobel Christensen

March 21, 1931 – June 16, 2021

Isobel Jean Smith was born March 21, 1931 in Oxnard, California. Her parents, Jean (Lawrie) Smith and William Smith had emigrated from Scotland and her Scottish roots were celebrated throughout her life. Isobel had the good fortune to grow up on the Limoneira Ranch in Santa Paula. Her early years were spent playing in the fields, riding horses through the trees and enjoying rural life.

After graduation from Santa Paula High School, she traveled north to attend UC Berkeley as a member of Alpha Chi Omega sorority, thus starting a love of all things “Cal”, and the colors blue and gold. After college she lived in San Francisco, and became a member of The Spinsters. Luckily, she was invited to play tennis with a Bachelor, Herman Christensen, Jr., and love was found on the tennis court. They married in 1960 and quickly built an amazing house in the hills of San Carlos. Their four children arrived and they soon needed more space so they built their family home in Atherton. Isobel and Herman joined the Circus Club in the early ’60s and continued to play tennis, help out at swim meets and watch horse events. Isobel volunteered with Peninsula Volunteers and in the local schools. Later in life, she took up golf and they joined Menlo Country Club, where she fostered many strong relationships with other women golfers. Isobel was also a devoted volunteer at the Atherton Historical Society. She was thrilled with the arrival of each of her seven grandchildren, and by them, she was lovingly called “Scraggles”. Her pampering of her steady stream of bearded collies was legendary, and everyone who knew them wanted to be reincarnated as one of her dogs. She was also famous for her dry sense of humor and her clever, witty Christmas cards.

After Herman passed away in 2013, Isobel stayed home more, but surrounded herself with an incredible team of helpers and friends. Our family will be forever grateful for the support she received from all those who came daily or weekly for her and provide companionship and community. Isobel is survived by her daughter Maren (Bill Welch), son Gavin (Tricia), son Andrew and daughter Amy (Drew Curby). Her grandchildren Brady, William, Brian, Caroline, Alicia, Pierce, Ford and honorary grandchildren Cam and Ixander will deeply miss their beloved “Scraggles”. She is also survived by her sister, Margo Holcomb, and her faithful bearded collie, Kat (the dog).

There will not be a public funeral; a private celebration of life will be held later in the summer.

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include Susan Lambert Mein, 78, a Menlo Park resident, on June 16; Isobel Christensen, 90, an Atherton resident, on June 16; and James Morgan Upton, 87, an Atherton resident and former teacher at College of San Mateo and Canadia College, on July 1.

To read full obituaries, leave remembrances and post photos, go to Lasting Memorials at almanacnews.com/ obituaries.
67 ROSEWOOD DRIVE | ATHERTON | $12,500,000 | 67ROSEWOOD.COM

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Custom estate located in desirable Lindenwood
Pool, entertainment and sports facilities built in 2012
Three-level main residence with 7 bedrooms, 7 full baths, and 2 half-baths
Approximately 11,465 sq. ft.
- Main house: 10,345 total sq. ft.
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- House storage: 220 sq. ft.
 Featuring spacious living room, library, formal dining room, butler’s pantry, wine cellar, kitchen, family room, recreation room with full bar, wine cellar and tasting/dining room, home theater, fitness center (bedroom 7), spa with sauna and steam room

Pool with shallow water lounge, waterfall grotto, spa, and water slide from second-story deck
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Putting green, sport court, batting cage, and custom playground
Approximately 0.96 acre (41,638 square feet)
Electronic-gated driveway and pedestrian entrances
Excellent Menlo Park schools

For a private showing of this extraordinary property, please contact:

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650.619.6461
hcornish@cbnorcal.com
CalRE#00912143

STEPHANIE ELKINS
650.400.2933
stephanie.elkins@cbnorcal.com
CalRE#01908304

HughCornish.com
Ranked #1 Agent in SF Bay Area
Coldwell Banker, 2020
Ranked #30 Agent in the U.S.
The Wall Street Journal, 2020
Over $2.75 Billion in Sales

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the 2021 precipitation year, which ended June 28, 2021. Nearly the entire state has received only about half of average annual precipitation, said Jeannine Jones, California Department of Water Resources interstate resources manager. The cumulative effect has plunged nearly the entire state into an extreme drought, according to the Western Regional Climate Center.

The water storage system that supplies most municipalities in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties is at 72.9% of its maximum capacity. Normally, the total storage averages 91% this time of year, Nicole Sandkulla, CEO and general manager of BAWSCA, said during a phone interview.

Although the system’s water bank, Hetch Hetchy Reservoir in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, is currently at 99.1% of its maximum storage capacity, looks can be deceiving.

“Clearly, it’s down,” Sandkulla said of the basin’s water levels, explaining that people need to start conserving water voluntarily.

More concerning is the amount of precipitation feeding the water system. The years 2020-2021 were the second lowest on record since Hetch Hetchy was completed in the 1930s. The lowest was the 1976-1977 drought, Sandkulla said.

“It’s very close; 1976-77 had 39.14 inches of precipitation; 2020-21 had 39.28 inches,” she said.

Jones noted that statewide overall reservoir levels have been dropping and are about 64% of average. Individual reservoirs such as those in the large federal Central Valley Project and California State Water Project, which serve parts of Santa Clara County, have dropped even lower. San Luis Reservoir, for example, is at 33% of capacity or 54% of its historical average, she said.

A ‘canary in a coal mine’?

Closer to home, Santa Clara Valley Water District, also known as Valley Water, is the post office of the region’s water system, a quick water system can become vulnerable to drought.

Water storage rates in Santa Clara County’s 10 reservoirs are currently 16% in Guadalupe and Stevens Creek; Lexington, Chesbro, Coyote and Uvas are in the 20%-25% range; and Calero and Almaden at 45% and 54% respectively. Only Vasona is at near capacity at 94%, according to the Valley Water Surface Water data portal.

Anderson Reservoir, the district’s largest, is at 4% capacity; however, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ordered the district to drain the reservoir over seismic concerns due to its age. Located near Morgan Hill, Anderson is Valley Water’s largest reservoir and stores half of the water in its system. The reservoir will stay empty for the next decade, denying the county of its critical water source until a rebuild of its dam can be completed, Valley Water Board Vice Chair Gary Kremen said.

Coyote Reservoir, the district’s second-largest, is also currently limited in its current surface water storage due to limits imposed by the California Department of Water Resources Division of Safety of Dams, according to a staff memo to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors.

Valley Water, which supplies some water to the city of Mountain View, gets about two-thirds of its supply from its reservoirs and the groundwater aquifer. Another 50% is imported (40% through the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and 10% from Hetch Hetchy), 5% is from wastewater treatment and recycling, and 15% comes through residential and commercial/agricultural conservation, according to the district.

‘We’re not going to conserve our way out of this problem.’

Valley Water

Valley Water’s ability to get water imported from the California State Water Project, which manages 17 reservoirs statewide, and the federal Central Valley Project, which manages 20 dams and reservoirs, is also taking a hit. The State Water Project is now providing just 5% of the water, and the Bureau of Reclamation, which oversees the Central Valley Project, announced in May that it is cutting the water to urban areas from 55% to 25% and for agricultural uses to 0%.

In response, on June 9 Valley Water instituted a 15% mandatory reduction in water use among its customers compared to 2019 usage due to the state and federal cutbacks, dwindling Sierra snowpack and the Anderson Reservoir shutdown.

Increased conservation is also necessary to protect local water supplies and guard against groundwater overdraft, subsidence and dry domestic wells, especially if the drought extends into next year,” Valley Water Board Chair Tony Estremera said in a June 9 statement. The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors ratified the emergency order at its July 1 meeting.

But Tom Francis, BAWSCA’s water resources manager, said that the projects the district could help bolster the water capacity for the future could take more than 10 years to move forward. A project at Crystal Springs Reservoir in San Mateo County would add treated but potable wastewater to the Crystal Springs supply, which comes from Hetch Hetchy, he said.

San Mateo County’s three reservoirs, Upper and Lower Crystal Springs and San Andreas Lake, provide emergency backup and supply for northern San Mateo County and the city and county of San Francisco. Sandkulla said that both are being kept full to provide emergency use in the event of another wildfire such as last year’s CZU Lightning Complex fires in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

For now, BAWSCA’s 26 member agencies, which include East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Redwood City, Stanford University, Purisima Hills Water District, which supplies water to Los Altos Hills, and California Water Service’s Bear Gulch District, which covers parts of Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside, aren’t under mandate to conserve water, but that could change this fall if there’s no precipitation when the rains should begin, Sandkulla said.

At the meantime, BAWSCA and Valley Water are offering incentives, tips and rebates to help people save water so the area can bank enough water if the drought continues into next year, and hopefully, to create a water-saving culture. BAWSCA is offering up to $4-per-square-foot rebate to replace their lawns with drought-tolerant native plants, up to $30 for planting a “rain garden” of native plants with deep root systems, and a rain barrel rebate.

Valley Water is offering customers up to $400 to install a greywater laundry-to-landscape system. On July 1, it kicked off a landscaping rebate increase to $3,000 for residential sites and up to $50,000 for multifamily properties of five or more units.

To learn more about the water-saving tips and rebates for water-wise landscaping, visit bawsca.org and valleywater.org.

Email Staff Writer Sue Dremann at sdremann@paweekly.com.

ATHERTON

51 Watkins Ave

$2,990,000

Sat/Sun 10:00-4:00

11BD/11BA

Compass

650-447-0412

EAST PALO ALTO

760 Weeks Street

$2,880,000

Sat/10:00-4:00

1BD/1BA

Compass

650-664-1150

LOS ALTOS

21260 Berkshire Court

$2,398,000

Sat/1:30-4:30

4BD/2BA

Compass

650-703-6347

MENLO PARK

1212 Cotton St

$3,498,000

Sat/1:30-4:30

3BD/3BA

DeLeon Realty

650-758-8522

2126 San Mateo Drive

$5,300,000

Sun 1:00-4:00

5BD/3.5BA

Coldwell Banker Realty

650-619-4641

2141 Mills Avenue

$4,149,000

Sat/2:00-5:00

4BD/3.5BA

Compass

650-388-8499

755 Cambridge Avenue

$2,980,000

Sat/1:00-4:00

4BD/4.5BA

Coldwell Banker Realty

650-639-1442

2872 Ashton Avenue

$3,580,000

Sat/10:00-4:00

5BD/4.5BA

DeLeon Realty

650-700-9700

MOUNTAIN VIEW

696 Bryant Ave

$3,480,000

Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30

3BD/2BA

Compass

650-279-7074

PALO ALTO

1121 Tahoe Lane (T)

$1,948,000

Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30

3BD/3.5BA

Compass

650-847-0412

170 Hawthorne Avenue

$3,488,000

Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30

4BD/3.5BA

DeLeon Realty

650-459-3888

404 Corrado Road

$4,490,000

Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30

5BD/5BA

DeLeon Realty

650-900-7000

4135 Orchard Court

$4,934,650

Sat/Sun 1:30-4:00

5BD/5.5BA

The Dreyfus Group, Golden Gate Sotheby’s International Realty

650-485-3476

4139 Orchard Court

$4,934,650

Sat/Sun 1:30-4:00

5BD/5.5BA

The Dreyfus Group, Golden Gate Sotheby’s International Realty

650-485-3476

PORTOLA VALLEY

50 Cheyenne Point

$3,888,000

Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30

4BD/4.5BA

DeLeon Realty

650-459-3888

SAN CARLOS

780 Knoll Drive

$2,980,000

Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30

4BD/4.5BA

DeLeon Realty

650-397-8988

Legend: Condo (C), Townhome (T).

Agents: submit open homes at AlmanacNews.com/real_estate

July 16, 2021 // AlmanacNews.com // The Almanac // 21

THE ALMANAC OPEN HOMES
**Public Notices**

**995 Fictitious Name Statement**
BARREJ FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No: 288047
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: Andrew Logan Psychotherapy, located at 2959 Woodside Road, Suite 260, Woodside, CA 94062, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
ANDREW LOGAN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY COUNSELING, A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION
2959 Woodside Road, Suite 260
Woodside, CA 94062
California
This business is conducted by: A Corporation. 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 June 10, 2021.

**1060 Fictitious Name Statement**
BARREJ FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No: 288047
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: Andrew Logan Psychotherapy, located at 2959 Woodside Road, Suite 260, Woodside, CA 94062, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
ANDREW LOGAN MARRIAGE AND FAMILY COUNSELING, A PROFESSIONAL CORPORATION
2959 Woodside Road, Suite 260
Woodside, CA 94062
California
This business is conducted by: A Corporation. 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 June 10, 2021.

**997 All Other Legals**
SUMMONS (Carcien Judicia) Case Number: 20-CIV-05258 (Numero del Caso)
NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: (Aviso al Demandado):
VANESSA BELLAND, An Individual
YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF: (Lo esta Demandando el Demandante):
Marilyn Santillan, located at 650-223-6580 or email vanessab@parkplace.com.
You must respond in the court within 30 days of delivery to you of this summons and papers served on you.
If you do not respond within time allowed by law, a default judgment may be entered against you in your absence.

**Radio equipment reported missing from garage**

More than $3,000 worth of radio equipment was reported missing in Atherton on Friday, July 9, amid a crime spree in town.
Police said Monday, July 12, that sometime between November 2019 and July 1 of this year, someone stole 59 radio equipment items from a garage. If the burglary occurred this year, it will be the 32nd in town so far in 2021.
"The victim moved out of state and left the equipment at his parents’ home in Atherton," Cmdr. Daniel Larsen said in a Monday email. "The victim’s parents sent him a photograph of where the equipment was stored (in the garage) and the victim noticed the equipment was gone."

The incident is under investigation.

In a July 9 news bulletin, police noted that burglaries in town are typically happening in the early evenings or early morning hours.

Although the town installed automated license plate reader (ALPRs) to alert police to known stolen or wanted vehicles and forensic investigation, the recent burglaries have involved perpetrators that are on foot or on a bicycle. The cameras cannot be used to identify perpetrators on foot or those that use bicycles to reach homes.

If you see something suspicious, report it to police at 650-688-6500 or 911 for emergencies.

**Menlo Park resident arrested in jewelry theft**

Detectives arrested a 23-year-old Menlo Park resident Tuesday, July 13, on suspicion of stealing at least $20,000 to $30,000 worth of jewelry from a pest control client in Portola Valley, according to the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office.

On July 2, a woman reported she discovered a "large amount" of her jewelry missing from her Portola Valley home shortly after the pest control employee left her home for the day, a Sheriff’s Office press release states.

Detectives said that the man was on probation, which allowed law enforcement to conduct searches. On July 13 they said they searched his Menlo Park home and found a large amount of jewelry in his bedroom, including the items reported stolen by the Portola Valley victim. The suspect could not explain how he had gotten the other jewelry that did not belong to the victim, police said.

He was arrested on suspicion of grand theft and possession of stolen property. He was booked at the San Mateo County Main Jail.

Detectives believe there may be other victims. Anyone with information on this case or a case that might be related is asked to contact Detective J. Piper at 650-363-4062 or via email at jppiper@smcgov.org.

—Angela Swartz
Loving a job for 40 years

By Harold Schapelhouman

I n looking back on my 40 years of service to the com-

munity, I want everyone to know how much I have appreci-

ated being a public servant and identified as just a firefigh-

ter. For those who are tired of tech, or are just looking for a career that lives by a code of conduct and professionalism that inspires service over self, running toward a problem instead of away from danger, actually experiencing the satisfaction of helping oth-

ers in their moment of need, working as part of a team, or just looking for a deeper meaning and purpose after a worldwide pandemic, then perhaps the fire service is for you.

The Menlo Park Fire Protec-

tion District is an independent public agency with its own gov-

erning board that is elected by

the residents of Atherton, East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, unincor-

porated San Mateo County areas and the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory, with a population of 100,000 people within a 29-square-mile area served by seven strategically located fire stations, staffed by 33 line personnel per day operating from 11 emergency vehicles.

While other city-based fire agencies may consolidate these services for financial or prac-

tical purposes, a district fire service model already takes that into account. What that simply means is we work to protect and service one of the most diverse and blended response areas in the nation.

Menlo Fire has become its own brand, with a local, state,

national and international fol-

lowing and reputation as the “biggest little fire agency in the country,” known for its innovative approach to public safety, ability to support new and emerging technologies through its many projects and programs that provide enhanced services to the local community first, but ultimately to the region, state and nation, especially in the areas of technical search, rescue and recovery.

None of this could be possible without a highly motivated, well trained and experienced cadre of line firefighters, supervisors, chief officers, support staff and dedicated fire board. It’s been the honor of a lifetime, and to have been the first fire chief promoted from inside the organization in 21 years, which was then able to serve in that capacity for the last 15 years.

Current, long-term leadership helps to build continuity, predictability and organizational stability, which is critical in agencies entrusted with the public well-being and emergency response.

I’ve known few people who can actually say that they loved their job, so I feel fortunate to be able to admit that not only am I one of them, but I always looked forward to just coming to work, because I knew that what we ultimately did was important to the community, because you could call on us at any time, any hour, or in any moment of need. You entrust us with your life, family’s overall well-being and the preservation of your property.

No greater responsibility can, or could have been given, and the privilege of leading a world-class organization that not only does it well, but seamlessly, will be something I proudly carry with me for the rest of my days!

Harold Schapelhouman retired in June from a career with the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, where he worked as a firefighter and fire chief.

Reflecting on a return to swimming

By Donia Bijan

The first pool I went to was a bus ride away from my

house. I was 6 but I still know the smell of it and I carry

with me the shame I felt for not

knowing how to swim. At

home, I was smaller than every-

one, I was hooked on the weightless

wet embrace of water.

I was 11 years old, a summer day. I’d know the way to

walk it with my eyes closed — down

Valparaiso, across El Camino, right on Laurel. I can smell it like I could smell it then. Ten minutes and I’m standing in it, listening to instructions. I still carry the shame, only now it’s for being mad at my mom all those years ago, and taking for granted

our pool, our masters team, our extraordinary coaches, and my swimming buddies — the best I ever had. For the past year, I’ve been a lone swimmer in a lane I reserved at midnight a week before. I have no other way of telling of what I’ve missed, what I thought was lost forever in 2020, and the near-miracle of its last return last week on July 5.

Donia Bijan is a Bay Area chef and writer who lives in Menlo Park. After graduating from UC Berkeley, she attended the Cordon Bleu and ran her own restaurant, L’Amie Donna, for 10 years. She is the author of the memoir “Maman’s Honeysick Pie,” and the novel, “The Last Days of Cafe Leila.”

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Music@Menlo offers a venue for every listener

Chamber music festival returns to live performances in a brand-new venue, plus a virtual viewing option

By Heather Zimmerman

Music@Menlo is going above and beyond to live up to its 2021 theme, "Gather," with the summer chamber music festival offering a venue for just about every listener.

The 2021 edition of the festival will feature in-person concerts, with options to attend performances indoors or outdoors — or virtually.

Music@Menlo is presenting nine concert programs over three weekends, kicking off Friday, July 16, and running through Sunday, Aug. 1, with live performances taking place at Menlo School in Atherton.

"It's a little more work for the staff and also for the musicians," Wu Han, Music@Menlo's co-artistic director, said of the multiple performance options.

"But we miss playing concerts so, so much. Everybody is totally understanding of the importance of gathering and being together, and having a sense of community. So we're giving all those options."

Music@Menlo has a lot to celebrate this year. Not only does the 2021 festival mark a return to in-person concerts, but when audiences and artists do come together indoors, it will be in the Spieker Center, a brand-new concert hall on the Menlo School campus. Concerts in the new hall will be recorded to be presented online.

"It's so beautiful. The interior is just glorious. The school and the design team and Music@Menlo all worked together so the venue is dead quiet and we can do recordings. The stage has wood paneling so the sound is warm," Wu Han said.

She described the recent day that the festival artists first arrived on campus, where music could be heard drifting from the various classrooms into the courtyard near the new hall as the artists rehearsed. People on campus were drawn to the courtyard, gathering around the first opportunity to hear festival music in person in two years.

The 2021 festival theme was inspired by Patrick Castillo’s composition “Gather,” commissioned by the festival to commemorate the Spieker Center’s opening.

Castillo is Music@Menlo’s audience engagement director and has been with the festival from its start nearly 20 years ago, but festival audiences may not know that Castillo is also a composer, Wu Han said. On a bittersweet note, this is Castillo's last year with Music@Menlo, as he will be joining the New York Philharmonic as its vice president of artistic planning.

"Gather" was commissioned for last year's festival, which took place entirely online due to the pandemic. With the return of in-person performances in 2021, the title of the piece seemed a natural fit for this year's theme, Wu Han said. At two and a half minutes, Castillo's piece is short, but it captures the emotions of an uncertain year.

The piece, written for piano and cello, begins with a kind of murmuring, with the cello and piano not quite together. Then it builds on the tune of a well-known hymn, "Shall we gather at the river" to create a sense of unity.

"It's very philosophical. He was thinking about the pandemic. In the beginning it is deliberately a little confusing, a little uncertain, then the hymn shows up and we are all gathering again. ... It's kind of unexpected; with a hall opening you're usually expecting a big bang. It's very, very intriguing and quite beautiful," Wu Han said.

Wu Han, a pianist, and her co-artistic director, David Finckel, a cellist, will be featured in the opening program, along with pianist Ji Na Kim; violinist Matthew Lipman; cellists Dmitri Atapine and Arnaud Sussman; and double bassist Scott Pingel.

"Gather" leads the July 16 opening program, which also features, for a "big bang," Johannes Brahms’ "Scherzo in C Minor" and the "Trout" by Franz Schubert's (also known as "Quintet in A major for Piano, Violin, Viola, Cello, and Bass.")

The pieces were chosen to contrast with "Gather" and also for the symbolism behind the works. The Brahms Scherzo is one of four movements in a sonata written collaboratively by Brahms, Schumann and Albert Dietrich as a gift for violinist Joseph Joachim, Wu Han said, noting that the Scherzo is the most performed movement from the work and it helped cement Brahms' status as a master.

"It's very declamatory, very celebratory, and it has a friendship story behind it. So it's a perfect sort of opening tribute to all the friendship, to the community and also to the reopening after the pandemic," Wu Han said.

The Schubert piece was written over a short period of time for a chamber performance at a patron's country house party, and included, at the patron's request, variations on another of Schubert's compositions.

The festival's overall programming this year offers a lot of intensity, with dramatic, emotional works and joyful ones, according to Wu Han.

"There are a lot of chamber music favorites," she said. But there's also a chance to discover some works that aren't as well known.

The festival's second concert program, on July 17, concludes with a piano trio by 20th-century composer Arno Babajanian that Wu Han calls "powerful." The program also features Mozart’s "Piano Quartet in G Minor" (K. 478) and Schubert's "Fantasy in F minor for Piano, Four Hands."

The roster for the July 17 concert features pianists Gilbert Kalish, Hyejeon Park and Wynona (Yinuo) Wang; cellists Dmitri Atapine and Finckel; violinists Kristin Lee and Tien-Hsin Cindy Wu; and violist Matthew Lipman.

The final program of the opening weekend, on Sunday, July 18, features violinists Lipman and Wu; violinists Yeri Roh, James Thompson and Angela Wee; cellists Atapine, Audrey Chen and Sterling Elliott; and pianist Park performing Janacek's "Violin Sonata" (1914-1915; rev. 1916-1922), Gyorgy Ligeti's "Sonata for Solo Cello" and Brahms' "String Sextet no. 1 in B-flat major, op. 18."

As musicians and listeners alike enjoy live performances, the online component offers another option for audiences to experience the festival — one that is likely to stay in place, too.

Music@Menlo's 2020 festival and its 2020-21 season offered an array of online performances and lectures that reached a broader audience than ever before, Wu Han said, with data showing that international listeners as well as local audiences attended the performances. With the success of Music@Menlo's online programming, and the importance of ensuring greater accessibility for audiences who may not be able to attend in person, the festival plans to continue offering online programming, according to Wu Han. She also said that she has heard from listeners that Music@Menlo's online offerings brought them comfort and inspiration during some of the most uncertain times.

Whether in person or online, she said this year's programming aims to bring listeners together to reflect and celebrate, offering "reminders of how beautiful music can be, and how beautiful this world can be. I found myself in the last year and a half needing music more than ever. It gives you beauty; it gives you hope."

Vaccinations are required for indoor concerts, which will also offer socially distanced seating. Each program will be performed twice once indoors and once outdoors. Indoor performances will be recorded.

For more information, visit musicatmenlo.org.

Email Assistant Editor Heather Zimmerman at hzimmerman@almanacnews.com.
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Palo Alto author publishes plant-forward recipe bible

Anne-Marie Bonneau's new book "The Zero-Waste Chef" offers a blueprint for a sustainable kitchen

By Angela Swartz

Turn fruit peels left over from your apple crumble into vinegar. Keep a left-over loaf from going to waste by making Mexican hot chocolate bread pudding.

These are just a couple of the creative ideas in Palo Alto resident Anne-Marie Bonneau's first book: "The Zero-Waste Chef." The book, released in April, includes 75 vegan and vegetarian recipes and tips for cooking with food scraps, creating fermented goodies — like from-scratch ketchup and preserved lemons — or simply inverting a plate over leftovers rather than using plastic wrap to keep them fresh in the fridge.

Bonneau, who moved to the Bay Area in 1998 during the dot-com boom, said she went "zero waste" in 2011 when she discovered only 9% of plastic is actually recycled and 40% of food goes unused in the U.S. every year. She began shopping at farmers markets "religiously" (she even transfers berries to her own jars to save cartons) and making food with fewer ingredients.

She injects humor, and storytelling, into it all. For example, she recounted during our interview how, after her younger daughter Charlotte stormed off into it all. For example, she recounted during our interview how, after her younger daughter Charlotte stormed off, she responded by going over loaf from going to waste by making Mexican hot chocolate bread pudding.

"Will you please stop making sticky buns?" Her answer was that day. ... The book took a long time; I washed 5 million dishes whole time. It's alive, it's fermented, so it's filled with live bacteria and yeast; it puts you in tune with the natural world more.

Which recipe in the book is your favorite or one you cook most often?

I especially love the sourdough sticky buns. I made them over and over and over for the book. One day Charlotte said to me, "Will you please stop making these?" I could text the neighbor and say, "Come and taste this" (while testing recipes for the book). It would have been really hard to do all of that during lockdown.

You describe yourself in the book as a "sourdough disciple." Why do you make your own bread and why should I?

I'm reading Rebecca Ruiz's "Plastic Free." I urge people to read "The New Climate War" by Michael E. Mann. He's a climatologist and a great communicator on the climate crisis. Elizabeth Kolbert's "Under a White Sky," Anything by Michael Pollan (his book "This Is Your Mind on Plants" was released July 6). Bonneau will host an author talk and book signing at a home in the Los Altos Hills on Tuesday, July 20, at 7 p.m. This will be her first in-person talk since the pandemic hit. Sign up online at tinyurl.com/zerowastechef.

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

LEHUA GREENMAN

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